NATIONAL REPORT ON TAIWANESE LONGLINE FISHERIES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN IN 1994

Hong-Yen Huang

Department of Fisheries
Council of Agriculture
Republic of China

ABSTRACT

In 1994, a total of 250 Taiwanese deep longliners and 58 conventional longliners fished in the Indian Ocean. The size composition, in terms of Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT), of the deep longline fleet was (1) about 50% greater than 700 GRT, (2) about 45% between 300 and 400 GRT; and (3) the remaining 5% less than 300 GRT. All the conventional longliners were in the 200-400 GRT size class. Total Taiwanese catches of tunas in the Indian Ocean in 1994 were about 79,936 t (yellowfin 34,270 t, bigeye 23,990 t, albacore 14,410 t, also swordfish 3,700 t), which is 58,678 t less than the previous year (138,614 t).

In 1993, the tuna catch statistics compiled from recovered log books were checked and raised to the level of landings of bigeye and yellowfin by Taiwanese vessels recorded at Japanese fishing ports. This will then provide an basis for the determination of the appropriate raising factor. In 1995 a research team has been organized to tackle the improvement of recovery of catch and effort data from the logbooks of vessels fishing in the Indian Ocean.

A revised catch data compilation algorithm was implemented in 1993 to adjust the Taiwanese catches compiled from recovered logbooks to the landing records provided by Japanese fishing ports. Details of the amounts of tunas (bigeye, yellowfin, and southern bluefin in particular) landed by Taiwanese vessels at Japanese ports are thus easily cross-referenced for the above-mentioned data compilation.

STATUS OF THE TAIWANESE LONGLINE FISHERIES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN IN 1993-1994

Taiwanese distant-water longliners of over 100 GRT form one of the largest fleets fishing for tunas in the Pacific, Indian, and Atlantic Oceans. For this reason, the fisheries research and managerial (administrative) sectors of Taiwan (Republic of China) have been devoting as much effort as possible to collecting fisheries data and studying the status of the tuna stocks, accepting the responsibilities as a major fishing nation of the world, even in the peculiar circumstance that the major international tuna fisheries management organizations have still not given Taiwan an appropriate membership.

The Taiwanese longline fleet fishing in the Indian Ocean consisted of 249 deep longliners and 84 conventional longliners in 1993; and 250 deep longliners and 58 conventional in 1994. Unfortunately, however, the exact annual number of annual total fishing days spent in the Indian Ocean by Taiwanese the fleet is not yet available, due to limitations of the current data collection and compilation system. This difficulty will soon be solved because the fisheries management sector of Taiwan is currently undergoing a structural reorganization for improving logbook recovery and validation, leading to a better understanding of fisheries activities.

Annual catches by Taiwanese longliners fishing in the Indian Ocean were about 138,614 t (yellowfin 84,248 t, bigeye 34,212 t, albacore 11,889 t, swordfish 3,459 t) in 1993; and about 79,936 t (yellowfin 34,270 t, bigeye 23,990 t, albacore 14,410 t, swordfish 3,700 t) in 1994.

FISHERIES RESEARCH ACTIVITIES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

In 1993, the tuna catch statistics compiled from recovered log books were checked and raised to the level of landings of bigeye and yellowfin by Taiwanese vessels recorded at Japanese fishing ports. This will then provide an basis for the determination of the appropriate raising factor. In 1995 a research team has been organized to tackle the improvement of recovery of catch and effort data from the logbooks of vessels fishing in the Indian Ocean. A revised catch data compilation algorithm was implemented in 1993 to adjust the Taiwanese catches compiled from recovered logbooks to the landing records provided by Japanese fishing ports. Details of the amounts of tunas (bigeye, yellowfin, and southern bluefin in particular) landed by Taiwanese vessels at Japanese ports are thus

easily cross-referenced for the above-mentioned data compilation.

The following research activities have been carried out for the assessment of the fisheries resources in the Indian Ocean:

(1) A fisheries interaction study related to the Indian Ocean.

(2) A stock identification study on Indian Ocean albacore resource.

(3) An assessment of Indian Ocean albacore and bigeye stocks.

In addition to these ongoing fisheries research activities, which are primarily carried out by the fisheries scientists of the National Taiwan University, it is expected that a research team will be organized for the Indian Ocean in 1995 to further strengthen not only the ongoing studies but to extend efforts to other fisheries resources stock assessment studies as well.