Vietnam Swordfish - Handline Fishery
Three-Year Evaluation Report

Version 1.3, November 2022

FIP Information

Target species scientific name(s) and common name(s) [state target stock(s), if relevant]	Scientific name: *Xiphias gladius* Common name: Swordfish Target stock: The Western and Central North Pacific Ocean (WCNPO)
Fishery location	Eastern Sea / South China Sea, North Pacific Ocean, FAO 61, FAO 71
Gear type(s)	Handline
Estimated FIP Landings (weight in tons)	800-1500 tons
Vessel type(s) and size(s)	Wooden Vessel, Length: 15-24m and above 24m to fishing offshore in Vietnam EEZ.
Number of vessels	2452
Management authority	National: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Directorate of Fisheries, Department of Capture Fisheries and Resource Protection RFMO: WCPFC (Northern Committee)
Assessor name(s)	Heri, Andini Kusumasari
Assessor Organization/Affiliation	KOLEKTIF
Date of report completion	18 August 2025

FIP Background (Optional)

This section is optional. If the assessor completes this section, use it to provide additional information about the context in which the FIP operates.

Stakeholder Consultation & Meetings

Name	Affiliation	Date and Subjects Discussed
- **Yen Nguyen** - **Huy Hoang**	Hong Ngoc Seafood Consultant	• Participation in the FIP and collaboration with VINATUNA. • Compliance with WCPFC CMMs and national regulations (VMS, logbooks, ETP handling). • Support for COPPA implementation and data sharing. • Training and awareness on ETP bycatch mitigation. • Benefits of FIP participation, including market recognition. • FIP coordination and stakeholder engagement
Nhut Phan	Fishers/Crew	• Involvement in FIP activities and use of COPPA logbooks. • Compliance with fishing regulations and reporting requirements. • Experience with ETP interactions and live release practices. • Changes in fishing practices due to FIP (circle hooks, species ID). • Training attendance and communication through fisher associations.

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Over the past three years, the Vietnam Tuna FIP has demonstrated measurable progress in strengthening management and sustainability practices. Stock assessments from WCPFC have been incorporated into national planning, while data collection has improved through enhanced logbook use, expanded VMS coverage, and observer programs. Habitat and ETP protections were reinforced with the issuance of Decree 37/2024 and the adoption of species-specific NPOAs, while compliance and enforcement have been strengthened under Decree 38/2024, with more consistent application since the EU yellow card. Decision-making processes have become more participatory through platforms such as the Tuna Fisheries Management Advisory Committee (TFMAC) and annual VTFACE workshops, ensuring stakeholder involvement. Regular performance reviews are embedded in the NTMP revision cycle, FIP evaluations, and WCPFC reporting, creating a stronger basis for adaptive management.

To sustain and accelerate progress, the FIP is encouraged to prioritize full implementation of the National Observer Program (Decision 456/2025) to improve monitoring of bycatch and ETP species interactions. Species-level reporting of secondary and bycatch species should be expanded to strengthen the evidence base for management. Independent external reviews remain important to validate compliance and reinforce transparency. Continued capacity-building for fishers, facilitated through associations such as VINATuna and VASEP, will improve awareness and compliance at the operational level. Finally, the forthcoming NTMP 2024–2030 should align closely with harvest strategies, reference points, and bycatch mitigation measures adopted at WCPFC, ensuring that Vietnam's tuna and swordfish fisheries remain consistent with international sustainability standards.

Considering the progress achieved in data collection, regulatory frameworks, and compliance, the reviewer concludes that this fishery has the potential to pass the MSC Full Assessment, albeit with conditions.

Summary of MSC Performance Indicator Scores

Principle	Component	Performance Indicator		Previous Score 2024	Current Score 2025	Rationale or Key Points
1	Outcome	1.1.1	Stock status	>80	>80	The score of 80 is maintained as the latest stock assessment conducted by SPC (SC19-SA-WP-09) indicates that the North Pacific swordfish (NP SWO) stock is in a healthy and sustainable condition relative to MSY-based reference points. The 2021 spawning stock biomass (SSB) was estimated at 35,778 metric tons, which is approximately 220% above the SSBMSY level of 16,000 metric tons. This means the biomass is more than double the level required to achieve maximum sustainable yield. In parallel, the average fishing mortality (F) for 2019–2021 was estimated at 49% of FMSY, demonstrating that current fishing pressure is significantly below the threshold associated with overfishing. Based on these results, the stock assessment concluded that: - Overfishing is very likely not occurring (probability >99%). - The stock is very likely not overfished (probability >99%). These findings provide robust evidence that the North Pacific swordfish population is well-managed and biologically sustainable. The high probability values associated with both biomass and fishing mortality further strengthen confidence in the assessment. This scientific evidence supports a high performance score for PI 1.1.1 (stock status), as the stock is maintained well above target levels, and for PI 1.2.1 (reference points), as reference points are clearly defined and the stock is consistently maintained at or above these levels.
		1.1.2	Stock rebuilding	-	-	-

	Management	1.2.1	Harvest Strategy	>80	>80	The score at 80 due to the continued application of the WCPFC's harvest strategy framework, which includes stock assessments, limit reference points, and a precautionary approach. The FIP has also enhanced data collection (COPPA, observer, and port sampling), providing robust inputs for harvest strategy implementation. Vietnam has taken part in data sharing, CMM adoption and management consultations as WCPFC Corporating non-member requirements. Fishery objectives have been incorporated into national fishery management plans (Circular No. 21/2018/TT-BNNPTNT , Decree 38/2024/ND-CP). Data collection (such as onboard logbooks) directly informs harvest decision-making.
		1.2.2	Harvest control rules and tools	60 - 79	>80	The current management framework for North Pacific swordfish (Xiphias gladius), as adopted under the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) through the Northern Committee (WCPFC-NC14-DP-14), provides a well-defined and responsive harvest control system. This framework is consistent with MSC requirements for a high-scoring outcome under PI 1.2.2. Key Elements Supporting High Scoring: 1. Defined F-Limit Rule (WCPFC): The WCPFC harvest strategy specifies that if fishing mortality exceeds FMSY with at least 50% probability, the Northern Committee must recommend management actions to reduce F below the limit within one year. This mechanism provides a direct and responsive link between reference points and management action, fulfilling MSC's requirement for a precautionary HCR. 2. Management Objectives and Reference Points:

						The limit reference point is explicitly defined as FMSY, categorizing the stock as Level 1 under WCPFC's reference point hierarchy. While target reference points (TRPs) remain under development, the application of conservative FMSY-based limit reference points already demonstrates precautionary management intent. 3. Evidence of Triggered Actions: To date, the stock has not required triggering of the HCR, as biomass remains above BMSY. However, the institutional framework is fully established, including clearly identified trigger mechanisms and mandatory response requirements, ensuring that management action would be taken if needed. 4. National Legal Support for Management Action (Vietnam): Circular No. 21/2018/TT-BNNPTNT obligates all offshore vessels ≥15m to maintain and submit fishing logbooks. These data streams directly into Sub-DFISH at the provincial level, which are authorized to analyze the information and recommend adaptive management actions where sustainability concerns arise. This provides a legal and institutional basis for responsive national action, including the ability to adjust gear regulations, closed seasons, or area closures in support of regional harvest strategies. 5. FIP Contributions and Scientific Input: Stakeholders involved in the Vietnam Swordfish FIP (e.g., VINATUNA) actively support data collection, monitoring, and participation in scientific and management processes at both national and regional levels. Their engagement

						provides additional capacity for adaptive management and reinforces the implementation of HCRs. Given the presence of a well-defined HCR at the WCPFC level, explicit reference points, national legal backing for adaptive action, and FIP-supported monitoring, the fishery now demonstrates a robust and precautionary harvest control system. Although TRPs are still in development, the existing framework already exceeds MSC's minimum requirements. Therefore, the performance score for PI 1.2.2 can reasonably be elevated from the 60–79 range to >80, reflecting a high level of confidence in the responsiveness and effectiveness of the HCR system.
		1.2.3	Information and monitoring	>80	>80	The score of 80 is maintained as the fishery continues to provide accurate and timely catch and effort data through a combination of mechanisms, including COPPA reporting, observer coverage, and port sampling programs. These data streams are systematically integrated into the WCPFC monitoring and stock assessment processes, ensuring that the harvest strategy is informed by reliable and up-to-date information. At the regional level, the WCPFC and SPC compile and analyze data from member countries to produce regular and robust stock assessments for North Pacific swordfish. These assessments provide scientifically credible estimates of stock status, fishing mortality, and spawning biomass against MSY-based reference points, which directly inform the harvest strategy. At the national level, Vietnam has established a strong legal and institutional foundation for data collection and reporting. Under Circular No. 21/2018/TT-BNNPTNT, offshore vessels ≥15m are required to submit logbooks, recording catch, effort, and fishing locations. These reports are collated by Sub-DFISH and D-FISH, and further strengthened through the FIP-supported monitoring activities such as port sampling, biological data collection, and training programs for vessel operators and enumerators.

						The FIP (VINATUNA and partners) plays an important role in reinforcing compliance, improving data quality, and supporting additional monitoring, including length-frequency sampling and traceability pilots. This ensures that data are not only collected but also validated and standardized to meet international reporting requirements.
		1.2.4	Assessment of stock status	>80	>80	The score of 80 is maintained as WCPFC's stock assessments for WCPO swordfish use robust data, peer-reviewed methods, and consider uncertainty. Results are updated regularly and clearly indicate that the stock is within sustainable limits.
2	Primary species	2.1.1	Outcome	>80	>80	The score of 80 is maintained as the most recent COPPA and portside sampling data show stable CPUE for tuna in the participating handline fleet. No evidence of stock decline or overfishing was found based on WCPFC/WPEA reporting and field observations. The 2024 dataset from 14 vessels (67 trips) supports consistent outcomes compared to the previous year.
		2.1.2	Management strategy	>80	>80	The score of 80 is maintained as management measures implemented in the previous year continued this year, including full VMS coverage, national logbook use, and an active professional observer program. COPPA monitoring remains in place despite funding transitions, with new support from the Resource Legacy Fund for 2025. Coordination between fisheries authorities and the FIP remains strong, ensuring sustained control of fishing effort and tuna reporting.
		2.1.3	Information	60 - 79	60 - 79	The score range of 60–79 is maintained as previous year data gaps have not been fully resolved this year. While COPPA and observer data collection continues, national tuna reporting to WCPFC still contains "Other" fish categories without species-level breakdown. Full integration of tuna catch data from COPPA, observer trips, and port sampling into official reporting has not yet been achieved, so information is considered adequate but not yet comprehensive. To increase the score to 80, the fishery should ensure species-level reporting for all tuna catches, fully integrate COPPA and observer datasets into national submissions, and maintain consistent vessel coverage to strengthen data reliability.

	Secondary species	2.2.1	Outcome	60 - 79	>80	a. Main Secondary Species Stock Status Based on COPPA monitoring (2020–2025), the fishery regularly catches several secondary species, including black marlin (Istiompax indica), blue marlin (Makaira nigricans), striped marlin (Kajikia audax), mahi-mahi (Coryphaena hippurus), wahoo (Acanthocybium solandri), king mackerel (Scomberomorus commerson), and long-snouted lancetfish (Alepisaurus ferox). A precautionary approach has been adopted by treating all these as “main” secondary species due to their consistent occurrence in catches. Although formal stock assessments are generally lacking for these species in the WCNPO, scientific evidence suggests that they are productive and resilient, and none is currently considered overfished or subject to overfishing in the WCPFC region. COPPA 2025 reports indicate that these species represent less than 5% of catch composition each, with stable proportions across 261 documented trips. CPUE analyses show no significant declines or abnormal fluctuations. This suggests that the stocks of these secondary species are highly likely to be above biologically based limits, supporting a score of 80+. b. Minor Secondary Species Stock Status Skipjack tuna, rainbow runner, cottonmouth jack, and great barracuda are occasionally encountered but make up less than 1% of annual landings. Their sporadic occurrence and negligible contribution to the overall catch composition indicate that they are best classified as minor secondary species, and are also highly likely to be above biologically based limits. c. Species Identified in Risk Assessments The 2017 Risk Assessment of Retained Species in Vietnam and subsequent PSA analyses (RIMF & WWF-

						Vietnam, 2017–2018) identified some species of potential concern. Medium-risk species included: • *Prionace glauca* (blue shark) – PSA 2.84, MSC score 73.5 • *Sphyrna lewini* (scalloped hammerhead) – PSA 3.07, MSC score 64.77 • *Sthenoteuthis oualaniensis* (neon flying squid) – PSA 2.73, MSC score 77.25 However, COPPA and WPEA observer data from 2023–2025 show very low encounters of these species, mostly incidental and non-retained. In particular, mobulid rays and bigeye thresher sharks, previously flagged, have been rarely encountered in the fishery, suggesting they do not constitute “main” secondary species. In contrast, high-productivity species such as yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), skipjack (*Katsuwonus pelamis*), and mahi-mahi were consistently scored as low risk (MSC >90) in the PSA, reinforcing their resilience under current fishing pressure. The improved data collection under COPPA and WPEA-supported programs has substantially reduced uncertainty around secondary species outcomes. The stable catch proportions, low risk assessments, and absence of significant depletion signals provide strong evidence that **secondary species are highly likely above biologically based limits**. Based on these updates, the score has been improved from 60-79 to >80
		2.2.2	Management strategy	<60	60-79	Score: Improved from <60 (2017 pre-assessment) to 60–79 (2025 review) At the 2017 pre-assessment, this PI was scored below 60 due to: • Lack of a defined management strategy for sharks and other sensitive secondary species.

						• Widespread concern about shark finning practices and absence of the “fins naturally attached” (FNA) policy. • Weak enforcement and incomplete legal framework for bycatch/secondary species. Recent Progress (2020–2025) a. Management Measures for Secondary Species • Shark Regulations Strengthened: Blue shark has now been added to the prohibited species list. Regulations amended to mandate fins naturally attached (FNA) for any retained sharks. • Retention Bans: Appendix II of Decree 37/2024/ND-CP fully prohibits retention of high-risk species (e.g., whale shark, hammerhead sharks). • National Plan of Action (NPOA – Sharks and Rays) drafted in alignment with FAO IPOA, embedding risk-based approaches, retention bans, and enhanced data collection requirements. • Legal Enforcement: o Law on Fisheries 2017: Traceability and handling requirements. o Decree 38/2024/ND-CP: Penalties up to VND 1 billion (~USD 40,000) for illegal shark finning, mandatory release or destruction of illegally caught sharks. o Circular 21/2018/TT-BNNPTNT: Shark landings must be recorded in the national database; non-compliant products cannot be certified. o Decision 456/QĐ-BNNMT (2025): Launch of a formal observer program, with trained officers to document shark interactions. b. Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance • Observer Coverage: Pilot program (2025–2028) deploying observers on vessels ≥15m with high-risk gears.

						• COPPA (Crew Observer Photographic Protocol Application): Over 300 fully documented trips, providing photographic evidence of shark encounters, linked with GPS and timestamps. • VMS & Port Inspections: Vessels tracked in real time; border guards and port inspectors authorized to cross-check fins vs carcasses. c. Compliance with International Measures (WCPFC) • Adoption of CMM 2010-07 & 2019-04 (prohibiting finning, whole-shark documentation). • Implementation of CMM 2024-05, making FNA mandatory across the WCPFC region. • Vietnam now reports compliance outcomes annually to WCPFC (Part 2 Report). Direct testimonies from fishers during interview confirm the practical implementation of these measures: “I use circle hooks provided by the Tuna Association, although sometimes I switch back to using J-hooks depending on the situation. When we accidentally catch a shark, we remove the hook and release it back into the sea if it's still alive. We do not keep sharks onboard because there’s not enough space in the fish hold. I do not catch or trade shark fins, because it’s illegal and the penalties are severe — we could even go to jail. Every year, the Sub-Department of Fisheries and the company run awareness campaigns to remind us of this.” Effectiveness and Scoring Justification SG60: Met – clear evidence that a management strategy exists, especially for high-risk species like sharks. SG80: Partially met – while the legal framework is robust, implementation (e.g., observer coverage) is still nascent and not yet at scale.

						Trajectory: The fishery is on a strong path toward 80+ scoring, once observer deployment and enforcement data can demonstrate consistent effectiveness
		2.2.3	Information	60 - 79	>80	The score improved from 60–79 to >80. a. Adequacy of Information for Assessing Main Secondary Species Since the 2017 pre-assessment, where this PI was flagged for limited and largely qualitative information, the fishery has made substantial progress in collecting reliable data on secondary species: • COPPA Program (2020–2025): The Crew Observer Photographic Protocol Application, developed by VINATuna and Sea Delight, now produces trip-level data with geo-referenced photos of retained and discarded bycatch, including mahi-mahi, wahoo, king mackerel, escolar, and blue shark. By 2024, over 300 fishing trips had generated validated species-level records. • National Observer Program (Decision 456/QĐ-BNNMT, 2025): Trained observers record retained secondary species at the species level, including biological traits such as size and sex. • TUFMAN 2 Integration (2021–2023): Vietnam has submitted detailed logbook and landing data for thousands of trips, which include secondary species composition across gear types. These datasets support advanced analyses such as productivity-susceptibility assessments (PSA). Together, these developments have greatly improved confidence in the adequacy of information for assessing outcomes for main secondary species. b. Adequacy of Information for Minor Secondary Species While species like lancetfish, rabbitfish, and triggerfish occur at very low levels, Vietnam has adopted a

						precautionary approach, treating all potentially minor secondary species as “main” for monitoring purposes. The combination of observer reports, COPPA data, and TUFMAN 2 entries provides sufficient information to track presence and catch patterns. Although time-series trends remain limited, the level of coverage ensures that minor species interactions are unlikely to be significant or go undetected.
						
						c. Information for Management Strategy
						
						In 2017, the pre-assessment highlighted insufficient information to underpin any coherent management strategy for secondary species. By 2025, clear progress has been achieved:
						
						• Legal Instruments: Circular 21/2018 and Decree 37/2024/ND-CP legally mandate logbook reporting of both catch and bycatch, forming the basis for management feedback.
						• Data Systems: TUFMAN 2 and the national VNFishbase now store observer, logbook, and COPPA data, with integration efforts underway to build a centralized and verifiable system.
						• Feedback Mechanisms: Data are reviewed through the National Tuna Management Plan and stakeholder forums such as VTFACE annual workshops, enabling management responses (e.g., adoption of FNA policy for sharks, retention bans for high-risk species).
						• Strategy Components: While explicit harvest control rules for secondary species are not yet developed, management is supported through:
						  ○ Low and stable bycatch levels.
						  ○ Species-specific bans and CITES enforcement (e.g., hammerhead and whale sharks).
						  ○ Expansion of observer and COPPA programs, which provide verifiable data for adaptive decision-making.

						By 2025, substantial improvements have been made in both the quantity and quality of data on secondary species. Monitoring programs such as COPPA, the National Observer Program, and TUFMAN 2 submissions now cover hundreds of fishing trips, producing verified, species-level data that are systematically integrated into national and regional databases. As a result, information is now sufficient to detect and respond to changes in secondary species interactions, providing the foundation for adaptive management strategies. This represents a clear advancement from the 2017 pre-assessment, where information was inadequate and heavily reliant on qualitative sources. Therefore, the fishery now meets SG80 for PI 2.2.3, with a demonstrated upward trajectory in both monitoring capacity and management responsiveness.
	ETP species	2.3.1	Outcome	60 - 79	>80	The Vietnamese swordfish handline fishery interacts infrequently with ETP species due to the selective nature of handline gear. Updated evidence from the COPPA program (2022–2025), observer records, and the 2017 Risk Assessment confirm that interactions with turtles, sharks, and mobulid rays occur only occasionally and are typically non-lethal. Vietnam's legal framework (Decree 37/2024/ND-CP; Circular 24/2018) lists protected ETP species including all sea turtles, mobulid rays, whale sharks, hammerheads, and manta rays. However, no formal quantitative bycatch or mortality limits have been established nationally or regionally. This scoring issue is therefore Not Applicable. a.Direct Effects of the UoA on ETP Species • Olive ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*): One confirmed interaction, released alive. • Bigeye thresher shark (*Alopias superciliosus*) and mobulid rays: Recorded in multiple trips, none retained.

						• Green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*): Potential presence, but no confirmed landings in COPPA or observer logs. These findings support the conclusion that direct mortality is rare and not likely to hinder recovery of ETP populations. The 2017 PSA ranked mobulids and bigeye thresher as medium risk, while subsequent COPPA records indicate very low encounter rates. Legal bans on ETP retention (Decree 37/2024) and WCPFC measures (CMM 2010-07, 2019-04, 2024-05) reinforce this protection. b. Indirect Effects of the UoA on ETP Species There is no evidence of indirect ecological effects. The fishery is low volume and highly selective, operating in offshore pelagic zones with limited overlap in habitat with most ETP species. Habitat disruption and trophic impacts are negligible. The fishery's interactions with ETP species are rare, non-lethal, and well-regulated, supported by observer and COPPA evidence. While a full Risk-Based Framework (RBF) analysis could further strengthen confidence, the available evidence supports an 80-level score. A precautionary stance may be maintained until additional quantitative data are available, but the current outcome clearly reflects improved conditions compared to 2017.
		2.3.2	Management strategy	60 - 79	>80	Vietnam has developed and implemented multiple NPOAs (Sea Turtles, Marine Mammals, Sharks & Rays draft), aligned with FAO guidelines and WCPFC measures. Strong legal reforms now in place: Decree 37/2024 (Fins Naturally Attached, bans on CITES-listed species), Decree 38/2024 (severe fines for illegal retention), Circular 24/2018 (mandatory bycatch reporting). Implementation mechanisms are active: Observer Program (2025–2028), COPPA app (>300 validated trips),

						TUFMAN 2 reporting, and coordinated port/VMS inspections. Strategy is precautionary, structured, and largely implemented, with clear alignment to international best practice. While coverage and enforcement are still scaling up, the system is highly likely to work and thus supports an 80-level score.
		2.3.3	Information	60 - 79	>80	Since 2017, Vietnam has significantly improved both the quantity and quality of ETP data. Fishers are required to record ETP interactions in logbooks (Circular 21/2018), while COPPA (>500 trips, 300+ complete datasets) and the National Observer Program (Decision 456/2025) provide independent and verifiable records. Confirmed interactions include olive ridley turtles, whale sharks, bigeye threshers, and mobulid rays, all documented through photographs, observer logs, and TUFMAN 2 submissions. Data systems (TUFMAN 2, VNFishbase) now support long-term analysis, while regular reviews occur via port checks, observer trip reports, COPPA dashboards, and VTFACE workshops. Adequacy of information: Species-level ID, spatial patterns, and frequency data are available; risk assessments (PSA, expert reviews) have been conducted for key taxa; mortality estimates are under development. Management linkages: ETP information directly informs NPOAs for turtles, marine mammals, and sharks/rays, as well as enforcement updates (e.g., Decree 37/2024). Overall, information is now sufficient to detect, monitor, and inform management of ETP interactions, supporting an 80-level score..
	Habitats	2.4.1	Outcome	>80	>80	The Vietnam Swordfish Handline Fishery uses handline gear only, a selective method where baited hooks are deployed vertically into the water column.

						No contact with seabed: Handlines are operated in pelagic zones (epipelagic–mesopelagic), away from benthic habitats such as coral reefs, seamounts, or seagrass beds. Scientific evidence: Studies and observer reports confirm that handline fishing has negligible impact on physical or structural habitats. No modification, damage, or loss of benthic features has been recorded. Target species behavior: Swordfish and tunas are targeted in open-water environments, further minimizing overlap with sensitive habitats. Habitat impacts are negligible and highly unlikely to pose any risk. The fishery therefore meets the requirements for maintain the score above 80 under this PI.
		2.4.2	Management strategy	>80	>80	The score of above 80 is maintained as this is handlie fishery and following reasons: a. Gear Selectivity The Vietnam Swordfish Handline Fishery uses handline gear only, with baited hooks suspended vertically in the water column. This ensures no seabed contact and eliminates risks of habitat disturbance. The method is recognized internationally as one of the most habitat-friendly gears. b. Operational Zoning Fishing is conducted in offshore waters targeting pelagic species (swordfish, tuna), far from sensitive benthic habitats such as coral reefs, seagrass beds, or known spawning aggregations. Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS), logbooks, and observer reports confirm that handline operations do not overlap with critical benthic habitats. c. Legal & Policy Framework

						Law on Fisheries (2017): Mandates sustainable resource use and integration of ecosystem and habitat considerations in fishery management. Decree 26/2019/ND-CP: Requires protection of aquatic ecosystems, including habitats of rare and endangered species. Decree 37/2024/ND-CP: Strengthens zoning, licensing, and conservation measures, with explicit restrictions in marine protected areas (MPAs) and critical habitats. d. Protected Areas and Exclusion Zones Vietnam maintains a network of MPAs where commercial fishing is prohibited. VMS, port checks, and observer programs confirm compliance. The handline fishery operates outside of MPAs and exclusion zones, with enforcement supported by administrative fines and sanctions under Decree 38/2024/ND-CP.
		2.4.3	Information	>80	>80	The score of above 80 is maintained because the Vietnam Swordfish Handline Fishery uses handline gear only, with baited hooks suspended vertically in the water column. This ensures no seabed contact and eliminates risks of habitat disturbance. The method is recognized internationally as one of the most habitat-friendly gears.
	Ecosystem	2.5.1	Outcome	>80	>80	The score of 80 is maintained as available evidence from COPPA, observer reports, and WCPFC/WPEA data shows no indication that the fishery is causing serious or irreversible harm to the ecosystem. The handline gear has low habitat impact, and no significant ecosystem-level changes were detected compared to the previous year.
		2.5.2	Management strategy	>80	>80	a. Ecosystem Strategy in Place The Vietnam swordfish handline fishery is managed under a multi-layered framework that combines regional (WCPFC) measures with national fisheries regulations and action plans. Together, these provide the foundation for an

						ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management (EAFM).
						
						Regional Framework – WCPFC
						
						• Applies CMMs that address both target species (swordfish, tunas) and non-target/ETP species (sharks, turtles, seabirds, marine mammals).
						• Measures include catch and bycatch recording, area-based restrictions, and high seas inspection procedures.
						• Promotes alignment with the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (1995) and related FAO action plans.
						
						National Framework – Vietnam NTMP (2018, updated)
						
						• While originally focused on tropical tunas, the NTMP scope now covers large pelagic species (swordfish) due to overlapping gear, habitats, and fleets.
						• Key management measures:
						  ○ Catch quotas (Decision 3647/QĐ-BNN-TCTS).
						  ○ VMS and logbook reporting for all offshore tuna/swordfish vessels.
						  ○ Bycatch mitigation measures, reinforced by observer pilots under Decision 456/QĐ-BNNMT (2025).
						  ○ Integration of ecosystem considerations into management planning, including non-retention rules for protected species.
						  ○ Data sharing with WPEA, TUFMAN 2, and COPPA.
						
						b. Management Strategy Design
						
						The NTMP is explicitly aligned with EAFM principles, emphasizing sustainability beyond target stocks. Its objectives are to:

						• Maintain both target and non-target species at sustainable levels. • Minimize adverse impacts on ETP species and habitats. • Ensure data-driven adaptive management through observer data, COPPA, and logbook reporting. • Strengthen multi-level governance, linking DFISH, Sub-DFISH, VINATUNA, and international partners. Supporting mechanisms include the finalized NPOA–Sea Turtles (2025–2030), the NPOA–Marine Mammals, and the draft NPOA–Sharks and Rays, all of which address ecosystem-level interactions. c. Strategy Evaluation Progress toward effective implementation has been demonstrated: • Data Systems: TUFMAN 2 and COPPA now provide structured reporting on bycatch and ETP encounters, enhancing transparency. • Observer Program: Decision 456/QĐ-BNNMT establishes observer coverage for 2025–2028, with explicit mandates to monitor ecosystem interactions. • Compliance & Enforcement: Decree 37/2024/ND-CP and Circular 24/2018 provide strong legal backing for traceability and sanctions against illegal activities. • Adaptive Learning: Results from COPPA pilots (500+ trips) and annual VTFACE workshops are already informing refinements to ecosystem measures. Vietnam's ecosystem management framework for the swordfish handline fishery is comprehensive, precautionary, and demonstrably improving. While not yet at a fully mature level of implementation across all components, the combination of national and regional

						strategies, coupled with active monitoring innovations, ensures that the fishery is operating under a credible ecosystem-based management strategy.
		2.5.3	Information	>80	>80	Vietnam has substantially improved ecosystem information through COPPA, the 2025–2028 observer program, TUFMAN 2 reporting, and RIMF-led research. Data now adequately covers retained, secondary, and ETP species, enabling risk assessment and management response. While dedicated trophic models for the EEZ are lacking, regional ecosystem science and national monitoring provide sufficient basis to infer ecosystem impacts and maintain an SG80 score.
3	Governance and Policy	3.1.1	Legal and customary framework	>80	>80	Vietnam has established a comprehensive and enforceable legal and administrative framework for the sustainable management of its marine capture fisheries, including swordfish handline. The Law on Fisheries (2017) provides the overarching legal foundation, requiring science-based management, licensing, MCS, and international cooperation. This is operationalized through Decree 26/2019/ND-CP and its 2024 amendment (Decree 37/2024/ND-CP), which include provisions on licensing, conservation, surveillance, and co-management. Complementary instruments such as Circulars 21/2018 and 24/2018 ensure detailed guidance on logbooks, observers, and fisheries data systems, while Decision 456/QD-BNNMT (2025) formally established the national observer program. Collectively, these create an effective framework aligned with FAO CCRF and WCPFC obligations, supporting enforcement against IUU fishing, data collection, and protection of sensitive species. In terms of customary rights, Vietnam's legal framework explicitly recognizes and protects the role of traditional and small-scale fishers. The Law on Fisheries (Article 10) embeds co-management principles, while Decree 26/2019 (Chapter VII) defines community participation in planning, enforcement, and monitoring. Customary practices are incorporated into zoning and NTMP processes, and traditional handline operators are directly engaged in tuna/swordfish management. This demonstrates that SG80 and probably SG100 requirements are met: an

						effective legal system is in place and the rights of customary resource users are formally recognized and operationalized.
		3.1.2	Consultation, roles and responsibilities	>80	>80	a. Roles and responsibilities clearly defined Vietnam's fisheries governance is underpinned by the 2017 Fisheries Law and its guiding regulations (Decree 26/2019/ND-CP, updated under Decree 37/2024/ND-CP, and Circulars 21/2018 & 24/2018). These instruments establish clear administrative roles across levels of government: • MARD/DFISH (national level): overall policy, licensing, and enforcement. • Provincial Sub-DOFs: field implementation, data collection, and fisher engagement. • Research institutes (RIMF, universities): scientific advice and stock/ecosystem studies. • Industry associations and FIP partners: compliance and co-management inputs. The Tuna Fishery Management Advisory Committee (TFMAC) provides a dedicated platform for technical and policy advice, involving government, science, industry, NGOs, processors, and fisher representatives. b. Inclusion of organizations and individuals in the management system The management system formally integrates public agencies, research bodies, fishers, and the private sector. Through TFMAC and Vietnam Tuna Fishery Annual Catch Estimates (VTFACE) meetings, stakeholders advise on catch quotas, observer programs, bycatch mitigation, and harvest strategy development. c. Engagement with stakeholders The Fisheries Law (2017) mandates stakeholder consultation in management planning. In practice, TFMAC and VTFACE workshops serve as central forums for multi-

						stakeholder dialogue, ensuring feedback loops from fishers and provincial officers to national decision-makers. This mechanism has influenced measures such as logbook enforcement, FAD regulations, and observer program rollout. Together, these arrangements demonstrate that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined (SG80+), stakeholders are formally included, and engagement mechanisms are functioning. Interviews with fishers confirm that representative organizations play an important role in bridging communication with government authorities. In particular, the Vietnam Tuna Association (VINATUNA), the Vietnam Fisheries Association (VFA), and the Vietnam Association of Seafood Exporters and Producers (VASEP) were mentioned.
		3.1.3	Long term objectives	>80	>80	The score of 80 is maintained because Vietnam's fisheries management framework includes clear, explicit long-term objectives consistent with the MSC Principles and international best practice. The 2017 Fisheries Law establishes sustainability, ecosystem protection, and precaution as guiding principles. The National Tuna Management Plan (NTMP 2021–2030) sets biological, economic, and social targets with timelines, performance indicators, and integration of harvest strategies aligned with WCPFC guidance. National strategies (e.g., Decision 339/QĐ-TTg) extend this vision to 2045, embedding ecosystem-based management and marine spatial planning.
	Fishery specific management system	3.2.1	Fishery specific objectives	60 - 79	>80	The score improve from 60–79 to above 80 as Vietnam has articulated fishery-specific objectives for its tuna and swordfish handline fisheries through the National Tuna Management Plan (NTMP 2018–2025), the 2017 Fisheries Law, and supporting decrees, circulars, and FIP commitments. These objectives are consistent with MSC Principles 1 and 2, focusing on: • Sustainable harvest at or near MSY levels;

						• Minimizing ecosystem and bycatch impacts; • Applying the precautionary approach and EAFM; • Ensuring compliance with WCPFC CMMs; • Promoting traceability, monitoring, and transparency. The objectives guide the management system via instruments such as catch quotas (Decision 3647/QĐ-BNN-TCTS), fishing permits (Decision 1037), VMS and logbook reporting (Circular 21/2018; Decree 26/2019), observer coverage (Decision 456/2025), and species-specific handling rules. Participation in WCPFC's TUFMAN 2 and national monitoring programs (COPPA, port inspections) demonstrates integration of objectives into adaptive management..
		3.2.2	Decision making processes	60 - 79	>80	The score improve from 60–79 to above 80 due to these reasons a. Effective decision-making processes Vietnam's fishery-specific management system for tuna and swordfish operates under the 2017 Fisheries Law, implemented by MARD and DFISH, with roles clearly defined across agencies. Decision-making is formalized through the Law on the Promulgation of Legal Normative Documents (2015, amended 2020), which requires transparent drafting, consultation, appraisal, and approval. At the regional level, Vietnam implements WCPFC CMMs via national decrees (e.g., Decree 26/2019, Decree 37/2024, Decree 38/2024). Advisory platforms such as the Tuna Fishery Management Advisory Committee (TFMAC) ensure stakeholder participation, alongside FIP consultations. Examples such as the adoption of the National Observer Program (Decision 456/2025) demonstrate that the system can deliver measures addressing serious issues. b. Responsiveness to issues Policy revisions show a feedback loop from research and monitoring into management measures. For example, the

						adoption of the Fins Naturally Attached (FNA) rule and blue shark protections responded to WCPFC compliance gaps; new observer and penalty requirements under Decree 38/2024 addressed weaknesses in MCS; and ongoing NTMP revision integrates ecosystem-based management, harvest strategies, and bycatch mitigation. c. Precautionary approach Vietnam applies precautionary measures where data are limited, such as non-retention of CITES-listed sharks, ETP handling protocols, and use of PSA/RBF frameworks in FIP assessments. This demonstrates alignment with FAO and WCPFC precautionary standards. d. Transparency and information The decision-making process is transparent, with legal instruments published in official gazettes, decrees, and circulars. Updates are shared with stakeholders through annual VTFACE workshops and TFMAC meetings, ensuring accessibility of information. Interviews with fishers confirm that representative organizations play an important role in bridging communication with government authorities. In particular, the Vietnam Tuna Association (VINATUNA), the Vietnam Fisheries Association (VFA), and the Vietnam Association of Seafood Exporters and Producers (VASEP) were mentioned.
		3.2.3	Compliance and enforcement	60 - 79	>80	a. Sanctions for non-compliance Vietnam now has a robust and enforceable sanctioning framework under the Law on Fisheries 2017 and implementing regulations: • Decree 38/2024/ND-CP – establishes strong administrative penalties for IUU fishing, illegal shark retention, misreporting, and non-compliance with VMS or observer requirements. Sanctions include fines up to VND 1 billion (~USD 40,000), license

						suspension/revocation, confiscation of gear, and mandatory release of illegally retained catch. • Decree 37/2024/ND-CP – strengthens vessel registration, monitoring, and technical certification requirements. • Circular 21/2018/TT-BNNPTNT – mandates publication of IUU-listed vessels, improving transparency and accountability. • Directive 22/CT-TTg – reinforces political commitment to IUU enforcement as part of the EU yellow card action plan. Since 2017, sanctioning has become more consistent and actively applied, with increased vessel inspections, VMS enforcement, and public disclosure of violators. This reflects a clear shift from policy intent (SG60–79) to operationalized enforcement (SG80). b. Monitoring and detection mechanisms Vietnam has developed an integrated compliance monitoring system that supports effective detection and deterrence: • Vessel Monitoring System (VMS): Mandatory for vessels ≥15m, transmitting positions every 3 hours. Automatic alerts flag interruptions for inspection. • National Observer Program (Decision 456/QD-BNNMT, 2025): Observers now deployed on tuna handline, longline, and gillnet vessels, monitoring compliance and ETP interactions. Independent reporting strengthens enforcement. • Landing inspections: Conducted by port authorities and border guards, cross-checking logbooks and licenses against centralized databases. • National IUU monitoring system: A real-time vessel blacklist is maintained, with repeat offenders flagged for stronger sanctions. Together, these measures demonstrate functional monitoring and deterrence mechanisms, with evidence of

						actual application. Vietnam shows that sanctions are consistently enforced and that compliance monitoring is operational and effective. Thus the score improve from 60-79 to be score at above 80
		3.2.4	Management performance evaluation	<60	60-79	a. Mechanisms for evaluation (currently SG60–79, not yet SG80) Vietnam's fishery-specific management system includes both internal and external evaluation mechanisms: **Internal reviews**: • The National Tuna Management Plan (NTMP) sets performance indicators and is periodically revised using observer data, RIMF/VIFEP advice, and stakeholder feedback through the Tuna Fisheries Management Advisory Committee (TFMAC). • Annual VTFACE workshops provide a platform for reviewing catch estimates, observer findings, and management challenges with DOF, provinces, scientists, and FIP partners. • DOF is mandated under the 2017 Fisheries Law to evaluate the effectiveness of regulations, including compliance and sustainability outcomes. • Enforcement is assessed through port inspection reports, VMS compliance data, and inter-agency reviews. **External reviews:** • Vietnam's performance is reviewed annually by the WCPFC Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC) for reporting obligations and compliance with CMMs (e.g., tunas, sharks, FNA). • FIP assessments (pre-assessments, 3-year reviews, consultant audits) benchmark Vietnam's tuna and swordfish fisheries against MSC criteria.

						• The EU IUU yellow card roadmap requires ongoing reporting to the European Commission on monitoring, VMS, port controls, and transparency. These mechanisms show an increasingly structured evaluation framework. However, SG80 usually requires regular independent review at defined intervals; current reliance on ad-hoc FIP reviews and WCPFC checks suggests the system is still consolidating, which is why it remains in the 60–79 range. b. Responsiveness to evaluation (SG60–79, trending toward SG80) Vietnam has shown responsiveness to findings and recommendations: • Based on WCPFC/SPC/WWF consultations, Decree 37/2024 updated species protection lists and initiated NPOAs for turtles, marine mammals, and sharks. • DOF agreed to integrate TUFMAN 2 with the national database (VNFishbase) after gaps were identified in reporting and synchronization. • Recommendations from the MSC Pre-Assessment (2022) and FIP evaluations (e.g., better secondary species data, stronger shark protections, CMM alignment) were reflected in NTMP revisions and policy updates. This shows an active feedback loop. Still, SG80 would require more systematic and transparent documentation of responses (e.g., published performance audits, timelines for implementation). Base on the conditions above, SG60 is clearly met: mechanisms exist, and responses happen. SG80 is partially met but not fully: independent review is periodic rather than routine, and while responsiveness is

						demonstrated, the documentation and follow-through cycle is not fully institutionalized.

Environmental Workplan Results

Result	Related Action on FisheryProgress	Related MSC Performance Indicator	Explanation
Improved information available on catch for target and bycatch species, including shark and ETP interactions	Action 2: Promoting data collection in the fishery and assessment of secondary and ETP species Action 4: Raising fisher awareness on management tools and monitoring programmes	1.2.3, 2.3.3, 2.3.2, 2.1.3, 2.2.3, 2.5.3	**1. COPPA Application and Implementation** Summary of 2022 As of the 2022 audit, efforts to improve fishery-dependent data were hindered by logistical constraints such as COVID-19, limited observer coverage, and hardware issues. To compensate, the FIP had developed the Crew Observer Photographic Protocol Application (COPPA). This mobile-based platform allowed fishers to self-record catch data using geo-tagged images. Although initial trials were promising, the rollout had only reached a limited number of fishers due to pandemic-related disruptions. As a mitigation measure, the Sea Champion Video Contest (CSCVC) was launched to build interest among the fleet. The COPPA data at the time had already begun identifying key ETP species (e.g., olive ridley turtles, bigeye thresher sharks) and was considered a promising tool, though still in early stages of adoption. Expanded Progress by 2025: ● Substantial Expansion of COPPA Usage By June 2025, the COPPA program has reached over 261 fishing trips, with 12 trained observers actively participating in data collection during the first half of the year alone. Compared to earlier stages, this represents a fivefold increase in coverage since 2022. Importantly, COPPA is now implemented across all three key provinces of the FIP (Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Khanh Hoa), and the 2025 program is approaching its year-end target of 75 observed trips ● ETP-Specific Data Capture Improvements ETP interaction reporting is now integrated within the app, including fields for species condition at release, hook type used (J-hook vs. circle hook), and photo documentation. This greatly enhances the ability to verify and validate data for MSC Principle 2.3.2 and 2.3.3. Between 2023 and 2024

			alone, COPPA documented turtle encounters, nearly all marked as released alive, along with verified shark and ray interactions ● Enhanced Fisher Training and Awareness VINATUNA and partners have conducted extensive training for both new and existing observers, focusing on species identification (especially for ETPs and secondary species), photo-taking techniques, safe release practices, and proper data recording. Fisher motivation has increased, bolstered by access to smartphones and peer recognition. The program also emphasized cultural values—for example, many fishers consider turtles lucky and release them voluntarily ● Data Use for FIP and National Objectives COPPA data is now being directly used in Vietnam's Tuna Catch Estimates Workshops (VTFACE) and to support national bycatch risk assessments. The inclusion of swordfish in tuna FIP data streams has furthered coordination between the two FIPs. The data also supports TUFMAN2 integration and contributes to Vietnam's alignment with WCPFC reporting obligations. ● Technology and Reporting Enhancements In 2024, COPPA added features to capture hook types and ETP status post-capture, a significant step forward in documenting gear-specific impacts. Six vessels now report using circle hooks, aligning with bycatch mitigation best practices. This directly contributes to evaluating gear effectiveness for turtle mitigation **2. Observer Program** ● Vietnam officially launched its National Observer Program through Decision No. 456/QD-BNNMT on March 24, 2025, under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD). This legal framework establishes systematic, long-term observer deployment on offshore fishing vessels, with a strong focus on scientific monitoring and compliance verification, including bycatch and ETP species protection. ● Applicable vessels: All offshore vessels ≥15m using high-risk gear (e.g. tuna longline, handline, gillnets). ● Pilot phase: 2025–2028, gradually scaling up from partial to expanded coverage. ● In 2025, the observer program began implementation in three provinces (Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Khanh Hoa) prioritized under the FIP. ● Trip targets (2025): Group I (high-risk gears, incl. gillnets): 28–47 trips/year. Group II (handline, longline, trawl): 5–10 trips/year

			● Observers recorded data on catch composition, fishing effort, gear used, ETP interactions, and compliance measures like VMS activation and landing verification. ● Capacity Building Observer training (delivered in coordination with SPC and WCPFC) included: Identification of bycatch and ETP species (esp. turtles, mobulids, sharks); Use of standardized data forms and integration with COPPA when applicable; Handling protocols for live releases of turtles and rays; Legal compliance under Circular 24/2018 and Decree 37/2024
Risk-assessment of vulnerable species identified by COPPA	Action 2: Promoting data collection in the fishery and assessment of secondary and ETP species Action 3: Encourage the protection of sharks and turtles in the fishery	2.2.1, 2.3.1	**ETP Fisher Awareness and Trainings** VinaTuna conducted several awareness-raising campaigns for fishermen about the importance of protecting ETP species, with a particular target focusing on protecting sea turtles. Although primarily focused on environmental (ETP) issues, these portside meetings provide an opportunity to share the Public Policy statement, including sharing its online link (Note: This link was also shared/announced to FIP stakeholders at various meetings and workshops, including informal opportunities, since its completion in 2023). An estimated 30-50 fishers or processor staff were engaged through this series in formal and informal workshops, training and meetings. (**please see Annex 04**)
Progress towards swordfish regional harvest strategy	Action 1: Promoting the improvement of fishery management policies and practices	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3, 3.2.1, 3.2.4	**2025 Update** Since 2022, substantial regional progress has been achieved in the development of a harvest strategy for North Pacific swordfish under the auspices of the WCPFC. Specifically: Adoption of a Formal Harvest Strategy by WCPFC16: In December 2019, the WCPFC officially adopted a Harvest Strategy for North Pacific Swordfish Fisheries (Attachment K, WCPFC16). This strategy establishes F_{MSY} as the limit reference point (F_{limit}), and mandates that the Northern Committee (NC) shall formulate conservation and management recommendations should fishing mortality exceed this limit. Strategy Components: ● Management Objective: Sustain thriving swordfish fisheries while maintaining stock biomass at levels capable of producing MSY. ● Reference Points: F_{MSY} has been established as F_{limit}; development of F_{target} and B_{target} is pending. ● Monitoring & Review: The ISC is tasked with periodic stock assessments and review every four years.

			● Decision Rules: If F exceeds F_{limit}, management measures must be implemented swiftly. ● Performance Evaluation: Further refinement of TRPs and HCRs will undergo Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) jointly between NC, ISC, and the SC. Vietnam FIP Contributions: Collaborating with WPEA and SPC on data collection improvements and presentation of swordfish-related data at the ISC and SC meetings.
Improving gear to reduce bycatch	Action 3: Encourage the protection of sharks and turtles in the fishery	2.2.2, 2.3.2	Since April 2024, fishermen have been able to enter the kind of hook they use —J for traditional hooks or Circle hooks. Additionally, this equipment also allows fishers to record the ETP status after encountered events whether or not it is released. This data provides very important insights into the utility of C-hooks in mitigating ETP bycatch. The revised national Tuna Management Plan (TMP) has incorporated stronger language on bycatch management, following technical review and feedback from stakeholders including VINATUNA and WWF. The TMP is still in the approval process, awaiting formal approval from the MARD Minister, and is expected to be officially signed in Q3 2024
Requirement to land sharks fins naturally attached	Action 3: Encourage the protection of sharks and turtles in the fishery	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.4	As part of its broader mission to promote responsible and ethical fishing practices, VINATUNA conducted a targeted outreach campaign to introduce and advocate for the adoption of the Voluntary Code of Conduct on Preventing Shark Finning; Protecting Marine Mammals and Endangered Species in Tuna Fisheries (hereafter referred to as “the Code”). This campaign focused on mobilizing key stakeholders in the tuna supply chain, including: tuna processing enterprises, fishing fleet groups and cooperatives representing offshore tuna vessel crews. The Code outlines key commitments such as: ● Prohibiting the capture, trade, and processing of shark species, marine mammals, and other endangered species; ● Promoting the implementation of the Fins Naturally Attached (FNA) policy on tuna fishing vessels; ● Strengthening reporting, handling and rescue skills, accountability and awareness along the tuna supply chain. Confirmed Signatories (as of June 2025): ● 1 Fishing Cooperative – Ward 4, Phu Yen (60 fishers) ● 1 Fishing Cooperative – Vinh Truong, Khanh Hoa (50 fishers) ● 15 Tuna Processing Companies The initiative was met with strong consensus and support. All signatories expressed a firm commitment to:

			• Integrate the Code into their business practices; • Communicate compliance expectations to suppliers and vessel operators; • Contribute to the broader efforts of marine biodiversity protection and responsible tuna sourcing . The Code, along with the list of signatories, has been formally submitted to the Directorate of Fisheries and the Fisheries Surveillance Authority for official recordkeeping. This serves as evidence of Vietnam's practical commitment to protecting sharks, marine mammals, and endangered species. It also contributes to ongoing policy advocacy efforts, particularly in support of incorporating the FNA requirement into national regulations. Please refer to Annex 05 for copies of the signed Voluntary Code of Conduct.

Supporting References

Provide a list of references that are referred to within this document.

Annex 01: Tuna Data collection 2024

Tuna data collection in 2024

No	Province	Landed catch sampling	Biological sampling	Fishing logbook	Total
1	Khanh Hoa	2378	225	2378	4981
2	Quang Nam	1400	280	738	2418
3	Quang Ngai	521	47	521	1089
4	Binh Dinh	11178	444	11066	22688
5	Phu Yen	642	0	2909	3551
6	Ninh Thuan	400	19	374	793
7	Binh Thuan	660	60	660	1380
8	Ba Ria - Vung Tau	0	0	804	804
9	Tien Giang	450	120	450	1020
10	Thua Thien - Hue			531	531
11	Quang Tri	N/a			
12	Da nang	N/a			
13	Total	17629	1195	20431	39255

	Tuna sampling in Vietnam					
No	Province	Gears	Landed catch sampling	Biological sampling	Fishing logbook	Total
1	Khanh Hoa	Longline	0	0	0	0
		Handline	916	106	916	1938
		Purse seine	155	9	155	319
		Gillnet	1307	110	1307	2724
		Total 2024	2378	225	2378	4981
2	Quang Nam	Gears	Landed catch sampling	Biological sampling	Fishing logbook	Total
		Longline	0	0	0	0
		Handline	0	0	0	0
		Purse seine	1400	280	738	2418
		Gillnet	0	0	0	0
		Total 2024	1400	280	738	2418
3	Quang Ngai	Gears	Landed catch sampling	Biological sampling	Fishing logbook	Total
		All gears	521	47	521	1089
		Total 2024				1089
4	Binh Dinh	Fishing ports	Landed catch sampling	Biological sampling	Fishing logbook	Total
		Quy Nhon	2100	444	2100	4644
		Tam Quan	9078	0	8966	18044
		Total 2024	11178	444	11066	22688
5	Phu Yen	Fishing ports	Landed catch sampling	Biological sampling	Fishing logbook	Total
		Phu Lac	642	0	549	1191
		Dong Tac	0	0	1911	1911
		Tien Chau	0	0	449	449
		Total 2024	642	0	2909	3551
6	Ninh Thuan	Gears	Landed catch sampling	Biological sampling	Fishing logbook	Total
		Purse seine	150	14	150	314
		Gillnet	250	5	224	479
		Total 2024	400	19	374	793
7	Binh Thuan	Gears	Landed catch sampling	Biological sampling	Fishing logbook	Total
		All gears	660	60	660	1380
8	Ba Ria - Vung Tau	Gears	Landed catch sampling	Biological sampling	Fishing logbook	Total
		All gears	0	0	804	804
9	Tien Giang	Gears	Landed catch sampling	Biological sampling	Fishing logbook	Total
		Purse seine	450	120	450	1020
10	Thua Thien - Hue	Gears	Landed catch sampling	Biological sampling	Fishing logbook	Total
		All gears			531	531
11	Quang Tri	N/a				
12	Da Nang	N/a				

Source: VTFACE 14, 2024, WPEA project

Annex 02: Handline species catch and species composition

Table 7: Total tuna catches in Vietnam's EEZ estimated for tuna handline by species in 2024

Provinces	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total of tuna catches in 2024 (tons)															
					TUNAS										BILLFISH					Shark	Total 2024
					BET	*YFT*	*SKJ*	*ALB*	*LOT*	*KAW*	*FRI*	*BLT*	*DOT*	*BIP*	*BLM*	*BUM*	*MLS*	*SWO*	*OTH*		
Quang Tri	10	10,0	5,0	0,0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0,0**
Thua Thien Hue	0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
Da Nang	0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
Quang Nam	0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
Quang Ngai	1.250	1.442,7	2.155,9	1.358,8	0,5	1.417,5	2,5	15,6	0,0	0,0	0,0	20,4	0,0	0,0	45,7	0,0	0,0	25,2	5,0	0,0	**1.532,4**
Binh Dinh	10.350	11.585,0	11.940,0	13.047,0	1.078,0	12.027	0	77	0	0	0	0	0	0	286	0	0	558	0	0	**14.026,0**
Phu Yen	3.100	3.325,7	3.244,9	4.095,0	45,4	3.691,0	0,5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	36,7	0	0	129,4	0,7	0,0	**3.903,7**
Khanh Hoa	2.096	3.112,0	1.195,1	2.154,1	0,6	2.005,7	0,0	0,0	3,3	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	73,9	0,0	0,0	133,5	13,5	0,0	**2.230,5**
Ninh Thuan	0	724,6	0,0	0,0	0	0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0	0,0	0	**0,0**
Binh Thuan	0	87,0	367,0	691,2	0,0	0,0	0,0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,0	0	0	0	0	0	0,0	**0,0**
Ba Ria-Vung Tau	0	84,0	0,0	0,0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
Tien Giang	0	0,2	0,0	0,0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,0	**0,0**
Total	**16.806**	**20.371**	**18.908**	**21.346**	**1.124,5**	**19.141,2**	**3**	**93**	**3,3**	**0**	**0**	**20**	**0**	**0**	**442,3**	**0**	**0**	**846,1**	**19,2**	**0**	**21.692,6**

Figure 7: Total tuna catches for tuna handline by species in 2024

Annex 03

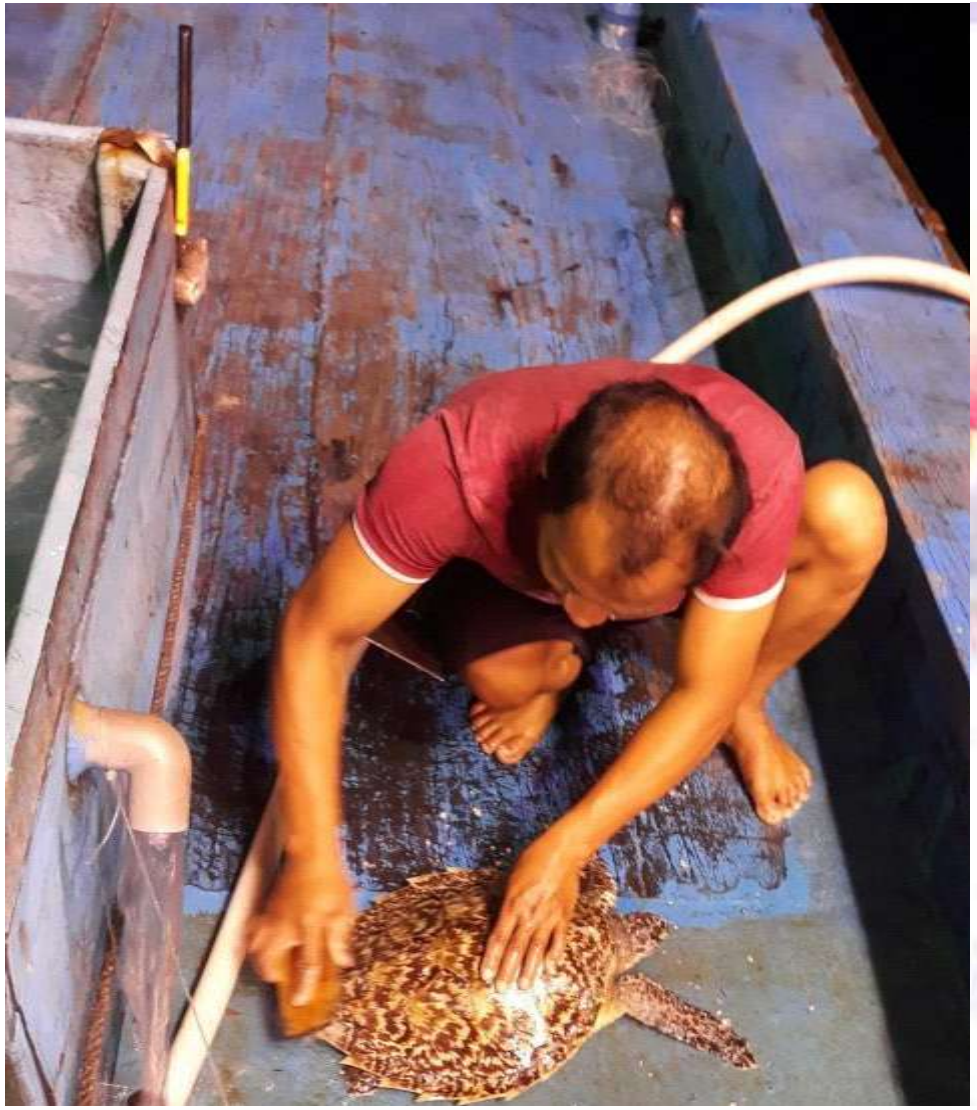
As of June 2025, COPPA has recorded over 261 tuna handline fishing trips observed, averaging 52.2 trips per year. These observations were primarily conducted by fishermen in Binh Dinh and Khanh Hoa, under the coordination of VINATUNA and with support from stakeholders such as WWF, RLF, and Sea Delight. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the program faced delays in 2021 and early 2022, leading to a temporary decrease in coverage. Subsequently, with strong support from stakeholders, VINATUNA has promoted the implementation of COPPA through new recruitment, thereby increasing the number of observed trips —73 trips in 2023 and 67 in 2024—moving steadily toward the target of 80 trips by the end of 2025.

The COPPA program from March to June 2025 is involving with 12 captains participating in 24 fishing trips. The total catch volume reached nearly 26.660,5 MT, dominated by Yellowfin Tuna, followed by Bigeye Tuna and Swordfish. A variety of other pelagic species were also recorded in smaller quantities. Currently, it still being implementing with the goal of 75 trips in the end of this years.

No.	Specie	CODE	Catch volume (kg)	Percentage	CPUE (kg/month)
1	Yellowfin Tuna	YFT	20.459,1	76,7%	852,5
2	Bigeye Tuna	BET	2756	10,3%	114,8
3	Skipjack	SKJ	7	0,0%	0,3
4	Swordfish	SWO	1.673	6,3%	69,7
5	Blue Marlin	BUM	430	1,6%	17,9
6	Black Marlin	BLM	179	0,7%	7,5
7	Stripped Marlin	MLS	240	0,9%	10,0
8	Great barracuda	GBA	104,5	0,4%	4,4
9	Snake Mackerel	GES	18	0,1%	0,8
10	Wahoo	WAH	116	0,4%	4,8
11	King Mackerel	KGM	113	0,4%	4,7
12	Mahi	DOL	214,5	0,8%	8,9
13	Escolar	LEC	49	0,2%	2,0
14	Long snouted lancetfish	ALX	11	0,0%	0,5
15	Rays		2	0,0%	0,1
16	Turtles		37	0,1%	1,5
17	Others		251,4	0,9%	10,5
Total			**26.660,5**	**100%**	**1110,9**

Source: COPPA 2025 report

Annex 4. ETPs incidentally encountered events and releasing



Other bycatch


DỰ ÁN CẢI THIỆN NGHỀ CÂU CÁ NGỪ VIỆT NAM
VIETNAM YELLOWFIN TUNA FISHERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
BẢO VỆ
RÙA BIỂN
SỬ DỤNG
Lưới câu vòng
để hạn chế
RÙA BIỂN mắc câu
Một cá thể đồi mồi chưa mắc câu được tàu KH 98246 TS sơ cứu và thả về biển
trong chương trình quan sát viên COFPA 2023


HÃY BẢO VỆ
CÁ MẬP & CÁ ĐUỐI
CÙNG NHAU HƯỚNG ĐẾN NGHỀ CÁ CÓ TRÁCH NHIỆM
Vietnam Yellowfin Tuna Fishery Improvement Project


SẢN VIỆT NAM QUANG VINH MUÔN NĂM

Annex 05 – Shark Voluntary Code of Conduct (CoC)

BỘ QUY TẮC ỨNG XỬ TỰ NGUYỆN

VOLUNTARY CODE OF CONDUCT

Số/ No: 12.02.2025

Về việc Ngăn chặn Hoạt động Cắt Vây Cá Mập; Bảo vệ Động vật có vú biển & Các loài Nguy cấp trong Khai thác Cá Ngừ/ *On Preventing Shark Finning; Protecting Marine Mammals and Endangered Species in Tuna Fisheries*

1. Giới thiệu/ Introduction

Bộ Quy tắc Ứng xử Tự nguyện (CoC) này nhằm thiết lập một khuôn khổ cho ngành khai thác cá ngừ có trách nhiệm, ngăn chặn việc cắt vây cá mập và bảo vệ các loài động vật có vú biển cũng như các loài nguy cấp. CoC này được xây dựng nhằm thúc đẩy sự hợp tác giữa các nhà chế biến, ngư dân và cơ quan quản lý chính phủ trong việc thực hiện các phương thức khai thác bền vững và đạo đức.

This Voluntary Code of Conduct (CoC) aims to establish a framework for responsible tuna fisheries, preventing shark finning and protecting marine mammals as well as endangered species. This CoC is developed to foster collaboration among processors, fishers, and government regulatory bodies in implementing sustainable and ethical fishing practices.

2. Phạm vi áp dụng/ Scope

Bộ Quy tắc này áp dụng cho tất cả các bên liên quan tham gia vào hoạt động khai thác cá ngừ, bao gồm nhưng không giới hạn đối với:

- Cộng đồng ngư dân
- Các nhà nhà máy chế biến cá ngừ
- Các tổ chức phi chính phủ (NGO) và các nhóm bảo tồn khác

This Code applies to all stakeholders involved in tuna fishing activities, including but not limited to:

- *Tuna fishers communities*
- *Tuna processing companies*
- *NGOs and other conservation groups*

3. Nguyên tắc & Cam kết/ Principles & Commitments

3.1. Cấm Cắt Vây Cá Mập/ *Ban on Shark Finning*

- Tất cả các bên ký kết cam kết thực hiện lệnh cấm hoàn toàn đối với việc cắt vây cá mập. Bất kỳ con cá mập nào bị bắt không chủ đích (bycatch) phải được đưa lên bờ với vây gắn tự nhiên xuống theo quy định (Fins Naturally Attached - FNA).
- Cấm tuyệt đối việc cắt vây cá mập trên biển và loại bỏ thân cá xuống nước.
- Các tàu khai thác và nhà chế biến không được tham gia hoặc hỗ trợ việc buôn bán vây cá mập.
- Tuân thủ các quy định khu vực và quốc tế hiện hành về bảo vệ cá mập và (Ví dụ: IOTC, WCPFC, CITES).

- All signatories commit to a complete ban on shark finning. Any captured bycatch sharks must be landed with fins naturally according to Fins Naturally Attached (FNA). The practice of shark finning, which involves removing fins at sea and discarding the body, is strictly prohibited.
- Fishing vessels and processors shall not engage in or support the trade of shark fins.
- Compliance with existing regional and international regulations (e.g., IOTC, WCPFC, CITES) on shark protection and FNA.

3.2. Bảo vệ Động vật có vú Biển & Các loài Nguy cấp/ Protection of Marine Mammals & Endangered Species

- Thực hiện các phương pháp tốt nhất để tránh đánh bắt không chủ đích nhằm động vật có vú biển, rùa biển và các loài nguy cấp khác.
- Chỉ sử dụng ngư cụ và kỹ thuật khai thác có chọn lọc nhằm giảm thiểu tác động đến các loài không phải mục tiêu.
- Thả ngay lập tức bất kỳ loài nguy cấp nào bị mắc vào lưới theo các phương pháp xử lý tốt nhất.

Protection of Marine Mammals & Endangered Species
- Implement best practices to avoid bycatch of marine mammals, sea turtles, and other endangered species.
- Use only selective fishing gear and techniques that minimize harm to non-target species.
- Immediate release of any endangered species caught accidentally, following best handling practices.

3.3. Giám sát & Báo cáo/ *Monitoring & Reporting*

- Ngư dân và nhà chế biến phải ghi chép và báo cáo bất kỳ sự tương tác nào với cá mập, động vật có vú biển hoặc các loài nguy cấp; ghi chép đầy đủ bao gồm loài, số lượng, kích thước, biện pháp xử lý thả về biển, xác nhận vây vẫn gắn tự nhiên trước khi đưa về bờ.

- Báo cáo minh bạch với cơ quan quản lý và tuân thủ các chương trình quan sát viên hoặc giám sát điện tử khi áp dụng (ví dụ: nhật ký khai thác, các phần mềm thu thập dữ liệu trên biển (the Crew Observer Photographic Protocol Application (COPPA); nhật ký khai thác điện tử, etc).

- Fishers and processors must document and report any interactions with sharks, marine mammals, or endangered species, including full records of species, quantity, size, release handling measures, and verification that fins remain naturally attached before landing.

- Transparent reporting to regulatory authorities and compliance with observer programs or electronic monitoring systems when applicable (e.g., fishing logbooks, at-sea data collection software such as the Crew Observer Photographic Protocol Application (COPPA), electronic logbooks, etc.).

3.4. Cam kết tham gia các hoạt động vận động chính sách, nâng cao nhận thức/ Commitment to Policy Advocacy and Awareness-Raising Activities

- Hiệp hội cá ngừ Việt Nam cùng với các Doanh nghiệp tham gia vận động, đóng góp ý kiến trong việc xây dựng các quy định nghiêm ngặt hơn trong việc cắt vây cá mập và bảo vệ các loài thú biển, nguy cấp, quý hiếm.
- Các nhà chế biến và ngư dân phải tham gia đào tạo định kỳ về các thực hành tốt về các quy định về vây cá mập (FNA), bảo tồn các loài thú biển và động vật có nguy cơ tuyệt chủng.
- Các chiến dịch nâng cao nhận thức cộng đồng sẽ được thực hiện để thúc đẩy các phương thức khai thác có trách nhiệm.

- The Vietnam Tuna Association, together with enterprises, engages in advocacy efforts and provides input in the development of stricter regulations on shark finning and the protection of marine mammals, endangered, and rare species.
- Processors and fishers must participate in regular training sessions on best practices related to shark fin regulations (FNA), the conservation of marine mammals, and the protection of endangered species.
- Community awareness campaigns will be conducted to promote responsible fishing practices with support and contribution of tuna processing companies.

4. Thực hiện & Tuân thủ/ Implementation & Compliance

- Tất cả các bên ký kết đồng ý đưa các cam kết này vào chính sách hoạt động của họ.
- Vi phạm có thể dẫn đến việc bị loại khỏi các chương trình bền vững tự nguyện hoặc các sáng kiến chứng nhận như Vietnam Yellowfin Tuna FIP, Vietnam Yellowfin Tuna MSC, etc).

Implementation & Compliance
- All signatories agree to incorporate these commitments into their operational policies.

- Non-compliance may result in removal from voluntary sustainability programs or certification initiatives (Vietnam Yellowfin Tuna FIP, Vietnam Yellowfin Tuna MSC, etc).

5. Cam kết Tuân thủ/ Commitment Statement

Là một bên ký kết Bộ Quy tắc ứng xử Tự nguyện này, tôi/chúng tôi cam kết:

- **KHÔNG khai thác, thu mua, trao đổi hoặc sử dụng cá mập, vây cá mập, động vật có vú biển hoặc bất kỳ loài nguy cấp nào trong hoạt động khai thác cá ngừ.**
- **Tuân thủ và Thực hiện các phương thức khai thác có trách nhiệm nhằm bảo vệ đa dạng sinh học biển và tuân thủ tất cả các quy định bảo tồn liên quan.**
- **Nhận thức rằng việc không tuân thủ Bộ Quy tắc này có thể dẫn đến việc bị loại khỏi các chương trình chứng nhận và các hoạt động cải thiện bền vững (Vietnam Yellowfin Tuna FIP, Vietnam Yellowfin Tuna MSC, etc).**

Commitment Statement
- I/We pledge NOT to catch, purchase, trade, or use sharks, shark fins, marine mammals, or any endangered species in tuna fishing activities.
- I/We commit to implementing responsible fishing practices that protect marine biodiversity and comply with all relevant conservation regulations.
- I/We acknowledge that failure to comply with this Code may result in exclusion from voluntary sustainability initiatives and certification programs (Vietnam Yellowfin Tuna FIP, Vietnam Yellowfin Tuna MSC, etc).

Chữ ký / Signature:

Chủ tịch Hiệp hội Cá Ngừ Việt Nam

BAN CHẤP HÀNH

VŨ ĐÌNH ĐẠP

Ngày / Date: 12/02/2025

CỘNG HÒA XÃ HỘI CHỦ NGHĨA VIỆT NAM
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM
Độc lập – Tự do – Hạnh phúc
Independence – Freedom – Happiness

GIẤY CAM KẾT TUÂN THỦ BỘ QUY TẮC TỰ NGUYỆN
LETTER OF COMMITMENT TO COMPLY WITH THE VOLUNTARY CODE OF CONDUCT

(Về việc Ngăn chặn Hoạt động Cắt Vây Cá Mập; Bảo vệ Động vật có vú biển & Các loài Nguy cấp trong Khai thác Cá Ngừ/ *On Preventing Shark Finning; Protecting Marine Mammals and Endangered Species in Tuna Fisheries*)

Kính gửi/ To: HIỆP HỘI CÁ NGỪ VIỆT NAM/
VIETNAM TUNA ASSOCIATION

Tôi, người đại diện của tên Doanh nghiệp/ Tổ chức/ *I, the representative of the name of the Business/Organization:* HONG NGOC SEAFOOD COMPANY LIMITED

Thông tin cụ thể như sau/ *Specific information is as follows:*

- Họ và tên/ *Full name:* TRAN THI HONG NGOC
- Chức vụ/ *Duty:* DIRECTOR
- Tên Doanh nghiệp/ Tổ chức/ *Name of Business/Organization:* HONG NGOC SEAFOOD COMPANY LIMITED
- Địa chỉ/ *Address:* Lot B3- Hua Hiep Industrial Zone – Hua Hiep Bac Ward - Dong Hoa Town – PhuYen Province – Vietnam
- Số điện thoại liên lạc/ *Phone Number:* 0257.3548.333
- Email: info@hongngocseafood.com

Sau khi nghiên cứu nội dung Bộ quy tắc ứng xử tự nguyện số: 12.02.2025 do Hiệp hội Cá ngừ Việt Nam ban hành ngày 12 tháng 2 năm 2025 về việc ngăn chặn hoạt động cắt vây cá mập; bảo vệ động vật có vú biển & các loài nguy cấp trong khai thác cá ngừ, Tôi xin cam kết thực hiện đúng những nội dung trong Bộ Quy tắc ứng xử tự nguyện do Hiệp hội cá ngừ Việt Nam ban hành. Nếu vi phạm, tôi xin chịu mọi trách nhiệm theo quy định của đơn vị ban hành Bộ quy tắc./.
After reviewing the content of the Voluntary Code of Conduct No. 12.02.2025, issued by the Vietnam Tuna Association on February 12, 2025, on Preventing Shark Finning; Protecting Marine Mammals & Endangered Species in Tuna Fisheries, I hereby commit to fully complying with the provisions outlined in this Voluntary Code of Conduct issued by the Vietnam Tuna Association. In the event of any violation, I accept full responsibility as stipulated by the issuing entity of this Code.

Phu Yen, ngày (day) 19 tháng (month) 2 năm (year) 2025
Người cam kết/ Committer
(ký, ghi rõ họ tên, đóng dấu nếu có)
(signed, clearly written full name, stamped if any)

CÔNG TY TNHH THỦY SẢN HONG NGOC

Tran Thi Hong Ngoc

CỘNG HÒA XÃ HỘI CHỦ NGHĨA VIỆT NAM
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM
Độc lập – Tự do – Hạnh phúc
Independence – Freedom – Happiness

GIẤY CAM KẾT TUÂN THỦ BỘ QUY TẮC TỰ NGUYỆN
LETTER OF COMMITMENT TO COMPLY WITH THE VOLUNTARY CODE OF CONDUCT

(Về việc Ngăn chặn Hoạt động Cắt Vây Cá Mập; Bảo vệ Động vật có vú biển & Các loài Nguy cấp trong Khai thác Cá Ngừ/ *On Preventing Shark Finning; Protecting Marine Mammals and Endangered Species in Tuna Fisheries*)

Kính gửi/ To: HIỆP HỘI CÁ NGỪ VIỆT NAM/
VIETNAM TUNA ASSOCIATION

Tôi, người đại diện của tên Doanh nghiệp/ Tổ chức/ *I, the representative of the name of the Business/Organization:* Nghiệp dàn nghề cá phường 4

Thông tin cụ thể như sau/ *Specific information is as follows:*

- Họ và tên/ *Full name:* Phan Thuần
- Chức vụ/ *Duty:* Chủ tịch Nghiệp đoàn
- Tên Doanh nghiệp/ Tổ chức/ *Name of Business/Organization:*
- Địa chỉ/ *Address:* Phường 4, TP Tuy Hòa, tỉnh Phú Yên
- Số điện thoại liên lạc/ *Phone Number:* 0836022490
- Email:

Sau khi nghiên cứu nội dung **Bộ quy tắc ứng xử tự nguyện số: 12.02.2025** do Hiệp hội Cá ngừ Việt Nam ban hành ngày 12 tháng 2 năm 2025 về **việc ngăn chặn hoạt động cắt vây cá mập; bảo vệ động vật có vú biển & các loài nguy cấp trong khai thác cá ngừ**, Tôi xin cam kết thực hiện đúng những nội dung trong Bộ Quy tắc ứng xử tự nguyện do Hiệp hội cá ngừ Việt Nam ban hành. Nếu vi phạm, tôi xin chịu mọi trách nhiệm theo quy định của đơn vị ban hành Bộ quy tắc./.
After reviewing the content of the **Voluntary Code of Conduct No. 12.02.2025**, issued by the Vietnam Tuna Association on February 12, 2025, on **Preventing Shark Finning; Protecting Marine Mammals & Endangered Species in Tuna Fisheries**, I hereby commit to fully complying with the provisions outlined in this Voluntary Code of Conduct issued by the Vietnam Tuna Association. In the event of any violation, I accept full responsibility as stipulated by the issuing entity of this Code.

..Phường 4.., ngày (day) 12 tháng (month) 2 năm (year) 2025
Người cam kết/ Committer
(ký, ghi rõ họ tên, đóng dấu nếu có)
(signed, clearly written full name, stamped if any)

Phan Thuần

the Voluntary Code of Conduct on Preventing Shark Finning; Protecting Marine Mammals and Endangered Species in Tuna Fisheries

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