

Sri Lanka tuna and swordfish - longline

Overview

FIP Description

History: In April 2017, a new fishery improvement project (FIP) for Sri Lanka's longline fishery was launched at the Seafood Expo Global in Brussels (Belgium) by the President of the Seafood Exporters' Association of Sri Lanka (SEASL) Prabhash Subasinghe. In May the SEASL signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Minister of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development, the Honourable Mahinda Amaraweera MP, to improve the biological and ecological status of Sri Lanka's longline fishery. The MoU also commits the parties to implement fishery-specific management measures that will maintain the status of the fishery at a level consistent with a sustainably managed fishery. In July pelagikos pvt ltd was appointed to administer and manage, design, plan, monitor and evaluate the new FIP. The progress made by the FIP to improve the Sri Lankan longline fishery since July, is presented in this the first FIP bulletin.

In July, the SEASL commissioned a Gap Analysis to establish the scope of the new longline fishery improvement project and to internally assess with members of the new FIP, the status of the fishery / fisheries against the Marine Stewardship Council's (MSC) Fishery Standard. The Gap Analysis Final Report was submitted to the SEASL by pelagikos pvt ltd at the end of April 2018. In November 2017 the SEASL commissioned a pre assessment of the longline fishery against by the MSC Fishery Standard by a Certified Assessment Body (CAB). The CAB pre assessment report was submitted to the SEASL in March 2018. The CAB pre assessment was co-financed by the SEASL and New England Seafood International Pvt Ltd.

Context: The new FIP is a collaboration between Sri Lanka's leading seafood manufacturers, the government's regulatory and export authorities, boat owners' associations, skippers and their crew. Representatives of these associations, agencies and authorities comprise the decision making 'members' of the new Sri Lankan longline FIP. The first Steering Committee was convened by the Secretary to the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development (MFARD) at the end of July 2017. 'Focal points' were appointed by each member of the new FIP. The scope of the new FIP was discussed and agreed in the second Steering Committee meeting held in October 2017. In this meeting, the immediate opportunities (including certification) and challenges that need to be overcome to further improve Sri Lanka's longline fishery were presented and discussed.

Scope: In 2016, Sri Lankan vessels harvested 77,029.24 metric tonnes of tuna (86%) and billfish (14%) from Sri Lanka's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and international waters, using gillnets, longlines, ring nets, handlines and trolling lines according to the National Aquatic Resources, Research and Development Agency (NARA). Key

species included skipjack, yellowfin, bigeye and albacore tuna, together with indo-pacific sailfish, swordfish and black, blue and striped marlin. The scope of the new FIP was determined based on the consideration of the following three factors:

- (1) The export demand for fresh and frozen tuna and billfish products.
- (2) The types of vessels and gears supplying tuna and billfish for export.
- (3) The current and short-term status of key export species.

Sri Lanka's fresh and frozen seafood export industry is driven by demand for yellowfin tuna products. Demand for bigeye, indo-pacific sailfish, swordfish and marlin products is also important to the industry. Artisanal (<15m) and semi-industrial (<24 m) multiday fishing boats, deploying short (500 ? 1,500 hooks) longlines are the main source of tuna and billfish for Sri Lankan exporters. 498 longline multiday boats were registered to fish within and beyond Sri Lanka's EEZ in 2017. 80% of these vessels were registered under the District Fisheries Offices in Chilaw (Thodduwawa and Wennappuwa) and Negombo. A further 300 or so longline multiday boats were registered for the EEZ only. IOTC stock assessments indicate that bigeye tuna and swordfish stocks are currently fished at a level consistent with a sustainably managed fishery (Green). The yellowfin tuna stock is judged to be overfished and subject to overfishing (Red). However, interim reference points and harvest control rules are in place to ensure that the stock recovers within the next three years. Sailfish and blue marlin stocks are overfished or subject to overfishing (Orange). Black and striped marlin stocks are judged to be overfished and subject to overfishing (Red). The absence of reference points for these species means it is unlikely stocks will recover within the next three years. Based on the new Sri Lankan Longline FIP's internal assessment, members of the FIP agreed the scope of the new Sri Lanka FIP to be

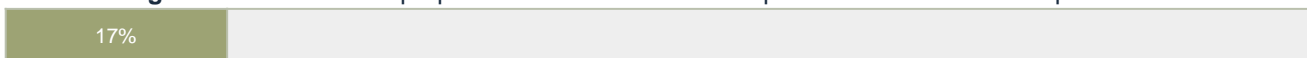
Geographic	<i>Sri Lanka's Exclusive Economic Zone & International Waters in the Indian Ocean</i>
Vessel Type	<i>Sri Lankan multiday fishing boats registered to fish in the EEZ or High Seas</i>
Gear Type	<i>Short longline (500 ? 1,500 hooks)</i>
Target Species	<i>Yellowfin Tuna, Bigeye Tuna, Swordfish</i>

How is this FIP Doing?

Current Status:



Actions Progress This shows the proportion of actions in the workplan that the FIP has completed.



Actions Overview This shows the proportion of actions that are behind schedule, on track, completed, or not yet started.

Behind	On Track	Complete	Future
33%	50%	17%	0%

Red Indicator Progress This shows the proportion of actions specifically addressing red indicators that are behind schedule, on track, completed, or not yet started. This helps users understand the progress the FIP is making on the biggest challenges in the fishery.

Behind	On Track	Complete	Future
50%	50%	0%	0%

FIP Progress Rating

C - Some Recent Progress

FIP Objective(s)

The overall goal of the Sri Lankan longline fishery improvement project (SLL FIP) is for the longline fishery to continue indefinitely at a level that maintains the ecological health and abundance of Indian Ocean yellowfin, bigeye and swordfish stocks and the diversity, structure and function of the Indian Ocean ecosystem which it depends as well by minimising the adverse effects that the longline fishery causes, by means of management systems implemented in a responsible manner, in conformity with local, national and international laws and regulations, which maintains the present and future economic and social options and benefits arising from the fishery, in a socially responsible and economically fair manner, by 2021

The FIP's Intermediate Objectives are threefold:

(1) The Sri Lankan longline fishery is conducted in a manner that does not lead to over-fishing or depletion of the exploited Indian Ocean yellowfin, bigeye and swordfish stocks and, for those stocks that are depleted; the fishery is be conducted in a manner that demonstrably leads to their recovery, by 2019.

(2) Sri Lankan longline fishing operations allow for the maintenance of the structure, productivity, function and diversity of the ecosystem (including habitat and associated dependent and ecologically related species) on which the fishery depends, by 2019

(3) The Sri Lankan longline fishery is subject to a effective management systems that respects local, national and international laws and standards and incorporates institutional and operational frameworks that require use of the resource to be sustainable, socially responsible and economically equitable.

FIP Type

Comprehensive

FIP Stage

Stage 4: Improvements in Fishing Practices or Fishery Management

Start and Projected End Dates

April, 2018 -

March, 2021

Species

Common Name

Yellowfin Tuna

Scientific Name

Thunnus albacares

Common Name

Bigeye Tuna

Scientific Name

Thunnus obesus

Common Name

Swordfish

Scientific Name

Xiphias gladius

Gear Type

[Longline](#)

Location

FAO Major Fishing Area

[Area 51 \(Indian Ocean, Western\)](#)

[Area 57 \(Indian Ocean, Eastern\)](#)

Exclusive Economic Zones

Country

Sri Lanka

Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMO)

IOTC

FIP Volume

77029 metric tons

FIP Leads

Organization Name

pelagikos private limited

Organization Type

Consultant

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