

# Tuna Market Intelligence

Issue 59, September 18, 2017

*Your fortnightly report on trends and influencers on the global tuna market from the Pacific Islands.*

## MARKET UPDATE

Skipjack prices in Bangkok are US\$2,150 per metric ton.

## INFLUENCERS REPORT

### MSC determines PNA should be recertified

The Certification Body of the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) determined that PNA Western and Central Pacific Skipjack and Yellowfin, Unassociated/ NonFAD Set, Tuna Purse Seine fishery should be re-certified. The final report is available on the MSC website at [msc.org](http://msc.org).

PNA is scheduled to be re-certified once the final consultation period has concluded on September 26 and a new certificate has been issued.

### MSC invites input on several topics, including chain of custody

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) invites stakeholders to participate in a 30-day consultation, which began Sept. 1, regarding several topics. Included are proposed improvements and developments to MSC's chain of custody standard and fishery requirement. MSC encourages feedback on options they have developed regarding the concerns stakeholders have voiced over vessels that fish both certified and non-certified catch within a single fishing trip. Independent experts across the seafood and conservation communities, including science, industry and NGOs worked to develop the options.

MSC states that "Input to these consultations will inform revisions to the MSC Fishery Certification Requirements and Chain of Custody Standard scheduled for release in late 2018," and "All consultation responses will be published anonymously in full along with the MSC's responses."

Other topics include, harmonization requirements, fishery suspension processes, streamlining the MSC fisheries assessment process, fisheries process improvements, auditor personnel competencies, ISO 19011 training requirements, chain of custody program review, and a new standard to assure traceability for ingredients associated with the ASC Feed Standard.

For further details see the MSC website at [msc.org](http://msc.org).

Consultations run from Sept 1-30 and can accessed at [improvements.msc.org](http://improvements.msc.org).

### MSC's Peer College up and running

Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), which currently certifies more than 300 fisheries in 35 countries, formalized a peer college beginning September 1 as a means of strengthening their review process. The peer college will help provide greater transparency and thus more credibility with MSC stakeholders. There are currently fifty marine science and fisheries management experts enrolled in the college.

SeafoodSource quoted Dan Hoggarth, Head of Standards Governance for MSC as saying the college will help to centralize tracking and serve to improve the performance of peer reviews. "Peer review of an independent certifier's initial assessment of a fishery is an important part of the MSC assessment process, ensuring that decisions are based on evidence, and that all information is considered in an impartial and accurate way."

All reviewers have a minimum of five years experience in fisheries or marine conservation management or research and have been trained on the MSC Fisheries Standard. They are required to report conflicts of interest related to review assessment.

### Concern group challenges PNA certification

On the Hook, a concerned group that represents retailers, industry, academics and NGO's, has criticized the Marine Stewardship Council for planning to re-certify PNA. On the Hook argues that a fishing vessel should not be allowed to have both certified and non-certified catch in the same trip, a practice currently allowable with vessels in PNA waters. Currently, a free-school catch and a catch using fish aggregating devices (FADs) can be aboard a purse-seiner at the same time. On the Hook's stance is that this practice is unsustainable, that it is counteractive to the MSC's statement that "When you see seafood with the blue MSC label, you can be sure it comes from a sustainable fishery."

PNA's current MSC certification is for FAD-free yellowfin and skipjack. The standard is "founded on three

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principles: healthy fish stocks, sustainable impact on the wider marine environment, and effective fishery management” according to what MSC reported to Undercurrent.

MSC has launched a 30-day consultation to address the concerns and will have a recommendation to the MSC board in January 2018. Meanwhile David Agnew, MSC Science and Standards Director, went on record saying, “Third-party scrutiny, independence, impartiality and stakeholder consultation are central to the MSC’s values and commitment to continually improve and maintain – world leading standards. Shoppers and diners can continue to feel confident when buying seafood bearing our label that it has been caught responsibly and is fully traceable to a sustainable source.”

## **Pacifical explains: How Our Multilevel CoC Assures You Get MSC Free School Tuna**

Assuring that you, as our partners, can always be fully confident that Pacifical co-branded free school tuna is caught in a sustainable way, and fully meets the MSC criteria, going even above and beyond CoC standards, has always been at the forefront of our efforts, since we started in 2010.

PNA and Pacifical probably have one of the most complex supply chain and Chain of Custodies (CoC) in existence, within an area 40% bigger than Europe, where many seiners and reefer carriers transship in many different ports and move catch to several destinations to process. We are very proud of our strict multi-level systems, with many strict filters, checks, balances and controls run by PNA at-sea and Pacifical. In order to make it easier to understand we have now made a comprehensive overview on just one sheet, which tells you exactly how it all works: [click here](#) to check it out.

>>By the way – never forget this: Our Pacifical tuna is only MSC certified after it has successfully passed our many CoC checkpoints. Before that it is just “eligible” for certification, if confirmed as free school up until then!! <<

Some people mistakenly think we just rely on captain declarations or our independent on-board observers. This is WRONG! To protect observer safety the observer’s role is just to observe and record, and in fact PNA has many other controls in place based upon industry and other document trails. This is in addition to the fully confidential observer reports and independent analysis of

their data in-port.

PNA is also using positional satellite data of vessel movements to verify if fishing is in the MSC UOA/UOC area, as well as captain log sheets, observer records, commercial documents, photos at all stages, and strictly supervised transshipments, discharge monitoring, grading and sorting prior to cold store entry, which all form part of the PNA CoC. For example you can determine quite accurately by the composition of the catch, size, by-catch species etc., if this was really from a free school set and that MSC eligible can legitimately become MSC certified.

Did you know that presence of a pufferfish for example is absolute grounds to disqualify a batch being claimed as from a free school set? They just can’t swim fast enough to be in a school and they need structure in nature to hide.

Pacifical CoC continues from the PNA certifying the MSC certified batch in the cold store through to processing and retail. Each batch and can is traceable, and is also audited.

As you know traceability and full transparency are a key part of the service we provide at Pacifical; that’s why all our PNA MSC certified tuna carries the prestigious MSC and Pacifical logos and can be traced back online from shelf to sea. This provides not only a platform to promote the sustainability of the product, but also the health aspects from tuna and the pristine PNA ecosystem it comes from in the Pacific. This remains unrivalled in the trade.

Originally published by Pacifical on August 31st, 2017. The article may be accessed at

<http://pacifical.com/articles/00106.html>

## **Fishing activity in PNA waters**

Purse-seine fishing has been spread across the PNA Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) since January 2017. The main fishing concentration in the first quarter was towards the west in Papua New Guinea’s EEZs, as well as those of Federated States of Micronesia and Solomon Islands and Nauru. From April to June, fishing was mainly seen towards the east around Kiribati, Nauru, Marshall Islands and Tuvalu. Current fishing activity is mainly in the EEZs of Kiribati and Marshall Islands in the east and now includes the Solomon Islands in the west, indicating movement of tuna to the west.

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## **Increasing economic returns and sustainable management addressed at 48<sup>th</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Meeting, Apia, Samoa**

Increasing economic returns and sustainable management was a common thread through several parts of the Pacific Island Forum Leaders' Meeting, including the opening remarks by Dr. Sa'ilele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister of Samoa and Chair of the 48th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, PNA, World Bank and Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea Peter O'Neill. The meeting was held in Apia, Samoa, September 4-8.

In his opening remarks Dr. Malielegaoi referred to "rights on Pacific Island communities relating to the use of the ocean and its resources" and continued saying, "With these rights come responsibilities, especially for sustainable development, management and conservation of the ocean's living resources and for the protection of the ocean environment and its biodiversity." Later in his speech he reflected that "in 2016, Leaders, under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism called for regional, priority action, to increase economic returns from the region's shared fisheries resources, endorsed the Fisheries Roadmap, as well as emphasized coastal fisheries for the sustainable management of such resources that are critical for the wellbeing, livelihoods, and resilience of Pacific Peoples."

These themes were addressed further in a PNA presentation titled, "The Blue Pacific – A Sea Of Commerce Challenges And Opportunities."

Sobering statistics presented included facts that at least 4 out of 5 fish from domestic purse seiners are processed, not on the island in whose waters the fish were caught, but in Asia, and that 2/3 of all PNA processing jobs are in Asia as well, taking away from island work forces and economies. PNA plants run, on average, at about 1/3 declared capacity even though the domestic catch exceeds the potential processing capacity even at 100%.

Responding to issues regarding how to keep the fisheries jobs and financial gains local, several solutions were offered.

Compliance should be rewarded by offering rebates to companies that process the fish locally, but only after all boats have paid foreign fees for licenses. Innovative ways to finance local participation on a level field should be explored. Boats that have been licensed should not be

allowed to fish the high seas. In addition, all resources should be used, including bycatch. Also, non-PNA island nations should look to establish a sub-regional group to look at the albacore longline fishery, using what PNA has done for skipjack purse seining as a model. Furthermore, jobs both at sea and shore can be terms for licensing, even from the foreign sector, and finally, labor mobility can be increased.

When World Bank presented their report, Pacific Possible, urging Pacific nations to grow wages and create jobs; fisheries were again addressed in conjunction with increasing economic returns and sustainable management. According to Radio NZ, noting poor economic growth among the Pacific nations over the last 20 years, the World Bank is "urging policy reform and targeted investment in tourism, labour mobility, sustainable fisheries and communications technology to turn the tide by 2040." The World Bank forecasts "fisheries could net an extra \$US300 million (\$A376 million) by 2040 without an increase in catch levels or threats to the sustainability of fish stocks." According to Radio NZ "This would translate to a lift in incomes in Kiribati and Tuvalu by about 50 percent."

Papua New Guinea is working on measures that will keep their resources at home. Gorethy Kenneth, of PNG's Post Courier reported that PNG Prime Minister O'Neill addressed the forum, telling leaders "the Government reached a point where enough was enough, and is now making deliberate interventions where exploitation is taking place." O'Neill continued, "We are now changing the dynamics of the fisheries sector in our country so that we do not let foreign companies take away the wealth and simply leave breadcrumbs behind."

"We are getting behind our fisheries sector to stimulate growth in onshore fish processing."

"This proactive approach is creating thousands of jobs, increasing revenue and providing jobs for young fishermen."

"In the Pacific we are small in population, but we can be very influential when we work together in the global community."

## **Marshall Islands transshipment hits monthly high for 2017**

The Marshall Islands Journal reports Tuna transshipment

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activity in Majuro's lagoon spiked in July and August, with the highest monthly total for 2017 to date.

The A total of 101 tuna transshipments took place in this two-month period, bumping this year's total to 306. This puts Majuro on track for over 460 transshipments for 2017, a solid but not record-breaking year. In 2016, 561 transshipments were recorded in Majuro.

Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority statistics show that there were 12 carrier vessels accepting tuna from 40 purse seiners during July, while the numbers bumped 10 18 and 48, respectively, in August. A total of 44 transshipments were recorded by MIMRA in July and 57, the highest so far in 2017, in August.

The heaviest usage of Port Majuro was by Taiwan purse seiners, with 30 over the two months in port. Taiwan boats were followed in number by US purse seiners, which saw 15 here during July-August. Numerous other flags used Port Majuro during the same period: Chinese, FSM, Kiribati, Korean, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Solomons and the Philippines. A majority of the carrier vessels are flagged in Panama.

## **Fiji's domestic fisheries in trouble**

Fiji's Fisheries Minister, Semi Koroilavesau, states that the declining tuna populations in Fiji means that exporters will ship 10,000 tons of product in 2017, down from 12,000 last year. He cites changing weather patterns as the cause of the low fish population in Fijian waters but CEO of FijiFish, Grahame Southwick, told Atuna that the Fijian waters have been overfished, citing Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) boats as large contributors to the critical situation. According to Southwick, tuna has declined over the past 20 years and that now "the Fiji domestic industry is on its last legs." FijiFish is no longer fishing for tuna. Southwick says that in order to see the stocks revive, the South West Pacific fleet would have to be cut by 50% or more and that is not happening.

Send us your tips to [Rebecca@pnatuna.com](mailto:Rebecca@pnatuna.com)

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