



Common Oceans Tuna Project 2022-2027

The Project “Sustainable Management of Tuna Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction” is a continuation of an earlier project (2014-2019) with the same name (often referred to as “ABNJ Tuna Project”). The Project objective is to achieve responsible, efficient, and sustainable tuna production and biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ in face of a changing environment. This is a GEF-funded project, implemented by FAO and executed by the IOTC through a Project Management Unit.

Selected activities with a global and/or regional focus in the Pacific Ocean region:

1. IATTC will develop and implement tools and processes for a regional shark fishery sampling program in three countries (Ecuador, Mexico and Peru) bordering the Eastern Pacific Ocean providing data for several types of stock assessments. This builds on successful work carried out in Central America to address important data gaps in shark fisheries which has been a challenge for IATTC. The long-term objective is to start building the required catch and effort data time series for conventional stock assessment. At the same time, the work will also prepare for data-limited methods to be used as well as alternatives such as Close Kin Mark Recapture (CKMR) involving genetic analysis.
2. The Pacific Community (SPC), in collaboration with Mercator Ocean International and Conservation International, will improve on the model to forecast the effects of climate change on tuna distribution in the Pacific Ocean. This work will also be extended and replicated for the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.
3. Three joint tuna RFMO Working Groups will be convened on topics of global relevance to be decided by the tuna RFMOs.
4. The Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) will develop an advanced competency-based qualification in fisheries management for fishery managers, thus contributing to strengthening fisheries management competency across the Western Pacific region. Another training initiative concerns MCS data analysis capacity in the FFA Regional Fisheries Surveillance Centre and in Pacific Island national fisheries administrations, which combines accredited courses and hands-on practical training in the use and analysis of data from MCS tools.
5. Activities led by Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) to enhance education, outreach, and capacity building for the monitoring and implementation of seabird bycatch mitigation measures, as well as an update of the 2016 global seabird risk assessment.

6. Continued support to the Tuna Compliance Network through the International MCS Network, which brings together compliance officers from the five tuna RFMOs, to review monitoring processes for compliance in tuna and non-tuna RFMOs to identify drivers of compliance rates and measures to improve compliance.
7. The Ocean Foundation will support capacity building in Harvest Strategies/Management Strategy Evaluation in tuna RFMOs through technical support, developing e-learning courses and interactive tools, hosting quarterly webinars, and producing supporting outreach materials.
8. The International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF) will continue efforts in various areas such as: a) capacity building in the implementation of EAFM; b) support the implementation of EMS; c) develop and promote biodegradable/ non-entangling FADs; d) hold skippers' workshops to adopt best practices in bycatch mitigation; e) develop acoustic technology; and f) produce and disseminate a policy paper for holistic bycatch management that considers the impact of different fishing gears.
9. World Wildlife Fund (US) will develop and promote a training guide/toolkit to address technical and financial barriers in developing countries for the implementation of electronic monitoring in tuna fisheries.
10. The International Whaling Commission (IWC) will assess cetacean bycatch and data gaps across the Western Pacific Ocean (and Indian Ocean), build regional capacity and awareness on cetacean bycatch and available solutions, and collaboratively develop recommendations to address cetacean bycatch for consideration by the tuna RFMOs.

The Common Oceans Tuna Project is part of the Common Oceans Program that has galvanized international action in support of sustainable management and biodiversity conservation of the ABNJ. Funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and led by FAO, the project works in collaboration with five regional tuna RFMOs, intergovernmental organizations and initiatives, the private sector, and civil society.

For more information:

Website: <https://www.fao.org/in-action/commonoceans/en/>

Fact sheet: <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc4043en>

