

Annual Report of Taiwan to ERSWG5
Fisheries Agency of Taiwan

There are two fishing seasons of Taiwanese vessels fishing for SBT which are June through September and November through February the following year. Areas among 30-40 degrees of south latitude in the Indian are their major fishing grounds.

During the 1990's, our SBT catches fluctuated between 800 and 1,600 mt. Since CCSBT has been established in 1995, Taiwan, in accordance with the CCSBT conservation and management measures, we have voluntarily set up a limitation of catching SBT to 1450 mt. After joining CCSBT in 2003, we again sacrificed and reduced 310 mt of our historical catch, and set up our catch limitation into 1140 mt.

To monitor SBT fishery, Taiwan has taken various measures including requiring fishermen to provide daily logbook/weekly catch report, requiring installation of VMS on board, implementing statistical document program, and promoting experimental pilot observer project.

We have established a new regulation regarding mitigation of seabird incidental catch for vessels fishing SBT. All longline vessels which obtained permission to catch SBT are obliged to set tori line if their operation area is southbound to 30° south latitude. The captains fishing on the areas of high latitude dramatically concern the bait loss due to seabird bites. Most captains take several other measures at the same time to avoid seabird bites such as hook-casting before dawn, using defrozen baits, etc.

Three weeks ago, we cooperated with BirdLife International and first ever held a conference entitled "Regional Technical Workshop on Seabird By-catch and Mitigation". Representatives joining the meeting came from the New Zealand, Japan, the U.S., Korea, the United Kingdom, and Taiwan. It's been helpful for setting future working directions for individual countries and strengthening the international cooperation. BirdLife International sent Taiwan 1000 copies of posters in Chinese regarding avoidance of capturing seabirds. We distributed the posters to

our fishermen for education already. It's a good opportunity to express our appreciation to BirdLife International for their generous offer.

We have continuously trained our fishermen at various training programs for knowledge of avoiding catch seabirds and release them safely as they come back to ports using identification posters, technical pamphlets. In addition, the technical exercise for setting up tori line has been also conducted during the at-sea training. Besides, under the request of CCSBT, we provide Chinese translation service in "ERS seabird handbook". Furthermore, broadcasting for educating fishermen through our professional fisheries radiostation has been conducted regularly

Speaking of other ecologically related species, I'm not going to get too much detail here. For sea turtles, it's forbidden to capture or possess 5 kinds of sea turtles. For sharks, the fishermen have been guided and encouraged to fully utilize sharks instead of just finning. For public relations and education activities, we regularly educate our fishermen pretty much through the similar channels and approaches.