



Key Traceability, FIP Coordinator
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Regarding;

International Cooperation on the Management of the Gulf of Thailand Longtail (Tonggol) Tuna Fishery

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This position statement is made by the participants of the Gulf of Thailand Longtail tuna purse-seine Fishery improvement Project (FIP). A FIP is a multi-stakeholder effort to address environmental challenges in a fishery. These projects utilise the power of the private sector to incentivise positive changes toward sustainability in the fishery and seek to make these changes endure through policy change.

As the number of FIPs around the world has grown, businesses and conservation organisations needed an easier way to access consistent, credible information about FIP progress. FisheryProgress, a joint project between FishChoice and the Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions, was launched in October 2016 to solve this issue. The website gives a range of information about global FIPs from a snapshot of progress and opportunities to get involved to detailed evidence for improvements.

The Thailand longtail tuna neritic purse-seine FIP targets longtail tuna (*Thunnus tonggol*) in the Gulf of Thailand (GoT) and aims to meet sustainability criteria for MSC certification and assist the fisheries to better meet international market requirements. The definition of the fishery is confined to those vessels categorised as neritic tuna purse seines (TUNA-PS) in the GoT. This fishery does not use Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs).

The FIP was launched in April 2019, with December 2024 being the projected completion date (please see <https://fisheryprogress.org/fip-profile/thailand-longtail-tuna-purse-seine-0>). The FIP was launched by WWF Thailand, involving partners from the Thailand Department of Fisheries (DoF), the Thai Tuna Industry Association (TTIA) and the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Centre (SEAFDEC). These four organisations signed a Joint Declaration of Intent on May 29th 2018¹ declaring their support for finalising the Longtail Tuna FIP Action Plan and committing their respective organisations to implement activities for which they agree to take responsibility as part of the multi-stakeholder consultation process.

As the target stock is a highly migratory species (HMS), regional cooperation is required from an MSC prospective under Principle 3. Sustainable management of the resource will require shared conservation management measures to control effort, data collection and sharing of scientific data, reporting requirements, and shared monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS). It is planned that the FIP prepares a strategy to promote the inception of a RFMO or equivalent sub-regional formal agreement to manage the stock. The RFMO/sub-regional agreement further seeks to formalise cooperation, data sharing, collaborative monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) system and other areas with neighbouring countries also taking from the GoT longtail tuna resource to ensure sustainable management of the fishery for the future. This strategy is to be presented by Thai Department of Fisheries at the upcoming SEAFDEC council meeting.

We believe it is important to collaborate with other countries/institutions working on longtail tuna in the Gulf of Thailand. Working together to improve the management and policy towards sustainable fisheries, for example Harvest Strategy and Harvest Control Rules, because they are essential in achieving MSC status and for a sustainable ocean.

¹https://fisheryprogress.org/system/files/documents_additional/3.%20Joint%20Declaration_Gulf%20of%20Thailand%20Longtail%20Tuna%20FIP.pdf



With regards, we wish for the engagement/cooperation of your organisation to contribute to advocating on the following:

- Commitment to formal decision-making and cooperation processes with States also targeting/ harvesting longtail tuna, including central data sharing and MCS activities;
- Agreement on longtail tuna management at the stock-wide level (a harvest strategy which is responsive to the state of the stock and well-defined harvest control rules).

If the above mentioned are achieved it will have positive long term-sustainability implications and improve overall health of the GoT marine ecosystem to allow for fisheries/business like our current FIP to achieve sustainability targets, particularly in line with MSC certification standards. If you would like to work together, please get in touch on how we could do so.

Sincerely,

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