



Thailand National Report to the Scientific Committee of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, 2016

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INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

<p>In accordance with IOTC Resolution 15/02, final scientific data for the previous year was provided to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 June of the current year, for all fleets other than longline [e.g. for a National Report submitted to the IOTC Secretariat in 2016, final data for the 2015 calendar year must be provided to the Secretariat by 30 June 2016)</p>	<p>YES 30th June 2016</p>
<p>In accordance with IOTC Resolution 15/02, provisional longline data for the previous year was provided to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 June of the current year [e.g. for a National Report submitted to the IOTC Secretariat in 2016, preliminary data for the 2015 calendar year was provided to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 June 2016). REMINDER: Final longline data for the previous year is due to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 Dec of the current year [e.g. for a National Report submitted to the IOTC Secretariat in 2016, final data for the 2015 calendar year must be provided to the Secretariat by 30 December 2016).</p>	<p>YES 30th June 2016</p>
<p>If no, please indicate the reason(s) and intended actions:</p>	

Executive Summary

Neritic tuna in the Andaman Sea, Thailand comprise 5 species in 2014. Neritic tuna consists of longtail tuna (*Thunnus tonggol*), kawakawa (*Euthynnus affinis*) and frigate tuna (*Auxis thazard*) and bullet tuna (*Auxis rochei*) and skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*). These species were caught from purse seine. The major species caught were kawakawa, bullet tuna, Longtail tuna, frigate tuna and skipjack tuna which 86.11 , 52.85 , 37.93 , 34.78 and 5.28 tonnes respectively.

During 2011-2015, Six Thai tuna longliners operated in the Western coast of the Indian Ocean. Their declared logbook to Department of Fisheries, Thailand. Data from logbook displayed important information of their fishing operation and effort. Then summarized and calculated the hook rate in Catch Per Unit Effort. fishing operations were recorded 2,070 fishing days. The highest total catch was in 2015 with 599.72 tonnes followed by 2014, 2012, 2011 and 2013 respectively (571.90, 470.40, 373.44 and 307.74 tonnes). The highest CPUE was found in 2014 with 13.68 fish/1,000 hooks followed by 2015 and 2012, respectively (12.38 and 10.83 fish/1,000 hooks). The major species caught during 5 years were tuna group, billfish group, shark group and other species group which 1,856.65, 295.31, 138.55 and 32.71 tonnes, respectively. The average percentage composition by weight of tuna group, billfish group, shark group and other species group which 79.92%, 12.71%, 5.96% and 1.41%, respectively. The CPUE have ranged between 9.13 and 13.28 fish/1,000 hooks, and the average CPUE was 11.39 fish/1,000 hooks. The lowest CPUE was in 2011, and the highest CPUE was in 2014. In 2015, bigeye tuna and yellowfin tuna were 33.44% and 18.25% by weight of the total catch composition.

Foreign tuna fleets unloading in Phuket, fishing effort increased steadily from 187 trips in 1995 to the peak in 1999, after that trend was continuously decreased into 241 trips in 2014 and 139 trips in 2015. In 2015, annual catches were estimated 13,768.97 tonnes. The main species composition were tuna group, billfish group and other species group which 10,526.40, 2,728.35 and 514.22 tonnes. The average percentage composition by weight of tuna group, billfish group and other species group which 76.45 %, 19.82 % and 3.73 %, respectively. From January – June in 2016, The whole figure of total landing catch was 4,359.69 tons. The main species composition were yellowfin tuna, bigeye tuna, albacore tuna, other species (Sharks, *Lepidocybium spp.*, *Coryphaena spp.*, *Molar spp.*, *Ruretlus pretiosus*, *Sphyraena spp.* and *Taractichtis spp.*) and bill fish (*Makaira spp.*, *Tetrapturus spp.*, *Istiophorus spp.*)

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1. BACKGROUND/GENERAL FISHERY INFORMATION

Marine fisheries are important both socially and economically for Thailand. Fish are very important to the food security and self-sufficiency of Thailand. Based on a recent survey (July 2015), a total number of 42,512 active Thai fishing vessels caught 1.34 million tonnes in 2014. This catch supports the livelihoods, incomes and employment for about 172,430 fishermen (82% migrants) and about 515,000 people employed in supporting industries (e.g. fish processing industry, ship building industry, canned and frozen fisheries product factories, fish meal factories). For rural Thailand, fish constitutes a generally affordable source of protein, contributing significantly to dietary health and food security, particularly the more than 2,500 villages of artisanal fishing communities along the coasts. Thailand is also a major seafood producer and exporter. In 2014, exports totaled 1.7 million tonnes, valued at USD6, 749 million and imports total 1.6 million tonnes valued at USD 2,740 million (DOF, 2015).

Thai tuna longliners operated in the Western Indian Ocean since 2007 after that were distributed around central and southern part of the Indian Ocean during 2011-2015. Data was collected from logbooks provided to the Department of Fisheries, Thailand. The data included information related to fishing trips and operations. The trip data was composed of dates and ports of vessel departure and return, number and weight of catch and effort (such as the number of hooks used) by species. The fishing operation included data on the time of the operation, location (latitude and longitude), the retained catch of target species and other information related to the operation. The data were provided by the Siam Tuna Fishery Company and Three Wonderful Company. Logbooks were used to estimate annual catches of the longline fleet.

2. FLEET STRUCTURE

The fishing gears catch neritic tuna and king mackerel namely, purse seine, gill net and trawl. For purse seines along the Andaman Sea Coast of Thailand can be classified into regular purse seines (RPS- that are Thai purse seine (TPS), fish aggregating device (FADs), light luring purse seine (LPS), and tuna purse seine (TUN). Among the purse seiners, TUN boat length is longer than other regular purse seine that is 21-25 meter and the size of net used are also longer ranging 1,000-2,000 meters in length, 100-150 meters in depth, and number of crew is range 35-45 persons. Normally, TUN operates during the Northeast monsoon, from November to May in the offshore area. Apart from those months, the TUN boat moves to fish pelagic species in coastal area or offshore area by using the net of mesh size 2.5 centimeter and change the gear to be LPS and TPS

Thai fishing fleet to the high sea of the Indian Ocean consist of Tuna longliner. In 2007, there are 3 longliners operated in Indian Ocean but one of each fishing gear operated only 6 months. After that the active fishing vessels increased to 3 longliners until in 2015 Thailand have six tuna longline vessel. The number of fishing fleet was shown in table 1.

Table 1: Number of vessels operating in the IOTC area of competence, by gear type and size

Year	Number of Thailand commercial longliners vessels	Size of the vessels(GT)	Remark
2011	2	372-434	In 2016,Thailand don't have commercial longliner vessels operated in Indian Ocean
2012	3	347-434	
2013	3	347-434	
2014	3	347-434	
2015	6	74-434	

Year	Number of Research Vessels of DOF Thailand	Size of the vessels(GT)	Remark
2011	3	1,178-1,424	
2012	3	1,178-1,424	
2013	3	1,178-1,424	
2014	3	1,178-1,424	
2015	3	1,178-1,424	

3. CATCH AND EFFORT (BY SPECIES AND GEAR) [Mandatory]

3.1 Fishing efforts; Neritic tuna

In 2014, Total catch of Neritic tuna were estimated 217.29 tonnes. The major species caught were kawakawa (*Euthynnus affinis*), bullet tuna (*Auxis rochei*), Longtail tuna (*Thunnus tonggol*), frigate tuna (*A. thazard*), skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*), respectively. The major species caught were kawakawa, bullet tuna, Longtail tuna, frigate tuna and skipjack tuna which 86.11, 52.85, 37.93, 34.78 and 5.28 tonnes, respectively. The average percentage composition by weight of kawakawa (*Euthynnus affinis*), bullet tuna (*Auxis rochei*), Longtail tuna (*Thunnus tonggol*), frigate tuna (*A. thazard*), skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*) and other species group which 39.63%, 24.32%, 17.45%, 16.01, 2.43 and 0.16%, respectively. (Figure 1)

These data were data sampling from Phuket port and Phang Nga Port, Not national statistical data

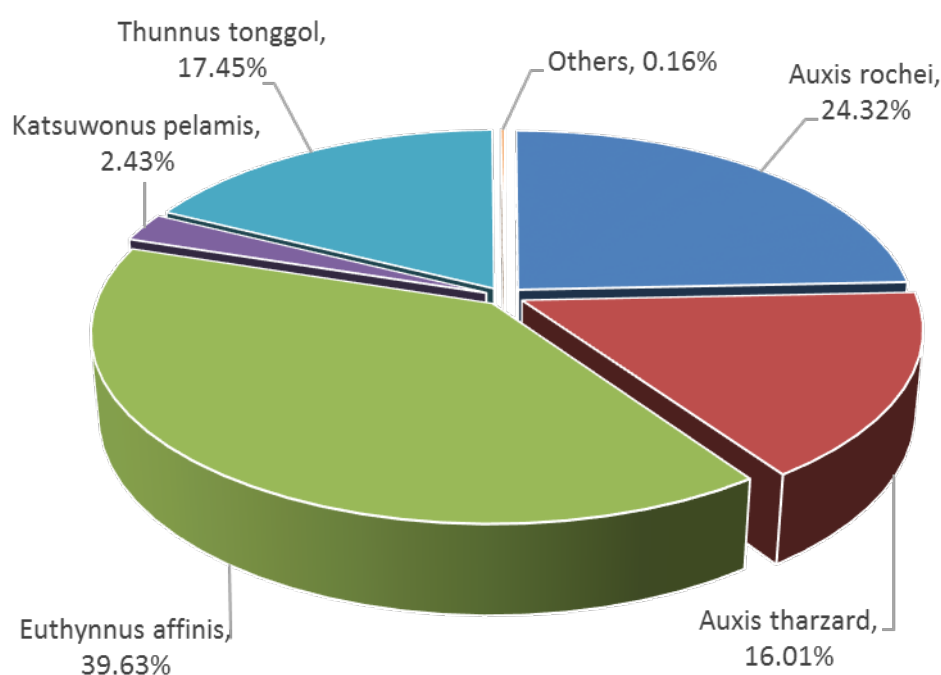


Figure 1 Catch composition of neritic tuna by weight in 2014

3.2 Fishing efforts; Oceanic tuna

Fishing efforts during 2011-2015 were shown in table 2. The main fishing grounds were around central and southern part of the west Indian Ocean (Figure 3). The fishing operations were recorded 2,070 fishing days. In 2015, The highest fishing effort 1,788,800 hooks (563 fishing days). Annual catches in 2011-2015 were estimated 373.44, 470.41, 307.74, 571.91 and 599.73 tonnes, respectively. The major species caught during 5 years were tuna group, billfish group, shark group and other species group which 1,856.65, 295.31, 138.55 and 32.71 tonnes, respectively. The average percentage composition by weight of tuna group, billfish group, shark group and other species group which 79.92%, 12.71%, 5.96% and 1.41%, respectively. (Figure 2) The CPUE have ranged between 9.13 and 13.28 fish/1,000 hooks, and the average CPUE was 11.39 fish/1,000 hooks. The lowest CPUE was in 2011, and the highest CPUE was in 2014. In 2015, bigeye tuna and yellowfin tuna were 33.44% and 18.25% by weight of the total catch composition.

During 2011-2015, Bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*) and yellowfin tuna (*T. albacares*) caught by number and weight were 29,008 fish (1,275.89 tonnes), 13,821 fish (449,280 tonnes) respectively. (Table 3) The average percentage composition by number of the bigeye tuna and yellowfin tuna were 44.44% and

21.18% and by weight 54.92% and 19.34%, respectively. In 2015, bigeye tuna and yellowfin tuna were caught 4,838 fishes (206.57 tons), 3,411 fishes (109.45 tonnes), respectively. The CPUEs of bigeye tuna and yellowfin tuna were 2.70 fish/1,000 hooks (115.48 kg/1,000 hooks) and 1.91 fish/1,000 hooks (61.19 kg/1,000 hooks), respectively.

During 2011-2015, Billfish were caught 6,853 fishes with 295.31 tons. The average catch rate of billfish were 1.20 individual fish/1,000 hooks and 51.54 kg/1,000 hooks. The percentage of billfish to the total catch is 10.50% by number and 12.71% by weight. In 2015, billfish were caught 2,250 fishes with 94.62 tons. The average catch rate of billfish were 1.26 individual fish/1,000 hooks and 52.90 kg/1,000 hooks. The percentage of billfish to the total catch is 10.16% by number and 15.78% by weight. The major species of billfish caught by weight were swordfish, black marlin, striped marlin and indo-pacific sailfish comprising 71.77, 25.37, 2.15 and 0.71% of the total catch, respectively.

During 2011-2015, sharks and other species for 79.92%, 12.71%, 5.96% and 1.41% of the total catch, respectively. Shark were caught 3,949 fishes with 138.55 tonnes. The average catch rate of shark were 0.69 individual fish/1,000 hooks and 24.18 kg/1,000 hooks. The percentage of shark to the total catch were 6.05% by number and 5.96% by weight. In 2015, shark were caught 1,835 fishes with 58.88 tons. The average catch rate of shark were 1.03 individual fish/1,000 hooks and 32.92 kg/1,000 hooks. Species composition of shark to the total catch were blue shark, mako shark and unidentified shark for 8.28%, 0.94% and 0.60% by weight or 6.10%, 1.56% and 0.62% by number, respectively.

Table 2. Fishing efforts, annual catches and CPUEs of Thai tuna longliners

Year	Fishing days	Total Number of Hooks	Total number of fish		Total catch by No. and Weight												Total CPUE	
					ALB		BET		YFT		Billfish		Sharks		Others		(per 1,000 hooks)	
			No.	Tonnes	No.	Tonnes	No.	Tonnes	No.	Tonnes	No.	Tonnes	No.	Tonnes	No.	Tonnes	By No.	By Weight (kg.)
2011	372	1,049,400	9,583	373.44	353	11.44	5,883	248.48	2,842	92.12	291	15.99	214	5.41			9.13	355.86
2012	388	1,083,600	11,732	470.41	120	2.73	8,021	342.18	2,311	81.92	736	25.05	544	18.53			10.83	434.12
2013	363	704,400	7,157	307.74	61	1.38	4,372	207.78	1,201	41.88	1,312	50.93	211	5.78			10.16	436.88
2014	384	1,103,900	14,663	571.91	725	13.91	5,894	270.87	4,056	123.91	2,264	108.72	1,145	49.95	579	4.54	13.28	518.08
2015	563	1,788,800	22,148	599.73	7,044	102.02	4,838	206.57	3,411	109.45	2,250	94.62	1,835	58.89	2,770	28.17	12.38	335.27
Total	2,070	5,730,100	65,283	2,323.23	8,303	131.48	29,008	1,275.89	13,821	449.28	6,853	295.31	3,949	138.55	3,349	32.71	11.39	405.44

Table 3 Fishing efforts, annual catches and CPUE of BET and YFT during 2011-2015

Year	Fishing days	Total Number of Hooks	Total catch		BET		YFT		CPUE of BET		CPUE of YFT	
									(per 1,000 hooks)		(per 1,000 hooks)	
			No.	Tonnes	No.	Tonnes	No.	Tonnes	No.	kg.	No.	kg.
2011	372	1,049,400	9583	373.44	5,883	248.48	2,842	92.12	5.61	236.79	2.71	87.78
2012	388	1,083,600	11732	470.41	8,021	342.18	2,311	81.92	7.4	315.78	2.13	75.6
2013	363	704,400	7157	307.74	4,372	207.78	1,201	41.88	6.21	294.98	1.7	59.45
2014	384	1,103,900	14663	571.91	5,894	270.87	4,056	123.91	5.34	245.38	3.67	112.25
2015	563	1,788,800	22148	599.73	4,838	206.57	3,411	109.45	2.7	115.48	1.91	61.19
Total	2,070	5,730,100	65,283	2,323.23	29,008	1,275.89	13,821	449.28	5.06	222.66	2.41	78.41

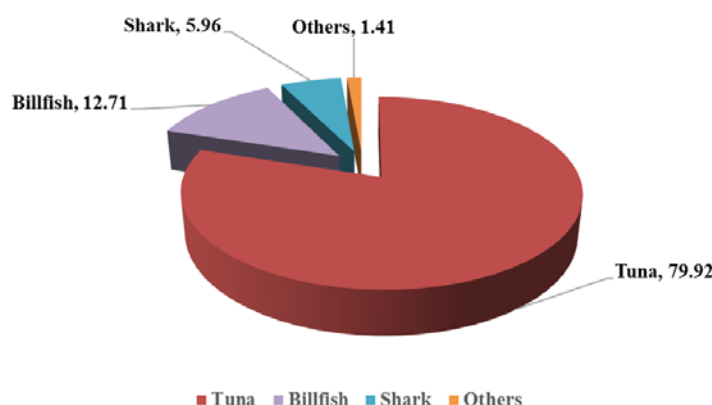


Figure 2 Catch composition (group) by weight during 2011-2015

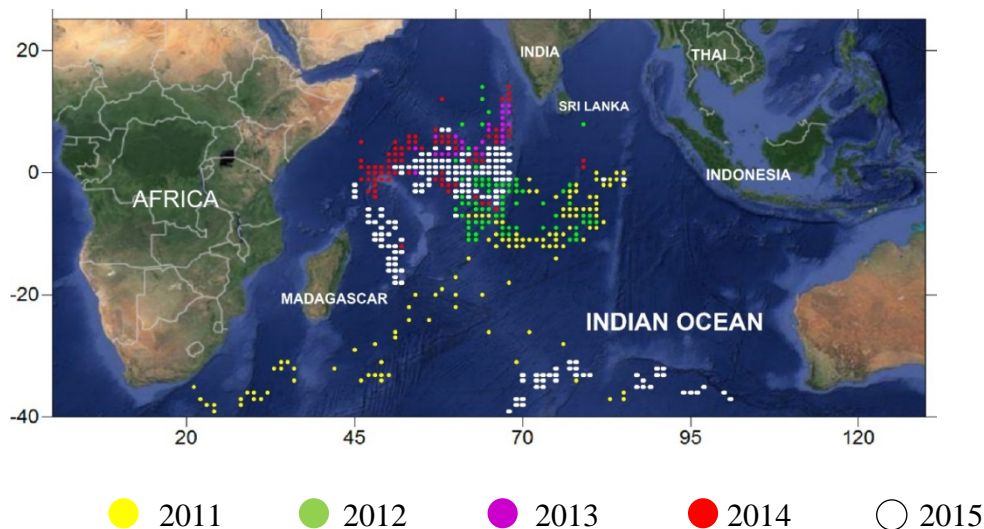


Figure 3 Fishing ground by Thai tuna longliners in the Indian Ocean during 2011-2015

3.3 Fishing efforts; Foreign tuna fleets unloading in Phuket

In 2015, Foreign tuna flag unloading in Phuket were Taiwan province of China, Indonesia, Japan, India, Belize and Bolivia. The total catch were estimated 13,768.97 tonnes. The average percentage composition by weight of tuna group, billfish group and other species group which 76.45 %, 19.82 % and 3.73 %, respectively. (Figure 4) The major species caught were tuna group (yellowfin tuna, skipjack tuna, bigeye tuna,

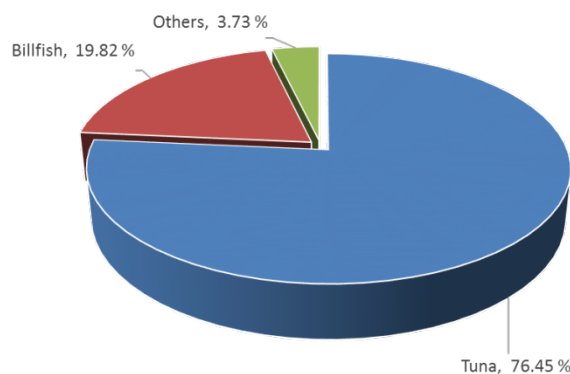


Figure 4 Catch composition of Foreign tuna fleets unloading in Phuket by weight in 2015

Bluefin tuna, albacore tuna) which 7,196.30, 1,620.80 , 1,557.90 , 79.00 , 72.40 tonnes and billfish group (blue marlin, swordfish, sailfish, black marlin, white marlin) caught were 1,267.65, 1,207.70 , 233.20 , 16.80 , 3.00 tonnes and other species group which 514.22 tonnes, respectively.

4. RECREATIONAL FISHERY [Mandatory]

Recreational fishery for tuna and tuna-like species is not a popular fishing game in Thailand, and they are only occasional and seasonal events in Andaman Sea.

5. ECOSYSTEM AND BYCATCH ISSUES [Mandatory]

Thailand has several measures to reduce the impact of fishing on marine ecology such as 1) prohibited trawler and push netter with engine operated within 3 kilometres from the shore line 2) mesh size regulation for purse seine to reduce a juvenile from the catches, 3) determination of closed area and season in particular fish species, and 4) enlarge the mesh size of code end of trawl net to be 5 cm.

5.1 Sharks [Mandatory]

Referring to the Thai Fisheries Statistics during 1995 to 2009, it was reported that sharks and rays were mainly caught by otter-board trawler and pair trawler where their fishing areas are located in the Thai’s EEZ. In addition, there is no record from the Thai tuna longliners and purse seiners on the shark by-catch from their fishing operation in the Indian Ocean. (only 2007 was recorded).

However, there are a numbers of national initiatives related to conservation and management of sharks. It includes: (i) development in 2012 and will be endorsement of the National Plan of Actions for Sharks in 2015; (ii) a series of study on shark by-catch using the national research vessels; (iii) development of handbook for sharks species identification and its database system for sharks and rays found in Thailand in 2012-2014; and (iv) participation of the staff concerned of Department of Fisheries to the meetings related to sharks/rays conservation and management. The total number of sharks retained during 2011-2015 follow table 4.

Table 4: Total number of sharks, by species, retained during 2011-2015

Year	Sharks species					
	BSH		MAK		Sharks unidentified	
	No.	Tonnes	No.	Tonnes	No.	Tonnes
2011					214	5.41
2012					544	18.53
2013					211	5.78
2014					1,145	49.98
2015	1,351	49.65	346	5.61	138	3.62
Total	1,351	49.65	346	5.61	2,252	83.32

Remark: BSH: *Prionace glauca* ;Blue shark, MAK: *Isurus spp*; Mako shark

5.2 Seabirds [Mandatory]

NONE

5.3 Marine Turtles [Mandatory]

Thailand is one of the countries that actively involved in the conservation programme of turtles long time ago.

Under Fisheries Act 1974, turtle and marine mammals are not allowed to be fished, disturbed or taken for whatever means without the permission of Fisheries authority. The turtles and marine mammals that are accidentally caught alive during fishing have to be release immediately.

5.4 Other ecologically related species (e.g. marine mammals, whale sharks) [Desirable]

No record available on the number of accidental caught marine animals and whale sharks by Thai fishing vessels. Under Fisheries Act 1974, Whale shark are not allowed to be fished, disturbed or taken for whatever means without the permission of Fisheries authority.

6. NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING SYSTEMS [Mandatory]

6.1 Logsheet data collection and verification

At present Thailand has implemented the new logbook in 2015 and have developed e-logbook in 2016. The implemented on Catch Certificate Exemption Statement since 1st January 2010 by apply Catch

Certificate and Fishing Logbook following Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing. Then, the system of estimate the total production of neritic tunas and seer fish will be gathering and improve on the percentage of coverage of logbook.

6.2 Vessel Monitoring System (including date commenced and status of implementation)

Thailand started and implemented the VMS system on all fishing vessels (> 30 gross ton) in 2015. For the distant longliner has already implemented the VMS system onboard in compliance with the fisheries management authorities.

6.3 Observer programme

The 1st batch of observers (20 of them) completed their training in December 2015 and the 2nd batch of candidate observers (30 of them) were trained to act as onboard fisheries observers in April 2016. The Department of Fisheries have been preparing operating manuals and report forms, and formulating necessary rules and regulations to ensure the effectiveness of the observer program. The process is being expedited so that the observers can begin working on board selected vessels operating in the High Seas or the Indian Ocean, tentatively in early 2016.

6.4 Port sampling programme

Neritic tuna were collected data by sampling method program. For local purse seine, has been collected data 2-3 days monthly in each fishing port. There are 2 steps in field trip data collection.

First is interview: Mostly fisheries officer has interviewed fishing master about fishing effort is total catch, day per trip, number of haul, fishing ground, depth, species composition, fish price, and problems in fishing. Sometime ask size of fishing gear, size of vessel or some techniques for fishing.

Second is sampling: the sampling size were not less than 30 kg/vessel, to identify species and measure total length fish size by punching paper in centimeter and also measure weight in gram.

Every month, data analysis has to be reported for fishing effort, percentage of species composition and length of fish. Mostly of purse seine has fishing ground in the Andaman Sea coast. DOF will use this database to monitor and analyze the status of marine.

Since 2015, Thailand has improved the data collection of marine fisheries by set up the Port in and Port out scheme.

- Check the number of fishing boat. The official check up the number of vessels follow the license. That is important data for management.

- "Port in – Port out" (PIPO) PIPO scheme has established since 1st May 2015, all fishing vessels over 30 gross ton. This system record information of each vessel including the types of equipment, types of caught fish, name of vessel, vessel registration, vessel license, fishery permit, and crew-members. Vessels are required to report these selected information to officer within 24 hours before going in and out from the port. However, every day has Port in-port out team check all document at the port.

- Logbook ; the fishing record information for catch composition and fishing ground daily.

- Marine catch Purchasing Document (MCPD); Boat owners will sell marine catch to middlemen who sell the fish to processing plants. The processing plant has been reported and submits catch certificate of Thailand, namely Simplified Catch Certificate of Thailand from DOF.

- Record fish unloaded; The DOF official record sale composition at the landing place. The official will random fishing vessels about 10%-20% of the total number of unloaded. This data will be cross checked with the data from logbook. The risk will be control this data don't exit over 10 % of logbook data.

6.5. Unloading/Transshipment

The cooperation program between Thai DOF and IOTC-OFCF was finished in December 2006. As the information of catches taken by foreign vessels operating in the Indian Ocean and landed at the fishing port in Thailand is so important not only for Thailand but also for IOTC. Nowadays, Thailand is still continuous collecting data from foreign longliner and purse seiner that landing catch at Phuket Province.

The activities involve collecting the number of landings, catch, vessel operating (no. of trip), weight samples, interviewing, biological samples and other activities such as collection of information of shark, other species, and study age of the fish by using otolith.

In case of fresh tuna longliner, the percentage of data coverage is less than 30 percent and followed all the protocol from the previous cooperation program.



7. NATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAMS [Desirable]

Table 5. Summary table of national research programs

Project title	Period	Countries involved	Budget total	Funding source	Objectives	Short description
Study on length frequency distribution of tuna caught by Thai tuna purse seiners in Indian Ocean				DOF Thailand	To study on the length frequency distribution for monitor the stock size of the catch as precautionary approach for sustainable tuna fisheries in Indian Ocean.	Relationships between length and fork-length of the catch will be studies. This aims to monitor the changes in size of the catch over
The observer onboard program	2015-present			DOF Thailand	The observer onboard program is a part of fisheries management plan. It has been launched to support the MCS and traceability systems. Data from observer is important because it is the correct and accurate information, to be used in the fisheries management which contains fishing information, quantity of captured and biology of economic fish.	The 1st batch of observers (20 of DOF officers) started observer onboard program in September 2015 and the 2nd batch of candidate observers (30 of them) started in April 2016. The 1st batch were introduced the Observer Scheme and the learned lesson and experience of implementation were shared by the key workshop conductors from the Philippines.
EU regulation to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing	Since 1st January 2010			DOF Thailand	Improve the Fishing Logbook, Marine Catch Purchasing (MCPD) and Marine Catch Transshipment Documents (MCTD) report system	DOF will emphasize its work on the suppression of illegal practices which is along the line of the International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IPOA-IUU). At present DOF of Thailand has the NPOA-IUU and will be submitted to cabinet in 2015.

8. IMPLEMENTATION OF SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE IOTC RELEVANT TO THE SC. [Mandatory]

At present Thailand have developed and implemented on Catch Certificate Exemption Statement since 1st January 2010 by apply Catch Certificate and Fishing Logbook. DOF has established two certification centers in Bangkok and Songkhla Province, and established the coordination center for certification marine capture by the Commission.



Thailand will be conducting the project “Neritic Tuna Resources in Thai Waters” during 2011 to 2013. The project will study on fisheries biology and stock assessment of neritic tuna in Thai waters. This project will fulfill constrain on up-to-date information and neritic tuna status in the Andaman Sea.

Thailand has implemented the recommendations adopted in the IOTC Scientific Committee including the following actions:

- Collecting scientific data and information of neritic tunas distributing in the Thai waters.
- Conducting research surveys in the Eastern Indian Ocean to collect scientific data and information of oceanic tunas distributing in the high seas.
- Monitoring fishing operation of Thai tuna fishing vessels operating in the high seas both purse seiners and longliners (include 3-month catch report and port sampling program).
- Collecting information of foreign tuna longline and purse seine vessels operating in the Indian Ocean and unloading their catch in fishing port in Thailand.
- Collecting information and reporting bigeye and swordfish statistical document and re-export

certificate.

Thailand has implemented the Port State Measured program at Phuket fishing port since 2013 to present, while the budget support from FAO.

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