

- Even **fuel consumption would decrease**, as it was evidenced that purse seiners were consuming more fuel when using FADs than when fishing on free schools.<sup>17</sup>

**We know how to do without drifting FADs; banning them does not equate with banning tuna fishing.**

Until recently, the French proudly displayed their ‘French know-how’ in targeting free schools — with larger, more mature individuals, and a much lower bycatch rate of sensitive species — rather than relying on drifting FADs. But since then, due to a nonsensical global tuna market, they abandoned this ‘know-how’ and became overly dependent on drifting FADs. For instance, according to its MSC certification report, the largest French tuna company, CFTO, caught 96.5% of its volumes around drifting FADs in 2021.<sup>18</sup> Mr. Adrien de Chomereau, CEO of French tuna company Sapmer, once said: *“As few FADs as possible is the path of virtue. But it is economic suicide”*.<sup>19</sup> **But what is “economic suicide” is the current model of European purse seiners:** in recent months, two of the three French companies targeting tropical tunas have filed for bankruptcy (Sapmer<sup>20</sup> and Via Océan/Saupiquet),<sup>21</sup> while CFTO (acquired by Dutch giant Parlevliet & van der Plas in 2016) has been bleeding money for years, with losses cumulating 30 million euros in 2020 and 2021 only.<sup>22</sup> **Yes, FAD fishing is an economic trap; a trap that the European industry has built itself and in which it fell on its own. Only the European Union can undo this trap and salvage the situation.**

**BLOOM hereby not only calls on Members of the IOTC to initiate a quick phase-out of drifting FADs in the Indian Ocean, but also calls on the European Union, in this international forum in which it claims to be a champion, to actually become one.** At home, the European Commission, which represents the European Union at the IOTC, should seriously reconsider its position, **propose a definitive ban on drifting FADs, and seek endorsement from co-legislators.** It should also immediately, along with France, **withdraw its objection to Resolution 23/02 to show good faith.**

In the short, medium, and long term, there are only benefits to yield for humankind and the biosphere, even for those who currently operate such drifting FADs or depend on them downstream.

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<sup>17</sup> Basurko *et al.* (2022) [Fuel consumption of free-swimming school versus FAD strategies in tropical tuna purse seine fishing.](#)

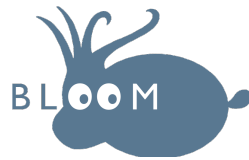
<sup>18</sup> MSC (2023) [CFTO Indian Ocean purse seine skipjack fishery — 1<sup>st</sup> surveillance audit report](#)

<sup>19</sup> Ortscheidt (2016) [La Sapmer à la croisée des chemins.](#)

<sup>20</sup> Grollier (2023) [En vente, l'armement Sapmer réduit la voile.](#)

<sup>21</sup> Jourdain (2024) [Cessation d'activité chez Via océan : mobilisation des marins et sédentaires à Concarneau.](#)

<sup>22</sup> See their net results, available at: <https://www.pappers.fr/entreprise/compagnie-francaise-du-thon-oceanique-376580585>.



## ADDITIONAL DETAILS

BLOOM is a non-profit organization founded in 2005 that works to preserve the marine environment and species from unnecessary destruction, and to increase social benefits in the fishing sector. BLOOM wages awareness and advocacy campaigns to accelerate the adoption of concrete solutions for the ocean, humans, and the climate. BLOOM carries out scientific research projects, independent studies and evaluations that highlight crucial and unaddressed issues such as the financing mechanisms of the fishing sector. BLOOM's actions are meant for the general public as well as policymakers and economic stakeholders.

As part of our research and advocacy campaigns, we have a keen interest in tropical tuna fisheries, especially those that occur within the IOTC area of competence.<sup>23</sup> Since November 2022, we have published a series of reports covering a case of illegal secondment between the French administration and the European tuna lobby,<sup>24</sup> the dynamics in IOTC delegations,<sup>25</sup> the lack of enforcement of EU rules by European fleets,<sup>26</sup> the role that the EU has in the continuous overexploitation of tuna populations in the Indian Ocean,<sup>27</sup> the out-of-control 'technological creep' of the FADs used by the European fleets,<sup>28</sup> the violations of human rights that occurred worldwide in tuna fisheries,<sup>29</sup> the role of the MSC label in certifying destructive fisheries,<sup>30</sup> the role of European retailers in the current state of play,<sup>31</sup> a comparative analysis of the socio-economic and ecological footprint of European industrial fishing and Maldivian coastal fishing for tropical tuna,<sup>32</sup> and the complexity and opacity of the tuna trade, focusing on the Seychelles.<sup>33</sup>

Below, we provide additional details that support our statement above.

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<sup>23</sup> We have a dedicated newsletter covering our work in Africa and in the Indian Ocean, in French (<https://bloomassociation.org/nos-campagnes/peche-en-afrique/newsletter-afrique/>) and English (<https://bloomassociation.org/nos-campagnes/peche-en-afrique/african-fisheries-newsletter/>).

<sup>24</sup> BLOOM (2022) [The wild west of tuna fisheries in Africa — The sheer power of an outlawed industrial sector. The guilt of a complicit administration.](#)

<sup>25</sup> BLOOM (2023) [Powerful, neo-colonial, pervasive... The EU under the rule of tuna lobbies.](#)

<sup>26</sup> BLOOM (2023) [Eyes wide shut — Statistics finally made available show that the French State does not monitor its distant water fleets in Africa.](#)

<sup>27</sup> BLOOM (2023) [Lining up the ducks — Industrial tuna fishing lobbies line up their political allies to defend their destructive practices in Africa.](#)

<sup>28</sup> BLOOM (2023) [Tuna war games — The story of a fatal technological race against tuna and marine life.](#)

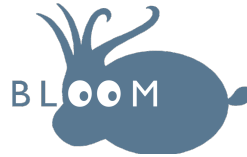
<sup>29</sup> BLOOM (2023) [Canned brutality — Human rights abuses in the tuna industry.](#)

<sup>30</sup> BLOOM (2023) [The death label — The MSC's fake sustainability but true destruction of tuna populations.](#)

<sup>31</sup> BLOOM (2023) [Willful ignorance — How European retailers turn a blind eye to the social-ecological destructiveness of tuna fisheries.](#)

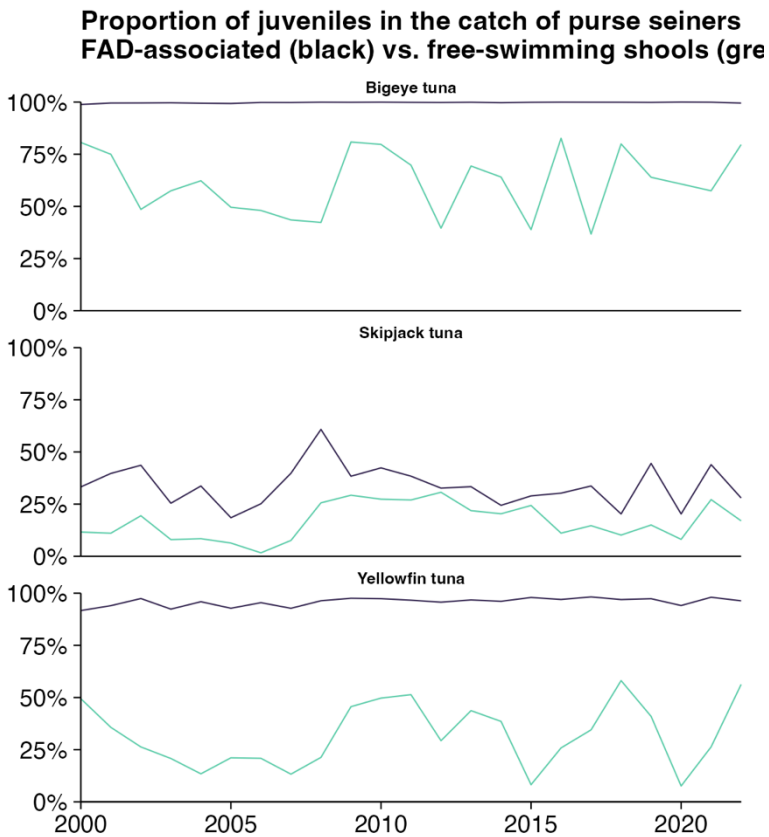
<sup>32</sup> BLOOM (2024) [From heaven to hell — A comparative analysis of the socio-economic and ecological footprint between the European industrial fishing and Maldivian coastal fishing for tropical tuna.](#)

<sup>33</sup> BLOOM (2024) [The tuna's black box — Knowns, unknowns and discrepancies in the tuna trade.](#)



## Juvenile catch

According to the IOTC 'size-frequency' data,<sup>34</sup> the proportion of juvenile individuals in the FAD-association catch of purse seiners vs. free-swimming shoals is as follows: 99.7% vs. 61.4% for bigeye tuna, 95.9% vs. 32.1% for yellowfin tuna, and 33.9% vs. 16.7% for skipjack tuna.



Source: IOTC 'size-frequency' data

Figure 1. Proportion of juveniles in the catch of purse seiners, 2000-2022.

<sup>34</sup> [IOTC data](#), version of 2 April 2024.





## Ownership of purse seiners registered in coastal countries of the Indian Ocean (2020-2022)

Table 1. Ownership of purse seiners registered in the Seychelles and Mauritius in 2020-2022.

Country	Vessel name	IMO number <sup>a</sup>	MMSI number <sup>a</sup>	Owner	Owner's country	Union <sup>b</sup>	Comment
Mauritius	ALBACAN	8906468	645683000	Albacora	Spain	OPAGAC	
	BELLE ISLE	9679634	645374000	Sapmer	France	Orthongel	Ware recently sold to operate in the Pacific Ocean
	BELLE RIVE	9679622	645373000	Sapmer	France	Orthongel	
	BELOUVE	9653848	645524000	Sapmer	France	Orthongel	
Seychelles	ARTZA	9202144	664271000	Atunsa	Spain	ANABAC	
	DRACO	9335226	664348000	Albacora	Spain	OPAGAC	
	EUSKADI ALAI	9733480	664578000	Echebostar	Spain	ANABAC	
	GALERNA II	9663154	664576000	Albacora	Spain	OPAGAC	
	GALERNA III	9663166	664584000	Albacora	Spain	OPAGAC	
	INTERTUNA TRES	9202704	664223000	Albacora	Spain	OPAGAC	
	IZARO	9684500	664563000	Echebostar	Spain	ANABAC	
	JAI ALAI	9733478	664579000	Echebostar	Spain	ANABAC	
	MORN SESELWA	9719800	312360000	Sapmer	France	Orthongel	Currently PLAYA DE LAGA, owned by Pevasa
	MORNE BLANC	9719812	312257000	Sapmer	France	Orthongel	Currently PLAYA DE LAIDA, owned by Pevasa
	PLAYA DE ANZORAS	9176917	664572000	Pevasa	Spain	ANABAC	
	TXORI AUNDI	8208531	664268000	Inpesca (29% owned by Albacora)	Spain	OPAGAC	
TXORI TOKI	9196682	664326000	Inpesca (29% owned by Albacora)	Spain	OPAGAC		

<sup>a</sup>Source: Marine Traffic.

<sup>b</sup>Source: ORBIS.