

Vanuatu National Report to the Scientific Committee of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, 2011

Fisheries Department of Vanuatu

INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

<p>In accordance with IOTC Resolution 10/02, final scientific data for the previous year was provided to the Secretariat by 30 June of the current year, for all fleets other than longline [<i>e.g.</i> for a National report submitted to the Secretariat in 2010, final data for the 2009 calendar year must be provided to the Secretariat by 30 June 2010)</p>	<p>NO No fleet other than longline</p>
<p>In accordance with IOTC Resolution 10/02, provisional longline data for the previous year was provided to the Secretariat by 30 June of the current year [<i>e.g.</i> for a National report submitted to the Secretariat in 2010, preliminary data for the 2009 calendar year was provided to the Secretariat by 30 June 2010). REMINDER: Final longline data for the previous year is due to the Secretariat by 30 Dec of the current year [<i>e.g.</i> for a National report submitted to the Secretariat in 2010, final data for the 2009 calendar year must be provided to the Secretariat by 30 December 2010).</p>	<p>NO The fishery just started in 2010. Data of the fishery is under checking process and compilation.</p>
<p>If no, please indicate the reason(s) and intended actions:</p>	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There was only longline fishery operated by Vanuatu in 2010 in the Indian Ocean. Four longliners targeted oilfishes with bycatch of yellowfin, bigeye and albacore tunas in the south-western region of the Ocean. Total catch of 2010 was estimated to be 622.2 mt, with 383.0 mt for oilfishes, 93.9 mt for yellowfin tuna, 87.4 mt for bigeye tuna, 53.5 mt for albacore and 4.4 mt for swordfish (data is still preliminary). These data were compiled from the logsheets that submitted by the vessels. All the four vessels have now removed registration from Vanuatu.

1. BACKGROUND/GENERAL FISHERY INFORMATION

Vanuatu is a developing coastal country and fishery plays an important role to the stability of the country. There is only longline fleet operated by the country in the Indian Ocean. The fishery commenced in 2010 by four longliners catching mainly oilfishes, with yellowfin, bigeye and albacore tunas as bycatch in the south-western region of the Ocean. They operated solely on the high seas, without bilateral cooperation with coastal states. However, the four vessels have been deleted from Vanuatu registry on Aug. 2011.

Since this is the first year compiling catch data of the fleet, the results are considered preliminary.

2. FLEET STRUCTURE

There is only four longliners operating in the Indian Ocean since 2010. They are all less than 24 meters in size. They operated in the south-western region between 10° - 40°S and 30° - 75°E (Figure 1)

3. CATCH AND EFFORT (BY SPECIES AND GEAR)

The four longliners targeted on oilfishes in the south-western region of the Ocean with the three major tunas as bycatch in 2010. Total catches were 383.0 mt for oilfishes, 93.9 mt for yellowfin tuna, 87.4 mt for bigeye tuna, 53.5 mt for albacore and 4.4 mt for swordfish, with overall catch being 622.2 mt. Figure 1 provides annual effort distribution of the fleet. Detail catch information is still under verification and compilation and so catch composition is not ready yet.

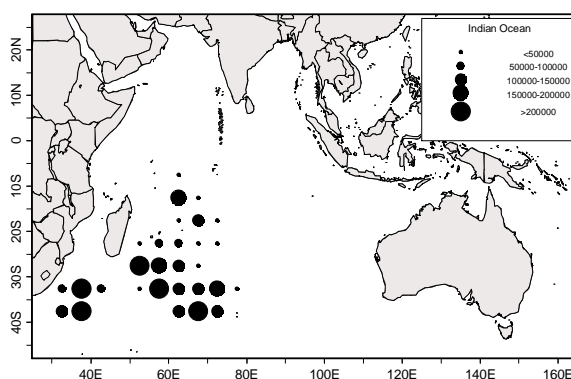


Figure 1. Map of the distribution of fishing effort of the longline fleet in the Indian Ocean, 2010.

4. RECREATIONAL FISHERY

There is no recreational fishery in the Indian Ocean by the country.

5. ECOSYSTEM AND BYCATCH ISSUES

Vanuatu has a policy to maintain fishery resources sustainable with the attention of ecosystem health. Vessels conducting fishing activities in all areas are required to observe the management regulations developed by related RFMOs on protecting the health of ecosystem. They are encouraged to implement a catch and release system for seabirds and sea turtles, such as using weighted branch lines and night setting with minimum deck lighting, and using circle hooks. Operators, including crewmembers, are required to develop and implement measures to ensure seabirds captured alive during fishing operations are released alive and in as good condition as possible. For sharks, the 5% rule (weight of shark fins landed is not greater than 5% of the dressed weight of shark) is strictly required.

6. NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING SYSTEMS [MANDATORY]

Vessels operating in the Indian Ocean were requested to submit logsheet data including fishing date and location and catches by species. Catch and effort data were compiled from the logsheets. The four vessels were requested to carry operational VMS for monitoring purpose. Due to budgetary limitation, no observer program or port sampling program was implemented on the fleet.