



Update on the implementation of Logbooks

25 December 2022

Implementation of logbooks, changes brought to licensing conditions and verification of data

Logbooks were introduced to the tuna fisheries in 2010 and refined twice, with the most recent revision in 2012 and the revised logbooks being introduced in January 2013. Following successful establishment of the logbooks, the enumerated system of data reporting through atoll councils was ceased on 31st December 2017, which was gradually being phased out since 2010. The logbook data allowed Maldives to report data by the required spatial resolution improving compliance with the data reporting requirements. According to the “Fishery licensing Regulation” that was formed under the Fisheries Law (law number 5/87), all licensed fishing vessels were required to regularly submit their respective daily fishery log sheets to the Ministry latest by 10th Calendar Day. Even though this law has now been superseded by the new Fisheries Act of Maldives (law no. 14/2019), the regulations made under the new law continue to mandate the submission of the log sheets regularly (refer to the regulation no. 2020/R-92: Regulation on the General Process of Issuing Licenses and Permits for Fishing, Fishing Related Activities and Aquaculture Activities, and regulation no. 2022/R-139: Regulation relating to the Management of Tuna Fishery).

The major challenge for the effective implementation of the logbooks since its introduction was the low levels of logbook submission rates. To address this issue, changes have been brought to the regulatory framework and fishing license conditions, making it mandatory for the completed logbooks to be submitted at the processing or purchase facilities prior to the unloading operations. The landing facility is then required to send the log sheets to the Ministry every fortnight. This change was put into effect on 1st March 2019 and the return rates have improved considerably since then (Figure 1).

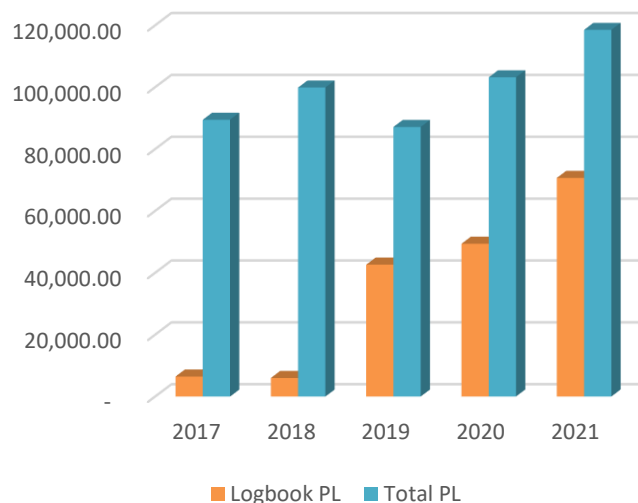


Figure 1: Total landings against landings recorded through logbooks 2017-2021



A web-enabled fishery information system, “Keyolhu” was developed and is now fully functional and all catch data are recorded and analysed through the system. This is a major improvement to the old database for data recording. The system facilitates vessel registration, issuing fishing licenses & fish processing licenses, data entry of fish purchase (by the commercial companies) and logbook data to provide a comprehensive system of compilation and reporting. The system is also designed to computerize the process of issuance of catch certificates required for the exports of all frozen, fresh or canned tuna from the Maldives. In this regard, the Fisheries Information System, *Keyolhu*, allows near real-time tracking of landings and purchases as well as licensing.

In 2022, the FIS was further developed to integrate logbook reporting online by fishers through a phone application. This allows the Ministry to ensure that all purchases made by processing facilities are associated with the electronic logbook of the corresponding fishing trip. In order to minimize the number of incomplete log sheets, the system is developed with a number of validation features that ensures e-logbook are submitted with all required fields/information.

Changes communicated to fishermen

In 2019, the change to licensing conditions and the implication to fishermen (that they can only offload catch after handover of log sheets) were communicated to the fishermen a month before the implementation through various mechanisms;

- Circulars communicated to all island councils and landing facilities, who then informed the respective fishermen of the change.
- An announcement published in the government gazette.
- A text message sent to all fishery licensees

Activities carried out in 2021/2022 to improve data collection and quality of data collected

1. Collection of log sheets from landing facilities

The Ministry ensured that logbooks are received from landing facilities on a regular basis. This is part of licensing conditions of processing / landing facilities. In 2021, the Ministry received a total of **17,731** log sheets compared to **10,553** log sheets in 2019.

2. Awareness sessions

Five awareness sessions were conducted in landing facilities in 2021, targeting fishers, vessel owners and staff at processing facilities. The aim was to improve the quality of data collected.



1. Kooddoo Fisheries Complex
2. Felivaru Fisheries Complex
3. Maandhoo Fisheries Complex
4. Bigfish Maldives facility - Himmafushi
5. Ensis Fisheries Facility - Hulhumale'
6. Top Tuna Fisheries - Huraa

Information was given on how to fill the log sheets and regarding the purpose, importance and use of catch data.

In addition to these sessions, special sessions were held during the annual Fishermen's Forum to provide the above information on the importance of logbook reporting.

3. Random inspections

In 2021 and 2022, fisheries compliance team conducted a number of inspections onboard vessels to assess the level of compliance of fishing vessels on the logbook requirement. A total of 360 inspections were conducted. The team observed that vessels regularly maintain the logbook reports. Where the crew members needed further clarifications on the process of reporting, further details were provided.

4. Awareness materials

Awareness materials such as leaflets, handbooks and video clips on logbook reporting were developed and disseminated through social media and through island councils. The video is also played at the Ministry's reception to maximise visitor reach.

A link to the video tutorial can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jiUWQD8jkbQ>