

# Tuna Market Intelligence

Issue 53, April 4, 2017

Your fortnightly report on trends and influencers on the global tuna market from the Pacific Islands.

## MARKET UPDATE

Tuna prices were around \$1550 mt in Bangkok at the end of March, down from a high of \$1750 mt in February. Pundits predicted the price would hover at the \$1500 mt mark for April, based on supply and demand in current conditions.

Send us your tips to [marketintel@pnatuna.com](mailto:marketintel@pnatuna.com)

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## INFLUENCERS REPORT

### PNG seeks to reduce EU export reliance

Papua New Guinea's National Fisheries Authority is searching other markets for the country's tuna stocks apart from the traditional European market.

*The National* newspaper reported that at present about 90% of PNG's tuna goes to the EU market but NFA Managing Director John Kasu said he hoped in future this percentage would change: "We are also working on alternative markets apart from the EU and trying to diversify markets in the Middle East, China and Asia."

Kasu said that PNG almost missed out on the lucrative US\$1.5 billion per annum from the export of tuna to the EU market when EU issued a yellow card warning in 2014. NFA has invested heavily to comply with and finally the yellow card was lifted in 2015, with more activities yet to be undertaken by the NFA with other line agencies like the PNG Customs, PNG Defense Force and Police.

Kasu said that NFA was now setting up surveillance and monitoring stations in Vanimo, Wewak and other coastal towns to combat IUU activities.

### US increases fishing in Cook Islands

The United States has purchased an extra 100 fishing days from Cook Islands for an undisclosed sum. The deal is on top of the US Treaty which allocates days to the US to fish in PNA and Cook Islands waters.

Moves to increase commercial fishing in Cook Islands have been somewhat controversial – first environmentalists pushed for and got a ban that no fishing would occur within 50 nautical miles of the island and now they are also campaigning against the use of Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs).

### Tourism fees to replace fish dollars in Palau

Revenues from commercial tuna fishing licenses will be replaced by allocation from the new Pristine Paradise

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Environmental Fee (PPEF) collection from tourists visiting Palau. Palau President Tommy Remengesau Jr. signed into law March 29 amendment to the Palau National Marine Sanctuary Law.

The \$100 PPEF fee which will be collected as soon as the Minister of Finance promulgate its rules and regulation, will allocate \$10 for the Fisheries Protection Fund. The fund will be used to finance the enforcement and surveillance of the marine sanctuary, while \$12.50 from the fee will replace the shares that each of the 16 states of Palau get from the current commercial fishing licenses and revenues.

By 2021, 80 percent of Palau's EEZ will be closed to commercial fishing while 20 percent of its waters will be designated as domestic fishing zone.

Remengesau said the PPEF, "represents an additional and meaningful component of the prudent decision to turn away from the already dangerously exploited fisheries industry and the deleterious mass tourism market and instead embrace a new identity that emphasizes quality over quantity."

## Solomon Islands Small Scale Canning Starts Up

Participants from government and industry were trained in small scale fish canning processes in Honiara, Solomon Islands last month. Organised by the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) with the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Chris Bourne from FoodStream taught participants how to can bycatch fish in accordance with international safety and HACCP standards.

Following these trainings several small-scale operations are running in Papua New Guinea and Marshall Islands. Melino Bain-Vete, PNA Policy and Research Support Officer commented that this year training would also roll out to Palau, FSM, Kiribati and Tokelau.

## Catch rates indicate PNA and S-E Asian dominance

Meanwhile, the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency's compilation of economic and development indicators continued to evidence the dominance of PNA countries in regional tuna catches.

For 2015, the top 5 biggest catches occurred in Kiribati (641,119 mt), Indonesia (432,083 mt), Philippines (216,382 mt), Papua New Guinea (187,597 mt) and Federated States of Micronesia (166,163 mt). Collectively, catches in PNA waters (plus Tokelau) were 1,363,763 mt, or 50% of the total tuna catch of 2,692,412 mt.

## Vessel Day Usage constant for 2017

The monthly usage of the PNA Purse Seine Total Allowable Effort for 2017 in the EEZs (exclusive economic zones) of VDS participants (PNA + Tokelau) is illustrated in the graph below. The yellow line represents the constant monthly usage for staying within the TAE of 45,590 days, and the red line shows the monthly effort (VDS days) in Participants' zones, taking into account non-fishing days.

The collective effort at the end of March was just under 11,000 days.

