Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

gef

ABNJ

COMMON OCEANS

Tuna Project

a partnership for sustainability

Indonesian liftnet vessel
in the Indian Ocean

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Improving management

Agreed decision frameworks are important components of sustainable management of tuna fisheries, according to the guidelines provided in the UN Fish Stocks Agreement and in the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

Towards implementation of the precautionary approach

The Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project is supporting the full implementation of the precautionary approach in each of the tuna RFMOs. This requires the adoption of harvest strategies for all major tuna stocks, following an evaluation of their likely performance under a wide range of situations.

The Project is facilitating this process by supporting capacity building workshops and collaboration between scientists and managers to advance the development of science-based harvest strategies.

Operationalizing the ecosystem approach to fisheries management

The Project is also promoting and supporting the preparation of long-term plans for operationalizing the ecosystem approach to fisheries management in the tuna RFMOs.

Combatting illegal fishing

Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing remains a serious threat to sustainable fisheries, marine ecosystems, and the livelihoods of legitimate fishers.

Improving capacities in developing countries

The Project is establishing, for the first time in the world, a certification-based training program that offers a new career path for enforcement and compliance officers.

Best Practices in Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) and mechanisms for exchange of experiences and information related to MCS operations will allow developing States to better comply with existing regulations and to combat IUU fishing.

Developing new MCS tools

The Project is developing new tools such as legal templates for implementation of Port State Measures, design options of Catch Documentation Schemes, and the automatic update of the Consolidated List of Authorized Vessels, (CLAV) from the t-RFMOs' databases. Pilot activities in Ghana and Fiji are used to evaluate the best way to integrate Electronic Monitoring Systems as a new MCS tool for developing States.

Workers preparing frozen tuna at Tsukiji Market in Tokyo, Japan.

Black-browed albatross (*Thalassarche melanophris*) attacking a hook baited with squid

© Fabiano Peppes

Blue shark (*Prionace glauca*)

© Terry Goss Photography USA Marine Photobank

Protecting biodiversity

Bycatch in tuna fisheries can severely impact seabird, sea turtles, marine mammal and shark populations, yet our ability of understand and mitigate these impacts is poor due to data gaps.

Improving shark data and management in the Pacific Ocean

The Project is supporting a number of initiatives to improve data on shark catches and develop new techniques to assess population status, leading to better management across the Pacific.

Mitigating bycatch and filling data gaps

The Project is assisting in the evaluation and dissemination of mitigation techniques to reduce bycatch of seabirds, sharks and small tunas.

The Project supports the further development of a global Bycatch Management and Information System and workshops for joint analysis of sea turtle mitigation effectiveness.

Gillnet fisheries in the northern Indian Ocean have a large impact on the ecosystem. The Project is working to better estimate the extent of the impact and work with fishing communities to adopt alternative gears.

The areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ)

are those areas of ocean for which no one nation has the specific or sole responsibility for management. These vast expanses of ocean are home to several species of tuna—a key food source in need of effective management.

The five-year Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) as the implementing agency. This Project harnesses the efforts of a large and diverse array of partners, including the five tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), governments, inter-governmental organizations, non-governmental organisations and private sector.

The Project aims to achieve responsible, efficient and sustainable tuna production and biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ focusing on three thematic areas.

Further information:
Alejandro Anganuzzi, Global Project Coordinator
alejandro.anganuzzi@fao.org
Website: www.fao.org/in-action/commonoceans
Twitter: @FAOfish #CommonOceans

Yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*) in
the Indian Ocean

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