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**SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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**Report of Japan's scientific observer program for tuna longline fishery  
in the Convention Area of Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission  
in 2016 calendar year**

JAPAN

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**Summary**

In accordance with Resolution C-11-08, Japan commenced its scientific observer program for longline fishery in the Convention Area of Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) from 1 January 2013. This document provides the scientific observers' information in 2016 calendar year. In 2016 calendar year, 13 observer trips were conducted on Japanese tuna longline vessels in the Convention Area.

**Keywords**

Longline, Japan, Scientific observer, Tuna fisheries

**Introduction**

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**Training of the scientific observer**

In principal, all scientific observers attend a training class held by Overseas Fishery Cooperation Foundation of Japan (OFCF) and Japan NUS (JANUS) under Japan's observer program before their departure for the cruise. The National Research Institute of Far Seas Fisheries (NRIFSF) of the Japan Fisheries Research and Education

Agency (FRA) provides an observer manual and supervises the training course. Under the course scientific observers are trained in skills necessary for conduct its part, including species identification, data recording protocols *etc.*

## Results

### i) Observer trip number, observed fishing operations and observer coverage

In 2016 calendar year, 13 observer trips were conducted on Japanese tuna longline vessels. Total number of observed fishing operations of 13 trips was 832 days. Information of the trips is shown in Table 1. The tentative observer coverage in this year was 7.18% by number of operations (831/11,572).

### ii) Catch records, including bycatch data

Observers recorded every items taken on deck and identified the species by themselves. Observers also collected bycatch data. They took photo of bycatch species according to the procedures given in the observer manual made by NRIFSF scientists. Bycatch experts in NRIFSF identified species using these photos.

By 30 June 2017, data of 8 observer trips was compiled for analyzing catch record. The list of species recorded by scientific observer on longline fishery in 2016 in the 8 trips was shown in Table 2.

In relation to paragraph 3 of Resolution C-11-10, eight interactions of oceanic whitetip shark were recorded by observers in 4 trips (Table 2). All oceanic whitetip sharks were released but they were dead.

In relation to paragraph 4 of Resolution C-15-04, three interactions of Mobulid ray were recorded by observers in 1 trip (Table 2).

In relation to paragraph 4.a of Resolution C-04-05, sixty interactions of Sea Turtles were recorded by observer in 3 trips (Table 2), and all of them were released.

**Table 1. Information on the trip of the scientific observer for Japanese tuna longline in the Convention Area of Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission during 2016 calendar year submitted by 30 June 2017.**

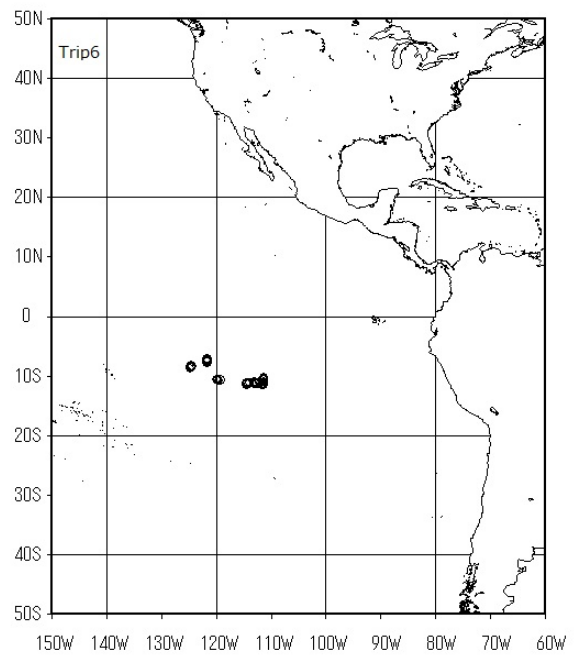
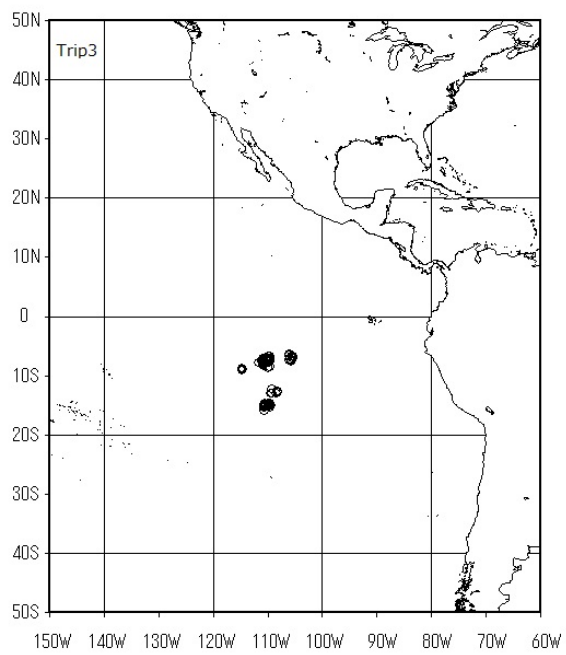
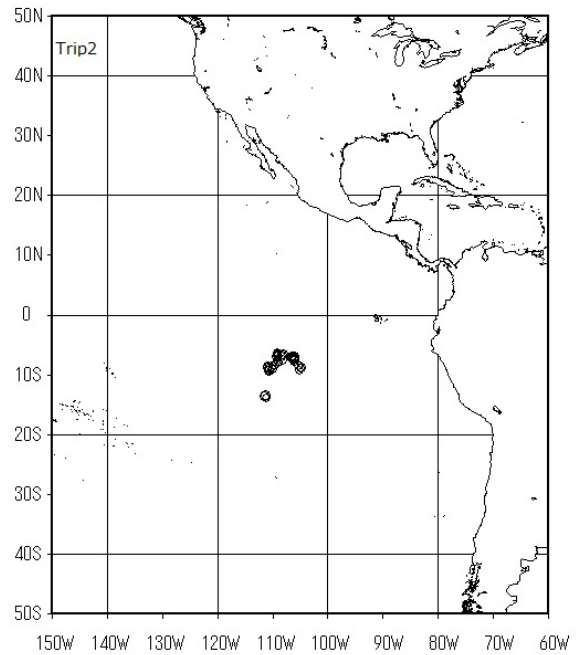
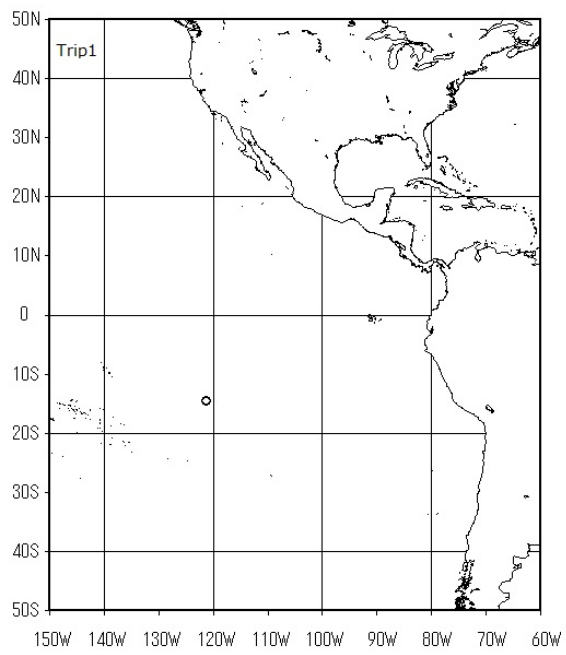
Trip ID	Range of latitude	Range of longitude	Start date of operation	End date of operation	Number of operation	Number of hooks
trip 1	14.4-14.7S	121.3-121.5W	2016/1/1	2016/1/3	3	8,010
trip 2	6.3-13.9S	104.8-111.5W	2016/1/1	2016/2/29	54	149,974
trip 3	6.3-15.8S	105.5-114.8W	2016/1/1	2016/4/22	94	236,976
trip 4	9.1-30.5S	80.4-119.8W	2016/5/2	2016/11/8	157	408,027
trip 5	4.9-12.8S	116.8-130.5W	2016/7/10	2016/10/30	107	344,466

trip 6	7.0-11.8S	111.4-124.8W	2016/8/8	2016/10/19	68	161,840
trip 7	11.3-19.6S	109.8- 114.1W	2016/8/19	2016/10/20	61	158,389
trip 8	9.5-15.1S	119.0- 135.8W	2016/8/5	2016/11/3	78	202,800
trip 9	11.5-14.3S	110.0- 123.0W	2016/9/17	2016/10/16	26	62,080
trip 10	18.4-18.9S	114.7-116.6W	2016/9/4	2016/9/21	18	45,832
trip 11	12.0-13.4S	102.3- 102.8W	2016/10/12	2016/10/24	13	33,150
trip 12	9.7-13.5S	102.9- 112.0W	2016/9/29	2016/12/31	82	194,500
trip 13	9.8-13.4S	104.8-111.3W	2016/10/19	2016/12/31	70	183,920
Total	—	—	—	—	831	2,189,96

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**Table 2. List of species recorded by scientific observer on longline fishery in the Convention Area in 2016 calendar year in the 8 observer reports whose data was compiled for analyze by 30 June 2017 (Unit: Number of individuals).**

Trip	1	2	3	6	8	9	10	11	Total
Species									
Albacore	1	1	51	281	261	102	191	0	888
Yellowfin tuna	10	78	95	503	152	47	33	55	973
Bigeeye tuna	24	592	469	1123	727	310	333	232	3810
Skipjack tuna	1	8	26	49	8	4	0	1	97
Sailfish	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Black marlin	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	4
Blue marlin	0	43	79	12	14	6	2	3	159
Spearfishes	1	35	78	52	53	58	85	26	388
Striped marlin	0	13	18	7	40	7	33	17	135
Sword fish	4	386	265	211	277	35	24	51	1253
Other teleosts	4	295	177	1271	597	182	187	279	2992
Thresher sharks	1	29	15	27	38	13	1	45	169
Shortfin mako	0	0	1	7	14	13	9	10	54
Blue shark	12	225	131	132	145	40	24	61	770
Oceanic whitetip shark	0	1	1	2	4	0	0	0	8
Other Sharks	0	309	55	530	74	90	0	33	1091
Sting ray	7	318	108	138	166	193	4	39	973
Manta Ray	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Other Rays	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	1	6
Sea Birds	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sea Turtles	0	34	25	0	0	0	1	0	60
Mammals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unidentified	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total	65	2372	1597	4346	2575	1100	928	853	13835



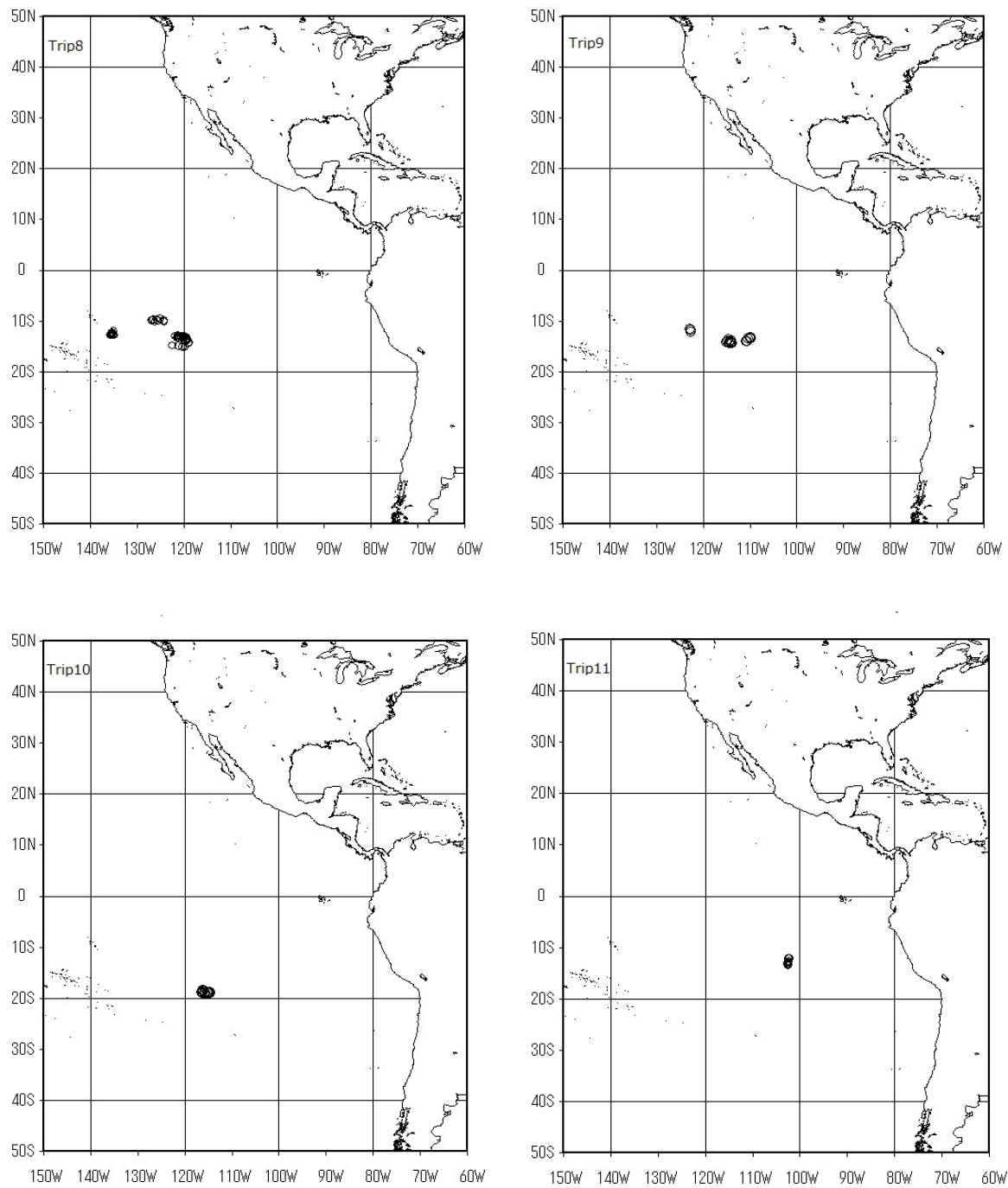


Fig 1. Line setting locations of Japanese tuna longline for the trips with the scientific observer onboard in the Convention Areas of Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission during 2016 calendar year (Trip 1 to 11).

**Note**

This report will be updated and submitted the Director sequentially in accordance with completion of analysis of the remaining 5 reports.

**Acknowledgement**

We greatly appreciate all scientific observers for their efforts in order to collect valuable data and samples on the Japanese longline vessels. We would also like to express special thanks to all crews of the longline vessels for their understanding and cooperation to the observer program.