

SPC ACTIVITIES



*Alitia Cirikiyasawa (left) and Hilda Lobendahn (right)
from the Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry, Fiji.*

countries can identify them. The auditing topic evolved into a broader overview of how databases can be used to reconcile different data types and to identify data gaps. It included a presentation on the use of vessel monitoring system data to check the coverage of logsheet data submissions.

Invitations to the workshops are sent to all SPC member countries, as well as the Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam, which also provide data and annual catch estimates to WCPFC. To further convey the ideas shared at the TDW, the information feeds into national tuna data workshops, and previous and current workshop material is made available on SPC's website at <http://www.spc.int/oceanfish/en/meetingsworkshops/tdw>

was first introduced in earlier workshops. To give participants practical experience in a self-auditing, an enjoyable practical session was offered during the 2010 workshop. Participants were asked to “audit SPC’s port sampling programme”. There were a few smiles when SPC’s Observer and Port Sampling Supervisor (Peter Sharples) threw in a few deliberate mistakes to see if participants could spot them. The theme of auditing continued at the 2011 TDW with a presentation on typical problems encountered in logsheet reporting and how

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Biological sampling workshop in Pohnpei

The first observer trainer training in the Pacific region was held in April in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). Nine participants from fishery departments in FSM, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands were trained in using biological sampling techniques and their related data recovery. Caroline Sanchez and Malo Hosken from SPC’s Oceanic Fisheries Programme delivered the courses and workshops. The objective was to teach and train participants in understanding the role of biological sampling and the importance of correct data collection for scientific studies and research.

The training included various seminar presentations and practical workshops, which were held at the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission. Participants learned about the various types of biological information and samples that could be collected and their use in scientific assessments, as well as the importance of quality tag recovery data. The practical workshops demanded participants to demonstrate adequate skills for identifying and collecting suitable biological samples such as stomachs, gonads, and livers. The more challenging part of the training for participants was mastering different otolith¹ extraction techniques. Depending on whether the fish needs to be in high quality condition, or whole for market purposes, different techniques can be used to extract otoliths, using various tools such as drills, cutters or saws. Otolith analysis (generally, incremental counts)



*Trainees Elton Clodumar, Ramon Kyle Aliven and Benaia Bauro
preparing tagged skipjacks for biological sampling.*

¹ Otoliths are small bones in the cavities of a fish’s head; they are sensitive to gravity and linear acceleration

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produces information on the age of the fish, which is of great importance for fisheries management.

Luen Thai Company, based in Pohnpei, supported the workshop by providing tuna heads as well as a facility to work in for the workshop's practical sessions. During the course of the workshop, around 160 heads were drilled, cut and meticulously inspected for otolith extraction. As the week passed, the observer trainers and other participants showed growing interest in marine biology topics and acquired enough skills to confidently deliver the same type of training to future observers.

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