CCSBT–CC/2610/16

Potential Non-Member Fishing Activity

1. Introduction

This paper provides:

- A brief summary of communication with Non-Cooperating Non-Members (NCNMs) since the Thirty-Second Meeting of the Commission and Extended Commission (CCSBT 32);
- An update on any NCNM Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT) catch reported to ICCAT[1] since CCSBT 32;
- Analysis relating to potential non-Member catches of SBT; and
- An update concerning CCSBT's relationship with TMT (formerly Trygg Mat Tracking) and information about the existing contingency fund for ad-hoc analysis with TMT.

2. Communications with Non-Members

CCSBT 32 tasked the Secretariat to invite China, Fiji, the Philippines, Seychelles, Thailand and the USA to participate as observers at CC 21. At the time of completing this paper, only the USA and Fiji have confirmed that they will be attending CC 21.

As noted in paper **CCSBT-CC/2610/11**, the USA continues to cooperate voluntarily with the CDS and provide important quarterly CDS data submissions to the Secretariat. The USA also continues to engage, as needed, with the Secretariat on the eCDS development.

3. Reported SBT Catch and Trade by Non-Members

In 2019, CC14 requested that the Secretariat check ICCAT's website[2] to confirm whether any new catches of SBT by CCSBT Non-Cooperating Non-Members (NCNMs) have been reported to ICCAT. The Secretariat re-checked ICCAT's website in 2026 and advises that the only other SBT catches reported to ICCAT in 2024 were reported by CCSBT Members[3].

4. Information on Potential Catches of SBT by Non-Member Flagged Vessels

The Secretariat prepared paper CCSBT-ESC/2608/04 for the 31st Meeting of the Extended Scientific Committee (ESC 31), which again notes that the "Indian Ocean appears to have the largest overlap of non-Member effort with SBT catch areas.In particular, the level of effort of the Chinese fleet in areas where SBT catch would be expected has increased in the last four years."[4]

[1] International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
[2] https://www.iccat.int/en/t1.asp
[3] Japan, Korea and South Africa.
[4] This paper has previously noted that there were no 5 x 5 Seychelles effort data available for 2022 or 2023, so Seychelles effort was unable to be included in the distribution maps for 2022 and 2023. This is the same in 2024 also.

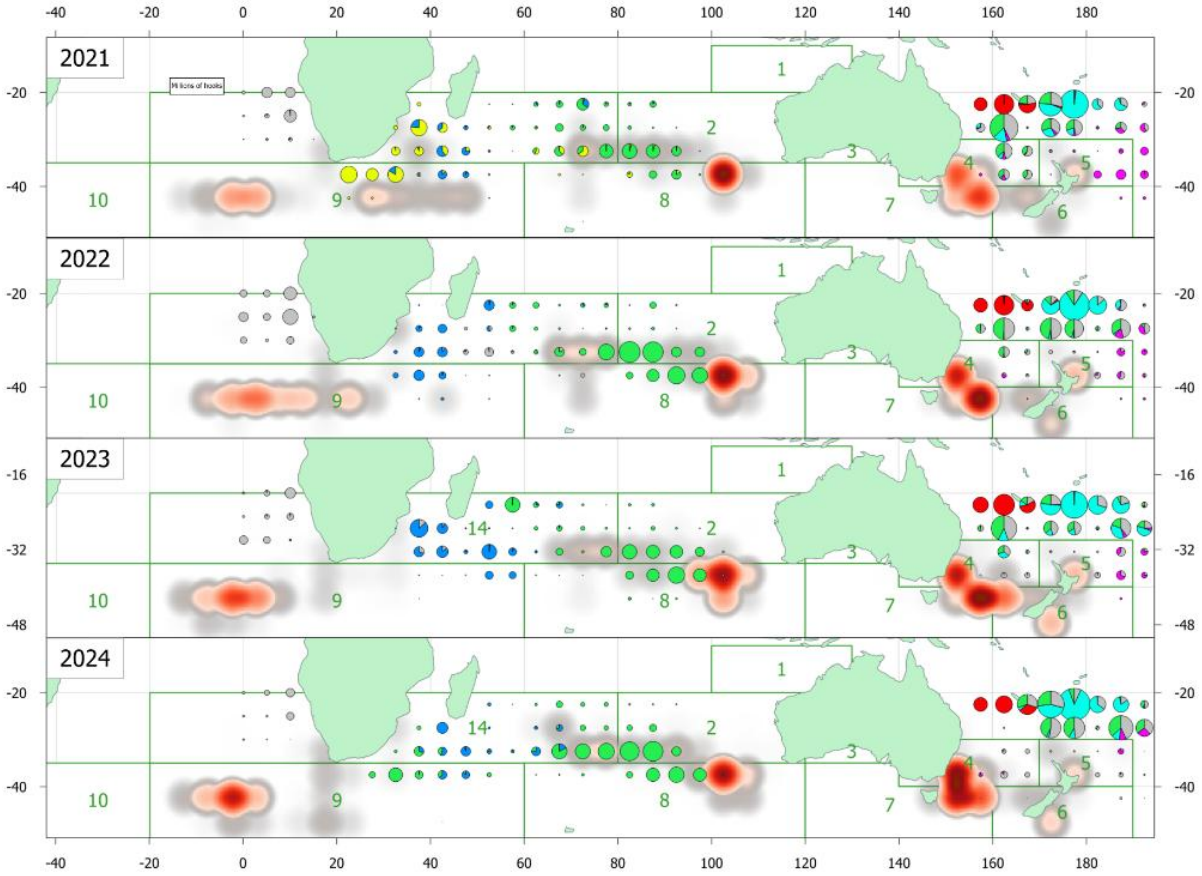


Image 1: Distribution of SBT catch (heat map of catch in wieght from raised catch data) and proportion pies for longline effort for Non-Members for 2021 - 2024 from ICCAT, IOTC and WCPFC catch and effort data (from CCSBT-ESC/2508/04 with catch and effort by Chinese flagged vessels is shown as green).

The Secretariat continues to monitor non-Member vessels and activity in areas consistent with catches of SBT. Using available AIS data, more than 35 Non-Member tuna longline vessels have again been identified as being active in the area around the intersection of CCSBT Statistical Areas 14, 2 and 8 between February and August 2026. Most of the non-Member tuna longline vessels identified in this analysis were flagged to China[5] and most have been active in this area in previous years.

These non-Member vessels have demonstrated a similar pattern of activity to that reported in CCSBT–CC/2510/17. The majority of these non-Member vessels seem to have arrived in the area early in the year, with most vessels already active in the area during February 2026. Most effort is again concentrated in CCSBT Area 8 through February, March and April, but moves closer to the boundary of CCSBT Areas 2 and 8 through the second half of April 2026. Effort by these vessels appears to remain further south for longer in 2026, with more of the vessels moving further south in area 8 in early May, while around a quarter of the vessels remaining in area 8 until mid-June.

Through June and July most effort is concentrated around the boundary of CCSBT Areas 2 and 14 and remains there through early August 2026. At the time of completing this paper, the latest AIS data available for August shows most of the vessels still active in the south-eastern corner of CCSBT Area 14. As reported previously, many of these Chinese flagged vessels have been active in the area in previous years and images 2, 3, 4 and 5 below show the areas of activity for this fleet for the past four years.

[5] In 2025 three Seychelles' flagged vessels were identified from available AIS data as being active in the area of interest, but much of this activity occurred further to the west of the area of greatest reported SBT catches. However, in 2026, two Seychelles' flagged vessels have been identified as being active in areas where SBT catches would be expected (see image 9).

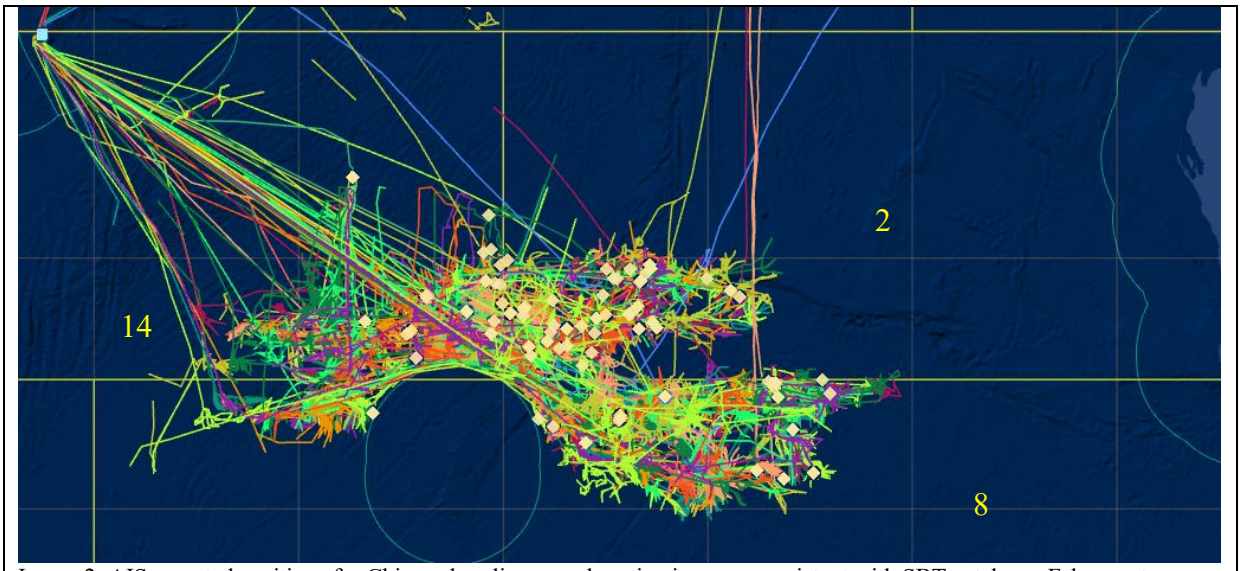


Image 2: AIS reported positions for Chinese longline vessels active in areas consistent with SBT catches – February to August inclusive 2026

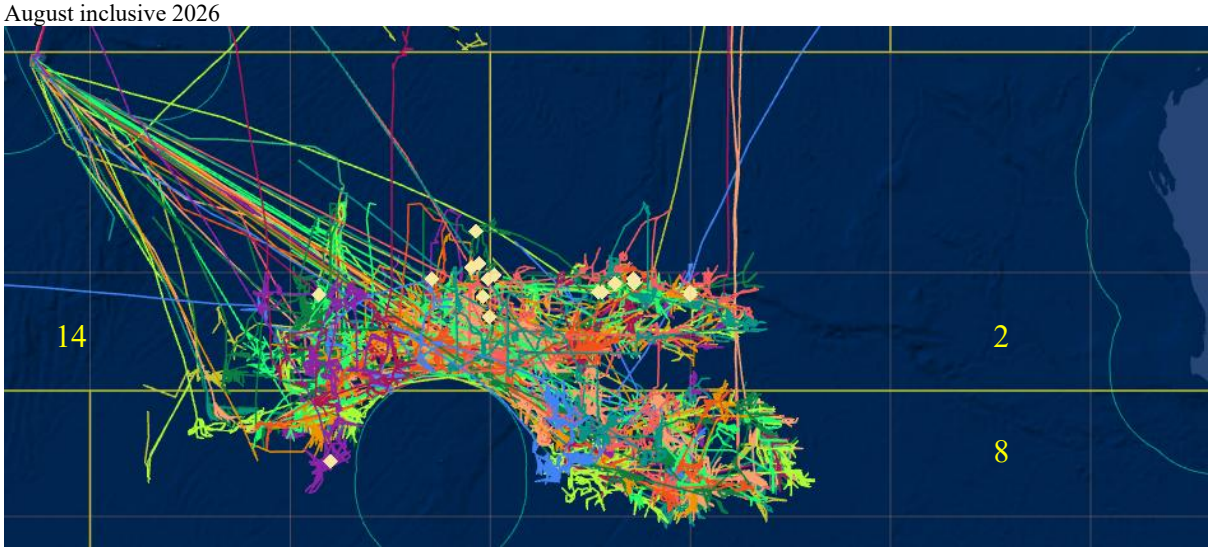


Image 3: AIS reported positions for Chinese longline vessels active in areas consistent with SBT catches - March to August inclusive 2025

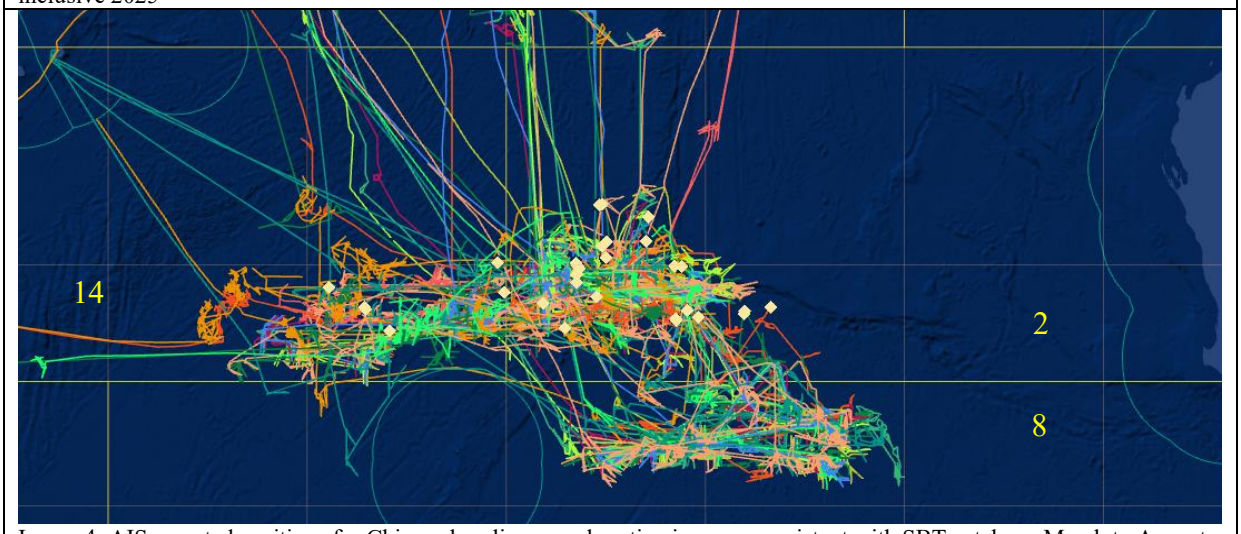


Image 4: AIS reported positions for Chinese longline vessels active in areas consistent with SBT catches - March to August inclusive 2024

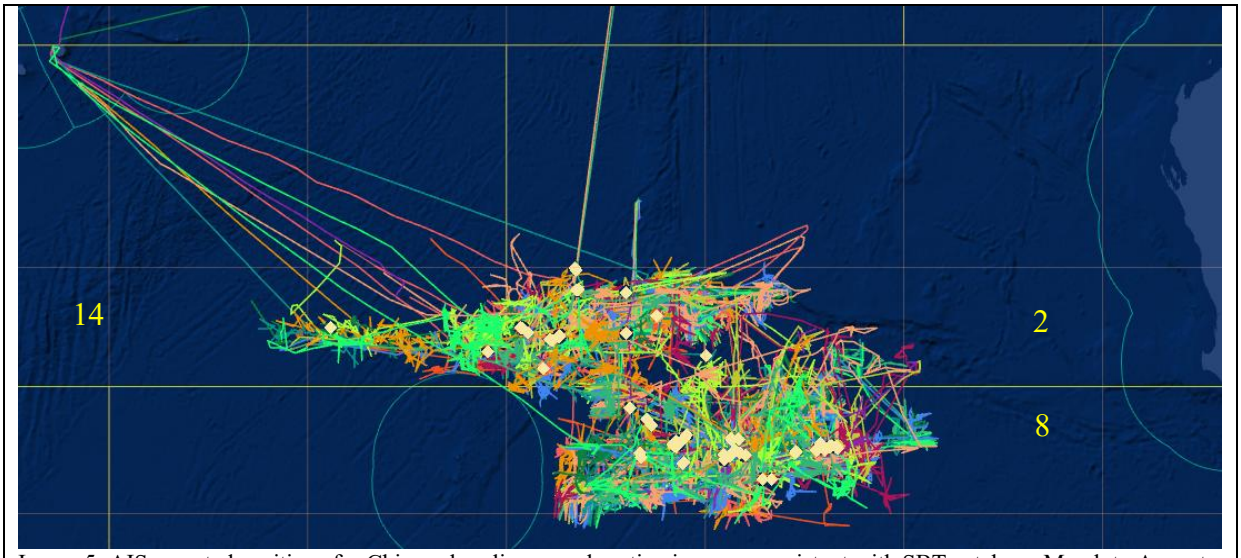


Image 5: AIS reported positions for Chinese longline vessels active in areas consistent with SBT catches - March to August inclusive 2023

The reported AIS positions for these Chinese tuna longline vessels between February to August (inclusive) 2026 again show a strong correlation with the areas of reported SBT catches (see image 6)[6]. The overlap with key hot spots for SBT catches appears even stronger in 2026 than it was in 2025 (see image 7).

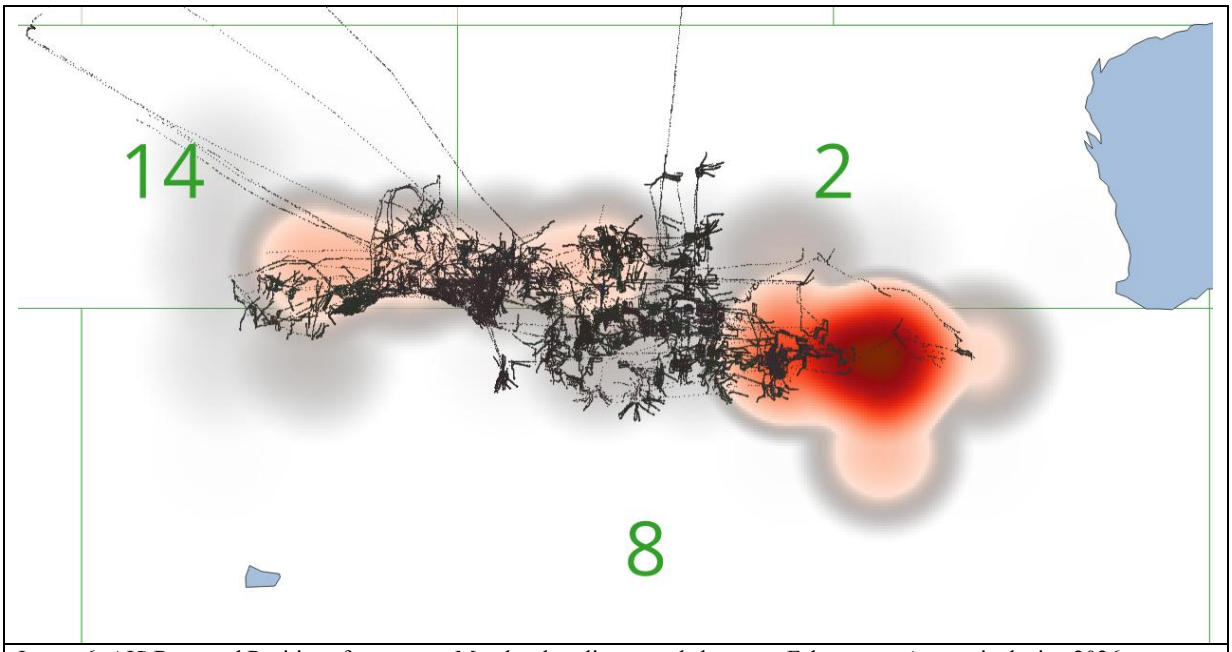


Image 6: AIS Reported Positions for ten non-Member longline vessels between February to August inclusive 2026 overlayed with CCSBT reported SBT catch heat maps for 2025[7].

[6] Image 6 shows only a sample (eight vessels) of the non-Member flagged tuna longline vessels identified as active in the area to ensure that the heatmap areas showing SBT catch are still visible.

[7] There is no raised catch data available to produce SBT catch heat maps for 2026. So, the vessel positions in 2026 are compared to the most recent SBT catch heat maps (2025). However, as illustrated in Image 1, there has been relative consistency in these heatmaps over recent years.

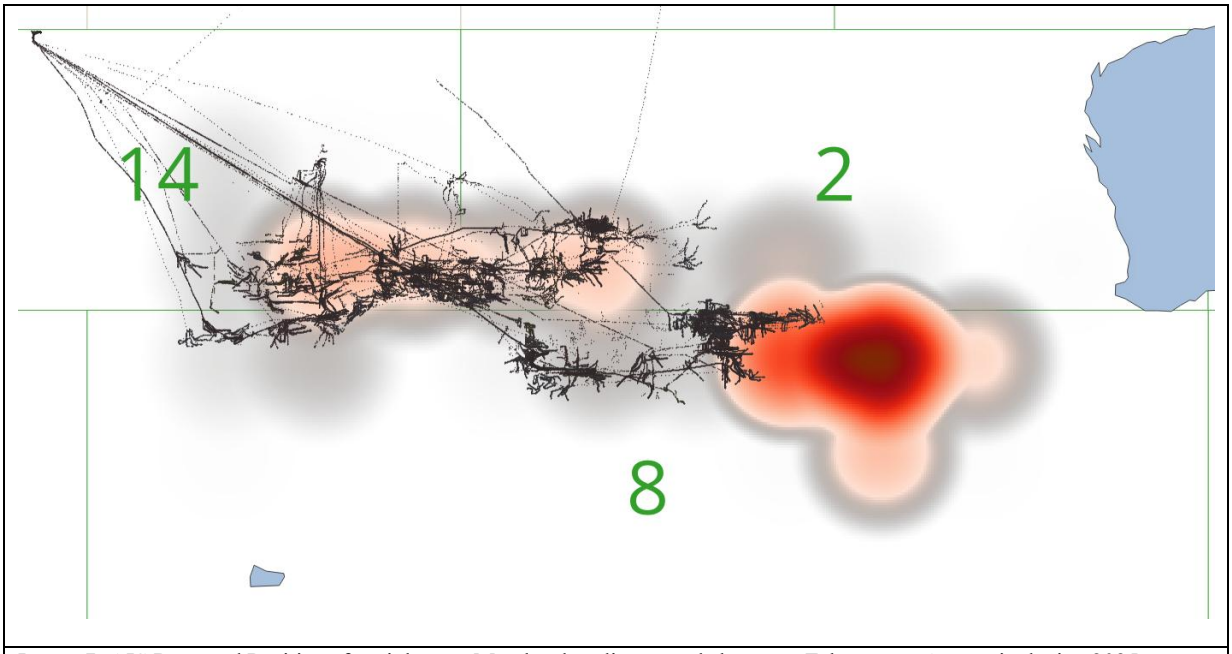


Image 7: AIS Reported Positions for eight non-Member longline vessels between February to August inclusive 2025 overlayed with CCSBT reported SBT catch heat maps for 2025.

The greatest period of overlap (by vessel numbers) occurs earlier in the period of interest in 2026 (February to April), when reported catches of SBT are generally not as high. However, there remains strong correlation between the areas fished by the non-Member vessels and Member authorised vessels that report SBT catches during months where reported SBT catches peak (such as July 2025 as shown in image 8).

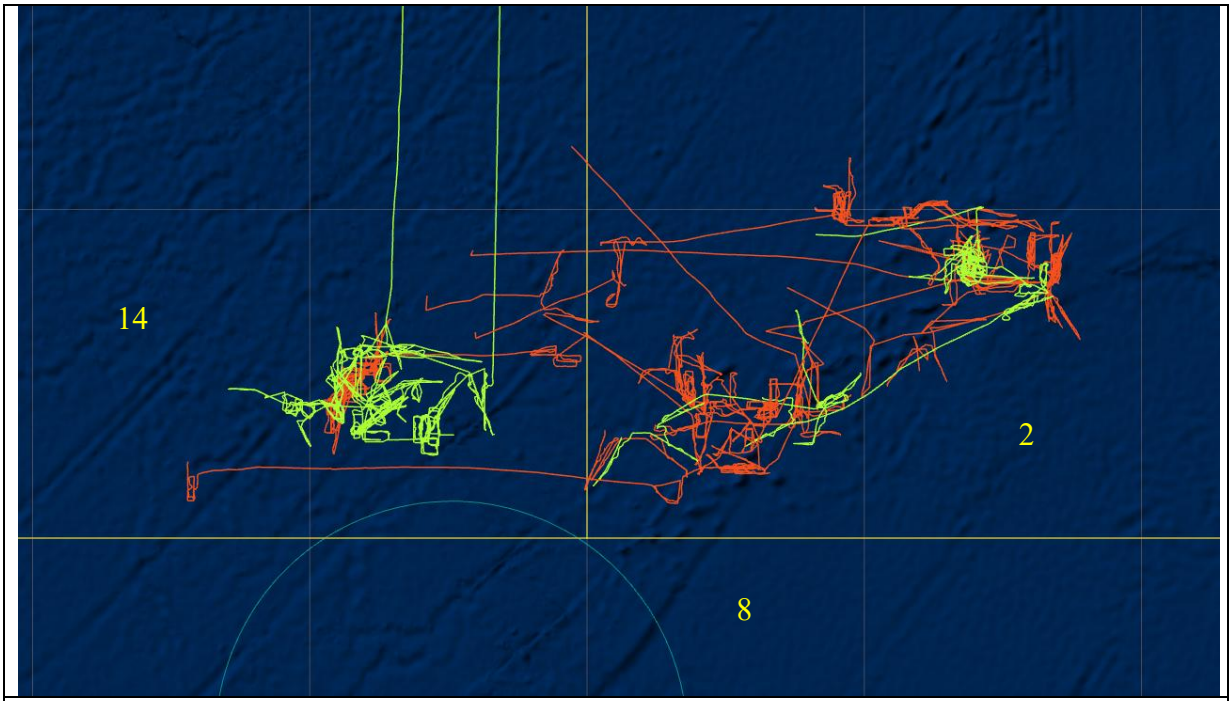


Image 8: AIS Reported Positions for five non-Member longline vessels (orange tracks) during July 2025, overlaid with three CCSBT authorised vessels (green tracks) that reported high SBT catches in July 2025.

During 2026, port use by these vessels (outside of home ports) has again most often occurred in Port Louis, Mauritius. In 2026, most port calls in Port Louis have occurred prior to the vessels arriving in the area or during June 2026. It is expected that, similar to 2025, most vessels will call through Port Louis, Mauritius after completing fishing in the area in September.

This year two Seychelles' flagged vessels have also been identified from available AIS data as being active in this area in 2026. These vessels were active in the area during March and

April 2026. Whilst in 2025, the Seychelles' vessels identified in the area were operating further west of the key SBT hot spots, during 2026 the two vessels identified have operated in areas where substantial SBT catches were reported during 2025. The Seychelles has previously stated at the Compliance Committee that it does authorise longline vessels to fish for albacore in areas where SBT may be caught and that these vessels are on the IOTC record of authorised vessels. It stated that the vessels are not allowed to catch or retain SBT onboard and mostly land or tranship in Port Louis, Mauritius, but may sometimes tranship in Port Victoria in the Seychelles. The two Seychelles' vessels that were fishing in the area during 2026 both called into port in Colombo, Sri Lanka, prior to fishing in the area and appear to have called into the same port in August 2026. Noting that these port calls occurred outside of the areas where Seychelles' vessels usually unload, it is unclear what monitoring the vessels would have been subject to during these port calls.

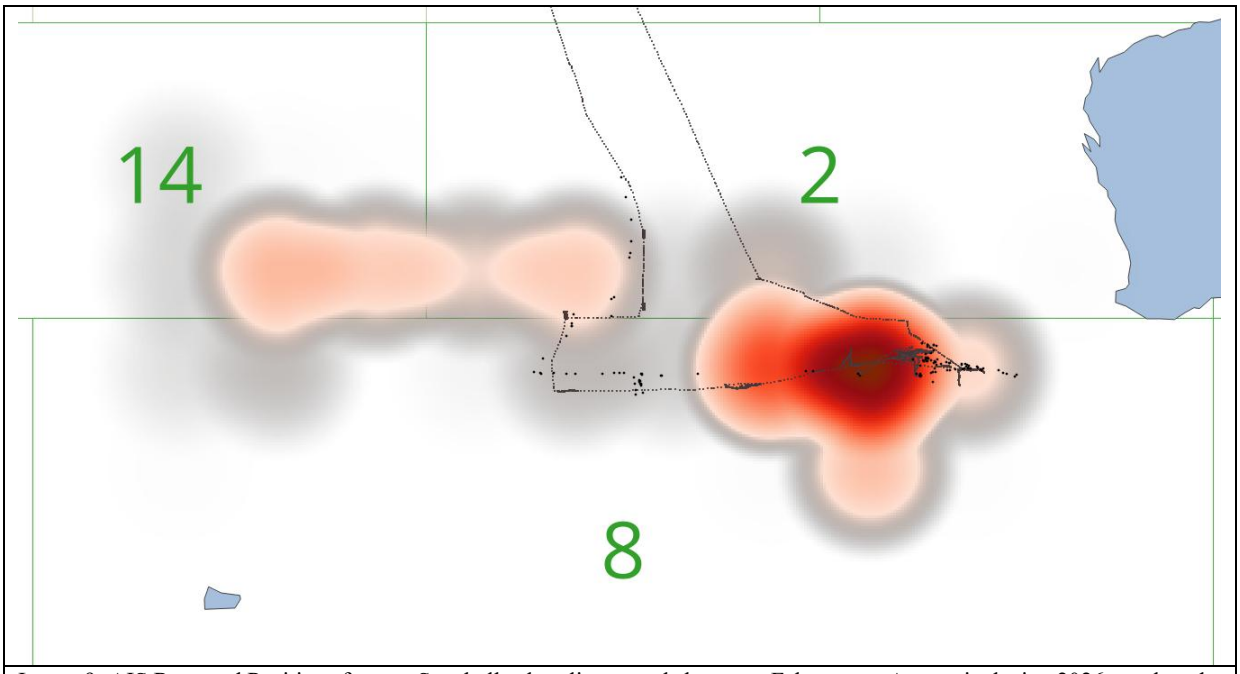


Image 9: AIS Reported Positions for two Seychelles longline vessels between February to August inclusive 2026 overlayed with CCSBT reported SBT catch heat maps for 2025[7].

At sea transhipment has again been common for Chinese vessels during the period of interest, with two Panamanian flagged carrier vessels FENG LU and FUTAGAMI, conducting in excess of 40 suspected transhipments with these vessels between April and August 2026. The Korean flagged carrier vessel SEIYU[8] also appears to have transhipped with around ten non-Member flagged longline vessels in the area of interest during July 2026.

CV Name	CV IRCS	CV Flag	CV IMO Number
FENG LU	3ERI4	PANAMA	9003158
FUTAGAMI	3FCH7	PANAMA	9105293
SEIYU	D8DK	KOREA	9172909

Table 1: Carrier vessel details for vessels identified as conducting encounters with Chinese Longline Vessels in areas consistent with SBT Catches.

The locations of suspected encounters between these three carrier vessels and the non-Member tuna longline vessels in the area of interest in 2026 are shown in the image 10.

[8] SEIYU is CCSBT authorised and has also conducted transhipments with CCSBT authorised vessels during this trip.

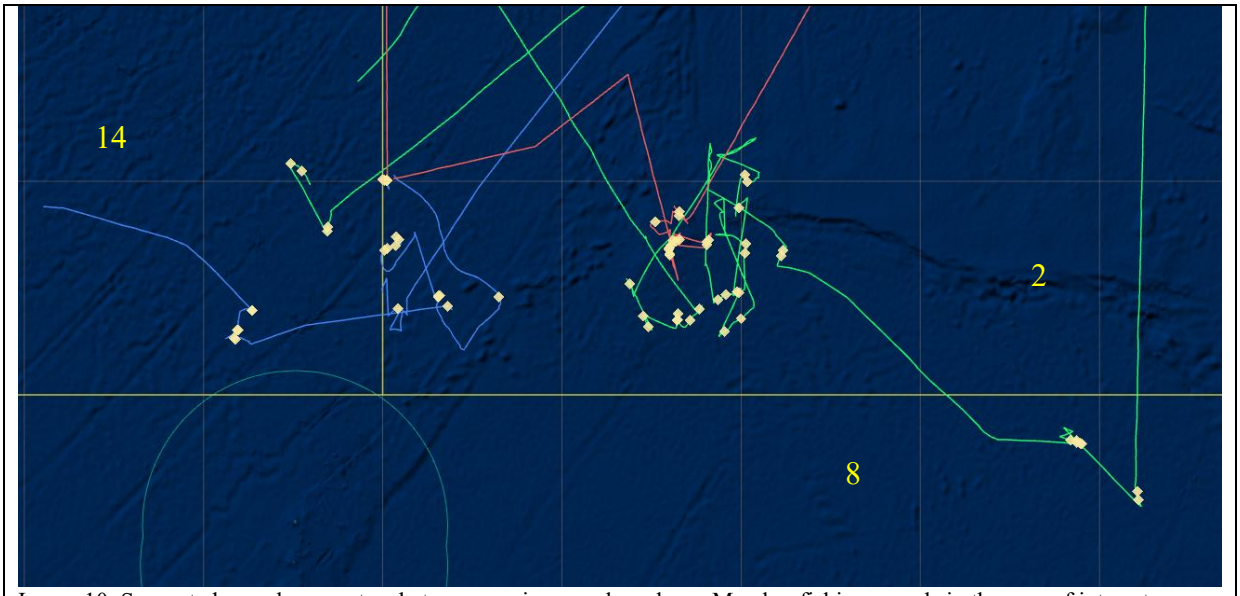


Image 10: Suspected vessel encounters between carrier vessels and non-Member fishing vessels in the area of interest (shown as yellow diamonds) – April to August 2026 inclusive. Carrier vessels Feng Lu (April to early June – green vessel track), Futagami (July and August – blue vessel track) and Seiyu (July – red vessel track).

The Feng Lu is the only carrier vessel to have made a port call subsequent to the encounters in the area of interest, with the other carrier vessels still at sea at the time of completing this paper. Consistent with previous years, the carrier vessel Feng Lu transited directly back to port in China[9] following these encounters. Therefore, the opportunities for Members to inspect the catch onboard these vessels continue to be limited.

5. TMT

Analysis Contingency Fund with TMT

In 2018, CCSBT 25 agreed to a small budget (AUD $20,000) for the Secretariat to contract TMT on an ad-hoc basis to conduct analyses of Automatic Identification System (AIS) data and examine vessel company relationships. An agreement was signed on 1 February 2019 and an initial payment of AUD $9,969 (USD $7,000) was made to TMT, with this to be held in an operating fund pending CCSBT analysis requests. As reported last year, TMT conducted some additional analysis on non-Member vessels and activity during 2025. This support used a further $1725 USD[10]. TMT were able to provide some of this support to CCSBT under a complementary source of funding which provided additional value to CCSBT and further demonstrated the value of the collaboration.

There has been no additional support sought from TMT during 2026, but TMT remain available to provide analytical support to CCSBT as required. Noting that this funding has been carried over since 2019, TMT have requested that, if possible, this remaining finding be expended by 31 December 2026. At the time of writing there remains $2,975 USD for TMT analytical support which TMT have advised would equate to a little over five and half day's support (including both human resource and data costs).

The Secretariat would encourage Members to identify any priorities for this analytical support.

6. Summary

The Secretariat invites CC 21 to note:

[9] The Feng Lu docked at Shidao, China around 20 June 2026.

[10] This was initially reported at $580 USD based on information received from TMT. However, subsequent to completing the paper for CC 20 the Secretariat was informed that some hours worked had not been included in the figure provided.

- The communication with non-Members since CC20;
- The balance remaining with TMT in the contingency fund for ad-hoc analysis and the request from TMT for the remaining funds to be used by 31 December 2026;
- The continued high levels of activity by non-Member tuna longline vessels in areas where SBT catches are common within the IOTC convention area; and
- The continued high level of transhipment activity undertaken by these non-Member vessels when fishing in areas where SBT may be present.

CC21 is invited to:

- Identify priority compliance issues for analytical support from TMT to expend the remaining balance of funds provided to TMT.

CC21 is also invited to encourage Members to:

- Conduct, and report back to CC, targeted inspections of carrier vessels that have been involved in potential transhipments with non-Member longline vessels fishing in the area of interest, focussing on identifying the presence of SBT; and
- Proactively seek opportunities to improve information on potential non-Member catches of SBT within the IOTC.

Prepared by the Secretariat