

# Eastern Atlantic Ocean tuna – purse seine (Ghanaian fleet) FIP

## ETP species interaction analysis

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## Introduction

The Eastern Atlantic Ocean purse seine tuna FIP was initiated in 2018 with a combination of Ghanaian and French-flagged vessels. The fishery targets yellowfin, skipjack, and bigeye tuna and operates in the high seas of the eastern Atlantic Ocean, and within the following EEZs: Ghana, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, and Cote d’Ivoire.

The FIP implemented an ETP management strategy in the purse seine fishery, which outlines a list of mitigation techniques used by the fishery to reduce the interaction rate with non-target (and specifically ETP) species. Measures are in place for sharks and rays, turtles, cetaceans, and seabirds. Additionally, the Ghana Tuna Association (GTA) has a published Fins Naturally Attached policy.

In September 2023, the FIP received comprehensive observer data from the Ghana Fisheries Commission (GFC) from the trips made by the purse seine vessels within the FIP. This data includes both target, non-target and ETP species and FAD operations. The received observer data has been collated and the catch composition has been analysed.

This report has been written to verify the low impact of the fishery on ETP species and that best practice release measures are being adhered to onboard the Ghanaian purse seine vessels.

## Results

Analysis has been conducted to assess and demonstrate the low impact of the fishery on ETP species and the survival rate of ETP species the fishery interacts with.

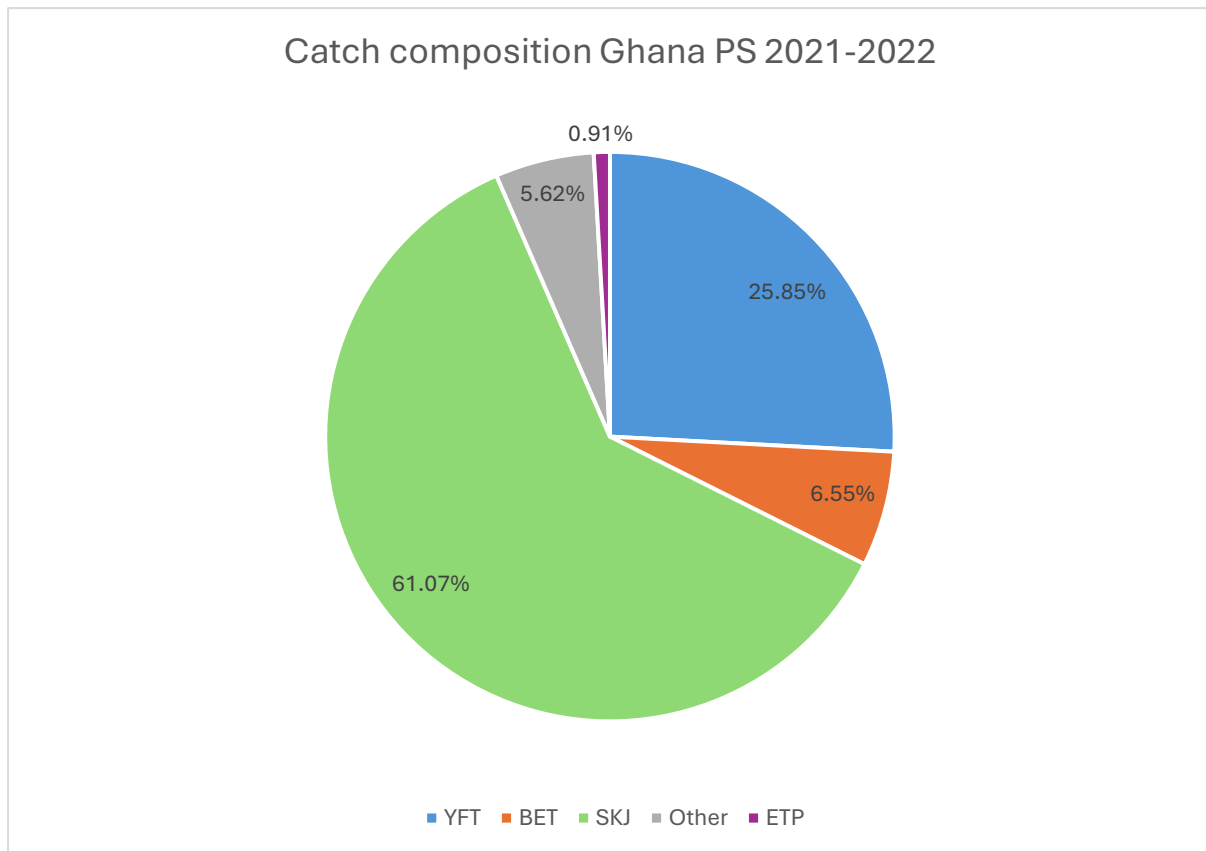


Figure 1: Catch composition of the Ghana purse seine FIP from 2021 – 2022.

As displayed in Figure 1, of the total catch recorded of target, primary, secondary and ETP species, it was observed that ETP species interactions are very low within the Ghanaian purse seine fishery and account for 0.91% of the total catch from 2021 to 2022.

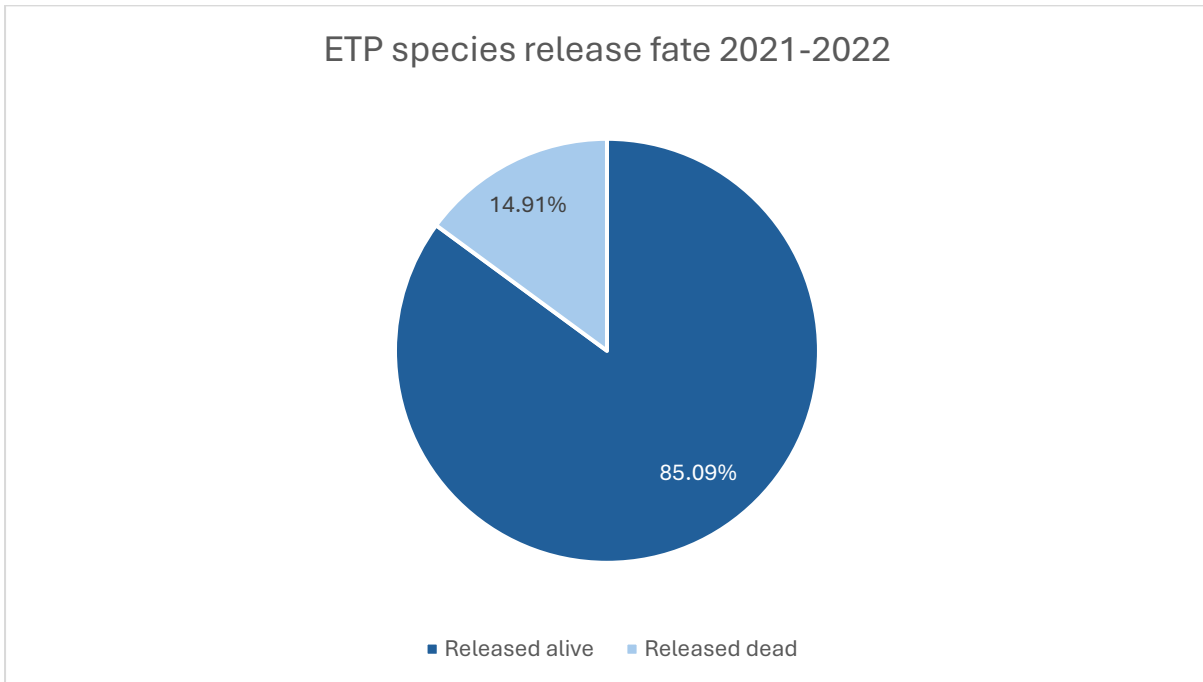


Figure 2: Release fate of ETP species from 2021 – 2022 in the Ghana purse seine FIP.

Of the total ETP species encountered by the fishery, 85% were released alive with only 15% of ETP individuals released dead. This further demonstrates that the mitigation and release practices outlined in the GTA ETP management strategy are being adhered to.

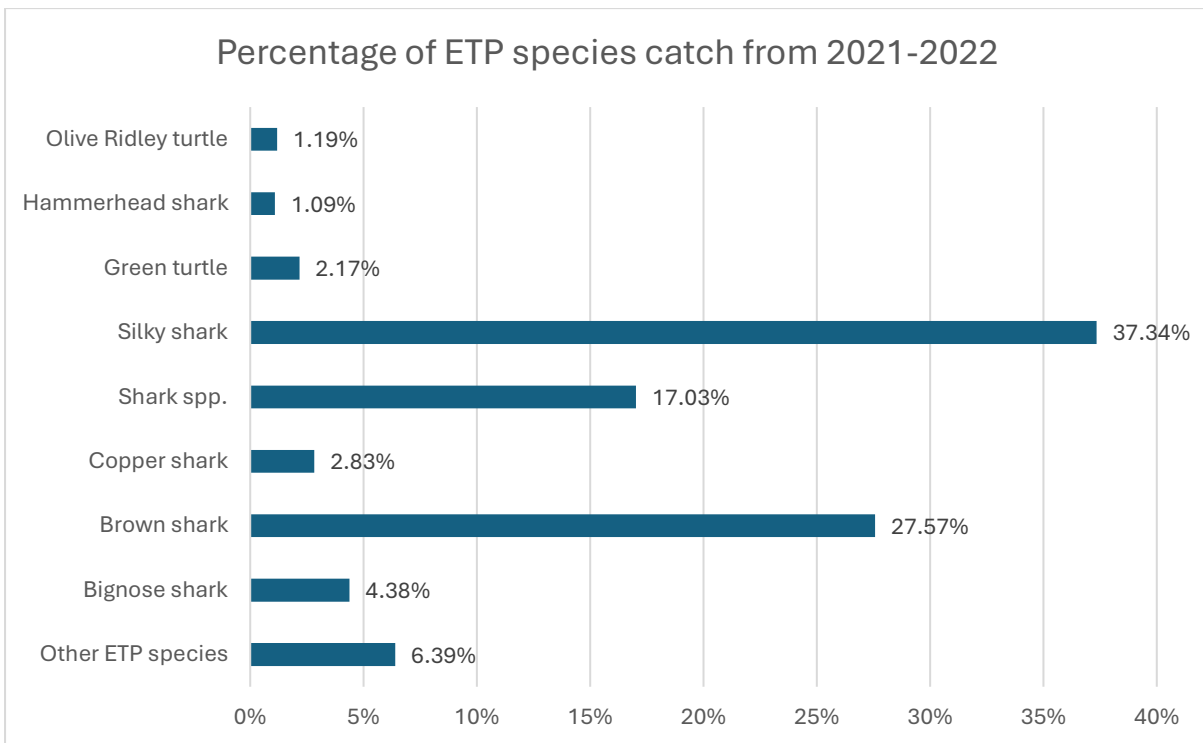


Figure 3: Percentage of ETP catch by species of the Ghana PS FIP from 2021 to 2022.

As displayed in Figure 3, the most frequently encountered ETP species in 2021 and 2022 were silky sharks (37%), followed by brown sharks (28%) and shark spp. (17%).

## Conclusion

In summary, the catch composition produced demonstrates the low interaction rates of the Ghana purse seine fishery. Furthermore, the high survival rate of ETP species the fishery does impact demonstrates that the best practice handling and release measures outlined in the GTA ETP management strategies are being implemented effectively and adhered to.

This report demonstrates the need for comprehensive observer data to be collected so that the ETP interactions, even if they are infrequent, are recorded and the post-release fate of the animal is known. This report demonstrates the high survival rate of ETP species that the fishery interacts with.

The FIP will continue to conduct catch composition analysis when the next batch of observer data is submitted to continue to verify that ETP mitigation, handling and release measures are being adhered to and review the ETP management strategy if required.