PNA COVID-19 Purse Seine Dashboard

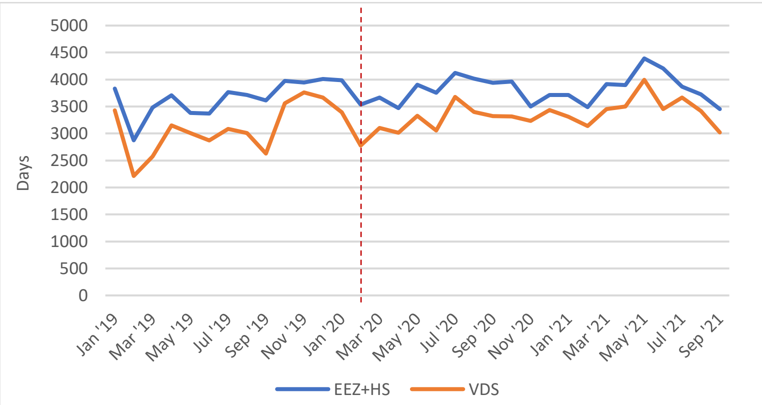
October 2021

Key trends:

- Preliminary figures indicate that both overall purse seine fishing days and VDS usage continued to fall in September, with the preliminary VDS figure of 3022 days the lowest monthly effort level since June ’19. Fishing intensity (fishing days/calendar day) also fell slightly. Note that September figures may be adjusted as NFDs are processed.
- Total purse seine catch (EEZs+HS) fell sharply in September, down around 48% on the August catch (although catches in archipelagic waters were higher). Catches of SKJ were at their lowest level since at least Jan ’19, while catches of large YFT returned to more average levels after a peak in August. Fishing effort was relatively evenly distributed with effort highest in KI, FSM and PNG. Catches were highest in FSM, PNG and KI.
- Based on preliminary figures, overall catch rates fell sharply in September. SKJ catch rates reached their lowest level since at least Jan ’19, while catch rates of large YFT returned to more average levels.
- Transhipment volumes fell by around 36% on August, although remained slightly above the levels during the early stages of the pandemic. Transhipment activity was highest in Majuro and PNG ports.
- Bangkok SKJ prices continued to fall in September, averaging $1300 according to Thai Union figures. Singapore MGO price rose in September, and has continued to rise in October.
- Daily new COVID case numbers fell in key southeast Asian processing centres, with numbers in each of Thailand, Philippines and Vietnam declining after peaks in August/September.

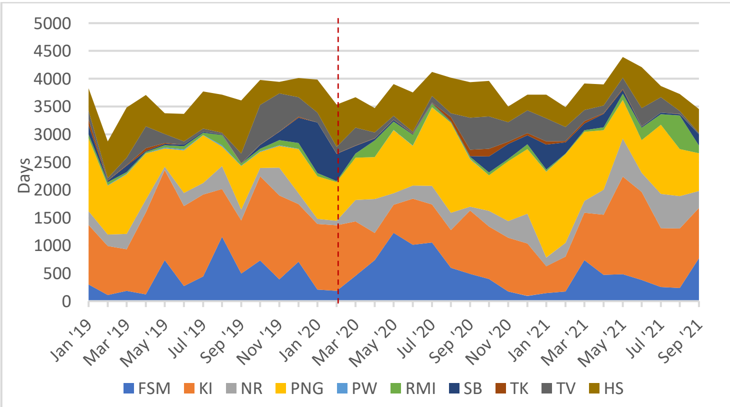
Fishing effort

Overall effort (PNA EEZs+HS)



- Both overall fishing effort (EEZ+HS) and usage of VDS days continued to fall in Sept. Fishing intensity (fishing days/calendar day) was at its lowest level since Jun ’19. Note that Sept figures are preliminary and may reduce slightly as NFD applications are processed.

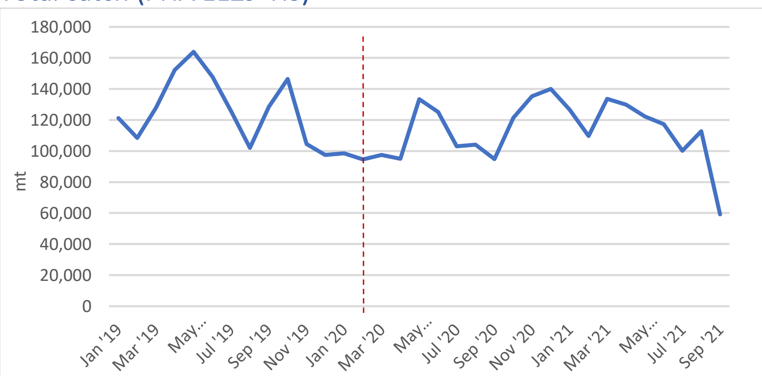
Distribution of effort (EEZs)



- Effort was relatively evenly distributed in Sept, with highest levels of effort in KI, followed by FSM and PNG. Effort in RMI fell sharply following high effort in Aug.

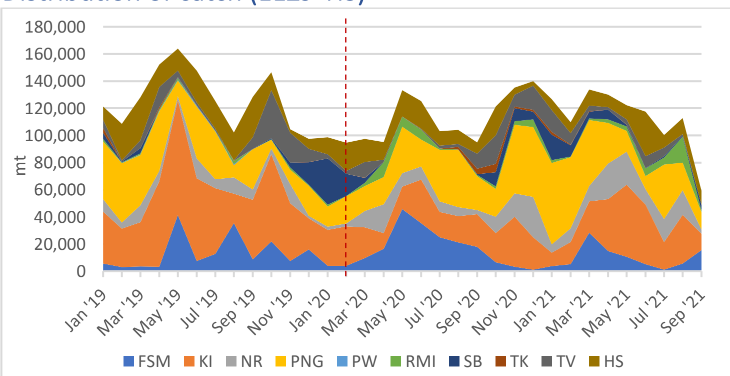
Catch

Total catch (PNA EEZs+HS)



- Total catch (EEZ+HS) fell sharply in Sept (59,186t), down around 48% on the Aug catch. The Sept SKJ catch (38,704t) was the lowest monthly catch since at least Jan ’19. YFT catches (11,371t) fell to more average levels after very high catches (31,049t) in Aug. Sept catch figures are preliminary and may be adjusted upwards slightly as additional reports are received.

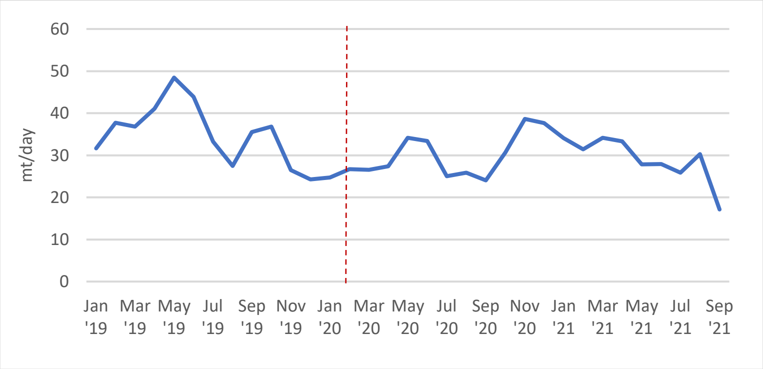
Distribution of catch (EEZs+HS)



- Catches fell across the board in Sept, with the exception of FSM, SB and the HS. Highest falls in catch were in RMI and NR. Catches were broadly distributed across the region, with highest catches in FSM, PNG and KI. Catches in archipelagic waters were higher in Sept (14,846t) than Aug (6,408t).

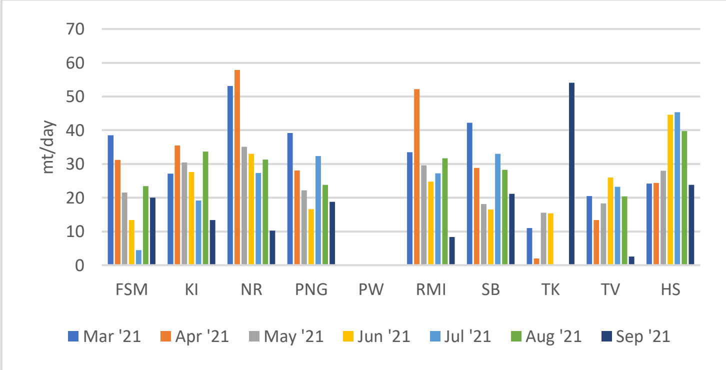
Catch rates

Overall (PNA EEZs+HS)



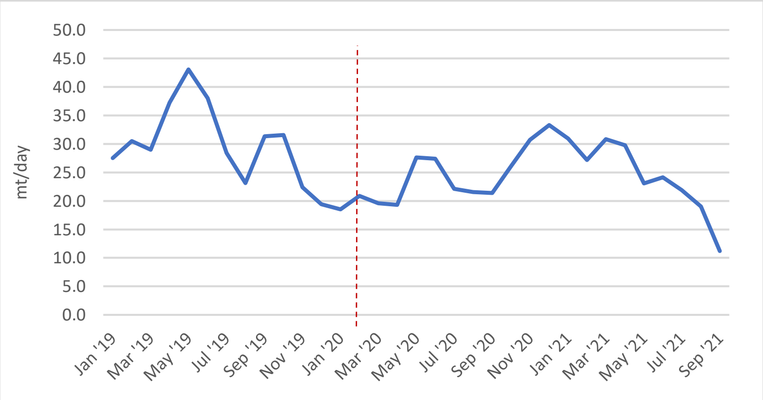
- Overall catch rates fell sharply in Sept, reaching their lowest levels since at least Jan ’19. These figures are preliminary and may be adjusted slightly as NFDs are processed and additional e-reporting is received.

Catch rate by zone (EEZs)



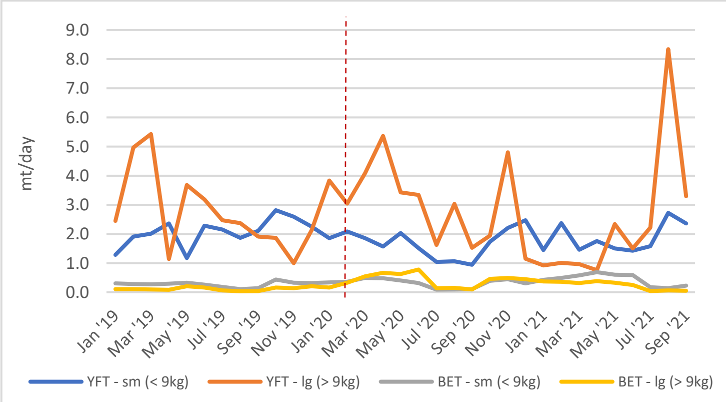
- Preliminary figures indicate that catch rates fell in most zones, with the exception of Tokelau (although this was based on very low levels of effort). Largest falls were in RMI, NR and KI. Catch rates in TV also fell although this associated with very limited effort.

Skipjack



- SKJ catch rate fell sharply in Sept, conitnuing a trend since a recent peak in Dec ’20. The Sept SKJ catch rate was the lowest since at least Jan ’19.

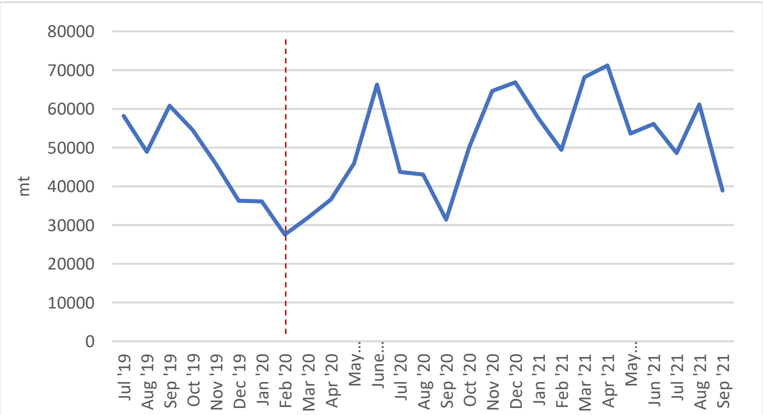
Other species



- Amongst the other purse seine species/size categories, catch rates of large YFT fell sharply off a peak in Aug albeit remained higher than other months in 2021. Catch rates of small YFT fell slightly, while both large and small BET remained stable at low levels coinciding with the FAD closure.

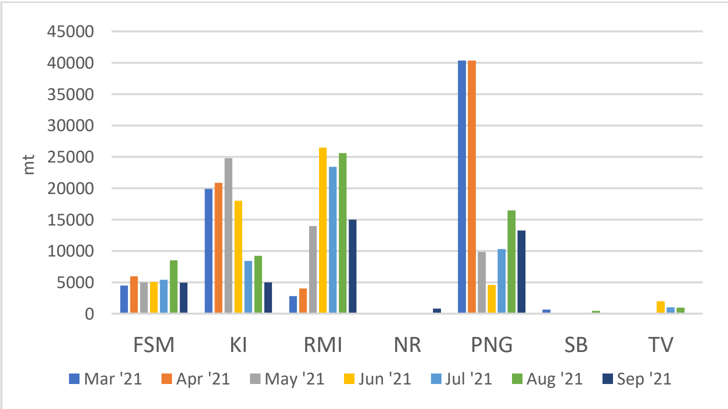
Transhipment

Volume



- Transhipment volumes in PNA ports dropped sharply in Sept, down by around 36% on Aug volumes (from 61,176t to 38,962t).

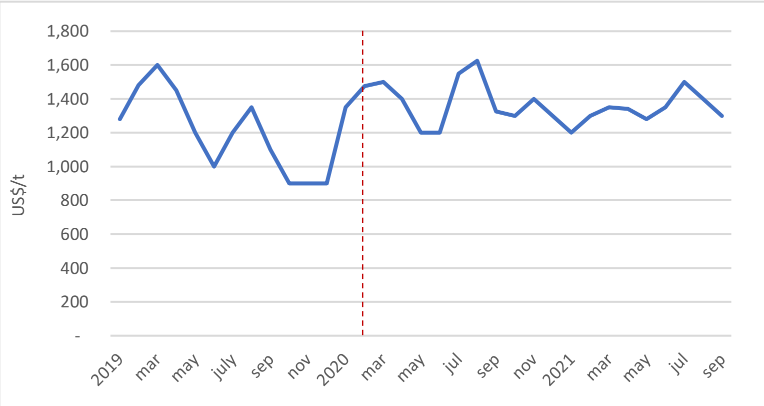
Location



- Transhipment volumes were highest in RMI and PNG, although volumes in Majuro were down on the previous three months. Volumes remained stable in FSM, and continued at low levels in KI. Nauru saw its first transhipment since Apr ’20.

Prices

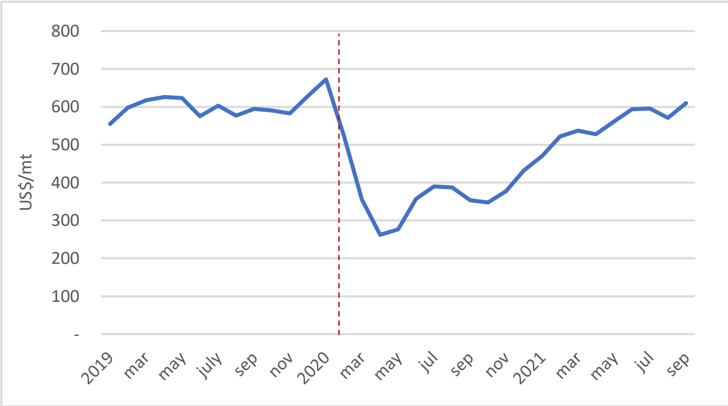
SKJ Price



https://investor.thaiunion.com/raw_material.html

- Thai Union report that Bangkok SKJ prices averaged around $1300 in Sept, down from $1400 in August. Atuna report that Manta price fell from $1700 in August to $1550 in Sept.

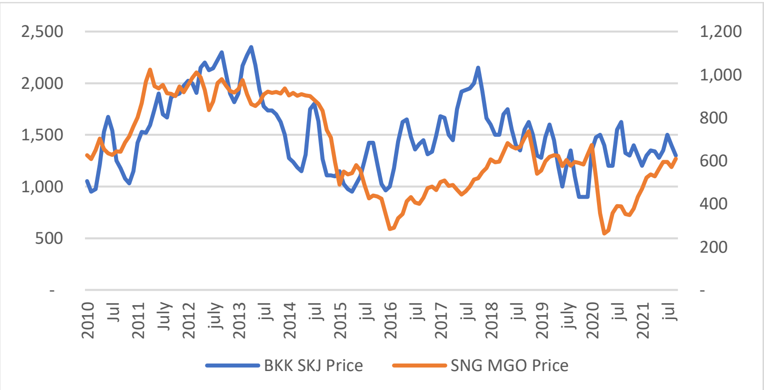
Fuel price



https://shipandbunker.com/prices/apac/sea/sg-sin-singapore#MGO

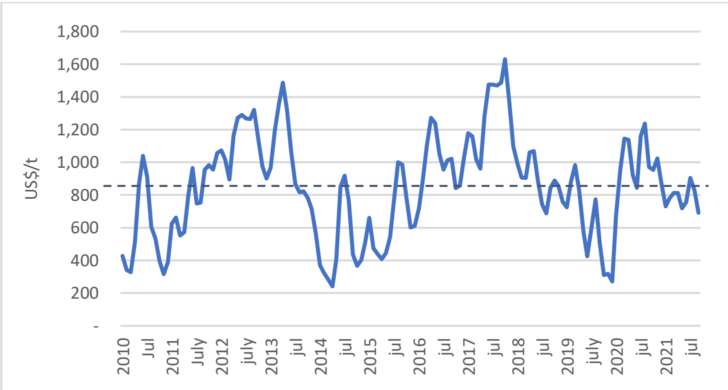
- Singapore MGO price rose in Sept, averaging US$610/mt and up from US$571/mt in Aug. Price has continued to rise sharply in Oct, sitting at $722/mt on 20th Oct.

BKK SKJ Price vs Fuel price



- BKK SKJ price and Singapore MGO price converged sharply in Sept, driven by the fall in SKJ price and the rise in fuel price. The index lines are as close as they've been since the start of the pandemic.

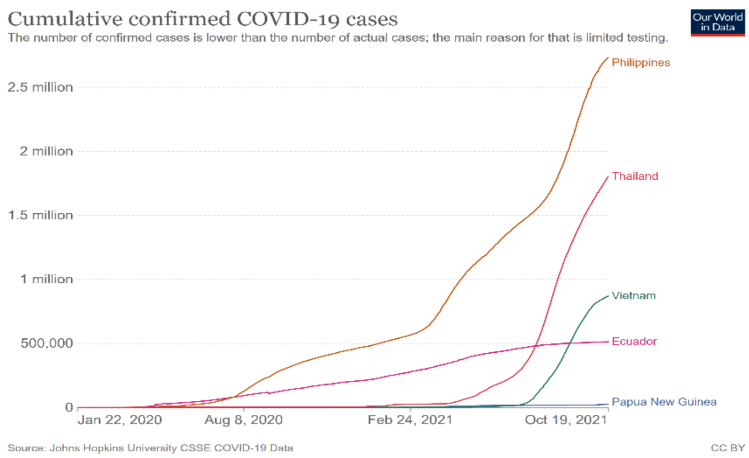
Price differential (BKK SKJ – Fuel)



- The price differential between BKK SKJ price and Singapore MGO fell sharply in Sept to $691. The differential is at it's lowest level since the start of the pandemic, but remains haigher than levels in 2019.

COVID-19 in processing countries

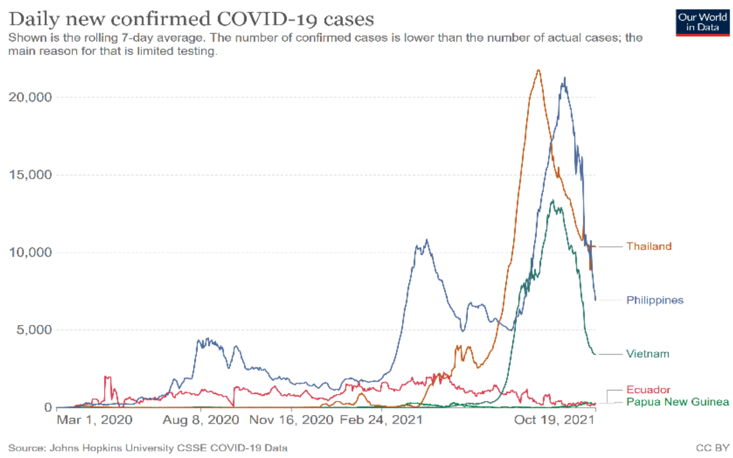
Total cases



https://ourworldindata.org/covid-cases

- The Philippines continues to have the highest number of cumulative COVID-19 cases amongst the main processing countries in the region, although Thailand's case numbers have risen rapidly in recent months.

Daily confirmed cases

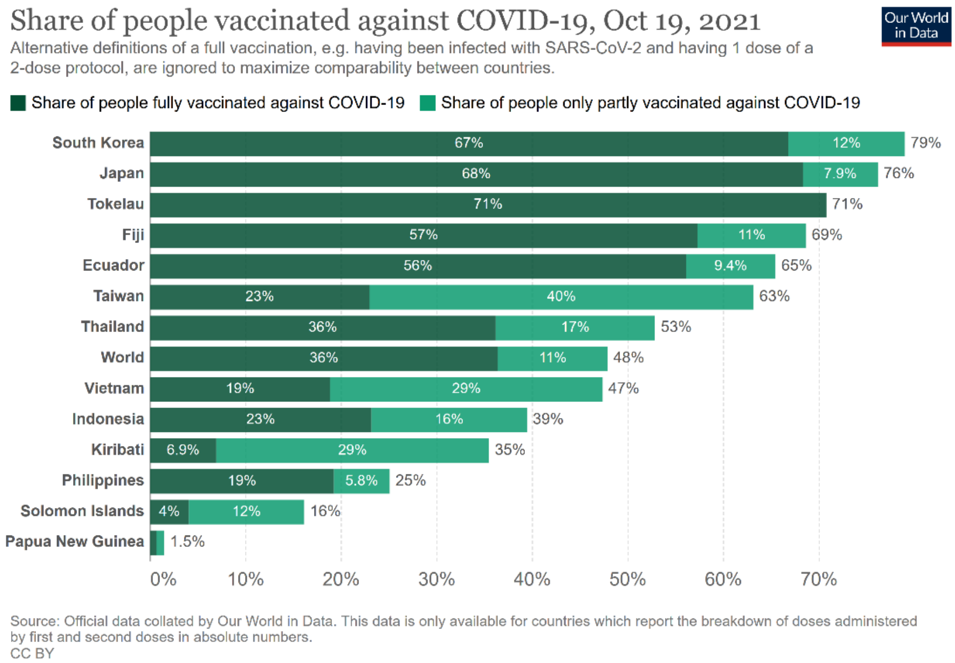


https://ourworldindata.org/covid-cases

- The surge in case numbers across Thailand, Philippines and Vietnam peaked in Aug/Sep, with new daily case numbers falling rapidly in each country. Ecuador's new daily case numbers remain low.

Other issues:

- As at Oct 18th, PNG is reported to have a cumulative total of 24,857 confirmed COVID cases, Solomon Is 20, Palau 8, Marshall Is 4, Kiribati 2 and FSM 1[1]. Case numbers in PNG are thought to be an underestimate given testing rates have been low and recent anecdotal reports indicate a 'positive rate' (proportion of all tests returning a COVID positive result) of around 85%[2].
- Fiji is reported to have 51,846 cases, although daily case numbers have fallen substantially from a peak of ~1,200 cases per day in late July to fewer than 30/day in mid-Oct[3].
- Vaccination rates across major tuna producing and processing countries remain highly variable. According to WHO data, countries such as Nauru and Palau have achieved very high rates of full vaccination, while others such as Marshall Is report very high rates of vaccination (80%+) in Majuro. Vaccination rates in PNG and Solomon Is remain at relatvely low levels, while Kiribati is improving[4]. Vaccination rates in Thailand are roughly equivalent to the world average for full vaccination, while rates amongst other key SE Asian processing countries remain below the world average.



Notes:

- Data on catch, effort, catch rates and transhipment is based on electronic reporting through iFIMS as at 20th October, 2021. Some data may change as more information is added over time. Figures for September 2021 should be considered preliminary.
- The EEZs+HS effort figures in the fishing effort graph do not include a VDS vessel size adjustment factor. The actual VDS usage figures are adjusted for vessel size. HS days may include some non-fishing time. HS effort figures are those for the eastern high seas and HSPs 4 and 5.
- A dashed-red line has been on many graphs at February 2020 to provide an indication of the time in which COVID-related restrictions were becoming more common globally and regionally.

[1] https://ourworldindata.org/covid-cases
[2] https://asiapacificreport.nz/2021/10/22/pngs-capital-port-moresby-reaches-crisis-point-over-covid-surge/
[3] https://ourworldindata.org/covid-cases
[4] https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations