



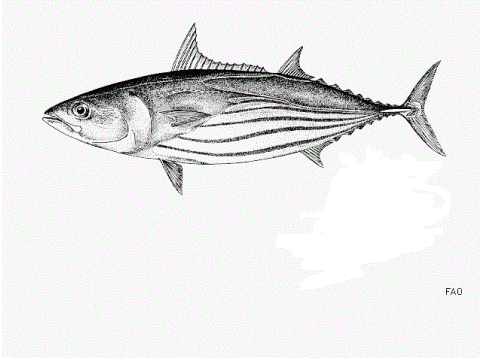


# Skipjack tuna Western and Central Pacific Ocean

 Fishery:  Western and Central Pacific Ocean  WCPFC  Japan  Mechanized lines

## IDENTIFICATION



### SCIENTIFIC NAME

*Katsuwonus pelamis*

### SPECIES NAME(S)

Skipjack tuna

### COMMON NAMES

Skipjack tuna

### STOCK IDENTIFICATION

Skipjack tuna in the western and central Pacific Ocean are considered a single stock for assessment purposes {Rice et al. 2014}.



### RELATED LINKS:

- [Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission \(WCPFC\) \(WCPFC\)](#)

## ASSESSMENT

### Strengths

Skipjack tuna in the western and central Pacific Ocean are managed at the international level by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). Regular assessments of target tuna and tuna-like species are conducted. Therefore the status of the stocks is known and regularly monitored. The Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) (EEZ's of Papua New Guinea, Kiribati, FS Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu) purse seine (unassociated or free school sets) fishery is MSC certified for skipjack tuna. Skipjack tuna have a healthy population size and fishing mortality rates are sustainable. There are several management measures specific to skipjack tuna purse seine fisheries currently in place through the WCPFC.

### Weaknesses

There is no formally adopted harvest control rule or target reference points. Information on compliance and monitoring by member countries has historically not been available. In recent years, there has been an increased lack of transparency with regard to the WCPFC decision making process. Skipjack tuna are difficult to assess because of their high and variable productivity. Timely submissions and data accuracy from some member countries is a problem which mainly contributes to the significant uncertainties in the stock assessment results. The Japanese pole and line fishery, which represents less than 4% of the total catch in this region is the only long term abundance data set. Calculating an index of abundance for the purse seine fishery, which dominates the equatorial catches, is difficult. The impact of fish aggregating device (FAD) purse seine fishing on ecologically important species, continues to be an issue. The WCPFC has yet to formally adopt management measures that require the use of non-entanglement FAD designs. The WCPFC Scientific Committee management advice included concerns over high catches of skipjack in equatorial waters. The Scientific Committee suggested that there should be management of total effort in the WCPO, including stricter rules surrounding purse seine fishing. In 2012, the WCPFC adopted a measure prohibiting the discard of skipjack (bigeye and yellowfin) tuna caught in purse seine fisheries, but it is too early to determine if this had reduced fishing pressure.

The magnitude of IUU fishing is unknown for this stock especially for vessels operating under flags of convenience; Sources and quantity of baitfish used in this fishery remain unknown; By-catch of non-target species and discards are poorly quantified in this fishery; There is a need for improvement in catches landed through artisanal fisheries (Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam etc.) are poorly quantified in many jurisdictions of Western and central pacific nations. There are no target reference points in place and no harvest control rules at the international RFMO level. There is a need for an improvement in observer programme to monitor these fleets in the high seas and in foreign EEZs. In addition, the WCPFC has suggested fishing limits should be considered (international).

## SCORES

### Management Quality:

Management Strategy	Managers Compliance	Fishers Compliance
≥ 6	≥ 6	≥ 6

### Stock Health:

Current Health	Future Health
10	10

## FIPS

No related FIPs

## MSC

No related MSC fisheries

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### RETAILERS & SUPPLY CHAIN

Stock-wide recommendations

- Conduct outreach to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) requesting continued work on the development and adoption of a harvest control rule, and encourage the WCPFC to take demonstrably effective actions to keep the spawning biomass near the adopted target reference point.
- Request improved transparency of and by the WCPFC, especially

regarding the Compliance Committee and issues of non-compliance by individual members (nations). Press individual members to provide evidence of compliance with all WCPFC Conservation and Management Measures in a timely manner.

- Ensure all products are traceable back to legal sources. Verify source information and full chain traceability through traceability desk audits or third party traceability certification. For fisheries without robust traceability systems in place, invest in meaningful improvements to bring the fisheries and supply chain into compliance with best practices.
- Encourage the supply chain to adopt voluntary shark fins naturally attached regulations and promote the adoption of this rule by the WCPFC.
- Improve data collection (i.e. catches, effort, size), on both target and bycatch species, and reporting through measures such as electronic logbooks (e-reporting).
- Identify and mandate the use of best practice bycatch mitigation techniques.
- Contact SFP to learn how to initiate your own fishery improvement project (FIP), engage in an ongoing FIP, and/or SFP's Supply Chain Roundtables.