

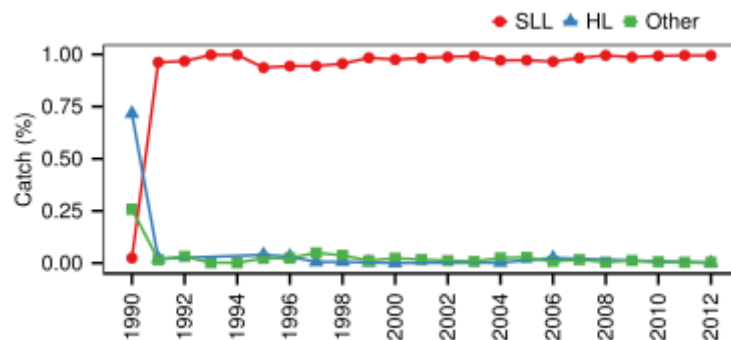
## New Zealand Self-Assessment of Fishing Capacity

### Recent History of the New Zealand SBT Fleet

From the late 1970s and early 1980s, a concerted effort to develop a domestic fishery to service the Japanese market was undertaken. By 1982 a handline fishery was established, with the catch frozen onboard a former Japanese longline vessel. The handline fishery continued, albeit at a reduced level, following the record 1982 season (305t landed) into the early 1990s when longlining became the dominant fishing method for SBT.

All but a few tonnes of the commercial SBT catch are now taken by longline. SBT catches are taken chiefly off the southwest coast of the South Island (WCSI; CCSBT Region 6) and off the east coast of the North Island (ECNI; CCSBT Region 5) from April to July.

**Table 1: SBT catch by method. Surface longline (SLL), handline (HL), and other.**



Longlining off the WCSI is almost entirely targeted at SBT. The fleet operating off the southwest coast is primarily composed of the larger –60<sup>ø</sup> freezer vessels of the charter fleet.

Smaller domestically owned and operated “ice boats” operate in the longline fishery off the ECNI. These vessels are typically at sea for only a few days, and land SBT both as a target and as a bycatch of bigeye target sets.

**Table 2: Number of longlining vessels targeting southern bluefin tuna in New Zealand fisheries waters by Calendar year and New Zealand fishing year (1 October to 30 September).**

Year	Calendar year vessel numbers	Fishing year vessel numbers
2001	132	132
2002	151	155
2003	132	132
2004	99	101

2005	57	58
2006	56	57
2007	44	45
2008	35	36
2009	40	39
2010	44	42
2011	42	42
2012	43	44

As seen in table 2, the New Zealand fleet has already undergone a significant rationalisation following the introduction of SBT into the New Zealand Quota Management System (QMS) in 2004 resulting in far fewer vessels now targeting the stock.

### **Capacity with Respect to New Zealand's Allocation**

The commercial fishing of SBT is managed under the QMS in which fishers have a tradable property right in the stock represented as quota. The Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of SBT is set based on New Zealand's country allocation under CCSBT. The TAC includes allocations for recreational, customary, and commercial catch along with other sources of mortality. The commercial allocation is issued yearly as Annual Catch Entitlement (ACE) to SBT quota holders based on their proportional holdings.

New Zealand does not restrict the number of vessels entitled to catch SBT under its national allocation but rather controls the take of SBT by requiring all commercial fishing vessels to acquire ACE for their catch regardless of whether they are operating within the boundaries of the Economic Exclusive Zone or beyond. Failure to acquire ACE results in significant punitive penalties in the form of deemed values.

Occasionally, SBT is also caught as bycatch of other fisheries operating in New Zealand (e.g. trawling vessels). These vessels must also acquire ACE or pay deemed values to cover their bycatch.

New Zealand believes that its current management system for the SBT fishery offers a robust means of ensuring that it stays within the bounds of its national allocation without the need for additional measures aimed at restricting vessel capacity. New Zealand also believes that the current fleet size, including bycatch vessels and recreational operators, is at a level below that which could be considered at risk of overcapacity.