

Esperanza

Defending Our Pacific

Expedition 2012

Summary of findings
4 - 24 November 2012



February 2013

GREENPEACE

Esperanza Defending Our Pacific Expedition 2012

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Front cover image: The *Esperanza* in the waters of Palau's
Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

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Image: Diver from the
Philippine purse seiner
Vergene at work, in and
around a skipjack tuna
purse seine net, in the
international waters of
High Seas Pocket No 1.



Image: Caught skipjack tuna, during a purse seine fishing operation underway between the Philippine purse seiner *Vergene* and the Philippine fish carrier/supply boat *Gene-2* in the international waters of High Seas Pocket No 1.



Introduction

More than 60% of the world's tuna is caught in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO)¹. Industrial fleets from distant water fishing powers² take the overwhelming majority of this catch. As demand for tuna grows, that proportion is increasing, as tuna stocks in other parts of the world have been drastically depleted – in some cases to the point of collapse. The WCPO is not immune to overfishing, and it has been widely known since 2001 that Pacific bigeye and yellowfin tuna stocks are in decline.³ Recent indications show that bigeye tuna stocks are now being overfished, and overfishing of yellowfin tuna may be occurring in the area where the majority of catches are taken. Management action by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) remains inadequate in cutting fishing effort and capacity, as well as limiting destructive fishing methods and implementing strong monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) in the region, and subsequently failing to cut mortality rates of at risk tuna stocks

Due to the lack of MCS capacity, foreign fishing vessels use the high seas as an escape route to launder fish out of the region, and as a base from which to make forays into the waters of Pacific Island countries. Under their current management, these areas are a safe haven for Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing activities. These activities have been particularly well reported for the high seas enclaves also known as the Pacific Commons.⁴

In order to secure sustainable fisheries and to help eliminate IUU fishing in the region, the Pacific Commons should be closed to all fishing activities and designated as marine reserves. The Pacific Commons have been closed to purse seining by member nations of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA)⁵, and the two western areas were also closed by the WCPFC in 2008. However, these western areas of the Pacific Commons were reopened by the WCPFC in March 2012, though in effect most purse seine fleets remain bound by the PNA closures that are still in place. The 36 vessels in the Philippine distant water purse seine fleet are the only ones that are not bound by the PNA closure, and were permitted to fish in the westernmost pocket of the Pacific Commons.⁶

Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) are commonly used by purse seine fleets. It is proven that the use of FADs increases the capacity/ability of fishing vessels to catch fish and the bycatch rate, including juvenile bigeye and yellowfin tuna – even though the target is skipjack – and other marine life, including vulnerable shark and turtle species.⁷ Scientists have advised that the most effective measures to allow bigeye tuna to recover from overfishing would be the prohibition of FAD use in purse seine fishing, and the closure of spawning areas to longline fishing.⁸

In addition to prohibiting unsustainable fishing methods and designating area closures, there are crucial steps required across the region to reduce fishing capacity to a level that matches the size of the fishery resource. Precautionary limit and target reference points must be developed for all tuna stocks in the region. This must be accompanied by reductions in fleet size, with preferential access to fisheries given to low-impact gears and practices.

Greenpeace International has conducted six expeditions to the Western and Central Pacific region since 2004. This report presents the findings of the 2012 “Defending Our Pacific” expedition. The Greenpeace ship *Esperanza* spent most of the three-week expedition in Pacific Commons Area 1, and within Palau’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), operating under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the government of Palau. Together with Palauan officials, we conducted a joint surveillance and enforcement exercise inside Palau’s EEZ (for full list of vessels inspected please see Appendix 1).

The work at sea included documenting vessels by ship and by helicopter, documenting FADs, and inspecting and documenting the fishing operations by vessels from the distant water fishing powers Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia and Cambodia, as well as unflagged vessels. Twelve illegal FADs were found in Palauan waters, and six of them were decommissioned. Seven vessels were inspected, and a case of IUU fishing involving four vessels was also documented and reported to the relevant authorities.

Key findings

FADs spinning out of control

Greenpeace International documented a total of 33 FADs during the three-week expedition, including many anchored FADs deployed in international waters (for full list see Appendix 2 and Appendix 3). This is the highest density of FADs ever observed by Greenpeace since our expeditions to monitor the region’s fisheries began. This is alarming, given how much is now known about the negative impact of FADs on bigeye tuna stocks and other species caught as bycatch. Although purse seine fishing on FADs is prohibited in Palau, a total of 12 illegal drifting and anchored FADs were found in Palauan waters, and 21 anchored FADs were recorded in international waters in Pacific Commons Area 1.

Almost all of the FADs found in international waters were set by Philippines purse seiners that have an exemption to fish in this area and are allowed to deploy up to 40 FADs per vessel.

Similar type (payao-style) FADs were found illegally set in the southeastern part of Palau’s EEZ. These FADs had no ownership information, date of deployment, or details of which vessel deployed them. The FADs very much resemble those deployed by Philippine vessels in Pacific Commons Area 1. These illegal FADs in Palau’s waters indicate that there are suspected IUU activities resulting in fish being stolen from Pacific Island Countries.

The density of FADs in this part of the WCPO leaves little chance for fish to escape from fishing fleets. Additionally, the deployment of metal payao-style FADs, anchored to the seabed in international waters, is also causing risk to the safe navigation of passing vessels. These FADs are not equipped with any location lights or warnings, nor marked on navigational charts.

High seas: Another IUU loophole

The Cambodian-flagged reefer *Heng Xing 1* (registered as a cargo ship) was documented receiving a transshipment of tuna from three other vessels, the Philippine reefer *SAL 19* and two Indonesian purse seiners/reefers (*KM Starcki 10* and *KM Starcki 11*) on 14 November 2012, at Pacific Commons Area 1.

The Cambodian reefer and the Philippine reefer are not registered with WCPFC, and the two Indonesian vessels' authorisations to fish in the WCPFC area have expired, which means none of them should be engaging in any fishing activity, including transshipment, in the WPCO. *Heng Xing 1*, the reefer receiving tuna from the other three vessels, was also in violation of the regional regulation as it did not have a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) onboard, was not reporting its activities to all the necessary authorities, and had no proper report on the locations where tuna was caught, and in which amounts.

All frozen tuna transhipped transferred to *Heng Xing 1* from the different vessels was mixed together with no separation or proper record-keeping, making it impossible to tell the source and amount of catch from each vessel and from which area, compromising the management of the fishery.

Hiding behind Flags of Convenience

The *Heng Xing 1* is a typical flag of convenience (FOC) vessel, owned and run by the company Zoushan International Shipping Company in Zhe Jiang, mainland China, according to the captain of the vessel and the listing on Lloyd's List Intelligence⁹. While all 12 crew members were also from Zhe Jiang, the *registered* owner is, however, a Cambodian company. The captain admitted the vessel is a FOC vessel, and said it is easier to operate and get the necessary documents for entering ports if they are registered under a Cambodian flag.

Flags of convenience are one of the loopholes of maritime and fisheries regulations. Although Greenpeace International documented the *Heng Xing 1* engaging in IUU operations in the Pacific Commons Area 1 in the WCPO, none of the government authorities in the region had the power to arrest the vessel. Cambodia is not a member of the WCPFC, and therefore its vessels are not subject to WCPFC conservation and management measures, despite the owners being from a WCPFC party.

The Pacific Commons should be closed with no exemptions

There are 36 Philippine purse seine catcher vessels allowed to operate in the area of Pacific Commons referred to as HSP-1 under the exemption given in 2011. The Philippines has also registered a larger number of fishing vessels allowed to have access to HSP-1. The first five purse seine catcher vessels given clearance to fish in the HSP-1 for instance, had 88 fishing support vessels associated with them, and they also have access to the high seas. As of November 2012, only eight catcher fishing vessels were operating in HSP-1 for the reason that these are the only vessels that had fully complied with the relevant Philippine regulation, FAO No. 245. Each of those catcher vessels operated with numerous support vessels, and each was allowed to deploy up to 40 FADs.

The Philippines government claimed that its vessels were fully compliant with the regulations. However, infringements were observed repeatedly on various Philippine vessels operating under the exemption. The infringements included not reporting their transit or location to Pacific Island countries, too small mesh net size, and the catching of species other than tuna, which according to fishermen and observers onboard were destined for markets at home.

Moreover, Philippine-style payao FADs were found in Palau waters, unmarked and illegal, not far from the high seas border. Although the ownership of these FADs cannot be proven, their presence shows that fishing activities in HSP-1 are increasing the chance of IUU activities in the EEZs of neighbouring Pacific island countries, making their enforcement much more difficult.



Image: An illegal fish aggregation device (FAD) anchored in the waters of Palau's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

Case Studies

#1: FADs

Illegal FADs southeast of Palau's EEZ

The Greenpeace ship *Esperanza* arrived in the area 135°30'N 4°30'N on 6 November 2012, and sent a helicopter to do a one-hour expanding-square search pattern covering 150 square miles in the southeast of Palau's EEZ.

The helicopter search revealed five FADs (see coordinates in Appendix 2), and on closer inspection these were found to be unauthorised by the government of Palau, therefore illegal.

All five FADs were of the same type (design and material): Anchored cylindrical metal barrels with a double figure number on them. The FADs had no information on ownership, date of deployment, or which vessel had deployed them. The FADs very much resemble the payao-style FADs deployed by Philippines vessels in HSP-1.

Another similar type of FAD, which appeared to be derelict as it was unanchored and drifting, was found in Palauan waters on 10 November. One drifting FAD made from bamboo and logs was found on 17 November, and three more payao-style FADs were discovered anchored in the south of Palau's EEZ on 21 November.

Four illegal FADs were sunk and two FADs were confiscated during the tour by the Palauan authorities with the help of Greenpeace International. The location and information of other illegal FADs were delivered to Palauan officials for follow up actions.

Image: Crew attending fish aggregation devices (FADs) on board the Philippine purse seiner *Geneviva* prior to deploying FADs in the international waters of High Seas Pocket No 1.



#2: *Geneviva*

Philippine purse seiner at HSP-1

Geneviva is one of the 36 Philippines purse seiners allowed to operate in Pacific Commons HSP-1 under the exemption given by the WCPFC. On 7 November, the vessel was spotted at the western end of HSP-1 close to the border of Palau's EEZ (03°56'N 136°12'E) anchored to one of their FADs with no AIS signal.

A patrol boat from the Federated States of Micronesia passed by the area on 9 November and checked its call sign and basic information, but did not conduct an inspection of the vessel.

Once the FSM patrol boat left the area, Greenpeace requested permission to board the *Geneviva*. The vessel had a Philippine fishing master and a Philippine observer, with 18 crew.

The *Geneviva* is a catcher vessel and does not hold any fish onboard. It operates as part of a group of vessels, including supply and carrier vessels, and therefore no tuna was found onboard.

At the time of the Greenpeace inspection, the *Geneviva* was carrying three FADs onboard, and had deployed one of the FADs in HSP-1 on 9 November. Each of the purse seiners operating under the WCPFC exemption can deploy up to 40 FADs, but there is uncertainty around the total number in HSP-1, as some of the FADs found by Greenpeace at sea had been set since 2008.

#3: *Heng Xing 1*, *SAL 19*, *KM Starcki 10* and *KM Starcki 11*

Multinational large-scale illegal transshipment



Vessels involved:

Cambodian-flagged reefer *Heng Xing 1*, (IRCS: XUPA8, IMO 8834421) owned (according to Lloyd's List Intelligence) by a Chinese company Zhoushan International Shipping Agency.

Philippine-flagged reefer *Sal Diecinueve (SAL 19)* (IRCS: DUG-6255, IMO 7709825) owned by Euthynuus Venture Corporation in General Santos City.

Indonesian purse seiners *KM Starcki 10* (IRCS: YBVU) and *KM Starcki 11* (IRCS: YBUT), owned by Philippine and Indonesian joint venture company Starcki.

Image: The *Heng Xing 1* is seen in an area of international waters near the EEZ of Indonesia. The Cambodian-flagged vessel, was caught illegally transshipping frozen tuna from a Philippine fishing vessel and two other Indonesian vessels in the Pacific high seas, where none of the ships have licences to operate.



The *Esperanza* was south of HSP-1 near the Indonesian EEZ border when the Cambodian reefer *Heng Xing 1* (registered as a cargo ship) was spotted via its AIS signal. Greenpeace then conducted a helicopter surveillance flight and discovered that transshipment of tuna was taking place from three other vessels. These activities took place on 14 November 2012 in HSP-1, approximately 1.5 miles away from the Indonesian EEZ (1°40'411"N 139°31'071"E). An oil slick of more than 1 mile long was observed around the transshipment area.

Cambodia is neither a Member nor Cooperating Non-Member of the WCPFC, and the *Heng Xing 1* is not on the WCPFC Interim Register of Non-Member Fish Carrier and Bunker Vessels. Its activities are unregulated in the Convention Area, and the transshipment from vessels flagged to Cooperating Non-Members is illegal under the terms of WCPFC Conservation and Management Measure 2009-06.

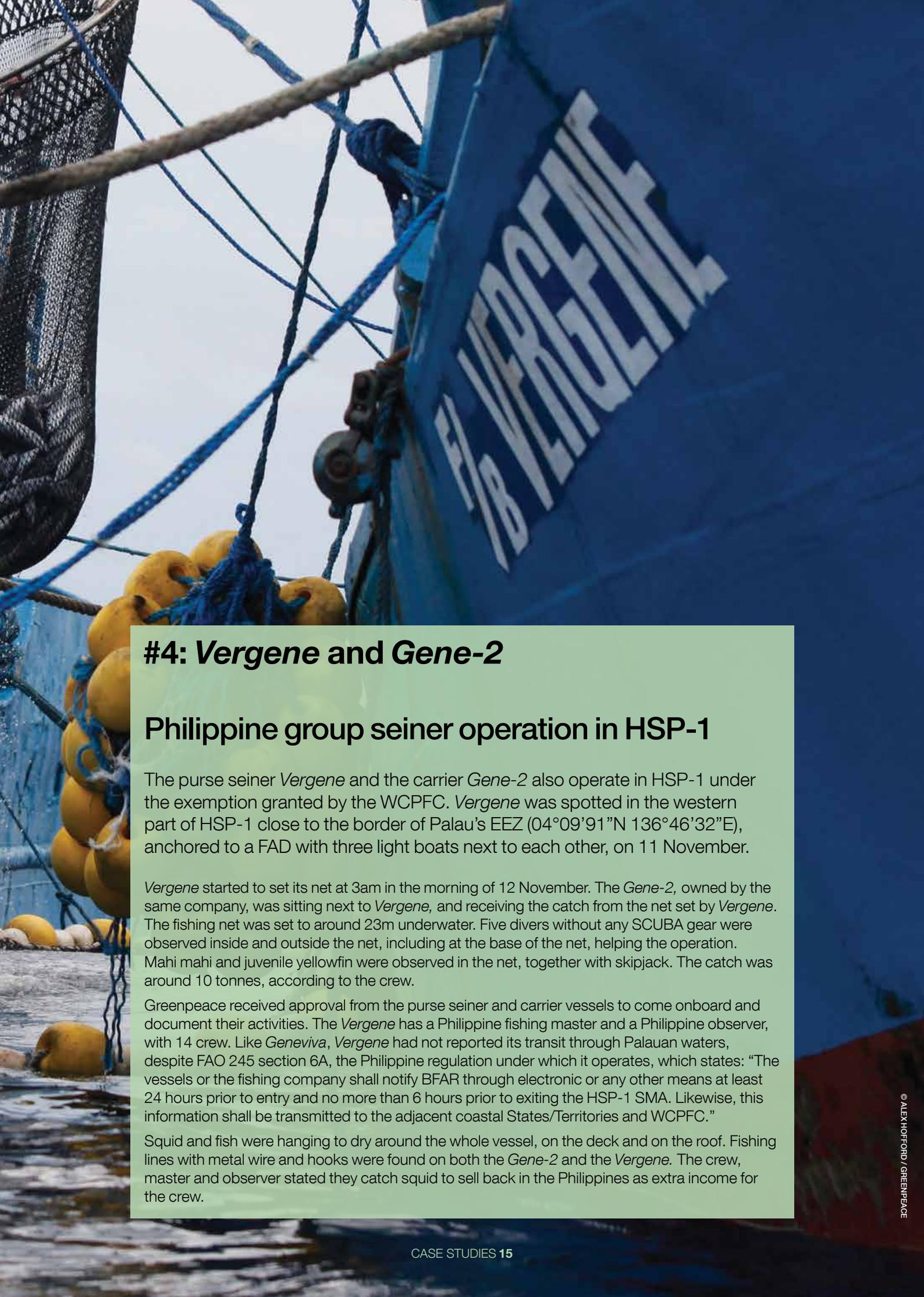
The four vessels stopped the transshipment and fled in different directions immediately after they noticed the helicopter observing and documenting their activity. The captain of the *Heng Xing 1* later explained that it was the Philippine vessel that gave the orders to flee. The same vessel, *SAL 19*, transhipped to *Heng Xing 1* on 13 and 14 of November, and had still not completed the transshipment due to the interruption by the helicopter flight. The other three vessels headed into the Indonesian EEZ and the *Heng Xing 1* turned back to HSP-1. The *Esperanza* followed the *Heng Xing 1* into HSP-1 and asked the captain to stop the vessel. The captain gave permission to board the vessel at 01°45'656"N 139°27'252"E.

During the visit, the captain showed his documents and said the WCPFC licence should be in the offices of parent company Zhe Jiang. There was no VMS onboard, and according to the captain, their only communication with the parent company is via satellite phone, when they are given instructions on where to go, with whom to tranship, how much tuna to tranship, and to report their location. The Greenpeace team was given access to the hold, which was observed to be full of frozen tuna, mostly skipjack with some juvenile yellowfin. There was no observable separation of catch from different vessels. The captain informed them there was no record identifying where it was caught, or by which vessel. The "logbook" shown to the Greenpeace team was only a paper notebook, with the dates, names of vessels, and a tally of the number of transfers. The *Esperanza* escorted the *Heng Xing 1* for two days until it became clear that, due to its flag of convenience and the lack of a comprehensive regional enforcement mechanism, no coastal state would be authorised to undertake an official boarding and inspection or undertake legal action against *Heng Xing 1*.

The Greenpeace team found the *SAL 19* again on 22 November at 03° 55'4"N 134°29'6"E in the EEZ of Palau. The vessel's name had been painted over when it was spotted for the second time, however the captain confirmed that the vessel was indeed the *SAL 19*. The captain gave permission to come onboard. No VMS, AIS logbook or transshipment records were present. The captain explained that they were repainting the vessel's name during the transit, and that was why the vessel's name was not visible. The captain admitted that the vessel had previously transhipped tuna to *Heng Xing 1* on 14 November, near the boundary between international waters and the Indonesian EEZ. The captain also said the vessel had worked closely with *KM Starcki 10*, *11*, *01* and *02*. The vessel's Philippine registration certification showed no IMO number. Greenpeace later confirmed with the WCPFC that two of the vessels do not have a valid authorisation to operate in the WCPO. Although according to the WCPFC Registry of Fishing Vessels (RFV) the authorisations for the Indonesian-flagged vessels (*KM Starcki 10* and *KM Starcki 11*) expired in 2010, WCPFC considers that vessels included in the RFV authorised to fish beyond the listed authorisation dates. The Philippine vessel (*SAL 19*) is not on the WCPFC RFV at all, and is therefore operating illegally under the terms of WCPFC CMM 2009-01, paragraph 16.



Image: A skipjack purse seine fishery operation underway on the deck of the Philippine fish carrier/supply boat *Gene-2* in the international waters of High Seas Pocket No 1.



#4: *Vergene* and *Gene-2*

Philippine group seiner operation in HSP-1

The purse seiner *Vergene* and the carrier *Gene-2* also operate in HSP-1 under the exemption granted by the WCPFC. *Vergene* was spotted in the western part of HSP-1 close to the border of Palau's EEZ (04°09'91"N 136°46'32"E), anchored to a FAD with three light boats next to each other, on 11 November.

Vergene started to set its net at 3am in the morning of 12 November. The *Gene-2*, owned by the same company, was sitting next to *Vergene*, and receiving the catch from the net set by *Vergene*. The fishing net was set to around 23m underwater. Five divers without any SCUBA gear were observed inside and outside the net, including at the base of the net, helping the operation. Mahi mahi and juvenile yellowfin were observed in the net, together with skipjack. The catch was around 10 tonnes, according to the crew.

Greenpeace received approval from the purse seiner and carrier vessels to come onboard and document their activities. The *Vergene* has a Philippine fishing master and a Philippine observer, with 14 crew. Like *Geneviva*, *Vergene* had not reported its transit through Palauan waters, despite FAO 245 section 6A, the Philippine regulation under which it operates, which states: "The vessels or the fishing company shall notify BFAR through electronic or any other means at least 24 hours prior to entry and no more than 6 hours prior to exiting the HSP-1 SMA. Likewise, this information shall be transmitted to the adjacent coastal States/Territories and WCPFC."

Squid and fish were hanging to dry around the whole vessel, on the deck and on the roof. Fishing lines with metal wire and hooks were found on both the *Gene-2* and the *Vergene*. The crew, master and observer stated they catch squid to sell back in the Philippines as extra income for the crew.

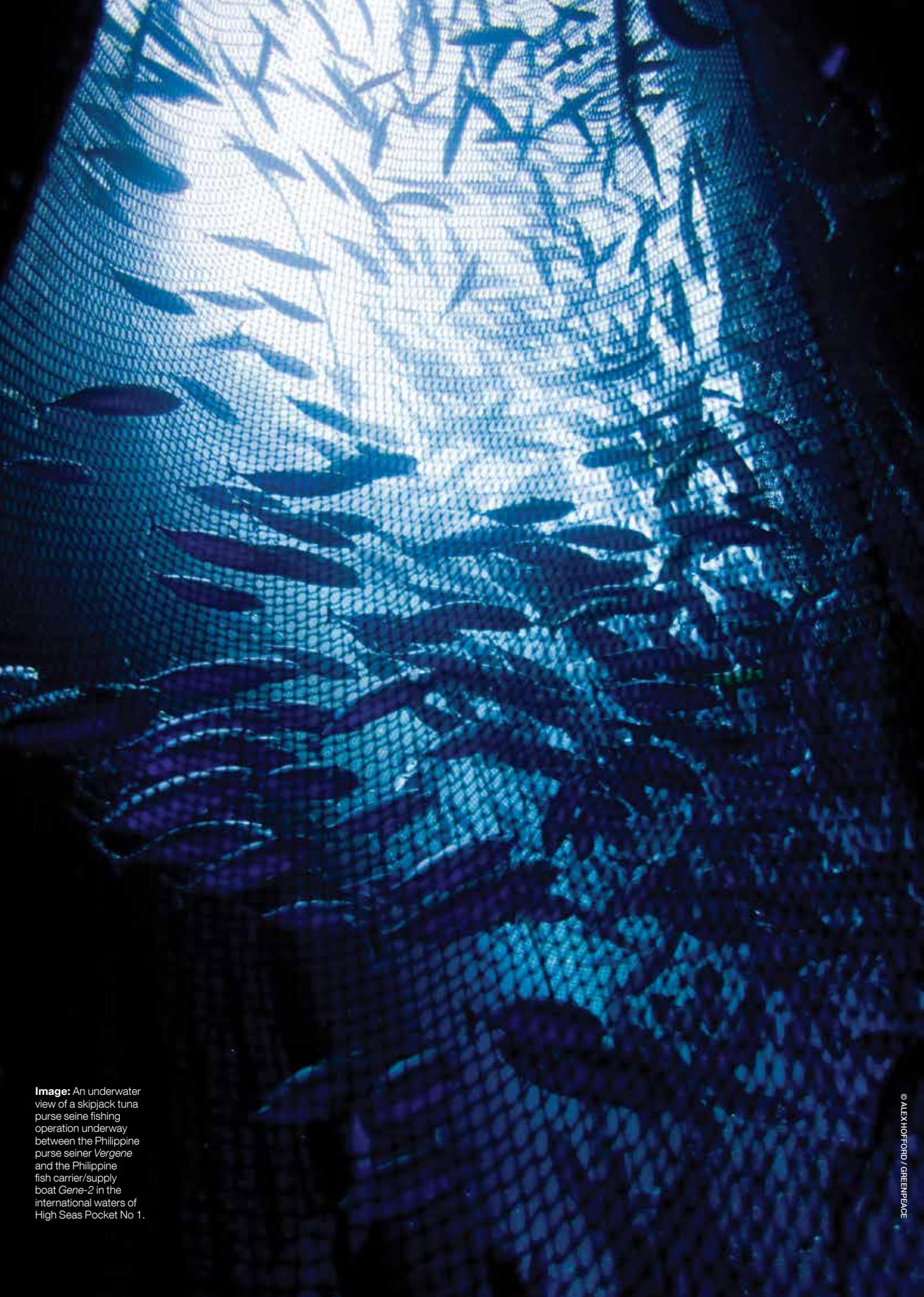


Image: An underwater view of a skipjack tuna purse seine fishing operation underway between the Philippine purse seiner *Vergene* and the Philippine fish carrier/supply boat *Gene-2* in the international waters of High Seas Pocket No 1.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Close Pacific Commons to all fishing

Fishing vessels are exploiting loopholes that allow them to fish in the Pacific Commons, and are also suspected to be conducting illegal and unreported fishing in the adjacent EEZs of Pacific small island coastal states.

In HSP-1, the expedition documented and exposed a large-scale illegal and unregulated transshipment of tuna between a non-member vessel and three CCM vessels.

In the adjacent EEZ of Palau, the expedition uncovered and exposed the presence of a large number of unauthorised (and therefore illegal) anchored FADs – similar to those used by the Philippine fleet “exclusively” fishing in HSP-1. Similarly, an alarming number of boats designated to fish only in HSP-1 were observed fishing very close to the Palauan EEZ. Philippine-flagged vessels transiting through Palauan waters to and from the area were not giving any notice to Palauan authorities, despite laws requiring this. Given the presence of FADs and lack of proper enforcement, the likelihood of these “unmonitored” vessels fishing illegally in Palau is extremely high.

The decision to reopen the Pacific Commons to purse seine fishing after only two years of closures by the WCPFC was a short-sighted mistake. The reopening came with a number of criteria, including the need for better monitoring of fleets and strict MCS measures. The reporting on compliance by flag states and evidence shown by the 2012 Greenpeace expedition demonstrate that the pre-conditions for reopening the closures are not being met.

The benefits of area closures often take several years to manifest, and need to be complemented with action to address displaced fishing effort. Area closures also need to be coupled with management measures to decrease overfishing. It should be noted the Pacific Commons are not ordinary high seas areas, they are high seas enclaves and should as such be given special attention as prescribed under international law.¹⁰

All evidence provided here point to the need for immediate and effective action be taken to strengthen MCS efforts and eliminate existing loopholes that promote IUU fishing. The first of these should be reinstating the closure of the Pacific Commons to purse seiners, and eventually expanding this to ban all forms of fishing in these areas without exemption. This would strengthen the benefits of existing closures, complement initiatives to create a network of marine reserves in adjacent waters, and to eradicate IUU fishing.

Ban the use of FADs in purse seine fisheries

The high number of FADs – both authorised and unauthorised – discovered in the Pacific Commons and in the EEZ of Palau in a short space of time is cause for alarm. Over 50% of the total bigeye tuna landed in the WCPO is caught incidentally in the purse seine fishery. FADs used in association with purse seine fishing are becoming increasingly responsible for the wholesale decline of bigeye tuna as a result of the large juvenile catches and bycatch of endangered sharks and turtles. Moreover, FADs increase the efficacy and subsequently the capacity of purse seine fleets in the WCPO in a way that makes measuring and enforcement difficult.

It is clear that banning the use of FADs would be an effective conservation measure backed by scientists in the region. During the months of the temporary FAD-ban, total catch was slightly below average, and the catch of bigeye tuna was also significantly reduced when compared to other months. However, total purse seine fishing effort had increased, despite the closures, to a record high in 2011 since purse seine vessels would make up for time lost time, undermining any conservation gains from the closure months. Unless the WCPFC urgently extends the FAD ban measure for bigeye to cover the entire year, the short-term reduction in bigeye catches will be outweighed by increased FAD use in other months.

Greenpeace recommends that the WCPFC adopt and implement a complete year-round ban on the use of FADs in association with purse seine fishing. This will help address excess fishing capacity, reduce catches of juvenile bigeye and yellowfin tuna, and reduce bycatch of other vulnerable species, including oceanic whitetip and silky sharks.

Reduce bigeye catches by 50%, set precautionary limit and target points for all species, and implement capacity reduction

The large number of Philippines-flagged vessels observed during the expedition that were active in the Pacific Commons indicates that tuna fisheries in the Western Pacific are in bad shape. Coastal states such as the Philippines are sending their bloated purse seine fleets further from shore as tuna stocks in their coastal waters disappear. These, and other fleets that are now migrating to the Pacific after decimating their own tuna grounds, are threatening to do the same in the WCPO.

Annual catch levels for bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack tuna in recent years have been at an all-time high. Scientists believe that the bigeye tuna stock is being overfished, and overall numbers are well below levels considered healthy enough to support a sustainable fishery. Overfishing of adult bigeye, combined with increased catches of juveniles in the purse seine FAD fishery, has drastically reduced the overall bigeye stock. Greenpeace believes that the current 30% reduction target for bigeye catch levels set by the WCPFC is far from precautionary. Greenpeace instead believes that catches must be reduced by 50% across all major bigeye fisheries.

For yellowfin tuna, the threat of overfishing is extremely high, given significant uncertainties about the stock assessments and the high mortality rate of juvenile yellowfin due to purse seine fishing on FADs. Increasing effort for skipjack, particularly through purse seine FAD fishing, has pushed yellowfin fishing to maximum sustainable levels.

Beyond tuna, oceanic whitetip sharks and silky sharks are in a dangerously poor state. For silky sharks, the greatest impact on the stock is attributed to longline fishing. However, there are also significant impacts from the FAD-associated purse seine fishery, where catches are predominantly juvenile silky sharks.

In order to reverse the impending and deepening crisis the WCPFC members need to adopt measures aimed at reducing bigeye catches by 50% from 2011 levels, to reflect both the uncertainty in those assessments and the need to maintain healthy stocks.

The commission must urgently adopt precautionary target and limit reference points for the tuna species under its mandate and implement capacity reduction measures to align fishing capacity with sustainable catch levels. Preferential access to these fisheries should be granted to states and fleets fulfilling best the following criteria:

-
- Low environmental impacts (level of bycatch; damage to the marine environment, including impact on species composition and the foodweb, is minimal)
 - History of compliance/flag state performance;
 - Amount and quality of data provided by flag states and operators;
 - Low energy consumption per unit of fish caught;
 - Quality of the fish produced and delivered to market; and
 - Socio-economic benefits such as employment provided, especially to coastal communities.

Capacity reduction in the region should be implemented in a way that does not result in capacity migration to other regions or fisheries.

Ban all at sea transshipments at sea, and implement Port State Measures

Evidence presented here continues to show how transshipment at sea plays a key role in laundering illegally caught tuna out of the region. Despite regulations in place to “manage” transshipment at sea, WCPFC member countries are still ignoring rules and transshipping, without proper authorisation and to unregulated non-member vessels. In the case of the transshipment documented in this expedition, the non-member vessels had no VMS, no observer and no “official” log book or other evidence to trace the origin of the tuna on board.

Without appropriate scrutiny by observers and fisheries officials, as is the case when transshipping in port, transshipments at sea on the other hand allows vessels to hide illegal catches, catch much greater amounts than they report, or catch fish in one area and report it caught in another area. Transshipment at sea facilitates the plunder of the region’s tuna stocks. Given the inadequate capacity to monitor at-sea transshipments, a more effective solution must be put in place.

In order to ensure better control of and compliance by fishing vessels, the coastal and flag state members of the WCPFC should urgently ban all at-sea transshipments and require transshipments in port, in order to close the net on IUU fishing in the WCPO. WCPFC members should also urgently implement the UN FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, to exercise better port control and improve information sharing.

Strengthen WCPFC vessel registry by keeping it up to date

The loopholes observed in the WCPFC Registry of Fishing Vessels (RFV) – which allow vessels that do not have valid authorisation to fish (for example the *KM Stracki 10* and *KM Starcki 11*) to appear on said registry – need to be urgently fixed.

In order to maintain an accurate overview of active fishing capacity in the region (and eventually globally), the WCPFC RFV should be continuously updated with the vessel details that are actually fishing activities in the region at any given time.

Appendix 1: Full list of fishing vessels inspected during the expedition

Vessel	Date	Flag	IRCS	Type	Location	Remarks
SHINN FURE SHEN 11	5-Nov-12	Taiwan	BK7408	Longliner	Palau EEZ	Has licence in Palau
GENEVIVA	9-Nov-12	Philippines	DUL6911	Purse seiner	HSP-1 03°56'N 136°12'E	Registered in WCPFC
GENE-2	12-Nov-12	Philippines	DUL6910	Carrier	HSP-1 04°09'91"N 136°36'06"E	Registered in WCPFC
VERGENE	12-Nov-12	Philippines	DUL6105	Purse seiner	HSP-1 04°08'05"N 136°36'06"E	Registered in WCPFC
HENG XING 1	14-Nov-12	Cambodia	XUPA8	Reefer	HSP-1 01°45'66"N 139°27'25"E	Not registered in WCPFC, illegally transhipped with <i>SAL 19</i> , <i>Starcki 10</i> and <i>11</i> at HSP-1
FONG KUO No 788	17-Nov-12	Taiwan	BEFL	Purse seiner	Palau EEZ	Registered in WCPFC, has fishing licence in Papua New Guinea
SAL DIECINUEVE (SAL 19)	22-Nov-12	Philippines	DUG6255	Registered as fishing vessel, operating as reefer	Palau EEZ	Not registerd in WCPFC, illegally transhipped with <i>Heng Xing 1</i> at HSP-1

Appendix 2: Illegal FADs in Palau EEZ

Date	Sources	Colour or Marks on the FAD	Coordinates	Action Taken
6-Nov-12	Spotted by helicopter	Philippine payao-style Anchored, marked "77"	04°30'50"N 135°32'00"E	Sunk on 6 November
6-Nov-12	Spotted by helicopter	Philippine payao-style Anchored	04°35'50"N 135°30'50"E	Reported to Palau authority
6-Nov-12	Spotted by helicopter	Philippine payao-style Anchored	04°34'50"N 135°25'00"E	Reported to Palau authority
6-Nov-12	Spotted by helicopter	Philippine payao-style Anchored, marked "93"	04°31'70"N 135°37'00"E	Sunk on 6 November
6-Nov-12	Spotted by helicopter	Philippine payao-style Anchored, marked "79"	04°28'50"N 135°36'50"E	Sunk on 7 November
10-Nov-12	Spotted from the bridge	Philippine payao-style Drifting, rusty, with a broken anchor line	06°47'30"N 134°58'90"E	Sunk on 10 November
17-Nov-12	Spotted from the bridge	Drifting bamboo and logs	07°34'53"N 135°49'77"E	Reported to Palau authority
20-Nov-12	Spotted by helicopter	Philippine payao-style Anchored, marked "#8081"	02°49'N 130°10'E	Reported to Palau authority
20-Nov-12	Spotted by helicopter	Philippine payao-style Anchored, marked "#8085"	02°40'N 130°13'E	Reported to Palau authority
21-Nov-12	Spotted by helicopter	Philippine payao-style Anchored, painted green, marked "48"	02°01'N 132°13'30"E	Confiscated on 21 November
21-Nov-12	Spotted by helicopter	Philippine payao-style Anchored, painted green	02°00'N 132°24'E	Confiscated on 21 November
21-Nov-12	Spotted by helicopter	Philippine payao-style Anchored, painted green	02°00'N 132°25'E	Reported to Palau authority

Appendix 3: FADs found in HSP-1

Date	Sources	Colour or Marks on the FAD	Coordinates	Remarks
7-Nov-12	Spotted from the bridge and by inflatable	Philippine payao-style Anchored, marked "8812"	03°56'N 136°12'E	FAD, which <i>Geneviva</i> anchored
7-Nov-12	Spotted from the bridge and by inflatable	Philippine payao-style Anchored, marked "FAD 8840"	03°56'90"N 136°11'88"E	FAD nearby <i>Geneviva</i>
9-Nov-12	Observer logbook on <i>Geneviva</i>	MV 825	04°06'45"N 136°18'94"E	FAD deployed by <i>Geneviva</i> on 28 October 2012
9-Nov-12	Observer logbook on <i>Geneviva</i>	MV 835	04°12'76"N 136°13'93"E	FAD deployed by <i>Geneviva</i> on 28 October 2012
9-Nov-12	Observer logbook on <i>Geneviva</i>	MV 839	04°15'49"N 136°16'44"E	FAD deployed by <i>Geneviva</i> on 28 October 2012
9-Nov-12	Observer logbook on <i>Geneviva</i>	MV 26	04°08'N 136°28'E	FAD deployed by <i>Geneviva</i> on 9 November 2012
9-Nov-12	Observer logbook on <i>Geneviva</i>		04°01'17"N 136°14'11"E	FAD observed by <i>Geneviva</i> on 27 October 2012
9-Nov-12	Observer logbook on <i>Geneviva</i>	AQUA 801	03°40'84"N 136°22'31"E	FAD observed by <i>Geneviva</i> on 29 October 2012
9-Nov-12	Observer logbook on <i>Geneviva</i>	AQUA 815	03°30'29"N 136°18'60"E	FAD observed by <i>Geneviva</i> on 29 October 2012
9-Nov-12	Observer logbook on <i>Geneviva</i>	AQUA 802	03°36'21"N 136°22'20"E	FAD observed by <i>Geneviva</i> on 29 October 2012
11-Nov-12	Spotted from the bridge	Philippine payao-style Anchored, painted white, marked "MV 19"	04°21'20"N 136°35'60"E	
11-Nov-12	Spotted from the bridge	Philippine payao-style Anchored	04°09'91"N 136°46'32"E	FAD anchored by <i>Vergene</i>
12-Nov-12	Spotted from the bridge and by inflatable	Philippine payao-style Anchored	04°08'50"N 136°36'60"E	FAD anchored by <i>Vergene</i>
13-Nov-12	Spotted by helicopter	Philippine payao-style Anchored	04°36'N to 04°06'N 136°30'E to 136°54'E	7 FADs in every 5 miles
13-Nov-12	Spotted by helicopter	Philippine payao-style Anchored	04°09'N 136°28'E	FAD anchored by <i>Viva-2</i>

Endnotes

- 1** Final report of the WCPFC Science Committee 2012 (SC9).
<http://www.wcpfc.int/node/5751>
- 2** Major distant water fishing fleets operating in the WCPO include China, Korea, Taiwan, Japan, the USA and the EU.
- 3** Final report of the WCPFC Science Committee 2005 (SC9). <http://www.wcpfc.int/doc/final-sc1-report-2986k>
- 4** <http://oceans.greenpeace.org/raw/content/en/documents-reports/plundering-pacific.pdf>
<http://www.greenpeace.org/raw/content/australia/resources/reports/overfishing/defending-our-pacific-2008-su.pdf>
<http://www.greenpeace.org/raw/content/international/press/reports/defending-our-pacific2009-summaryreport.pdf>
- 5** PNA member countries include the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Tuvalu.
- 6** Philippine group seiner fleet of 36 vessels allowed to fish in western high seas pocket under special conditions set out in WCPFC CMM 2011-01 as well as Philippine law.
- 7** Paragraphs 27 & 31 of Executive Summary: SC (2011). Summary Report. Seventh Regular Session of the Science Committee, WCPFC. 9–17 August 2011, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia. Available at <http://www.wcpfc.int/node/3961>; see also (v)
- 8** Siberta J, Seninab I, Lehodeyb P & Hampton J (2012). Shifting from marine reserves to maritime zoning for conservation of Pacific bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*). PNAS vol. 109 no. 44. Available online at: <http://www.pnas.org/content/109/44/18221.abstract>
- 9** <http://www.loydslistintelligence.com/lint/vessels/ownership.htm?vesselid=230570>
<http://www.loydslistintelligence.com/lint/companies/overview.htm?companyID=225611>
- 10** Article 8 (4) of the WCPFC Convention, which requires the Commission to pay attention to the high seas in the Convention Area that are surrounded by exclusive economic zones (EEZ).

Image: Yellowfin tuna at the Dong Gang wholesale fish market, Dong Gang, Kaohsiung, Taiwan.



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