

**Update of the Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery
for the 2001-02 Season,**

1. Introduction

The Australian Domestic SBT catch for the 2001-02 quota year (1 December 2001 to 30 November 2002) was 5262 tonnes.

漁獲割当年（2001年12月1日～2002年11月30日）におけるオーストラリアのみなまぐる漁獲量は5,262トンであった。

2. Operational Constraints on Catch

Regulatory Measures

Domestic operations are managed through individual transferable quotas (ITQs) granted as statutory Fishing Rights (SFRs) under the Southern Bluefin Tuna Management Plan 1995. Although the global total allowable catch (TAC) has not been determined by the Commission since 1998, Australia agreed to maintain its national catch limit at 5265 tonnes, which has remained unchanged since 1989-90.

Australia continued with restricted access arrangements to reduce the incidental catch of SBT in the domestic longline fishery. Longline fishers that did not hold adequate quota to cover incidental catch of SBT in areas of high abundance were prohibited from fishing in such areas. Those operators who were granted access were subject to a range of additional monitoring and compliance conditions including Vessel Monitoring Systems, and observer coverage.

3. Catch and Effort

The SBT landings for 2001-02 were:

South Australia 5234 tonnes (farmed)

New South Wales,
Tasmania and Queensland 22 tonnes (longline)

Western Australia 7 tonnes (longline)

SBT caught for fish farms in South Australia, using purse seine vessels, utilised 99.5% of the Australian quota, with the remainder taken by longline. There were no SBT poled off South Australia or trolled off Tasmania during either season. The Australian catch by gear and state for the quota years 1988-89 to 2001-02 is shown in Table 1. The Australian catch of SBT in calendar years 2001 and 2002 is mapped on Figures 1 & 2 respectively.

4. Historical Catch and Effort

Major restructuring occurred in Australia's SBT fisheries following reductions in the global TAC and national catch allocations in the 1980s. Table 1 provides a summary of catch taken by each sector of the Australian industry since 1998-89. Confidentiality guidelines prevent the release of data from groups of less than 5 boats, therefore data are combined for some fishing methods.

5. Annual Fleet Size and Distribution

In 2001–02, a total of 56 commercial fishing vessels landed SBT in Australian waters.

South Australia

The one- to five-year-old SBT, which school from late spring to autumn in surface waters of the eastern Great Australian Bight, were fished by seven purse seiners during the 2001-02 quota year, but various live bait, pontoon-towing and feeding vessels were also involved. Fishing commenced in late December 2001 and finished in March 2002. No longline vessel reported taking SBT from these waters during 2001-02.

Western Australia

Thirteen longline vessels caught SBT seasonally off the WA coastline in 2001–02.

New South Wales

During 2001–02, 17 domestic longliner vessels participated in the fishery for older juveniles and adults in deeper waters off NSW in winter. Longline fishing off NSW commenced in May 2001 and finished in November 2001.

Tasmania

Only two longline vessels operated during the 2001–02 quota year because of the limited availability of quota. For confidentiality reasons all catches are incorporated in the NSW longline catch.

Queensland

Two longline vessels operated during the 2001-02 quota year. For confidentiality reasons all catches are incorporated in the NSW longline catch.

6. Historical Fleet Size and Distribution

Australians began fishing SBT in the early 1950s off New South Wales and South Australia and then later (1970) off Western Australia. The catch peaked at 21 500 tonnes in 1982. Historically, the bulk of the Australian catch had been used for canning.

Progressively over the mid to late 1980s, the Australian catch focused on supplying the Japanese sashimi market, with an increasing amount of the catch being transhipped to Japanese freezer vessels in the Great Australian Bight.

The introduction of an ITQ based management plan in 1984 based on an Australian TAC of 14 500 tonnes resulted in the redistribution of quota ownership. In the late 1980s the Australian quota reductions to 5265 tonnes led to further restructuring. From 1990 to 1994 approximately half the Australian quota was taken by Australian-Japan joint venture longliners. With the termination of the joint venture arrangements in 1995 Australian catches again focused on the surface fishery with poling operations supplying the fresh chilled sashimi market and purse seiners providing SBT to farms.

Since 1992 there has been a progressive increase in the number of SBT taken under farming operations. In the 2001-02 season this component utilised over 99% of the Australian quota.

7. Fisheries Monitoring

There are a series of logbooks and associated catch records that are required by law to be completed by fishers and fish receivers and sent to AFMA for the purposes of monitoring, compliance and research. The type of form used is dependent on the type of method used to catch SBT in the

fishery. All of the data provided from Logbooks and Catch Disposal Records must be supplied to AFMA within specified time periods specific to each record. Validation of this data is undertaken as a minimum on an annual basis through an audit process by AFMA compliance staff, and sometimes on a needs basis. The monitoring arrangements in the SBT fishery continue to be reviewed and refined in order to improve monitoring and compliance.

Catch Disposal Records

Catch disposal records for SBT are for recording SBT taken by fishers for the purposes other than farming and are signed by the fishing concession holder and the first receiver immediately after unloading the catch. Catch disposal records provide a means to verify logbook data.

Australian Daily Fishing Log and Farm Transit Log

A Logbook form is required to be completed by fishers when using pelagic longlining or when fishing with minor line methods. In the purse seine fishery the Master of the catcher vessel (with quota assigned) is required to complete the Australian Purse Seine and Pole Daily Fishing Log – for farmed SBT only. A specific permit called the Farm Transit Log is completed by the holder of the SBT carrier boat permit or representative, and provided to the monitoring company which undertakes the fish count when fish are transferred from tow cages to farm cages.

Farm Disposal Record

A specific process has been designed to obtain data to allow for research and monitoring from farming operations. An independent company is contracted annually by AFMA to monitor the farming operations. All mortalities that occur during the capture and towing operations must be recorded on the appropriate form and must be available for inspection if requested by an AFMA officer.

When SBT are transferred from tow cages to the fish farms, a video record must be carried out by the AFMA contracted monitoring company. The video recording is then used to undertake a count of the fish that are transferred into the fish farm. This count of captured fish will be multiplied by the average fish weight (derived from a 40 fish sample) and decremented from quota using the Farm Disposal Record. During the 1999-00, 2000-01 and 2001-02 season AFMA Compliance Officers were deployed on farm tow vessels to observe procedures and protocols.

Observer Programmes

Observer programmes for the purse seine and longline sectors were implemented in the 2002-2003 fishing season and achieved greater than 10 percent coverage of catch and effort.

Seasonal Area Restrictions

To minimise the risk of non-quota take of SBT by longliners off New South Wales and Western Australia, access to the waters through which SBT migrate has been restricted to vessels holding SBT quota since 2000 in NSW and 2001 in WA.

8. Other Factors

Import/Export Statistics

The Trade Information Scheme (TIS) that records all exported Australian fish has been implemented and refined. A TIS form is completed by an authorised signatory from the export-registered establishment that is the last to handle the consignment before the product leaves Australia and validated by a Government officer. The form is used for both farmed and non-farmed SBT. This program provides a complete record of SBT exports that can be compared with the Japanese Import Statistics.

Markets

More than 95% of Australia's SBT catch is exported to Japan

Quota Year*	Western Australia			South Australia			New South Wales			Tasmania			Large longliners			Australia total				Total All Gears	
	Albany Pole	Esperance Pole	Total	Pole & purse seine	Farm Cages	Long-line	Total	Pole & purse seine	Long-Line	Total	Troll	Long-Line	Total	Aust. charter	Joint-venture	total	Domestic Surface	Domestic long-line	Total long-line		RTMP
1988-89	204	221	425	4872	0	0	4872	0	1	1	2	0	2	0	684	684	5299	1	685	0	5984
1989-90	133	97	230	4199	0	0	4199	0	6	6	14	0	14	0	400	400	4443	6	406	0	4849
1990-91	175	45	220	2588	0	0	2588	0	15	15	57	0	57	255	881	1136	2865	15	1151	#300	4316
1991-92	17	0	17	1629	138	14	1781	34	90	124	36	20	56	59	2057	2116	1854	124	2240	800	4894
1992-93	0	0	0	716	722	68	1506	16	238	254	23	44	67	0	2735	2735	1477	350	3085	650	5212
1993-94	0	0	0	621	1294	55	1970	0	286	286	7	105	112	0	2299	2299	1922	446	2745	270	4937
1994-95	0	0	0	908	1954	2	2864	0	157	157	4	109	113	0	1295	1295	2866	268	1563	650	5080
1995-96	0	0	0	1447	3362	0	4809	28	89	117	0	262	262	0	0	0	4837	351	351	0	5188
1996-97	0	0	0	2000	2498	0	4497	7	229	236	2	242	244	0	0	0	4507	472	472	0	4978
1997-98	0	0	^0	916	3488	^0	4403	~0	475	475	!0	219	219	0	0	0	4433	664	664	0	5097
1998-99	0	0	^0	28	4991	^0	5018	~0	97	97	!0	116	116	0	0	0	5016	216	216	0	5232
1999-00	0	0	^0	0	5130	13	5143	0	114	114	0	!0	!0	0	0	0	5130	127	127	0	5257
2000-01	0	0	^0	0	5162	6	5168	0	32	32	0	!0	!0	0	0	0	5162	38	38	0	5247
2001-02	0	0	7	0	5234	0	5234	0	≈22	≈22	0	!0	!0	0	0	0	5234	29	29	0	5262

* Dates: 1 October to 30 September for 1988-89 to 1990-91; 1 October 1991 to 31 October 1992 for 1991-92; 1 November to 31 October for 1992-93 and 1993-94; 1 November 1994 to 15 December 1995 for 1994-95; 16 December 1995 to 15 December 1996 for 1995-96; and 16 December 1996 to 30 November 1997 for 1996-97; 1 December to 30 November for 1997-98; 1998-99; 1999-00, 2000-01 and 2001-02.

Note that a further 700t of Australian quota was 'frozen' (not allocated) in 1990-91.

^ 1997-98 and 1998-99 WA and SA non-farm catches are included in SA pole and purse seine catch and in 1999-00 and 2000-01 WA longliner is included in SA longliner catch due to confidentiality guidelines.

~ 1997-98 to 1998-99 NSW pole and purse seine catches are included in NSW longline catch due to confidentiality guidelines.

! 1997-98 and 1998-99 Tas troll catches are included in Tas longline and in 1999-00, 2000-01 and 2001-02 Tas longline is included in NSW longline due to confidentiality guidelines.

≈ 2001-02 NSW longline catch also includes QLD longline catch due to confidentiality guidelines.

Table 1: Australian Catch by Gear and State for Quota Years 1988-89 to 2001-02

Figure 1: Australian SBT Catch in 2001

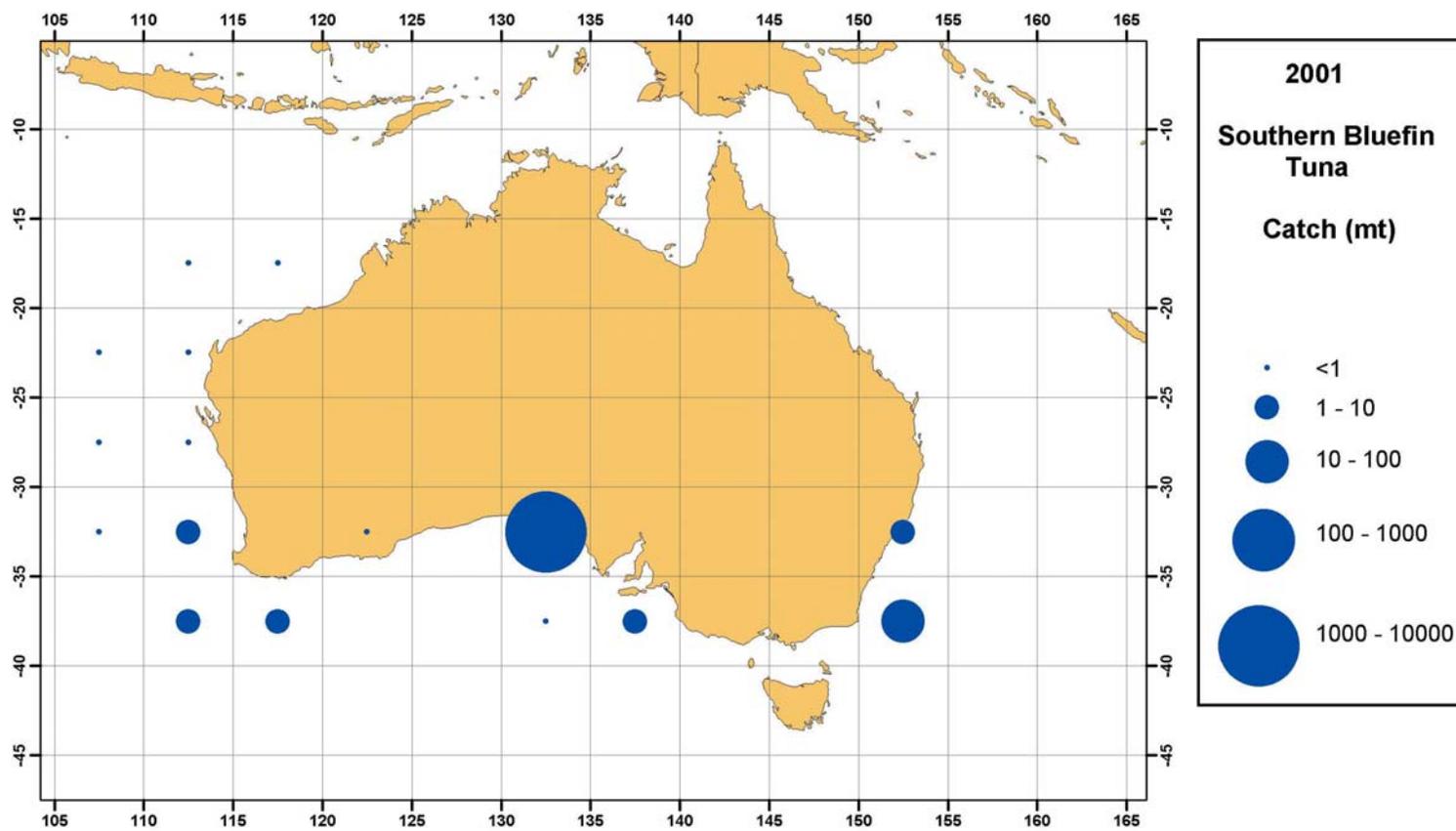


Figure 2: Australian SBT Catch in 2022

