

# Tuna Market Intelligence

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

## MARKET UPDATE

Tuna prices have risen continuously since April from USD \$1,500 mt in Bangkok to USD \$1,950 mt, a high that has not been seen for three years.

The high market price is attributed to low WCPO catch rates that have resulted in lower skipjack volume coming to Bangkok, coupled with strong demand from processors.

Recently canners began to buy only hand-to-mouth, minimums that meet their immediate needs, which has subsequently slowed the rapid growth in price.

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

**Tuna Market Intelligence is an independent publication, sponsored by the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) to unearth industry and market information from Pacific Island reporters and analysts. Reprint in the media from the PNA countries is free. All other reprints must be authorized. Contact us on [rebecca@pnatuna.com](mailto:rebecca@pnatuna.com) or see more on [www.pnatuna.com](http://www.pnatuna.com)**

## INFLUENCERS REPORT

### PNA hosts successful 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Ministerial Meeting

In a spirit of solidarity, PNA presented several items of interest during the ministerial meeting held in Majuro, June 21-23. Highlights from the meeting include:

- Recognition of successful implementation of the purse seine VDS and noting progress of the on-going development of a longline VDS.
- Agreement to adopt a policy in 2018 that will halt high seas bunkering by purse seine vessels that are licensed to fish in PNA waters. The ministers noted this policy would be sensitive to Kiribati's unique situation that involves its being located in

three distinct EEZ waters separated by distinct areas of high seas.

- Review of tuna catch trends in PNA waters and noting that the VDS is effective in its purposes to allow for skipjack stock growth and at the same time promote economic growth in PNA related fishing industries.
- Concern regarding the overfished status of bigeye tuna while looking to the upcoming WCPFC meeting for adoption of measures that would rebuild bigeye stock over a ten-year period.
- Commitment to a Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) workshop to address and improve FAD management. The ministers also agreed with recommendations to develop amendments of domestic legislation and to enforce compliance with FAD tracking and management in PNA waters by 2018.
- Celebration of the success of PNA's small-scale tuna canning training and technical assistance program that is positively impacting PNA member countries as they develop local canning facilities.
- Plans to hire a chief financial officer and a deputy director to help accommodate the growth of the PNA organization.
- Plans to begin building a new PNA office facility in Majuro that will accommodate immediate and future growth of the organization and agreement for the parties to share the financing of the project.

### Marshall Islands cannery in operation

Majuro-based company KMI launched its new small-scale cannery last week. This is the happy culmination of an effort that began in 2015 with a pilot project and public forum, followed by the first Regional Cannery Supervisor Certification course in Majuro in 2016. The Marshall Islands Office of Commerce and Investment (OCI) and PNA worked closely with KMI to help ensure their success.

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KMI's next step is to see their canned tuna, labeled 'Jalele Ek,' on Marshallese grocery shelves, helping to promote the local theme: "Be/Buy Marshallese."

Regional Cannery Supervisor courses have subsequently been held in the Solomon Islands and one is scheduled for Palau in the near future to encourage establishment of small-scale canning operations in other PNA nations.

## **Kiribati readies itself to export tuna to the European Union**

The EU Competent Authority (CA) has given Kiribati approval to export tuna products to the European Union.

This is big news for Kiribati; only the Solomon Islands, Fiji and Papua New Guinea precede Kiribati as Pacific Island nations with comparable export privileges as a result of establishing Competent Authorities to ensure standards are met in the handling and processing of fish for export.

Kiribati Fish Limited (KFL) is currently the sole tuna processing plant in Kiribati, 60% of which is owned by the Chinese fishing firm, Shanghai Fisheries Group, and 40% by the Kiribati national government.

KFL looks forward to supplying Pacific MSC certified frozen yellowfin tuna steaks and loins to European and US markets later this year.

## **New Zealand's 'world class system' puts fishing stocks at risk**

Twelve authors of an article published in the US-based National Academy of Sciences are questioning New Zealand's claims to be a world leader in sustainable fisheries system efficiency.

The authors are research scientists who geographically span from New Zealand and Canada to England and Botswana and include expertise in fisheries as well as government and industry.

According to the authors, New Zealand fisheries fail to collect independent scientific data, relying instead solely on information provided by the fishing industry. The scientists also found that three-quarters of the NZ fish stocks have no formal assessment and that funding for stock assessments is about 45% of the levels seen in the early 1990s. Furthermore, there is evidence that only 8.4% of NZ fishing boats are covered with observers. Finally, a 2016 study by Dr. Glenn Simmons reveals widespread illegal dumping and misreporting have skewed NZ catch statistics.

Unfortunately this means the fish stocks may not be as sustainable as New Zealand reports and New Zealand may not be the world leader in sustainability and efficiency it purports to be.

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**ABOUT THE PNA:** The Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) are eight Pacific Island countries that control the world's largest sustainable tuna purse seine fishery supplying 50 percent of the world's skipjack tuna (a popular tuna for canned products). They are Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu.

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