# **Review of the Fishery Improvement Plan for the Vietnamese Tuna handline and longline fisheries**

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**ACRONYMS**

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| **Vietnamese Institutions Acronyms** |
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| DARD | Department of Agriculture and Resource Development |
| DECAFIREP | Department of Capture Fisheries & Resource Exploitation and Protection |
| CRSD | Coastal Resources for Sustainable Development  |
| MARD | the Ministry of Agriculture and Resource Development |
| NIO | Nha Trang Institute of Oceanography |
| PPC | Provincial People’s Committees |
| RIMF | Research Institute for Fisheries Management |
| TFMC | Tuna Fisheries Management Council |
| VASEP | Vietnam Association of Seafood Exporters and Producers  |
| VINATUNA | Vietnamese Tuna Association |
| WWF-VN WWF-CTP | World Wildlife Fund (Vietnam)WWF Coral Triangle Programme |
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**Fisheries Management Acronyms** |
| CCM |  | Cooperating Commission Member |
| CMM |  | Conservation and Management Measure |
| CNM |  | Cooperating Non Member |
| EEZ |  | Exclusive Economic Zone |
| FMA |  | Fisheries Management Area |
| IUU |  | Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated |
| MSC |  | Marine Stewardship Council |
| MoU |  | Memorandum of Understanding |
| NPOA |  | National Plan of Action |
| NTMP |  | National Tuna Management Plan |
| PIRFO |  | Pacific Islands Regional Fisheries Observer |
| RFMO |  | Regional Fisheries Management Organisation |
| SC |  | Scientific Committee |
| SPC |  | Secretariat of the Pacific Community |
| TCC |  | Technical Conservation Committee |
| TAC |  | Total Allowable Catch |
| TURF |  | Territorial User Rights in Fisheries |
| UNFSA |  | United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement |
| VDS |  | Vessels Days Scheme |
| UNFSA |  | United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement |
| VMS |  | Vessel Monitoring Scheme |
| WCPFC |  | Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission |
| WCPO |  | Western Central Pacific Ocean |
| WPEA OFM |  | [West Pacific East Asia Oceanic Fisheries Management Project](http://www.wcpfc.int/west-pacific-east-asia-oceanic-fisheries-management-project) |
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| **MSC Acronyms** |
| BMT |  | MSC FIP Benchmarking and Monitoring Tool |
| EAFM |  | Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management |
| ETP |  | Endangered, Threatened and Protected |
| FIP |  | Fishery Improvement Project |
| MSC |  | Marine Stewardship Council |
| PSA |  | Productivity Sensitivity Analysis |
| RBF |  | Risk Based Framework |
| SICA |  | Scale Intensity Consequence Analysis |

## **Introduction**

This report provides a review of the Fisheries Improvement Plan (FIP) for the Vietnamese longline and handline yellowfin tuna fisheries. The first section reviews the activities and milestones and assesses the achievement of these along with any barriers. This review is not part of an M&E review, which is scheduled to take place in Q3 2015. There is no attempt at this stage to re-score the fishery. This will be done at the time of the review.

## **Section 1: Summary report on milestone outcomes**

This section represents a summary of the current positions on the milestones set to evaluate the achievement of outcomes in the Vietnam Fisheries Improvement Plan facilitated by WWF-VN and WWF-CTP. The Fisheries Improvement activities were agreed at a workshop held in June, 2013 and progress reviewed for those milestones which were to be completed by Q2 2014.

It is important to note that MSC requires vigorous assessment and public consultation processes, with a facility for objections and adjudication. For this reason very specific milestones have been set, which require validation through Means of Verification (MoVs). These will be recorded in a Dropbox, and outputs evaluated by the FIP consultant to test whether these outputs are sufficient, or if not, require strengthening. The Dropbox system will be created following this report, and will be linked to the existing FIP stakeholder communication channels. Having the specific MoVs in place will allow the MSC assessors to confirm if the MSC scoring guideposts have been met. It also provides clear evidence of outcomes to any prospective challenge to fishery specific certification.

The report concludes that in the FIP’s first year, 1 from 50 milestone outcomes is in the process of achieved.

The report summary below also includes revision to milestones based on changes in the fisheries or its management structure. Some primary 23 recommendations are proposed for immediate attention. This does not preclude the fact that other actions need to be implemented.

GOAL 1: STOCK STATUS IMPROVED AND REFERENCE POINTS APPLIED IN MANAGEMENT

Outcome 1.1 Stock status improved and reference points applied in management

*Activity 1.1: WCPFC sets explicit limit reference points which are consistent with the MSC definition of BLIM (0.2 B0), and these limits are applied to the harvest strategy*

**Milestone 1: MARD/RIMF participating in SC WGs and WCPFC general session discussions on reference points (Projected milestone completion: Q4 2013).** Attending WCPFC General Session and Technical and Compliance Committee, but not annual Science Committee. Budgetary restrictions may prevent attendance from time to time. It is noteworthy that delegates attending meetings report to the Minister following each meeting. RIMF and SPC should reconcile differences in methodology used to determine stock status. Given the potential conflicts in stock assessment outcomes (RIMF VPA analysis and SPC Multifan), it is important that RIMF attend and present their scientific outcomes at SC. This milestone is only being partially achieved.

Recommendation 1: RIMF technical staff to personally attend and submit a scientific paper at the 2015 General Session on their VPA analysis.

**Milestone 2: Setting of LRPs and TRPs at WCPFC for all YFT and BET (Projected milestone completion: Q4 2015**). LRPs were set at the WCPFC General Session, and TRPs for skipjack, yellowfin and bigeye are likely to be set in the 2014 GS. MFMR has reportedly set its own TRP for skipjack tuna. It is important that LRPs and TRPs are consistent with WCPFC policy. Any potential conflicts in stocks assessments should therefore be reconciled. This milestone has not been achieved.

Recommendation 2: Government of Vietnam must apply Limit and Target Reference Points that are consistent with those accepted by WCPFC and these should be implemented through management measures.

*Activity 1.1.2: An effective rebuilding strategy implemented for bigeye tuna*

**Milestone 3: MARD/RIMF participating in SC WGs for the revision of the core WCPFC CMM on bigeye and yellowfin strategy (Projected milestone completion Q3 2013).** SC and GS needs scientific inputs from RIMF and management inputs from DECAFIREP on specific measures to be applied where national BET catches of longline exceed 2,000 mt. Whilst Vietnam is a CCM, as a CNM it is required to implement compatible measures. This milestone has not been achieved.

Recommendation 3: MARD/RIMF (appropriate technical staff) must attend the WCPFC General Session.

**Milestone 4: Catch and / or effort limits set for bigeye and yellowfin tuna for Vietnam consistent with WCPFC methodology (either 2001-2004 levels or an alternative) and based on an historic reference point (Projected milestone completion: Q1 2014).** WCPFC requires that the fishing mortality rate for bigeye tuna will be reduced to a level no greater than Fmsy, i.e. F/Fmsy ≤ 1. This will be achieved through a step by step, with limits set on longline fishing for 6 CMMs (WCPFC CMM 2013-01) and not presently including Vietnam. The Vietnam longline catch has been between 2,200-3,600 mt in the years 2007-2013 (Vietnam AR Part 1). Vietnam would therefore be required to implement equivalent measures. It is noteworthy that Indonesia managed to negotiate an exemption from a reduction in effort. This milestone has not been achieved.

Recommendation 4: MARD/RIMF must participate in deriving management outcomes for its BET longline fishery.

Outcome 1.2 Data collection and Information systems strengthened

*Activity 1.2.1: Continue to improve national data collection and monitoring at all levels*

**Milestone 5: Logbook coverage > 75% for LL and HL, and improved coverage of other fisheries eg purse seine, gillnet (Projected milestone completion: Q4 2015).** As part of The Government’s commitment to strengthening logbook coverage, and through capacity building implemented through the WPEA programme considerable advances are being made in logbook reporting (BD 100% boats record the logbook, Phu Yen 50%, Khanh Hoa: 20%). A problem is that some of the logbooks submitted are unusable. This milestone is on track.

Recommendation 5: WPEA to focus strongly on logbook fisher awareness campaigns.

**Milestone 6: Port sampling for key gear types implemented in all main ports/provinces (Projected milestone completion: Q4 2015)***.* Through WPEA, significant advances in logbook coverage including gillnet. There are some cooperation and data sharing issues to be resolved, and the data available is not yet considered sufficiently strong enough to support fisheries management assessments. This milestone is on track.

Recommendation 6: Strengthen cooperation and sharing of data.

**Milestone 7*:* Tuna vessel register operational at Provincial level linked to National recording system (Projected milestone completion: Q4 2015)**. The VN-Fishbase has been designed and will link provincial data to the national database. Fund is available from Coastal Resources for Sustainable Development (CRSD). This milestone is on track.

**Milestone 8: National tuna data collection system implemented and fully effective (Projected milestone completion: Q4 2015)**.On track under WPEA project

Outcome 1.3 Management strategies applied and supported by tools and the application of strong information and research.

*Activity 1.3.1: Implementation of a compatible harvest strategy in Vietnam waters (and compliance with CMMs), which would include longline, purse seine and other gears (including handline and gillnet), and would be consistent with Vietnam’s obligations developed through any future changes to 2012-01.*

**Milestone 9: Vietnam is compliant with CMM 2008-01, 2013-01 or any subsequent amendment (Projected milestone completion: Q1 2016).** Levels of compliance are unknown. Compliance Review issues are expected to be raised and may be interpreted as FIP supporting actions. This milestone is unlikely to have been achieved.

*Activity 1.3.2: Setting a monitoring system in place (consistent with CMM 2010-03) which evaluates the effectiveness of the management measures.*

**Milestone 10: Compliance reporting and annual report on the effectiveness of the CMM. Part II Annual report was submitted to WCPFC and will be discussed in October 2014 (Projected milestone completion: Q3 2013).** WCPFC Part 1 and Part 2 reports submitted. This milestone has been met but the quality of the Part 1 report is poor and the Part II report is not publically available.

Recommendation 7: Review non-compliance/compliance review issues following WCPFC TCC and integrate into FIP Action Plan.

*Activity 1.3.3: Establishing national harvest control rules (input and output restrictions) across the range of tuna fisheries which allow for limits to be implemented as reference points are approached. The rules and tools will need to take account of best practice examples to illustrate their appropriateness (e.g. overall capacity limits, quotas and closed seasons).*

None of the following actions are due to be completed within this timeframe.

**Milestone 11: Workshop on exploring/establishing limits based on TRPs and LRPs and CMM 2012-01 (years 2001-2004 levels), and making allowances for uncertainties (Q4 2014)**. Not commenced

Recommendation 8: Workshop on input and output controls linked to Target Reference Points and WCPFC CMMs

**Milestone 12: Establishing a framework within which harvest control rules would be set and delegating appropriate responsibilities to the Provinces (Q4 2015).** Not commenced

**Milestone 13: Introduction Vietnamese management measure for the Vietnam tuna fishery (Q1 2016).** Not commenced

**Milestone 14: Fisher awareness programme (Q1 2016).** Not commenced

**Milestone 15: Undertake and assess evidence that the measures established are effective (Q4 2017).** Not commenced

GOAL 2: ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT: TO PROMOTE THE ECOSYSTEM BASED APPROACH TO FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

Outcome 2.1 Retained and bycatch species subject to a management strategy

*Activity 2.1.1:* [*Document the catch of bigeye tuna, shark, billfish, baitfish and other species in the handline and longline fisheries (See FIP action 2.1.3).*](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cricha_000%5CDocuments%5CRichard%5CWWF%20Vietnam%20Tuna%5CFIP%20tracking%5CFIP%20Tracking_June%20workshop_draft.xlsx#RANGE!B32)

**Milestone 16: Establish an observer scheme to monitor all catches of retained species and document the level of discarding from the handline and longline fisheries (Projected milestone completion: Q4 2015).** Commitment from industry/WWF to support the role out of an observer scheme. Recommended coverage of 5-10%, which based on WCPFC Part 1 Report would be for 1,734 handline and longline vessels ~ 200 observers. WWF-CTP with WWF-VN and industry partners proposing to develop a training schedule and observer training for around 30 + observers as a pilot. Some broad views was that there were insufficient scientists available to support an observer programme, dedicated specialist observer programme would be beneficial, with training the SPC Pacific Islands Regional Fisheries Observer (PIRFO) Standards, but also exploring the option of a fisher observer scheme. The Pacific Island standing payment rate for observer coverage of US$ 35/day was seen as acceptable. Not commenced

Recommendation 9: Observer programme to be developed by WWF-CTI/VN in cooperation with Private sector and DARD Provinces. Standards to conform to PIRFO

**Milestone 17: Extend port sampling procedures to cover retained species (and informed by the observer scheme) (Projected milestone completion: Q4 2015).** This milestone is being achieved through successful application by DARD Province and supported by WPEA.

Recommendation 10: Evaluate port sampling data to assess data gaps which need resolving through the observer programme

**Milestone 18: Document observer data and port sampling verification, and prepare summary reports of main and vulnerable species (retained) interactions other than bigeye tuna (Q4 2015).** To be developed along with milestone 16. Not commenced

Recommendation 11: Observer programme to include capacity building for Provincial DARD staff – Training, Training of Trainers and Observer Debriefers.

*Activity 2.1.2: Undertake retained species and bycatch management strategy for all billfish and bait stocks (e.g. squid and flying fish) and any other retained or bycatch species, if data shows catch rates to be 5% or more*

**Milestone 19: Training in risk assessment and the application of EAFM (Q1 2016).** Not commenced

**Milestone 20: Workshop to determine risks to commercial, bycatch, baitfish and ETP species (Q2 2016).** Not commenced

**Milestone 21: Workshop to determine management mitigation measures. (Q3 2016).** Not commenced

**Milestone 22: Implement retained species mitigation measures (other than those covered already by CMMs) where necessary (Q1 2017).** Not commenced

**Milestone 23: Evaluate the effectiveness of management mitigation measures for vulnerable retained and bait species. (Q4 2017).** Not commenced

Outcome 2.2: Shark management measures implemented

*Activity 2.2.1: If certain sharks (Oceanic and silky) are proved to be found in the fishery and are retained in the LL and HL fisheries, implement a partial strategy consistent with CMM 2010-07. Implement full strategy to prevent their retention capture of oceanic whitetip (CMM 2011-03/CITES App 2) and scalloped, great and smooth hammerheads (CITES App 2).*

**Milestone 24: Implement shark CMMs 2010-07, CMM 2011-03, CMM 2013-05 and CITES App 2 including all data collection requirements (Q1 2014).** These WCPFC CMM and MUST be applied by July 2014. Indications are VN not complied. There is also a need to design a NPOA for sharks as part of outcome for Milestone 24. This milestone is has not been achieved.

Recommendation 12: Implement WCPFC Shark CMMs

Recommendation 13: Prepare a shark NPOA-IUU

**Milestone 25: Ensure that all shark species are covered under observer reporting above (Projected milestone completion: Q1 2014).** Need applying data logs of SPC for observer program. This milestone is has not been achieved.

Recommendation 14: Strengthen the capacity of observers and port samplers to identify shark species.

**Milestone 26: Shark fisher awareness programme (Projected milestone completion: Q2 2014).** Not achieved but planning with Vina Tuna, industry and WWF. This milestone is has not been achieved.

Recommendation 15: Strengthen the capacity of fishers identify shark species and adopt conservation controls.

**Milestone 27: Evaluate the effectiveness of management measures for shark species identified in the CMMs and CITES (Q1 2015).** No policy to evaluate. Still to be implemented

Outcome 2.3 Turtle management strengthened

*Activity 2.3.1: Monitor and implement a turtle management mitigation policy.*

**Milestone 28: Monitor of turtle bycatch and life status in the handline and longline fisheries (Projected milestone completion: Q1 2014).**  To be clarified for WPEA and industry. This milestone is has not been achieved.

Recommendation 16: Set up a turtle monitoring programme

**Milestone 29: Implement effective management mitigation measures for turtles which are consistent with national and international (WCPFC) obligations (Projected milestone completion: Q1 2014).** No progress. No evidence of reporting back on CMM 2008-03 obligations. This milestone is has not been achieved.

Recommendation 17: Implement CMM 2008-03

Recommendation 18: Prepare an NPOA-Turtles

**Milestone 30: Fisher awareness programme (Q2 2014). There are Circular 01 and Decree 103 for protect sea turtles**. New AP for turtle is planned. Still to be implemented

Recommendation 19: Train fishers in turtle handling and mitigation

**Milestone 31: Evaluate the effectiveness of management mitigation measures for turtles based on best practice (Projected milestone completion: Q4 2014*).***This milestone is has not been achieved.

As per recommendation 16.

Outcome 2.4. Habitats subject to a management strategy

*Activity 2.4.1: Incorporate a requirement to record gear losses into the national observer programme*

**Milestone 32: Gear losses incorporated into observer reporting (Q4 2015).** To be implemented as part of the observer programme

Recommendation 20: Introduce gear loss recording as part of the observer programme

Outcome 2.5: Ecosystems and biodiversity assessments made for the Vietnamese and South China Sea region

*Activity 2.5.1: Assess the ecosystem impact for the Vietnam EEZ /South China Sea Sub region*

**Milestone 33: Collection of biological samples to adequately assess Pacific ecosystems (Q4 2015). Still to be implemented**

**Milestone 34: Training in ecosystem modeling (Q4 2015). Still to be implemented**

**Milestone 35: Ecosystem analysis and reporting to support adoption of EAFM (Q4 2016). Still to be implemented**

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GOAL 3: GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS: TO STRENGTHEN GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS IN VIETNAM’S TUNA FISHERY

Outcome 3.1: Fisheries Law effectively implemented

*Activity 3.1.1: Clarification of Vietnam's status within the convention, and extension of the convention area to the Vietnam*

**Milestone 36: Clarification of the application of the Convention (and CMMs) to Vietnam (Projected to be completed by** Q1 2016 (New amended timeline)**).** If no specific law, VN laws follow the international laws which VN participates. **Still to be implemented/confirmed**

**Milestone 37: Vietnam becomes a WCPFC CCM (Contracting Member) (Projected to be completed by Q4 2016)** Amended to Q4 2017. **Still to be implemented**

*Activity 3.1.2: Revise fisheries legislation containing the core elements which prioritise sustainable fisheries, and contain provisions for automatic implementation of international conventions including the WCPFC CMMs*

**Milestone 38: National legal documentary system, effective and organised and effective cooperation with other parties, where necessary, to deliver management outcomes consistent with MSC Principles 1 and 2** (Timeline amended to Q1 2016). **Still to be implemented**

**Milestone 39: Applying of relevant tuna regulations/decrees (catch/effort limits etc) (Q1 2016).** **Still to be implemented**

Outcome 3.2: Roles and responsibilities and consultation processes fully implemented

*Activity 3.2.1: Implementation of the Advisory Board through the NTMP process*

**Milestone 40: Tuna Fishery Management Council fully operational and all roles & responsibilities defined (Q4 2013).** *ToRs for Vina Tuna defined in the FIP TOR.* VINA TUNA leads but DECAFIREP participate in the Council.

Recommendation 21: Clarify Council structure, and provide for engagement of Vina Tuna in Advisory Board establishment

*Activity 3.2.2: Revise the a tuna fisheries strategy so that long term and short term objectives demonstrate effective implementation of sustainable fisheries management systems*

**Milestone 41: Explicit reference would have to ensure that any change in fleet capacity takes account of the precautionary approach to fisheries management, and adherence to appropriate scientific advice, most specifically adhering to the LRPs set in management (Q1 2016). Still to be implemented**

**Milestone 42: Evidence would need to show that the Precautionary Approach to Fishery Management (PAFM) is explicitly understood and enacted at both national and provincial level (Q1 2016). Still to be implemented**

**Outcome 3.3: Positive incentives promoted**

*Activity 3.3.1: Review negative and positive incentives against the background of stock status for yellowfin and bigeye, as well as the impact on bycatch.*

**MSC is removing incentives from the programme. Milestone 43 and 44 are likely to be removed.**

Outcome 3.4: Fishery specific management objectives applied

*Activity 3.4.1: The handline fishery is included along with the other tuna fisheries contained within the management plan*

**Milestone 45: Definitions to include handline fisheries and all target species (Q4 2013).** Not achieved based on available evidence.

Recommendation 22: Tuna Management Plan to include Reference to all specific fisheries including handline, with defined objectives and measurable output indicators

**Milestone 46: Management Plan finalised, complies with MSC principles and contains a consultation process and includes a monitoring & performance component (Q4 2016**). **To be implemented**

**Milestone 47: Evidence that the management plan is being applied and its effectiveness is assessed by a process of regular internal and external reviews (Q4 2017).** To be developed along with measurable indicators. **To be implemented**

Outcome 3.5: Decision making process strengthened

*Activity 3.5.1: Clarify decision making structure which is defined with the NTMP*

**Milestone 48: Introduce clear guidelines for taking management decisions, probably as a component of the management plan (Q2 2014).** Not achieved. Review FIP Action Plan guidelines and requirements. **To be implemented**

Recommendation 23: Identify where the decision making process should be clarified: MARD / DARD strategy, Tuna Management Plan or Policy Decision.

**Milestone 49: Evidence is available that explanations to be provided for decisions taken, and should follow the basis of the management plan when introduced, which may include precautionary actions (Q4 2016). To be implemented**

Outcome 3.6: Effective application of compliance systems

*Activity 3.5.1: Strengthen the compliance monitoring system*

Milestone 50: Risk assessment of enforcement actions following the introduction of P1 and P2 associated management measures (Q1 2016). **To be implemented**

Milestone 51: Review of sanctions for non-compliance (Q1 2016). **To be implemented**

Milestone 52: Effective evidence of systematic compliance and an effective system of sanctions (Q4 2017). **To be implemented**

Outcome 3.7: Research plan is in place

**Activity 3.7.1: A national research plan in place which addresses P1 and P2 requirements**

**Milestone 53: A research plan prepared publically available (Q1 2015)**

**Milestone 54: Research results are disseminated to all interested parties (Q4 2016)**

Detail activities for management and research plan have yet to be developed

Prog 47 and follow by prog 188, not specific for tuna but for big pelagic 188 will be started in 2016.

**To be implemented**