THE WESTERN AND CENTRAL PACIFIC FISHERIES COMMISSION

FACT SHEET

HOW TUNA IS FISHED IN THE WCPFC AREA

PACIFIC POSTCARD: Purse-seine fishing is an effective way of catching many fish at a time. Large nets can result in by-catch – catch of unwanted species such as sharks, turtles and others. Purse seine fishing is also responsible for catching juvenile tuna when conducted on fish aggregating devices.

A-Z OF FISHING METHODS

Hook-and-line: *A general term used for a range of fishing methods that uses relatively short fishing lines (compared to long lines) with hooks; bait and lures to attract target species.*

Hand-lines *use lines and baited hooks from a stationary or moving boat. Because hauling is slow, mechanised systems have been developed to allow more lines to be set and retrieved by a smaller crew.*

Pole-and-line, *or* **'bait-boat'** *fishing, attracts surface-schooling fish to the vessel, where they are driven into a 'feeding frenzy' by the throwing of live or dead bait into the water and the spraying of water onto the sea surface to simulate the escape of small prey. Lines are used to hook the fish, which are then pulled on board by manual or powered devices. On these vessels, used primary for catching of tuna and skipjack, the fishermen stand at the railing or on special platforms, and fish with poles and lines.*

Trolling: *Trolling is a method of fishing where one or more fishing lines, baited with lures or bait fish, are drawn through the water behind a moving boat. Trolling is used to catch fish such as mackerel and kingfish. It sounds the same as trawling, which is a fishing method involving a net rather than a line.*

Fish Aggregating Devices (FAD): *Marine life is attracted to floating objects, and FADs are designed to mimic this effect for gathering or aggregating fish. They can be pieces of wood tied together and weighted or sophisticated steel structures, anchored to the sea floor and fitted with electronic monitoring equipment that can transmit detailed information to fishing vessels by radio, including water temperature and quantity of fish in the vicinity.*

Purse seining: *Vessels built for this purpose, known as purse seiners, encircle fish with a large 'wall' or net, which is then brought together to retain the fish by using a line at the bottom that enables the net to be closed like a purse.*

Long-line: *Long-lines consist of short lines (called snoods) carrying baited hooks, attached at regular intervals to a longer main line that is laid on the bottom or suspended horizontally with the help of surface floats. Main lines can be over 100 km long and can carry several thousand hooks.*

Trawling: *Pulling a large fishing net, or trawl, through the water behind one or more boats; called trawlers. Trawlers vary in size; from small open boats with only 30 hp to large factory trawlers with over 10,000 hp. Trawling can be carried out by one trawler or by two trawlers fishing cooperatively (pair trawling).*

CATCH AND BY-CATCH – WHAT ELSE JOINS THE TUNA IN YOUR BOAT?

Commercial fishing strives for the most tuna possible, whatever the approach used. The problem with many fishing approaches is that those with big catches, for example, purse seining, can also bring in high numbers of non-targeted or by-catch species. These can include sharks, turtles, sea birds, and juvenile tuna which will impact on how fast the remaining tuna fish stock can grow.

The WCPFC makes decisions to set the amount of catch across the Western and Central Pacific Ocean and rules around by-catch. At its 2008 meeting in Korea, the Commission agreed to a conservation and management measure on turtles which included a requirement for members to ensure purse seine vessels take practicable steps to avoid catching turtles or to rescue and release those that were caught as bycatch. They can take steps such as stopping the net from being drawn if they see a turtle in it and avoiding circling turtles with nets. Long line fishing vessels can carry and use line cutters and de-hookers to handle and promptly release sea turtles caught or entangled.

The Commission also has a conservation and management measure on sharks which requires fishing vessels to retain more whole shark on board rather than finning them and throwing the carcass back to sea. The Commission is also increasing the requirements to report and observe catch of sharks, seabirds and turtles by fishing vessels.

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Observers like this one board fishing vessels to monitor and report on catch and bycatch by both longline and purse seine fishing vessels.

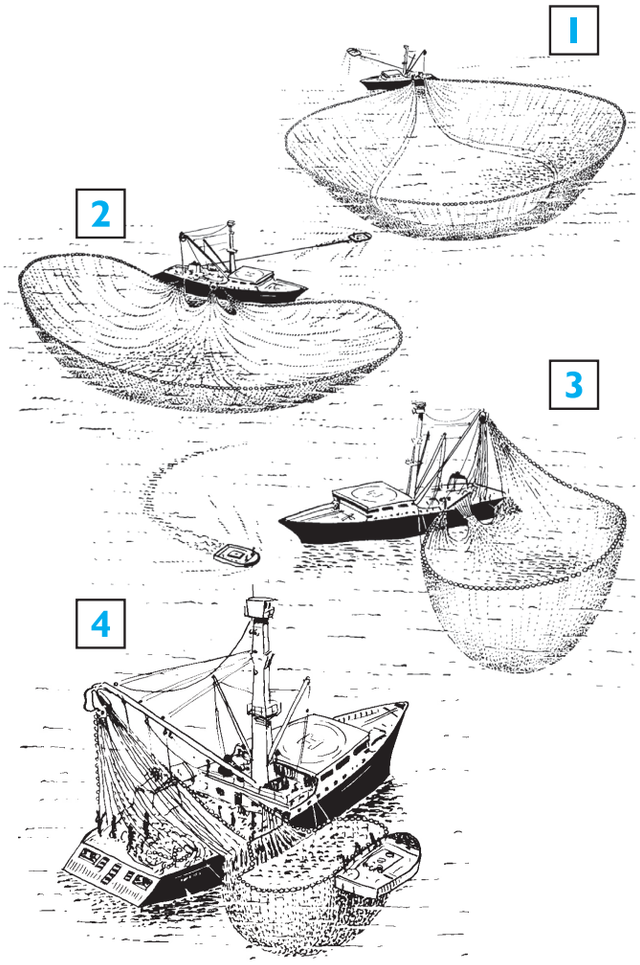
FISHING APPROACHES

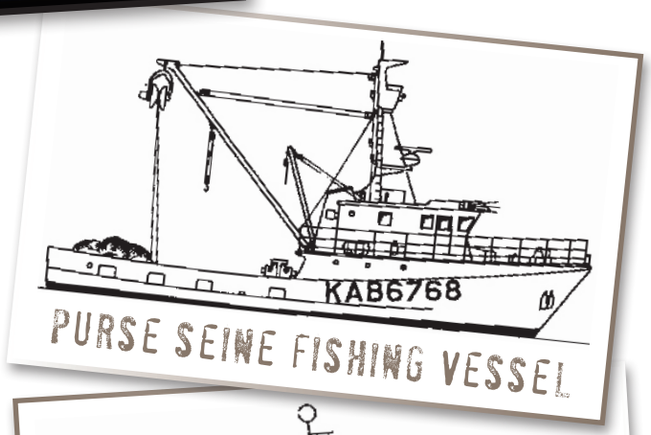
"The sea is where we feed ourselves the ordinary householder, and the nation."

- Sir Nathaniel Waena, Solomon Islands Governor General (during a visit to the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency HQ in Honiara, June 2008)

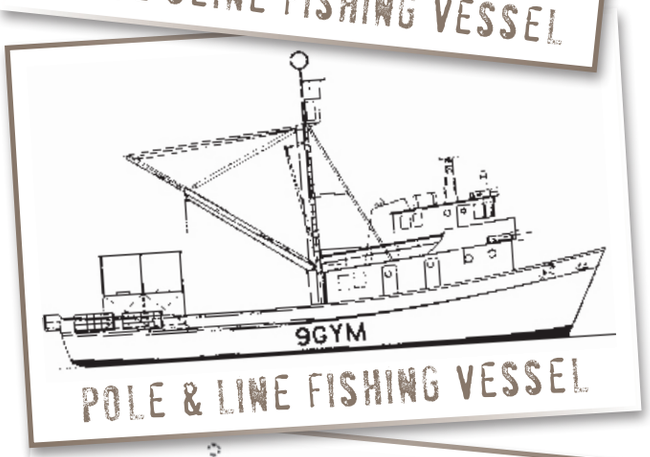
HYPERLINK QUOTE: http://www.ffa.int

PURSE SEINE FISHING

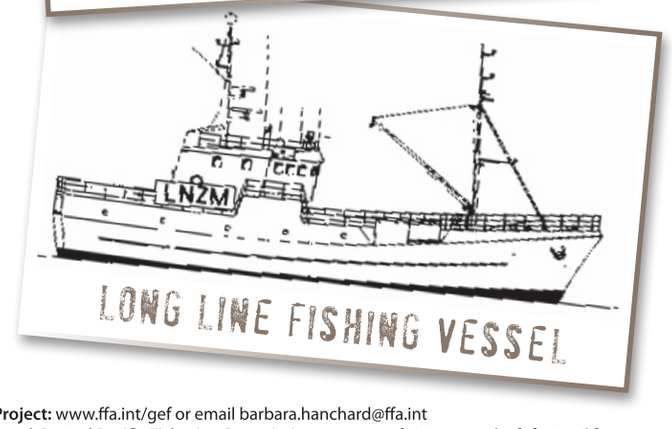




PURSE SEINE FISHING VESSEL



POLE & LINE FISHING VESSEL



LONG LINE FISHING VESSEL

MORE INFORMATION: Oceanic Fisheries Management Project: www.ffa.int/gef or email barbara.hanchard@ffa.int
Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency: www.ffa.int or email info@ffa.int. **Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission:** www.wcpfc.int or email wfpfc@mail.fm.

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