

# **Federated States of Micronesia**

## **National Tuna Fishery Report**

### **SCTB10**

#### **Introduction**

The 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) covers almost 1,000,000 square kilometres of ocean. It is one of the largest EEZs in the central and western Pacific Ocean and contains rich fisheries resources. Revenues derived from the issuing of licences to foreign distant water fleets resources are the largest domestic product of the FSM and hence the management of these resources is a foremost priority in the FSM.

The figures for 1996 in this report are preliminary as the 1996 CES database is not complete. The catches represented in this report are probably about 2/3-3/4 of the true figures.

#### **Total Catch**

The preliminary total catch figure for the 1996 calendar year is 106,604 mt. This probably represents about 2/3 of the 'real' figure. The total catch for all gear types in the FSM reached a peak in 1995 of 253,585 mt. The 1995 peak was due to an increase in catches by all gear types particularly the pole and line fishery and the purse seine fishery. The main increase in the purse seine fishery was due to a large increase in the effort and hence catch of the US flagged vessels. In 1996 the US vessels tended to fish to the south east of FSM, outside the EEZ. This and the failure of the Korean and Taiwanese purse seine fleets to come to an agreement for most of 1996 caused a significant decline in the total purse seine catch.

The longline catch was also less due to a reduced number of boats in all the major fleets.

The 1995 figure was above the harvest target recommended by John Sibert in 1995.

Year	Purse Seine	Longline	Pole & Line	Total Catch
1992	125,520	12,645	3,110	143,267
1993	157,514	14,842	6,549	180,898
1994	188,377	15,674	6,041	212,086
1995	212,707	20,902	17,981	253,585
1996	82,092	7,479	15,078	106,645

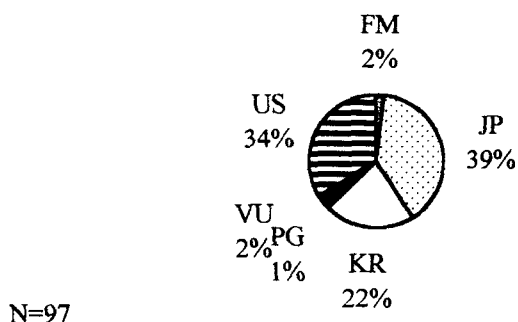
## Fleet Structure

The fleets of all gear types had a reduced number of vessels fishing in the FSM EEZ. As stated above the purse seine fishery was affected by the US flagged vessels tending to fish to the south east of the FSM and the failure of the Korean and Taiwanese fleets to reach an agreement with the FSM to fish. This reduced the number of vessels in the combined purse seine fleet by approximately 1/3 for the year.

The longline fleet was also reduced in the major flagged fleets. The total number of vessels in 1996 was approximately 3/4 of that of 1995. This was largely affected by the departure of the Ting Hong company of Chinese and Taiwanese longliners from the FSM.

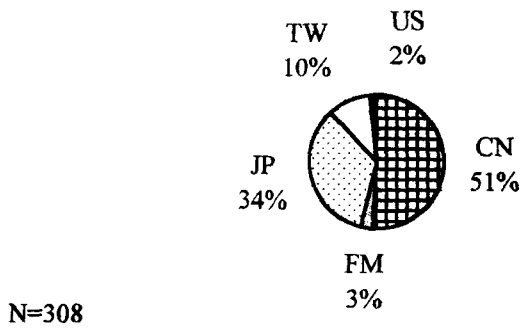
In 1995 the purse seine fleet was mainly composed of US and Taiwanese flagged vessels, in 1996 the Japanese flagged vessels predominated.

1996 Purse Seine Fleet Composition



The proportional composition of the longline fleet by flag was essentially similar in 1995 and 1996, but with fewer vessels overall in 1996.

1996 Longline Fleet Composition

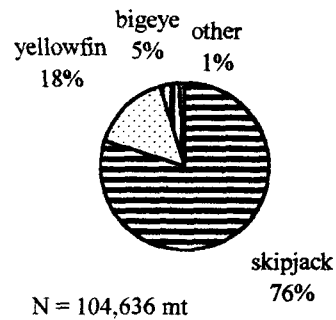


All 16 vessels of the pole and line fleet were Japanese.

### Catch by Species by Gear

Skipjack comprised a slightly larger proportion of the combined catch by species in 1996 compared to 1995 (up 5%). However these data are preliminary

1996 Total Catch in FSM



***Purse Seine Catch by Species by Flag***

Japanese vessels caught over 80% of the 1996 purse seine caught tuna in the FSM. This contrasts with the 1995 figures where Japanese vessels caught about 1/2 of the purse seine tuna catch.

Flag	Days	Skipjack		Yellowfin		Other		Total	
		mt	CPUE	mt	CPUE	mt	CPUE	mt	CPUE
JP	2,676	57,182	21.4	10,879	4.1	196	0.1	68,270	25.5
US	510	5,675	11.1	1,280	2.5	14		6,968	13.7
KR	244	3,580	14.7	190	0.8			3,770	15.5
FM	194	2,205	11.4	229	1.2			2,434	12.5
VU	54	310	5.7	65	1.2			375	6.9
PG	13	115	8.8	160	12.3			275	21.2
	3,691	69,067	12.2	12,803	3.7	210		82,092	15.9

***Longline Catch by Species by Flag***

The Japanese invested approximately 1/2 of the total effort (no. of hooks) in the 1996 longline fishery in the FSM and caught over half of the target tuna.

Yellowfin tuna comprised 54% of the target tuna caught by the long line fishery in 1996. This is similar to that of 1995 (55%).

Flag	100s of hooks	Yellowfin		Bigeye		Other	Total	
		mt	CPUE	mt	CPUE	mt	mt	CPUE
JP	120,267	2,247	0.5	2,011	0.7	334	4,592	1.3
CN	93,863	1,155	0.3	783	0.3	260	2,197	0.7
TW	15,723	166	0.3	202	0.4	91	459	0.9
US	4,197	48	0.3	76	0.8	5	129	1.1
FM	2,477	27	0.3	59	1.1	17	103	1.6
	236,527	3,643	0.3	3,131	0.7	707	7,480	1.1

***Pole and Line Catch by Species by Flag***

Skipjack comprised 97% of the fish caught by the pole and line fishery.

Flag	Days	Skipjack		Yellowfin		Other	Total	
		mt	CPUE	mt	CPUE	mt	mt	CPUE
JP	1,071	14,603	12.7	128	0.1	347	15,078	14.1

**Final Market Destination/Disposal of Catches**

The following data should also be regarded as preliminary until the Transshipment and Port Sampling data are verified.

***Purse Seine Transshipments at FSM Ports (mt)***

Chuuk Harbour was the only FSM port utilised for purse seine transshipments in 1996. Only 55 transshipments were done, which is only 15% the number that occurred in 1995. This is mainly due to the absence of the Taiwanese and Korean fleets during the year which had previously utilised Chuuk as a transshipment port in the region. Resultantly, only about 18% of the volume of tuna was transhipped.

(mt)	KR	TW	AU	PG	Totals
Transshipments	43	6	2	4	55
Skipjack	20,183	3,326	384	2,074	25,967
Yellowfin	1,777	339	96	216	2,428
Total Trans.	21,960	3,665	480	2,290	28,395

### ***Longline Transshipments at FSM Ports (mt)***

The number of longline transshipments in FSM ports in 1996 was only 58% of that of 1995 (4,125), with a proportional decrease in volume (1995 = 8,863mt)

<b>Port</b>	<b>No. of Trans.</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>YFT (mt)</b>	<b>BET (mt)</b>	<b>BIL (mt)</b>	<b>OTH (mt)</b>	<b>Total (mt)</b>
Pohnpei	1,539	Trans.	936	92	58	0.4	2,460
		Reject	183	73	3.5	0	260
Yap	417	Trans.	185	467	17	1.3	670
		Reject	37	15	55	38	145
Chuuk	226	Trans.	201	278	12	0.1	497
		Reject	42	13	41	1.2	97
Kosrae	223	Trans.	104	92	0.2	0	196
		Reject	14	4.4	21	11	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,405</b>		<b>1,702</b>	<b>1,034</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>4,375</b>

## **Onshore Developments**

Development of a drydock appears to be underway in Kosrae Harbour. This is despite the low number of vessels using the harbour in the past year.

The Kosraean State Government decided to purchase its fossil fuels through Shell instead of Mobil as it could be sold at a cheaper price. Part of the envisaged benefit was to attract longliners to bunker (and hence tranship) in Kosrae. As a reaction to this Continental Micronesia stopped flying through Kosrae, which limited their transhipment facility.

Yap will expand its dock space in Colonia Harbour, this is being funded by a Japanese fisheries grant.

The Pohnpei based Chinese longline company Micronesian Fishing Venture Inc. will be bringing in an additional 66 Chinese flagged longliners.

The Polar company is also planning to bring in an additional 75 longliners. Their foreign investment permit is currently in Congress for approval.

## **Future Prospects and Developments**

A proposal by the Guam based Japanese company YTK to develop the Pohnpei Harbour and airport facilities has been disapproved by the foreign investment board. The proposal was to expand the port area and include a market area for local auctioning of the export tuna and supporting infrastructure. The airport was to be expanded to be able to land large jets (747 etc.). Part of the proposal was to include the bringing in of between 450-600 Japanese longliners. The proposal suffered negative public opinion after a 'soil turning ceremony' as an expression of good-will between the parties was done prior to approval by the foreign investment board.

Green Globe are proposing a joint venture with The National Fisheries Corporation (FSM) to bring in another 15 longliners.