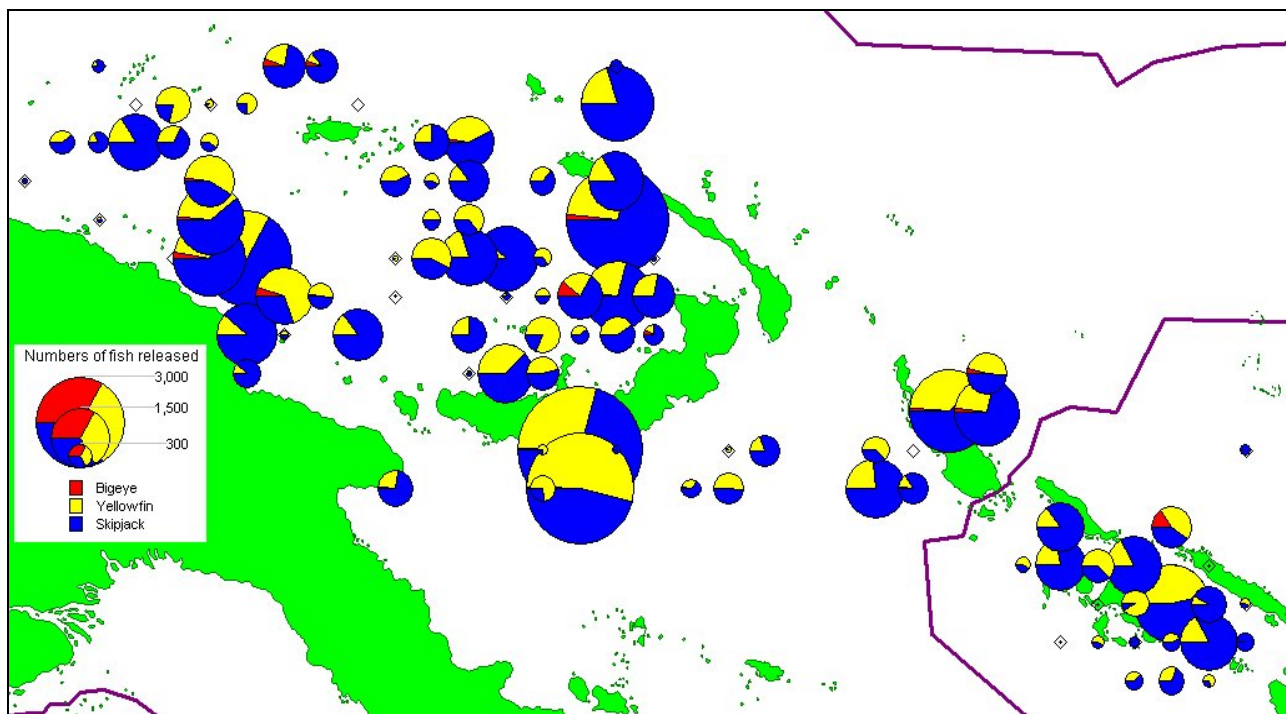


PACIFIC TUNA TAGGING PROGRAMME
MONTHLY TAGGING SUMMARY – NOVEMBER 2007



PROGRAMME UPDATE

The PNG Tagging Project, the fieldwork for which was completed in May 2007, was intended to represent Phase 1 of a new Pacific Tuna Tagging Programme (PTTP). A proposal for the PTTP was presented at the August meeting of the Scientific Committee of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, and was enthusiastically supported by the scientific representatives of Commission members and cooperating non-members. Since then, a major funding commitment (NZD 5 million) to the PTTP was announced by the Hon. Helen Clark, Prime Minister of New Zealand at the recent Forum Leaders Meeting in Tonga. This commitment, along with other funding committed by the European Commission and Papua New Guinea National Fisheries Authority, means that approximately USD6.4 million of the USD10 million project budget has now been pledged.

With these developments, we will continue to provide monthly summaries of tagging activity under the banner of the PTTP.

TAG RELEASES

Field work for Phase 1 (PNG) was completed in May 2007. A one month cruise was recently completed in the Solomon Islands (27 October-23 November), contributing an additional 11,180 releases (7476 SKJ, 3565 YFT and 139 BET) to the project. Therefore the total numbers of releases are now revised as below in Table 1.

Table 1. Tag releases, August 2006 -November 2007.

	Skipjack	Yellowfin	Bigeye	Total
Conventional tag only	47814	23860	765	72439
Archival + conventional tag	2	219	47	268
Sonic + conventional tag	69	116	10	195
Archival + sonic + conventional tag	0	19	8	27
Total	47885	24214	830	72929

TAG RECOVERIES

Recoveries from the PNG and Solomons releases will be reported separate initially in these summaries.

PNG TAGGING

November was another busy month for tag returns (Figure 1), with 585 conventional tag returns, 2 archival tags and 1 sonic tag. This brings the total number of tag returns to 7,243, with an overall recovery rate of 11.7% (Table 2) for conventional tags, 12.7% for archival tags (Table 3) and 8.6% for sonic tags (Table 4).

Table 2. Conventional tag recoveries, PNG Tuna Tagging as at 31 November 2007.

	Skipjack	Yellowfin	Bigeye	Total
November 1st – 31st recoveries	323	253	9	585
Total to November 31st	4252 (10.5%)	2764 (13.4%)	227 (32.9%)	7 243 (11.7%)

Note : numbers include returns that were double tagged with conventional and electronic tags.

Table 3. Archival tag recoveries, PNG Tuna Tagging as at 31 November 2007.

	Skipjack	Yellowfin	Bigeye	Total
November 1st – 31st recoveries	-	1	1	2
Total to November 31st	1 (50%)	24 (10.3%)	11 (22.9%)	36 (12.7%)

Table 4. Sonic tag recoveries, PNG Tuna Tagging as at 31 November 2007.

	Skipjack	Yellowfin	Bigeye	Total
November 1st – 31st recoveries	-	1	-	1
Total to November 31st	2 (2.9%)	10 (7.47%)	7 (38.9%)	19 (8.6%)

The November recoveries were dominated by a large delivery of tags from the RD fishing company in PNG, the recovery contact in Thailand (Table 5) and the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission.

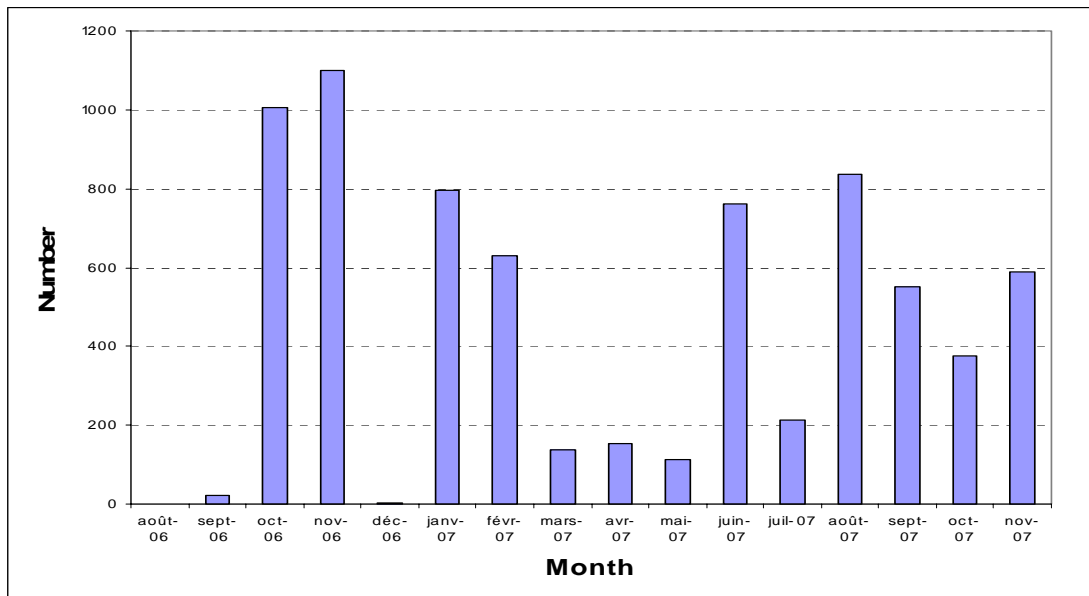


Figure 1. Number of tag returns by month.

Table 5. Number of tag recoveries by source (location found).

Tag return source	November returns	Total returns
American Samoa	2	13
China	0	1
FSM	0	1
IATTC	0	82
Indonesia	27	69
IOTC	0	2
Japan	55	226
Korea	0	81
Other	0	5
Philippines (direct)	54	241
Philippines (Frabelle)	0	162
PNG (Frabelle)	93	463
PNG (NFA)	0	87
PNG (other)	0	29
PNG (RD)	208	5022
PNG (SSTC)	87	145
Solomon Islands (Soltai)	34	106
Solomon (other)	1	12
Tagging vessel	0	23
Thailand	24	473
TOTAL	585	7243

Overall, tag recoveries continue to be dominated by PNG flagged or affiliated vessels fishing primarily in the Bismarck Sea, where many of the tagged tuna were released (Table 6). However, significant recaptures of tagged tuna continue to be made by all of the major purse seine fleets (Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Vanuatu, China).

Table 6. Number of tag recoveries by vessel flag.

Flag	November 2007 returns	Total returns
Non identified	67	318
China	2	21
FSM	0	4
Indonesia	28	71
Japan	55	237
Kiribati	0	8
Korea	2	128
Marshall Islands	0	4
New Zealand	0	2
PNG	253	5408
Philippines	119	693
Solomon Islands	33	116
Seychelles	0	1
Taiwan	25	190
United States	0	5
Vanuatu	1	37
TOTAL	585	7243

SOLOMONS TUNA TAGGING

Many recoveries were reported and received , mostly in Noro, during November but have yet to be entered and are thus not included in this summary A tag recovery officer (Hudson Wakio) has been appointed in Solomon Islands, to cover mainly tag recoveries from the purse seine transshipment operations that occur in Honiara, and the full cooperation of Soltai Fishing and Processing Company in processing returns in Noro has been assured.

TAGGED FISH MOVEMENTS

Updated graphics showing the movements of tagged tuna are shown below in figures 2-4. Skipjack continue to show the greatest mobility, followed by yellowfin and bigeye tuna.

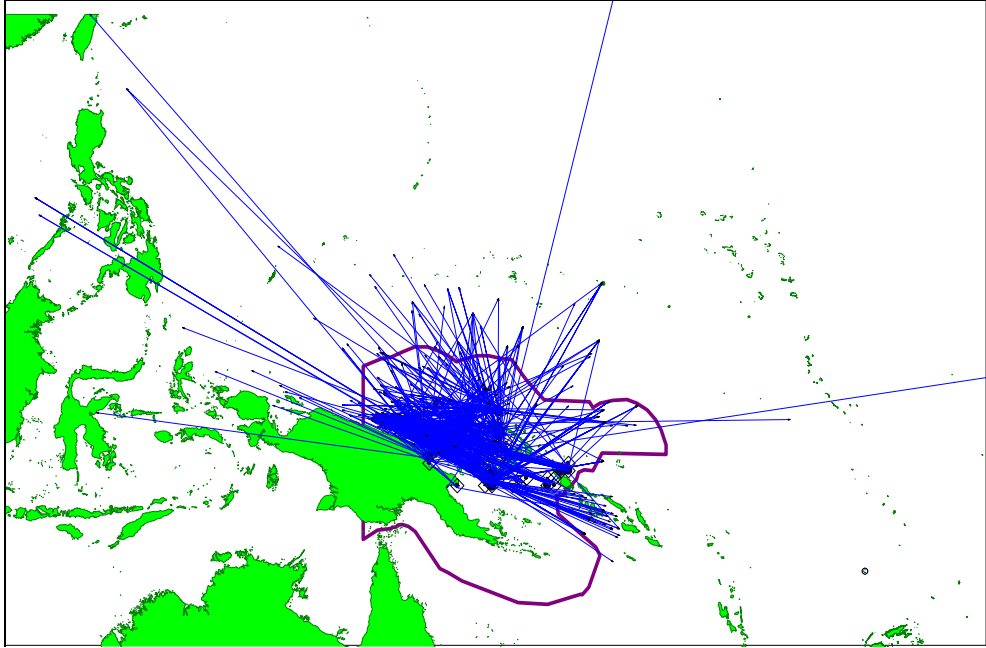


Figure 2. Displacements of tagged SKIPJACK>300 nmi.

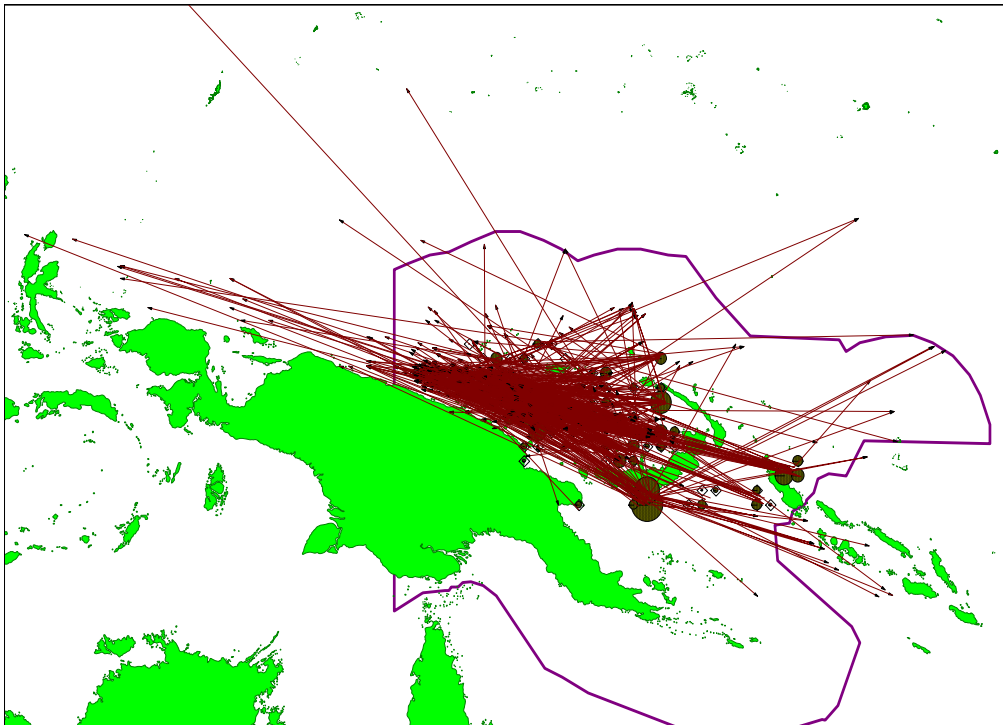


Figure 3. Displacements of tagged YELLOWFIN>200 nmi.

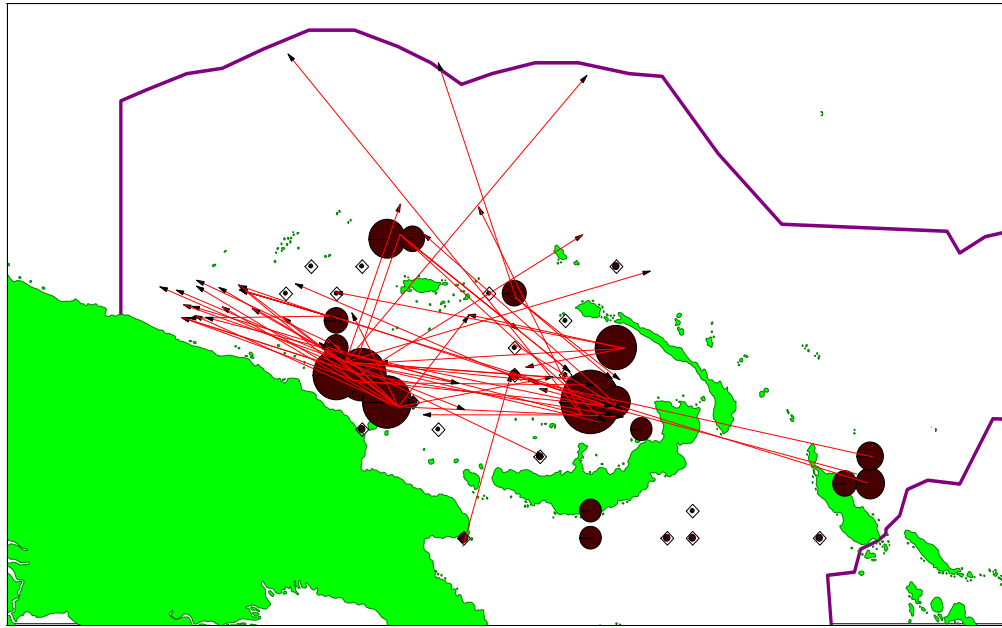


Figure 4. Displacements of tagged BIGEYE>100 nmi.