



FIA PNG



FIVE-YEAR IMPACT REPORT

2025

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VISION

A sustainable and competitive fisheries sector delivering long-term benefits for our members and communities.



MISSION

To advance the professionalisation of domestic fisheries, strengthen governance and practices, and maximise long-term value and sustainability through responsible resource use.

TOWARDS A COMMON GOAL

As the Chairman of the Fishing Industry Association of Papua New Guinea (FIA PNG), it's my great honour to present the sixth edition of the FIA PNG Impact Report: a reflection not just of the past five years, but of a system that is evolving alongside changing regulations and expectations.

Increasingly, sustainability is no longer optional – it's necessary to address the challenges we face. Societal expectations are rising in regard to climate goals, emissions, fishing practices, and human rights, with a growing demand for clear and measurable business practices. The [EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive \(CSRD\)](#), which came into force in January 2025, illustrates this shift. Its strict requirements and due diligence obligations signal a new era of reporting, requiring detailed, standardised information on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) impacts and risks, replacing the less comprehensive [Non-Financial Reporting Directive \(NFRD\)](#).

In response to these developments, in 2024, FIA PNG published a practical ESG report aligned with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standards, building on our existing Responsible Sourcing Policy (RSP) to support stakeholders and business partners.

In 2025, we took a major step toward strengthening human and labour rights across our tuna fleet through enhanced monitoring, auditing, and compliance. We transitioned from FIA PNG group certification to individual tuna fleet certifications, thereby transferring full responsibility to each member for reporting on human and labour rights at sea under the [FISH Standard for Crew certification](#).

This approach improves data accuracy and enhances communication between crew members and fishing companies, as well as human resources management. At the same time, members continue to comply with the FIA PNG RSP. We also introduced additional mandatory training courses for auditors, further strengthening transparency and consistency among our members.

It is my pleasure to reflect on the significant progress and impact our fishery sector has experienced over the past five years, particularly through the implementation of the RSP. This journey has reaffirmed our commitment to sustainable fishing practices and has helped shape the future of our fisheries, our coastal communities, and the ecosystems that sustain them. Our association now includes 54 fishing vessels and nine tuna fleet members. Through

new Technical Committees, Working Groups, and the revitalisation of our internal processes and decision-making, we have created more opportunities than ever for open dialogue and shared progress.

In a world increasingly challenged by environmental degradation and the impacts of climate change, our adoption of the RSP has been pivotal. The principles embedded in this program have guided our efforts to balance economic growth with environmental stewardship, ensuring that our fishing practices do not compromise the health of our oceans or the livelihoods of future generations. By adopting these responsible practices, we have strengthened the sustainability of our fisheries and safeguarded the resources upon which countless families depend.

Moreover, our partnerships with the National Fisheries Authority (NFA), non-governmental organisations, and international markets have continued to grow, enhancing our reputation as a leader in sustainable seafood production within the region. As a result, we have gained access to new markets and opportunities that recognise the value of responsibly sourced seafood, further supporting economic development in our coastal communities.

This progress has not come without challenges, and there is still a lot of work ahead of us. However, the achievements of the past five years show what can be accomplished when we work toward a common goal. As we look ahead, we will continue to uphold the principles of the RSP, while strengthening collaboration and innovation across all our activities.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to every member of our association, our dedicated partners, our office staff, and the fishers of Papua New Guinea who have embraced the values of sustainability and responsibility. Together, we are not only transforming our fisheries but also building a legacy of stewardship and resilience for generations to come.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to our shared vision.



Sylvester Barth Pokajam
President & Chairman
Fishing Industry Association
Papua New Guinea

GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION

This Five-Year Impact Report 2025 represents a very important milestone, marking five years of our MSC tuna fishery certification and the reshaping of our strategic plan for the coming 10 years.

Since our last report in 2024, FIA PNG has entered a period of remarkable growth and transformation, driven by increasing demands to adapt to climate change, regulatory shifts, and a growing global push toward social and environmental sustainability. In this report, we evaluate the impact of our Responsible Sourcing Policy (RSP) over the past five years.

Since 2018, our commitments have been embedded in social and environmental sustainability within our logframe. We have aimed to ensure that environmental protection, social equity, and sound governance are not isolated goals, but are central to how we plan, operate, and measure our progress.

Since 2020, we have aligned our work with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through our registered [Ocean Action #38702](#), focusing on sustainable fisheries and the responsible management of marine ecosystems. We have also updated our assurance model, which not only contributes to the SDGs but also offers brand protection to our buyers and commercial partners and enhances transparency in our fishing operations.

In 2025, our commercial and outreach efforts continued to expand, with campaigns and educational activities across four continents: the United States, the United Kingdom, Spain, France, China, Fiji, Australia, and Papua New Guinea.

Our FIA PNG Chairman, the tuna fleet members, the Management Team, the Technical Working Group members, and the National Fisheries Authority (NFA) have supported our outreach and annual commercial activities over the past five years.

In this report, we share cumulative data from the past five years, as well as progress regarding tuna catches, good practices, traceability, marine litter, crew welfare, production and capacity, biodiversity, and other sustainability initiatives.

We reaffirm our commitment to advancing our FIA PNG logframe and strategy by maintaining and improving our due diligence systems and upholding human rights due diligence across our fishing operations. We aim to lead the tuna industry not only in terms of financial performance, but also as a benchmark for sustainability.



Marcelo Hidalgo
FIA PNG Chief Operating Officer (COO)

18%
of global tuna catches come from the PNG EEZ
[↗ FAO. 2024]



ABOUT FIA PNG

The Fishing Industry Association (FIA) was founded in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (PNG) in 1991. It is a non-profit organization that represents local fishing and processing companies, in particular the tuna industry, as well as associated sectors. FIA PNG works to unite the fishing sector and collaborates with the National Fisheries Authority (NFA) for a responsible management of marine resources.

Since its foundation in 1991, the association has provided a unified voice for the fishing industry and related sectors and facilitating dialogue with the NFA, the Minister responsible for Fisheries, and a wide network of national and international partners. Its membership includes tuna fishing and processing companies, prawn operators, bêche-de-mer (sea cucumber) buyers and exporters, as well as associated industries such as crew recruitment agencies, fisheries consultancy services, and provincial artisanal fishing cooperatives.

While FIA PNG represents a diversity of fisheries, its tuna members operate across the entire value chain, from fishing and logistics to processing, sales, and marketing. Core business activities include the catching and processing of whole-round frozen tuna and pre-cooked frozen loins for export.

Through its operations and collaborations, FIA PNG works to ensure that Papua New Guinea’s fisheries resources are managed responsibly, thereby generating economic value, supporting local livelihoods, and safeguarding marine biodiversity for future generations.

Since the introduction of the Responsible Sourcing Policy (RSP) and its strategic plan in 2018, FIA PNG’s role in the global tuna sector has evolved. The FIA PNG RSP has grown into a reference for best practices in social and environmental sustainability and continues to advance transparency and accountability in the tuna industry. In addition, FIA PNG and its RSP have contributed to scientific research, with more than 10 scientific papers and studies produced over the past two years.

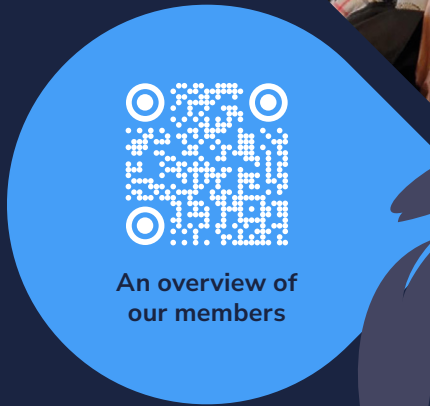
Over the past five years, FIA PNG has further established itself as a regional and global reference in responsible tuna sourcing, implementing the commitments set out in the RSP in 2018.



OUR MEMBERSHIP

Since May 2020, when we obtained MSC certification for our tuna fishery, our tuna fleet has grown from 33 tuna purse seiners to 53 by the end of December 2025, nearly doubling in size, while the number of small-scale fisheries and associated service members has remained stable.

[Click here for an overview of our members as of December 2025](#)



GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Sustainability is embedded across all levels of FIA PNG's governance framework, ensuring that Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) principles are implemented through clear roles, coordination and accountability mechanisms.

The FIA PNG governance structure is composed of the Management Committee Board and the FIA PNG members, the Executive Management Team that runs the association's daily affairs, and the associated Development and Technical Working Groups.

The members of the Management Committee Board control and manage the administration of the affairs, property and funds of the association. The Board also approves the annual work programme and the administration budget of the FIA PNG office during its annual general meeting that is held once a year. In addition, the Board members are required to meet regularly, at least up to six times, during the year to discuss the affairs of the association.

After evolving over the last five years, the new organisational structure aims to focus its resources on implementing our RSP for both industrial and small-scale fisheries.

The top level is comprised of the Chairman and President, Sylvester Pokajam, the Executive Manager and Board Secretary, Donald Papaol and the Chief Operating Officer, Marcelo Hidalgo. Together, they form the FIA PNG leadership team for the RSP. They provide overall direction for FIA PNG's strategy, mission, vision, and logframe, ensuring alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as national regulations and international commitments.

The FIA PNG RSP team expands to three key coordination areas led by:

- 1. Stephanie Pokajam** – VMS, Traceability & Chain of Custody Coordinator
- 2. Clare Tutuana** – Planning and Logistics Coordinator
- 3. Nialangis Posanau** – Sustainability and MSC Coordinator, who oversees certification scheme systems



The RSP management system is supported by the FIA PNG Technical Working and Development Groups



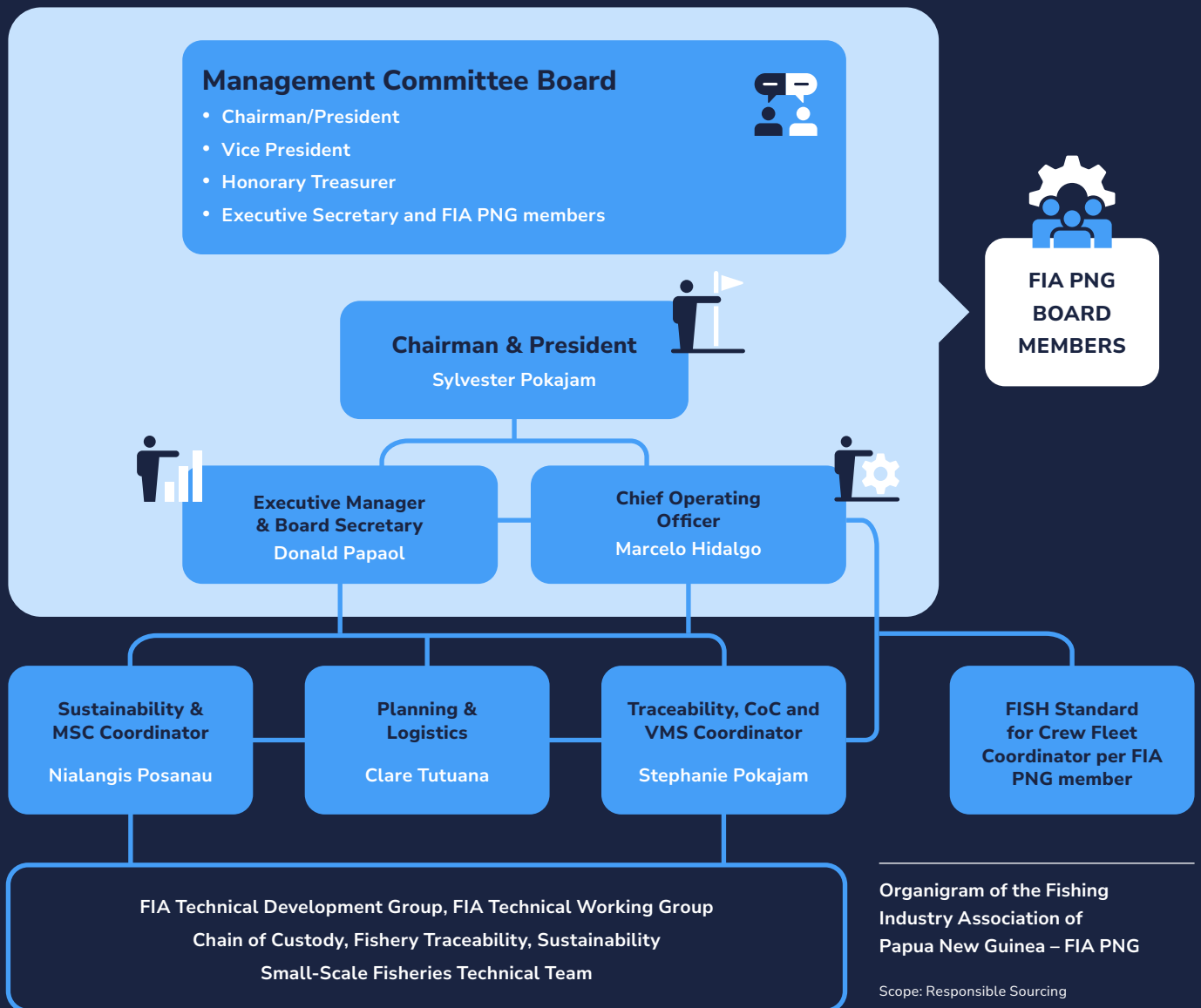
1,6MT

of tuna come from from the 7 PNA tuna stocks (YFT, SKJ, BET) where FIA PNG has access

The Small-Scale Fisheries Technical Team, formed by the FIA PNG VMS, Traceability & Chain of Custody Coordinator, and the COO, liaises with the NFA officers and small-scale fisheries operators.

Since 2025, the areas of crew welfare and the FISH Standard for Crew certification have been taken over by each of the FIA PNG tuna fleet members. Each member disposes of their own coordinators and internal auditors. The COO is responsible for overseeing and providing technical support to the FIA PNG members.

This governance structure demonstrates FIA PNG's engagement in ensuring transparency, accountability, and collaboration across all operational levels, linking strategic leadership with on-the-ground sustainability performance while continuously delivering tangible and measurable outcomes.



FIA PNG governance structure

FIA PNG operates under a transparent, participatory, and technically robust governance model designed to ensure accountability, oversight, and continuous improvement across its fisheries operations. Governance is delivered through the RSP and supported by a structured organisational framework comprising:

- **FIA PNG Board of Directors:** Meets twice annually in person and twice remotely. The Chairman and the Board of Directors are elected annually by the membership.
- **Associated Members:** Representatives from member tuna fleets and processing companies who contribute to the strategic direction of the association
- **Technical Advisory Group (TAG):** Executive management committee responsible for overseeing the implementation of the RSP

- **Technical Development Group (TDG):** FIA PNG office staff, led by the Chief Operating Officer (COO), responsible for day-to-day coordination and implementation activities
- **Technical Working Group (TWG):** Technical specialists from FIA PNG and member companies who provide expertise across the RSP pillars, support policy development, oversee technical implementation, and contribute to audit and monitoring tools

This governance structure ensures that sustainability, social responsibility, traceability, and regulatory compliance are consistently implemented, monitored, and continuously improved across all member companies.

OUR STORY: THE RESPONSIBLE SOURCING POLICY (RSP)

The **FIA PNG RSP** was developed in 2017 and launched officially in 2018, together with the announcement of the FIA PNG tuna fishery entering full assessment against the MSC Standard for sustainable fisheries.

The RSP serves as a due diligence and assurance model and is centred around four pillars:

- Sustainability
- Traceability
- Marine Litter and Fishing Gear
- Social Responsibility & Crew Welfare

The RSP was developed in response to key challenges for global fisheries, including overfishing, ecosystem degradation, supply chain disruptions, increasing regulatory requirements, human rights risks, crew welfare concerns, and threats to long-term food security. It is directly aligned with the FIA PNG Strategic Plan and Logframe (2018–2030) and takes market as well as sustainability, traceability and social requirements into account. As such, it covers different aspects along the entire supply chain.

A core component of the RSP is its structured risk assessment framework, which evaluates performance across its four pillars and informs targeted mitigation measures, most of which are aligned with international regulations, conventions and ratifications.

Since the launch of the RSP, the FIA PNG members have been working hard to implement and achieve the milestones to put this **assurance model** into practice. The successful implementation is the result of close collaboration between the industry and the National Fisheries Authority (NFA).

The work on the RSP illustrates that FIA PNG is committed to ensuring a progressive tuna fishery by surpassing the set targets over the course of time. The absolute priority of FIA PNG is to preserve and protect our natural resources, our people, and our future.

THE FIA PNG LOGFRAME

The FIA PNG logframe was established in 2018, providing a basis to assess its impact over more than five years. In 2024, it was further aligned with the ESG framework.

The logframe sets a clear pathway for building partnerships, ensuring that FIA PNG's work is guided by internationally recognised principles of sustainable, social, and ethical fisheries.



CARING FOR OUR MARINE ECOSYSTEMS: THE RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES



Responsible Sourcing Policy
4 pillars – due diligence

The FIA PNG RSP and accompanying logframe provide a strategic foundation for sustainable fisheries management and responsible seafood production.

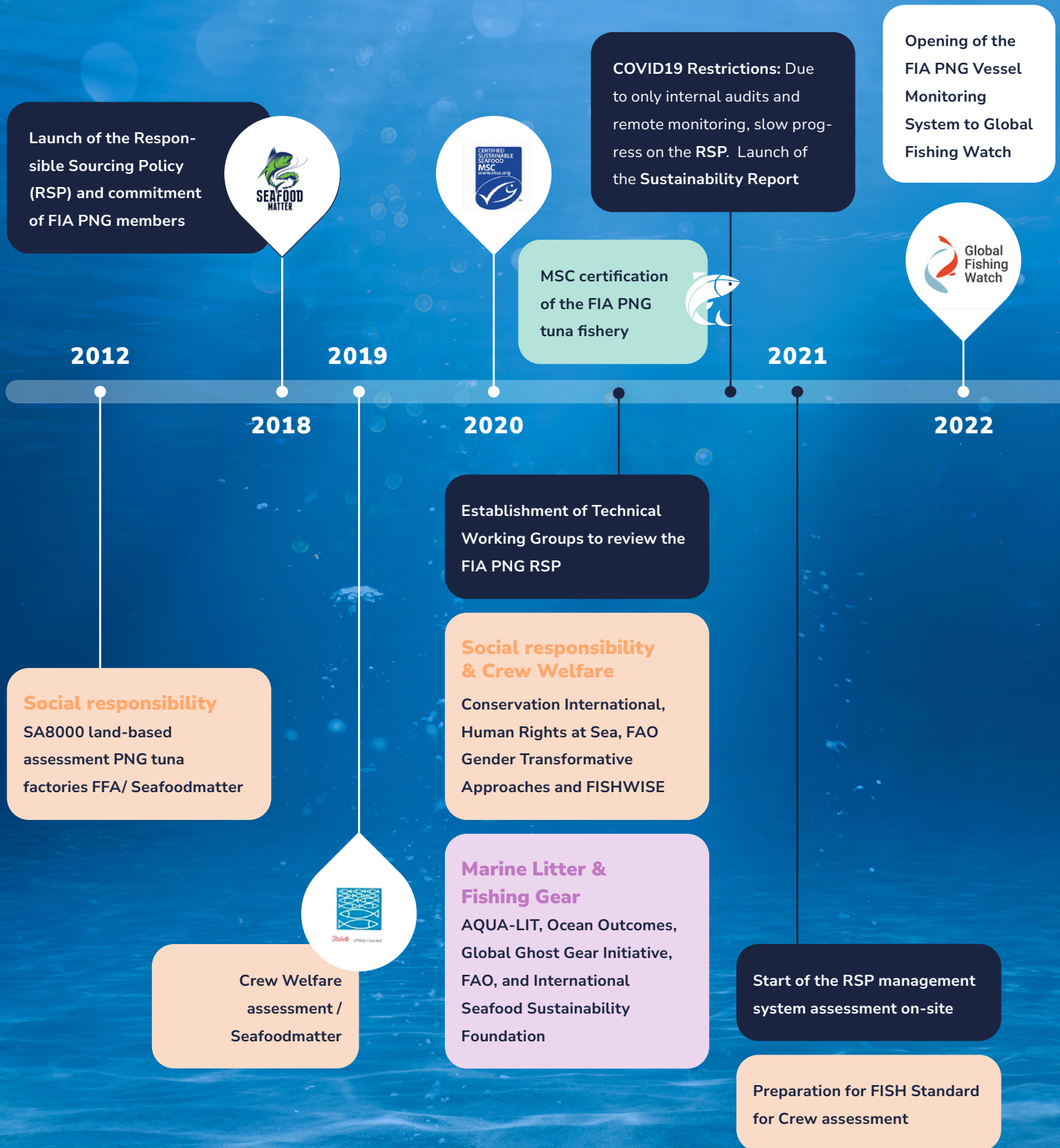
The RSP prioritises biodiversity and marine resource protection, social responsibility, and the long-term resilience of the PNG seafood sector, as specified in the following objectives:

- Support PNG's commercial fisheries in achieving **best practice** in sustainable resource utilisation, social accountability, and market access
- Support the **development, sustainability, and long-term viability** of domestic fisheries and related businesses
- **Strengthen industry** efforts to improve the sustainability of tuna stocks within PNG and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Convention Area

- Work in **alignment and partnership with the National Fisheries Authority (NFA) and regional stakeholders** to develop and implement science-based, verifiable fisheries management measures and commitments that contribute to sustainable fisheries outcomes
- **Implement** the FIA PNG RSP with its four pillars **across member companies**, which contributes to 11 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Supported by a clear strategic plan and logical framework, the RSP enabled FIA PNG to achieve significant progress within five years, as outlined in the following chapters.

OUR JOURNEY TO IMPLEMENTING THE RESPONSIBLE SOURCING POLICY

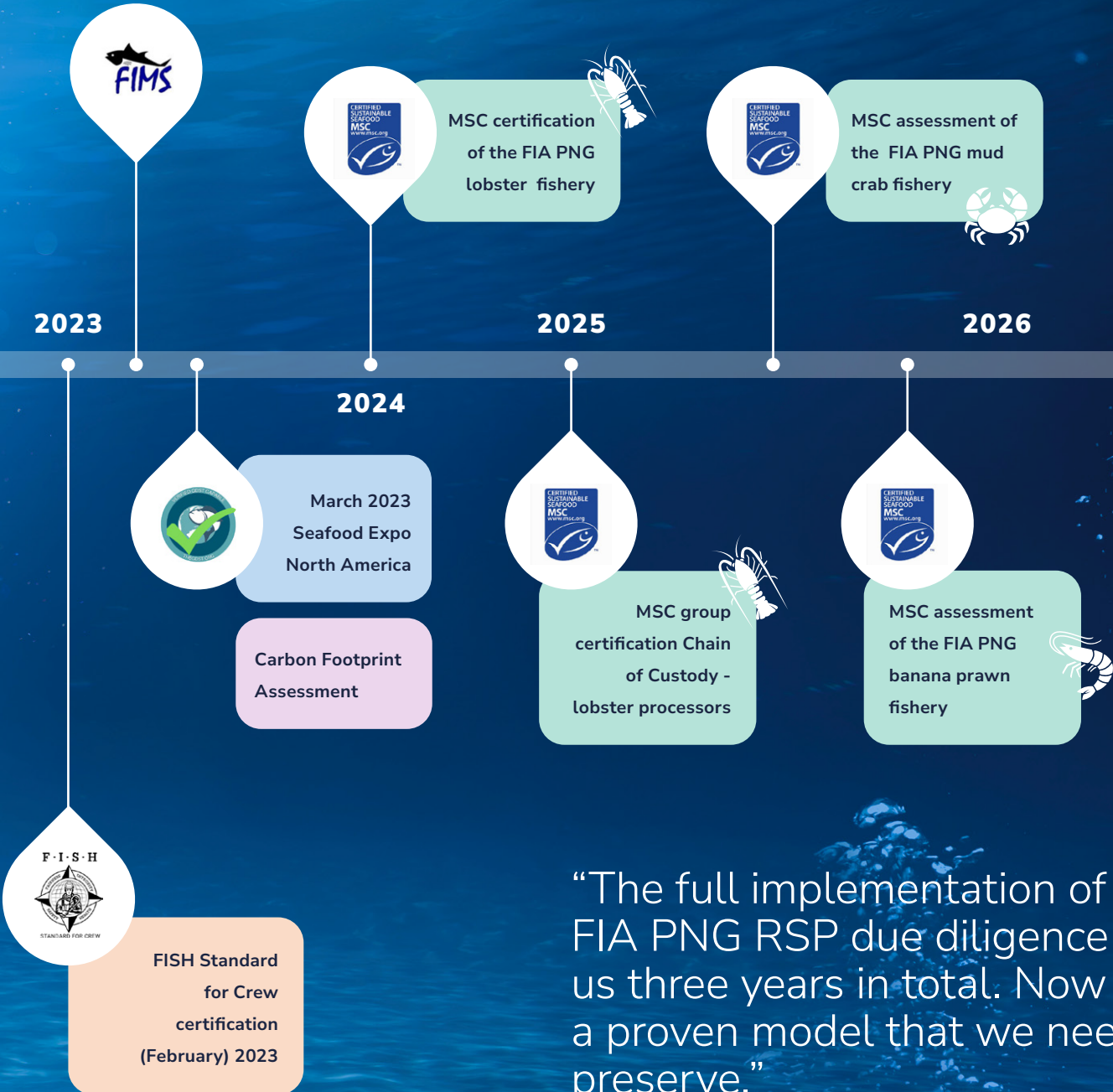


- Responsible Sourcing Policy
- Sustainability
- Marine Litter & Fishing Gear
- Social Responsibility & Crew Welfare
- Traceability

The integrated Fisheries Information Management System (iFIMS) passed the capability test of the Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST)



GLOBAL DIALOGUE on Seafood Traceability



“The full implementation of the FIA PNG RSP due diligence took us three years in total. Now it is a proven model that we need to preserve.”

Nialangis (Alice) Posanau; FIA PNG Sustainability & MSC Coordinator

FIA PNG TUNA FLEET

53

Tuna purse seiners
(100% observer coverage)

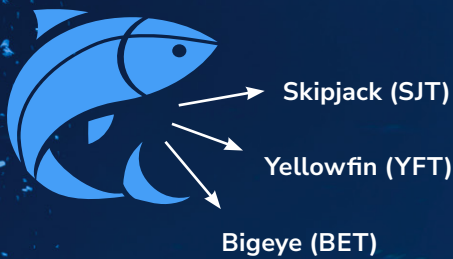
↗ FIA PNG fishing vessel list and certifications (June 2026)

484

MSC tuna trips in 2025



3 MSC certified tuna species of commercial interest

A white silhouette of a crew member standing and holding a large tuna fish vertically. To the right of the silhouette, the number '1,456' is displayed in a large, bold font, with the word 'Crew' and '(onboard direct jobs)' below it.

1,456
Crew
(onboard direct jobs)

Tuna catches 2025 per species (1000 MT)



Total tuna catches by fishing gear
(1000 MT)



27



Catches with FADs



254

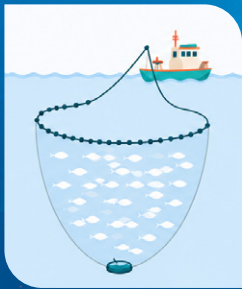
Free school catches



281

Total

Tuna fishing gear used



Purse Seine



Free School



Natural FADs



Anchored FADs



Drifting FADs

FIA PNG TUNA PROCESSORS

Tuna canneries in PNG



6



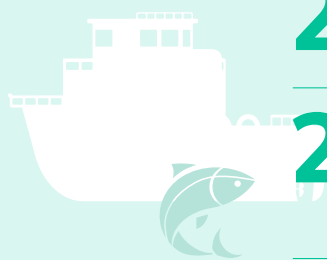
15,000

Workers
PNG local worker force

Processors: Frabelle PNG Ltd / International Food Corporation Ltd / Majestic Seafood Corporation Ltd / Nambawan Seafoods PNG Ltd / RD Tuna canners Ltd / South Seas Tuna Corporation Ltd

FISHERIES & ENVIRONMENT

Over the past five years, FIA PNG has continued to strengthen its environmental commitments through responsible and science-based fisheries management, biodiversity protection, and improved monitoring systems. Guided by the RSP and aligned with international sustainability frameworks, FIA PNG and its members have worked to balance economic development with the long-term health of marine ecosystems.



Deployment of Fish Aggregating Devices

Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) are widely used in tropical tuna fisheries to improve fishing efficiency and support operational management. Since 2020, FIA PNG has continued to monitor and assess FAD deployment practices across its tuna fleet, with particular attention to sustainability, regulatory compliance, and potential ecosystem impacts.

Considering that the Parties to The Nauru Agreement (PNA) allow the deployment of up to 350 FADs per vessel, the table below presents the annual deployment based on the FIA PNG tuna fleet of 53 purse seiners.

Table 1: FAD deployment of the FIA PNG purse seine tuna fleet per year, from 2020 to 2025

	FIA PNG vessels	PNA allowance FADs/ vessel	PNA total allowance	FIA PNG deployed FADs	
2020	53	350	18550	153	0,82%
2021	53	350	18550	155	0,84%
2022	53	350	18550	199	1,07%
2023	53	350	18550	232	1,25%
2024	53	350	18550	79	0,42%
2025	53	350	18550	202	1,09%

Fisheries

Since 2020, FIA PNG has expanded its engagement in certified sustainable fisheries, supporting both industrial tuna and small-scale coastal fisheries. These initiatives improve sustainability performance, traceability, and long-term resource management across the sector and strengthen access to international markets for seafood products from PNG.

2 MSC certified fisheries
tuna (May 2020) and rock lobster (October 2023)

2 Fisheries in MSC assessment
mud crab and banana prawn (July and December 2025)

3 Small-scale fisheries
1 is MSC certified (rock lobster) and 2 are yet to undergo full MSC assessment (mud crab and banana prawn)

53
Our fleet of 53 tuna purse seiners only fish in domestic waters, the PNG EEZ & AW

BIODIVERSITY

Protecting marine biodiversity remains a key priority for FIA PNG and its members. Since 2020, FIA PNG's tuna fishery has contributed to ocean biodiversity conservation through a structured set of practices and management measures:

- **Sustainable fishing practices:** By adhering to the MSC Standard for sustainable fisheries, FIA PNG ensures that its tuna fishing methods are sustainable. This means minimising overfishing, thereby maintaining healthy fish populations and the overall balance of marine ecosystems.
- **Improving ecosystem management:** FIA PNG assesses the impact of its fishing activities on the wider marine ecosystem. This includes considering bycatch (non-target species caught during fishing) and implementing measures to reduce it. This effort helps to protect various marine species and habitats.
- **Monitoring and reporting:** Through the NFA observer program, the FIA PNG tuna fleet actively monitors its environmental impact, including interactions with and the impact on ETP species. The outcomes help to improve sustainable fisheries management, including the protection of important habitats such as coral reefs and spawning grounds.

By integrating these practices into its operations, FIA PNG aims to contribute positively to ocean biodiversity while ensuring the long-term sustainability of the fishing industry. Fishing practices are guided by the [FIA PNG Strategic Plan for Mitigating Bycatch](#) and the [FIA PNG Incentive Model](#) to avoid setting nets on ETP species.

At the beginning of 2025, an in-house assessment of the impact of the tuna fleet on ocean biodiversity was conducted, using observer data from 48 tuna purse seiners from 2020 to 2025. This analysis evaluated trends in mortality rates, habitat interactions, and potential impacts on species populations.

It is important to note that FIA PNG's fishing operations take place exclusively offshore, with no direct impact on freshwater sources, aquaculture or land-based ecosystems. Biodiversity protection efforts therefore focus on marine species and habitats.

These commitments are implemented through the RSP. PNG's ratification of the [Port State Measures Agreement](#) (PSMA) further supports these efforts by combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, thereby reducing pressure on vulnerable species and protecting market integrity.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Over the last five years, FIA PNG has developed a suite of internal policies and operational procedures designed to protect marine biodiversity, minimise bycatch, and ensure the humane and ethical treatment of all species encountered during fishing operations. These policies form the operational foundation of the [Responsible Sourcing Policy \(RSP\)](#) and are aligned with MSC certification requirements, the [Conservation and Management Measures \(CMMs\)](#) of the [Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission \(WCPFC\)](#) and the international guidelines from the [FAO](#).

The policies and operational procedures at a glance:

- Strategic Plan for Mitigating Bycatch and Shark Conservation
- Shark Survival Audit Procedure
- Shark finning policy (2022)
- Incentive model
- Best Practices for the Safe Release of Sharks, Turtles, Whale Sharks and Other ETP Species
- Transactions and Conservation Measures – Management Requirements for FIA PNG Tuna Purse Seiners

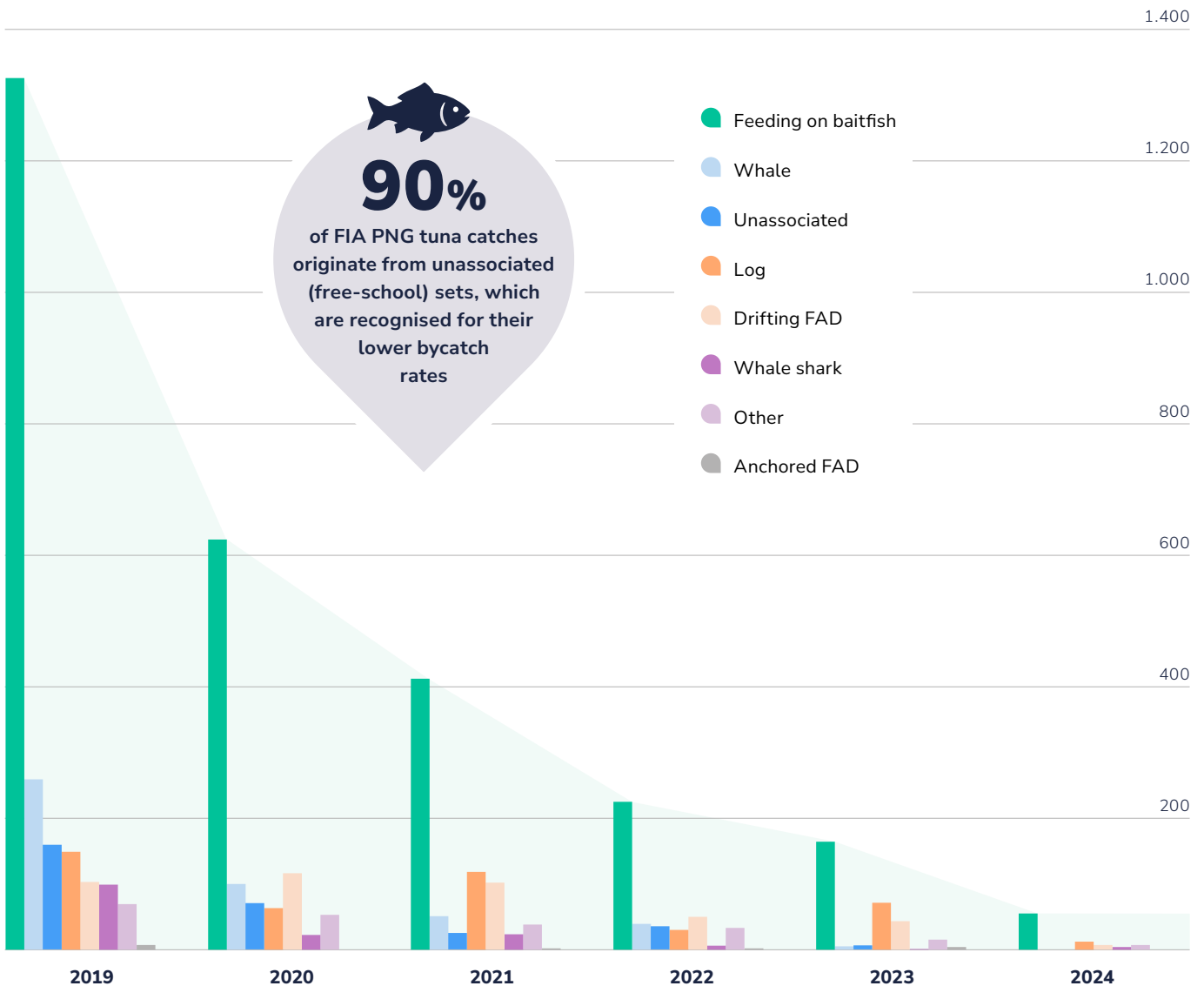
ENDANGERED, THREATENED, AND PROTECTED SPECIES (ETP)

FIA PNG has established best practices for the safe handling of ETP species onboard its vessels, with a particular focus on minimising harm and supporting post-release survival. These procedures are applied when species such as silky sharks are brought onboard during brailing or hauling operations, including cases where individuals are entangled in fishing gear and cannot be released immediately. Together, these practices form an integral part of FIA PNG’s broader commitment to responsible and sustainable fishing operations.

FADs: associated tuna sets

Figure 1 shows the number of observed sets and set types by MSC certified FIA PNG vessels associated with ETP species such as marine mammals, reptiles, rays and sharks since 2019. There is generally a decrease in the number of sets associated with ETP species. FIA PNG shared its data with the University of Queensland for scientific analysis. This research project started in 2026, and the results are expected to be published before April 2027.

Figure 1: Number of observed sets, per set type; FIA PNG MSC certified vessels per year, from 2019 to 2024 | Source: NFA Observer Reporting



SILKY SHARKS

The silky shark plays a vital role in maintaining the health of marine ecosystems by helping to regulate prey populations and support ocean biodiversity.

100% non-entangling FADs

The FIA PNG MSC certified tuna fleet (49 tuna purse seiners in 2024) deployed an average of 150 drifting FADs (dFADs) between 2019 and 2024 (see Table 1). Since 2020, all dFADs deployed by FIA PNG are non-entangling designs.

Figure 2: Number of observed silky sharks caught by FIA PNG MSC certified vessels per year, from 2019 to 2024

Source: NFA Observer Reporting



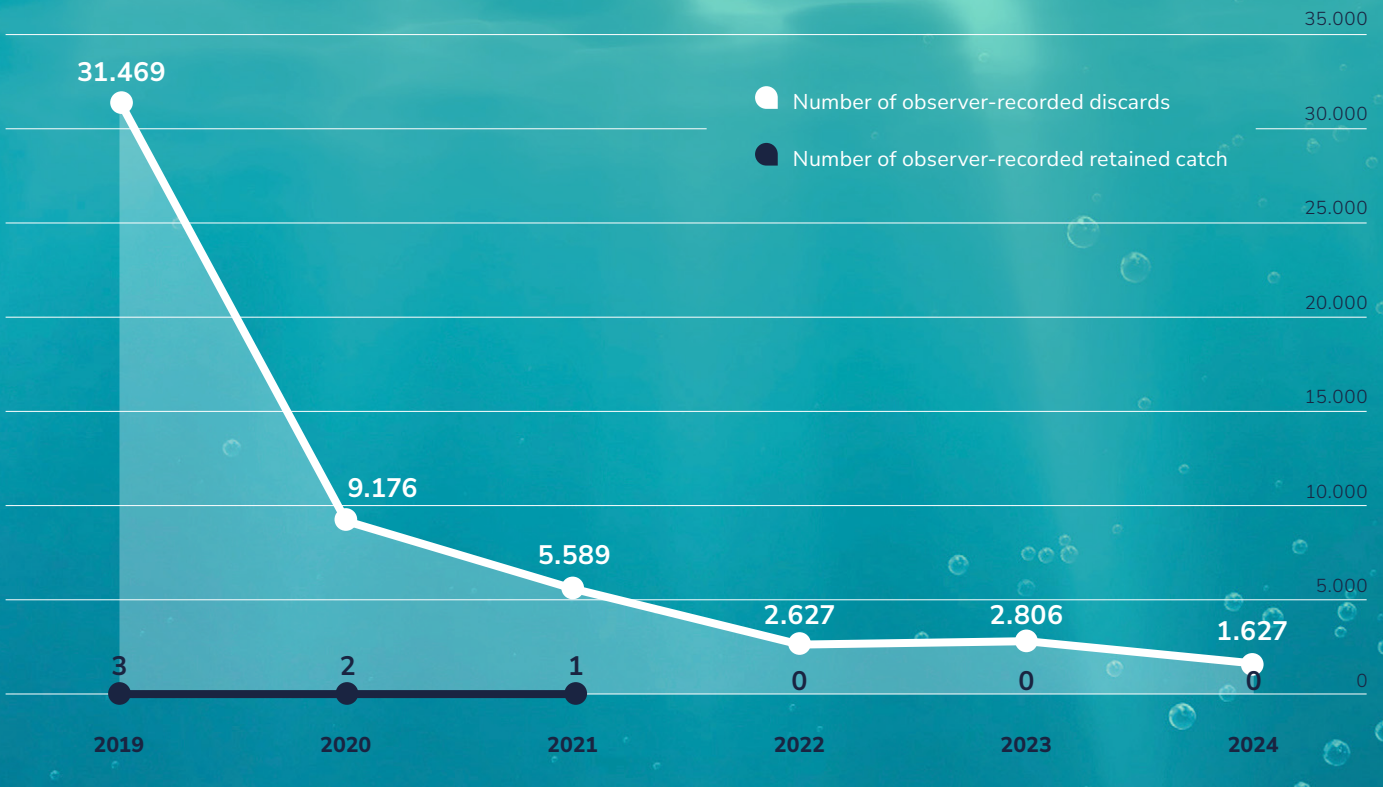


Figure 3: Number of observed silky sharks caught (retained vs. discarded) by FIA PNG MSC certified vessels per year, from 2019 to 2024 | Source: NFA Observer Reporting

Observer data for silky sharks

Observer data (rather than fleet-wide extrapolated estimates) was used to estimate the number of silky sharks caught across different set types. During the MSC certification period (2020–2024), an annual average of 4,365 silky sharks were caught and subsequently discarded by MSC vessels (see Figure 3).

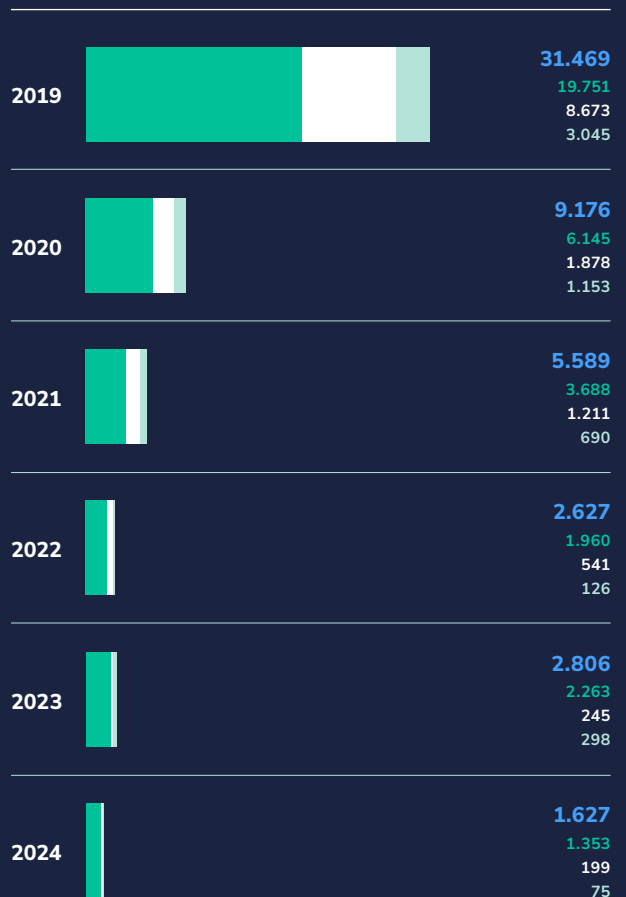
On average per year (see Figure 4)

- 815 silky sharks were released alive
- 3,082 were released dead
- 468 were released with unknown status

The number of silky sharks caught (see Figure 2) and released (alive or dead, see Figure 4) by FIA PNG MSC certified vessels has been decreasing since 2020, after the first MSC certificate was issued.

Of the observed silky shark catch, only six silky sharks were retained between 2019 and 2021. The vast majority were released, either alive, dead, or with unknown status.

Figure 4: Life status of non-retained silky sharks caught by FIA PNG MSC certified vessels when landed on the deck per year, from 2019 to 2024 | Source: NFA Observer Reporting



● Total ● Dead ● Alive ● Unknown

MOBULA RAYS & MANTA RAYS

Mobula and manta rays are important to the PNG tuna fishery as they contribute to the ecosystem's balance by controlling prey populations and supporting the overall health of marine habitats.

Significant decrease in mobula ray bycatch

On average, the FIA PNG MSC certified vessels caught 158 mobula rays annually during the MSC certification period (2020-2024). The number of mobula rays caught has decreased over the last five years. Please note that the 2024 data remains provisional at this stage.

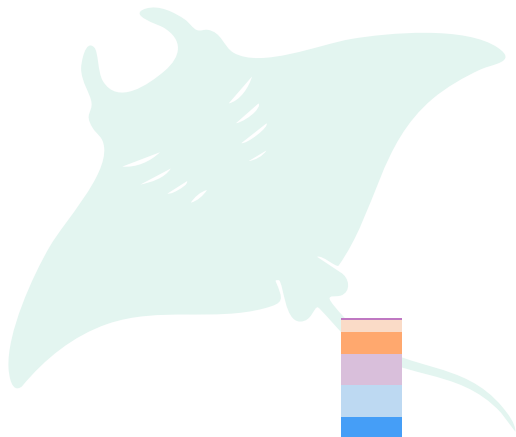


Figure 5: Number of observed mobula rays caught by FIA PNG MSC certified vessels per year and per set type, from 2019 to 2024

Source: NFA Observer Reporting



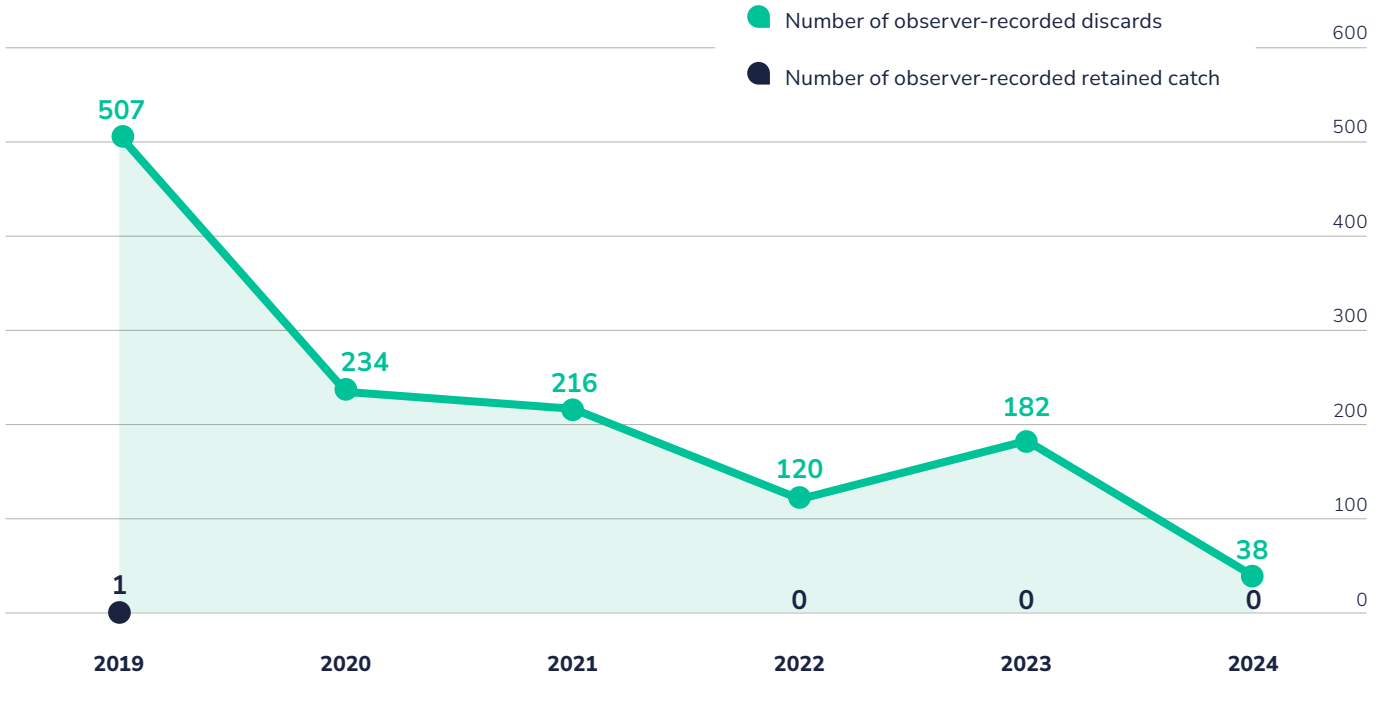


Figure 6: Number of observed mobula rays caught (retained vs. discarded) by FIA PNG MSC certified vessels per year, from 2019 to 2024 | Source: NFA Observer Reporting

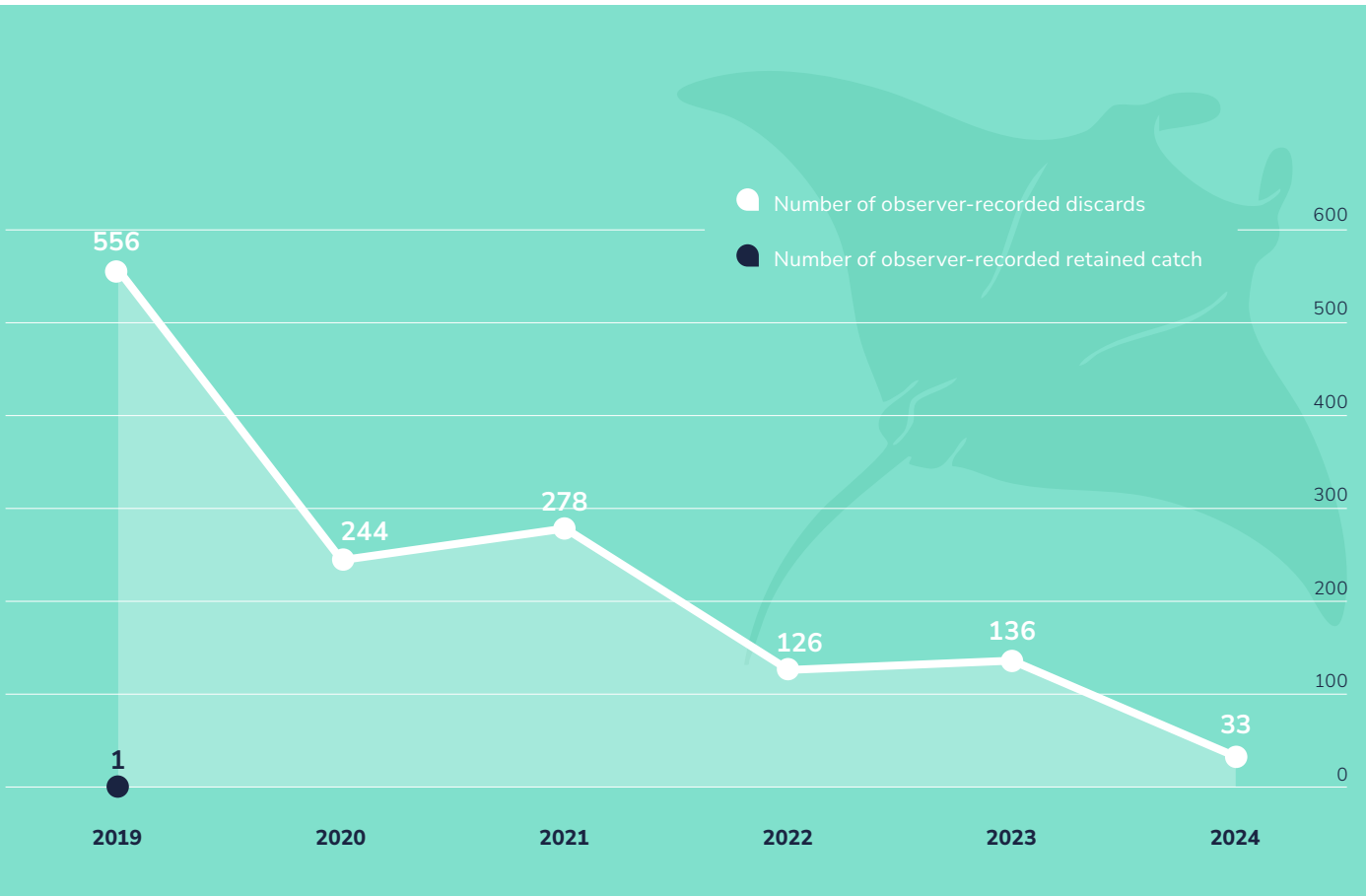


Figure 7: Number of observed giant manta rays caught (retained vs. discarded) by FIA PNG MSC certified vessels by year, from 2019 to 2024 | Source: NFA Observer Reporting

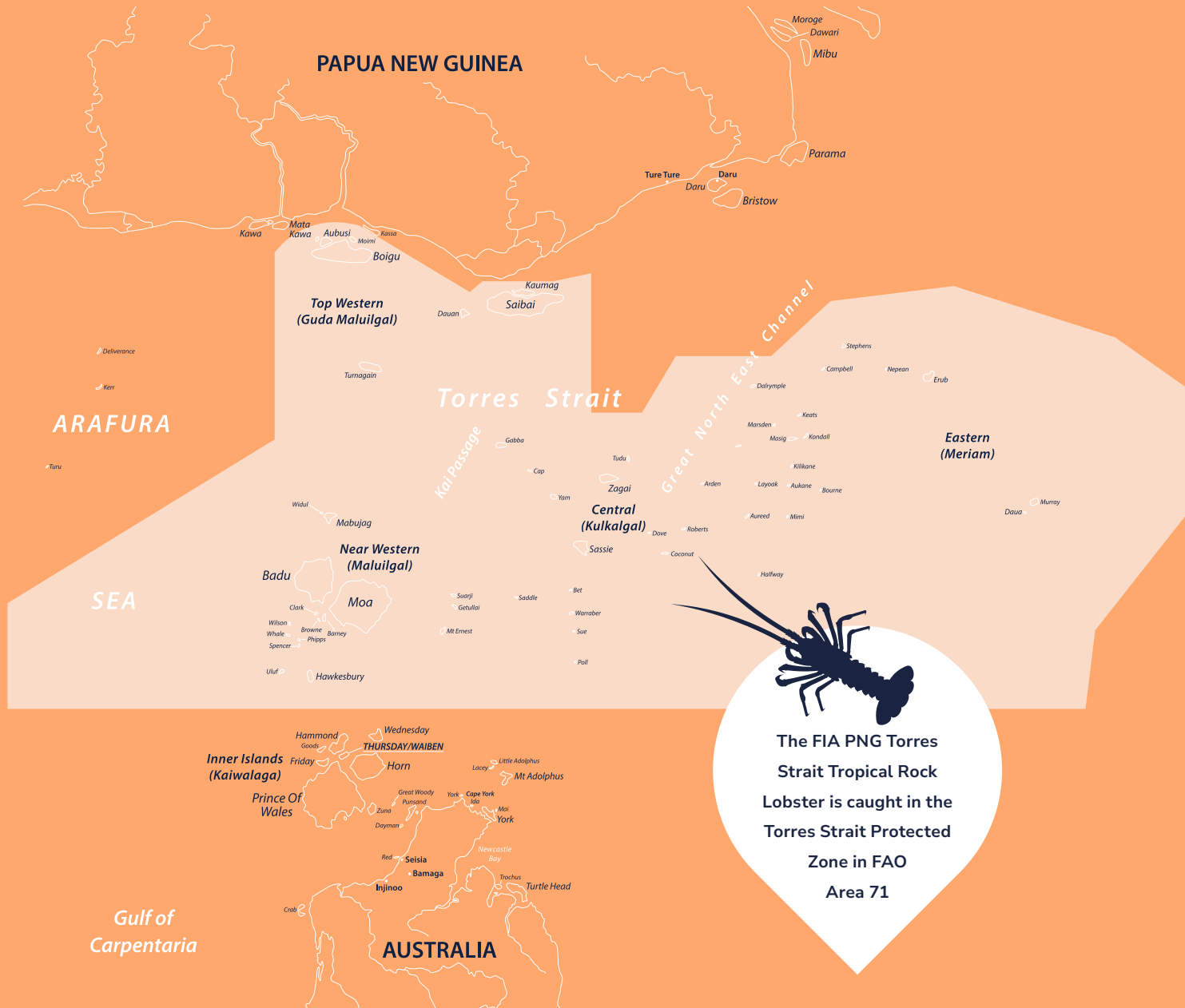
SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES: A GROWING SECTOR IN PNG AND IN THE PACIFIC REGION

Small-scale fisheries are a growing sector in PNG and across the Pacific. Following the success of the RSP in the tuna sector, FIA PNG has expanded its efforts to support coastal communities and small-scale fisheries.

Small-scale fisheries contribute an estimated 40% of the global seafood production and support 90% of the capture fisheries workforce. Worldwide, some 500 million people rely on small-scale fisheries for their livelihoods (FAO 2024). FIA PNG therefore aims to support its local

communities by providing technical assistance, training, and guidance, enabling access to premium markets while improving responsible fishing practices. A key milestone was achieved in October 2023 with the first MSC certification of a small-scale fishery in the region, for the Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster.

In 2025, further progress was made towards MSC certification with the start of the assessment of the small-scale fisheries on mud crab and banana prawn in July and December. On-site evaluations are expected by October 2026. [↗ FAO, 2024]



TORRES STRAIT TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER

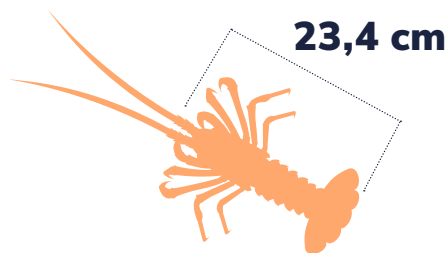
The FIA PNG fishery on Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster (*Panulirus ornatus*) is a small-scale MSC certified fishery that operates in the geographical area of the Torres Strait Protected Zone (TSPZ) in the Western Pacific Ocean (FAO Area 71). Each larger vessel (the so-called 'dory') acts as a home base for the fishing activity which includes divers accessing reefs from smaller 'dinghy' boats and harvesting the rock lobster one by one by hand

using 'hookah' dive gear or by free diving (apnea). Therefore, the fishery operates with no impact on the ecosystem. The rock lobster fishery provides work for 120 people directly employed in the fishery and another more than 20 in the associated processing facilities, having a positive impact of the coastal communities in the TSPZ region.

Total rock lobster catches in 2025 (MT)



Average size of a harvested rock lobster



Apnea and hookah divers per dinghy



Dories anchored in the reef

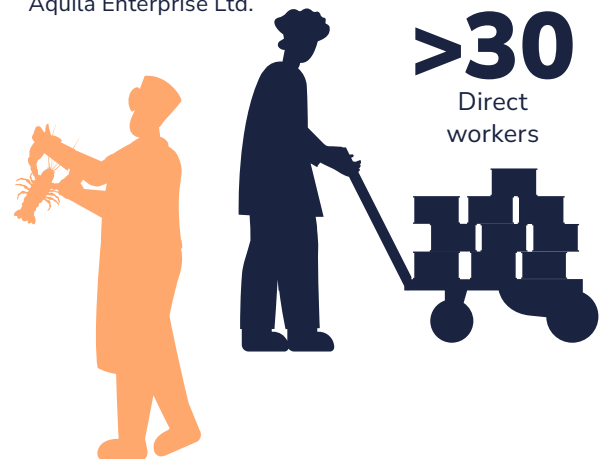


Dinghies associated with dories



Lobster processors

2 Maru United Ltd & Aquila Enterprise Ltd.

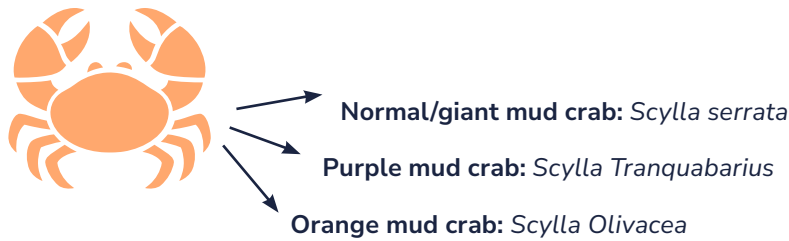


MUD CRAB




The FIA PNG fishery on mud crab is a small-scale fishery that supports livelihoods and income generation in coastal communities across PNG. With a clear focus on improvements in management and traceability, the fishery entered MSC assessment in July 2025 and is working towards strengthening long-term sustainability.



3 commercial species



Main markets

-  Singapore
-  Hong Kong
-  China

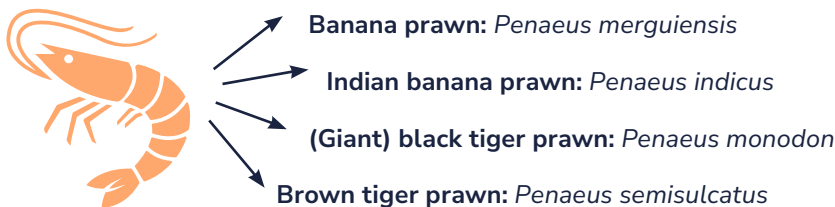
5
provinces

21,000
collectors or fishers

BANANA PRAWN

The FIA PNG banana prawn fishery operates in PNG's coastal and estuarine waters and contributes to local employment, food security, and economic development. As part of the MSC assessment that was initiated in December 2025, efforts are focused on strengthening fisheries management, maintaining healthy stocks, and creating long-term value for fishing communities and supply chain partners.




4 commercial species



10
commercial small trawlers,
with observer onboard

180
crew members /
18 per boat

Main markets

-  Hong Kong
-  Japan
-  Singapore

2 factories process
rock lobster,
prawns, and
mud crab


5-8
days fishing trips



ANIMAL WELFARE

FIA PNG formally commenced its animal welfare activities in the second quarter of 2024. Since then, the association has released its **Animal Welfare Commitment** together with an accompanying **policy and strategy framework**. Recognizing that wild-capture operations require distinct approaches from land-based agriculture or aquaculture, FIA PNG is working to integrate aquatic animal welfare with established environmental sustainability, catch quality, and data-backed compliance practices across its tuna and lobster operations.

ADVANCING ANIMAL WELFARE

To strengthen this work, FIA PNG has engaged with two leading non-governmental organisations in the field: the Netherlands-based [Catch Welfare Platform](#) and the [Aquatic Life Institute](#), which recognised FIA PNG for [leading the way in adopting tuna welfare policies](#). The initial 2024 framework utilized the World Organisation for Animal Health's (WOAH) [Five Freedoms](#) approach. FIA PNG acknowledges that this serves as a baseline and that a more robust, species-specific approach is needed to establish clear welfare improvements across a defined timeline. Currently, FIA PNG's operations directly support animal welfare and stress reduction through high-impact intersectional initiatives:

- **Traceability and transparency:** Leveraging 100% observer coverage (human and electronic) and the GDST framework to lay the digital groundwork for tracking welfare-relevant operational data, transforming abstract policy into verifiable compliance
- **Bycatch prevention and reduction:** Achieving verified, multi-year reductions in Endangered, Threatened, and Protected (ETP) species interactions, such as silky sharks and mobula rays, coupled with mandatory crew training for best-practice handling and rapid live release to ensure maximum post-release survival
- **Ghost gear prevention and reduction:** Recognizing that abandoned, lost, or otherwise discarded fishing gear is a critical welfare issue, FIA PNG maintains full alignment with the [Global Ghost Gear Initiative \(GGGI\)](#) to prevent marine litter, gear entanglement, and ghost fishing through gear marking, retrieval protocols, and crew awareness



A phased roadmap for continuous improvement

Building upon these foundational initiatives, FIA PNG utilizes a phased approach that balances rigorous seafood safety and quality standards with continuous welfare advancements across the entire harvest lifecycle, from initial capture to onboard processing. Over the next strategic cycle, the association aims to explore innovative, science-based solutions for humane harvesting that can be effectively scaled within high-volume wild-capture fisheries.

To achieve this, FIA PNG will utilize its integrated Fisheries Information Management System (iFIMS) and observer data to track operational proxies, such as catch volume per set and total hauling duration, to better understand and mitigate the impacts of crowding density.

FIA PNG continues to advance this work by actively seeking partnerships with NGOs, gear technologists, and academic institutions to support collaborative research into optimized onboard handling. Through targeted pilot projects, the association aims to investigate the technical feasibility and crew safety of advanced sorting layouts, specialized handling parameters for live lobster exports, and innovative methods to minimize harvest stress for both tuna and crustacean fisheries.

Ultimately, FIA PNG is moving beyond static statements by embedding these aquatic animal welfare workstreams directly into its broader ESG and biodiversity governance. In practice, the association is integrating welfare-related key data elements into its established annual sustainability reporting and leveraging its 100% observer data to track compliance. By institutionalizing welfare within our existing oversight frameworks, FIA PNG ensures a holistic, accountable approach to sustainable sourcing that translates commitments into verifiable progress for the global market.

MARINE LITTER AND FISHING GEAR

As FIA PNG members operate exclusively within the marine ecosystems of their own Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ, FAO Area 71), preventing marine litter and lost fishing gear from polluting these ecosystems remains a key priority.

Since 2018, when the Marine Litter and Fishing Gear (ML&FG) policy and procedure was established, it has evolved into a robust monitoring and auditing framework that is aligned with the following international standards and guidelines:

- the Conservation and Management Measures of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC CMMs)
- Annex V of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL)
- the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) guidelines and their good practices for gear marking
- the best practices of the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF)
- the best practice framework for the management of fishing gear of the Global Ghost Gear Initiative (GGGI)

In our 2020 Annual Report, we first outlined the ML&FG procedure and described how we intended to address the impact of fishing gear on biodiversity.

Today, this framework represents one of the core pillars of our FIA PNG RSP. A dedicated ML&FG procedure guides all member companies in minimising waste generation, tracking gear usage, and ensuring responsible waste handling both on board and in port.

Implementation across the fleet

FIA PNG fishing companies implement the ML&FG procedure across the tuna fleet. Key measures include:

- Minimising single-use plastics on board and replacing packaging materials with reusable shipboard containers
- Marking, tracking, reporting, and responsibly managing all fishing gear, including drifting Fish Aggregating Devices (dFADs) and netting materials
- Ensuring that lost or damaged gear is reported through observer elogs and documented during audits
- Returning end-of-life nets (approximately two tonnes per vessel every three years) to Manila, Philippines, for recycling





Beach cleaning team Nambawan 1 Tuna Processing

MARINE LITTER AND FISHING GEAR 5 YEARS AT A GLANCE

100% of the FIA PNG tuna fleet has been internally audited for compliance with the ML&FG procedure ↗

40% of the FIA PNG tuna fleet has undergone a second-party audit ↗

50 Deployment of 50 Argos-GNSS satellite tracking buoys (GNSS = Global Navigation Satellite System) designed for the tracking and relocation of fishing gear by NFA observers from FIA PNG tuna purse seiners

2 FIA PNG has received 2 public recognitions for its best practices by WWF and GGGI

5 Coastal clean-up activities were conducted to increase awareness about single-use plastic pollution ↗



TRAINING & WORKSHOPS

For officers, captains, crew, deckhands, and auditors

TRAINING ON RELEASE AND BEST HANDLING PRACTICES FOR ETP SPECIES

184

participants from FIA PNG members, NFA, and stakeholders

TRAINING ON THE MSC STANDARD FOR SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES

(focus on principles 1, 2, 3 and collected evidence)

312

participants from FIA PNG members and NFA

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Climate change increasingly threatens global fisheries, coastal communities, and food security. While wild-caught tuna remains one of the lowest-carbon animal proteins available, purse seine fisheries have the lowest carbon footprint per kilogram of landed catch, whereas longline and pole-and-line fisheries generally record higher emissions intensities [7 Tyedmers, P. and Donovan, S., 2025]. At the same time, awareness is growing across the seafood sector of the importance of measuring and reducing the environmental footprint of fishing operations.

Against this backdrop, the FIA PNG Board formally committed in May 2024 to assessing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across all member vessels. This industry-wide initiative represents the first coordinated effort in Papua New Guinea to quantify the carbon impacts of the tuna sector.

Increasingly, fisheries are using CO₂e accounting as a key indicator of their climate footprint, enabling companies to evaluate and manage emissions associated with their activities. By integrating these measurements into operational decision-making, the sector aims to strengthen sustainability performance, reduce contributions to climate change, and support responsible seafood sourcing.

Study to estimate the carbon footprint of tuna fishing operations

In 2025, four fishing companies representing 50% of the FIA PNG tuna fleet voluntarily initiated a study to estimate the carbon footprint of their operations.

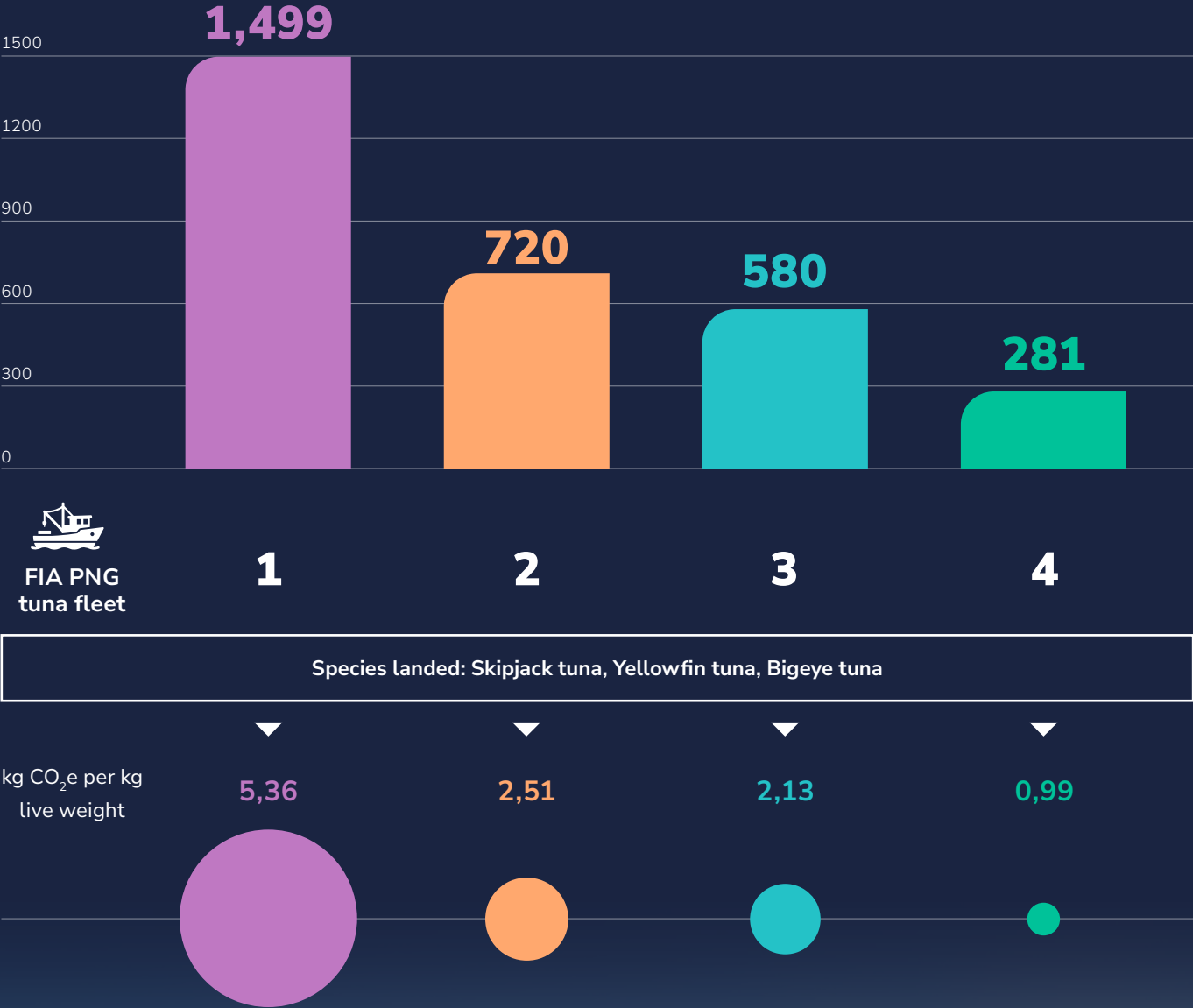
The study aims to estimate the carbon footprint of four tuna fleets operating a total of 26 purse seine vessels. Emissions were assessed based on kilograms of landed catch and include contributions from direct and indirect fuel combustion associated with fleet activities.

The assessment focuses on scope 1 greenhouse gas emissions related to direct fishing operations and landed tuna catch only. Transshipment activities, as well as downstream emissions associated with processing, storage, and transportation, were excluded from the analysis.

The study considered operational data from the past three years, including fuel consumption, ammonia use, port electricity consumption, maintenance records, vessel age, and other relevant operational indicators.



Figure 8: Fuel use intensity 2021-2024 (fuel in litres per ton of catch)



TRACEABILITY, TRANSPARENCY AND DIGITAL MONITORING

Traceability and transparency form the fourth pillar of FIA PNG's RSP and are fundamental to the integrity of its tuna and small-scale fisheries. As global markets place increasing emphasis on demonstrating legal origin, responsible sourcing, ethical labour practices, and full traceability, FIA PNG has developed a framework designed to deliver transparency from boat to plate.

One of the primary benefits of this framework is its ability to help prevent illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. By requiring detailed documentation of fishing activities – including catch location, vessel identity, fishing method, and landing information – the system provides a verifiable record of the legality and origin of seafood products.

TUNA FISHERY

Since 2009, the NFA has operated the [integrated Fisheries Information Management System \(iFIMS\)](#), a digital system that collects more than 50 key data elements verified by the [Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability \(GDST\)](#) through onboard observer programmes and transmits this information in near real time via satellite.

IN 2020, FIA PNG was introduced to the Industry Portal on iFIMS, which integrates iFIMS data, monitors every fishing trip, and facilitates the issuance of the unique MSC FIA PNG trip number or batch certificates as evidence of full monitoring and traceability.

In 2023, FIMS received formal recognition as a GDST-verified digital traceability solution, positioning FIA PNG among the global leaders in interoperable seafood traceability.

FIA PNG's publicly available [Traceability and Transshipment Procedure](#) ensures comprehensive control and verification of activities at designated ports while prohibiting at-sea transshipment of MSC certified tuna. This framework aligns with the 10 Principles of [Transparency in Fisheries by the Environmental Justice Foundation \(EJF\)](#).

Since 2022, FIA PNG has been the only tuna fleet globally to share near real-time Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) data with [Global Fishing Watch \(GFW\)](#), providing unprecedented visibility of vessel activity to governments, markets, civil society organisations, and the public.

In 2024, FIA PNG joined the [Coalition for Fisheries Transparency](#), further strengthening its commitment to transparency, accountability, and responsible fisheries governance.

LOBSTER FISHERY

In 2023, the NFA partnered with [CLS \(Collecte Localisation Satellites\)](#) to deploy [NEMO](#), a satellite-based vessel monitoring solution designed specifically for artisanal and small-scale fisheries operating across PNG's 15 maritime provinces.

The initiative aims to improve fisher safety, enhance traceability, and support sustainable fisheries management while increasing digital inclusion within coastal and traditional communities.



Rock lobster collector platform in the Torres Strait reef

PNG's coastal fisheries span 15 maritime provinces and support thousands of small-scale and artisanal fishing vessels operating in remote waters. These fisheries provide vital livelihoods for coastal communities, but fishers face significant challenges, including unpredictable weather, ageing vessels, limited communications infrastructure, and increasing safety risks at sea.

Traditional VMS solutions designed for industrial fleets were often too costly and impractical for artisanal fisheries. To address this challenge, the NFA, under the leadership of Managing Director Justin Ilakini, introduced NEMO, a satellite-based vessel monitoring system specifically designed for small-scale and artisanal fisheries.

NEMO uses solar-powered transmitters that provide real-time vessel tracking, even in remote areas without mobile network coverage, eliminating the need for batteries or electrical systems on traditional boats.

The system strengthens fisher safety through improved search-and-rescue capabilities while supporting traceability, regulatory compliance, and sustainable fisheries management. The design withstands harsh marine environments and allows for fishers to use it without technical training.

In 2024, the NFA completed the installation of NEMO across the lobster dinghy fleet and other small-scale reef fisheries.



100%

of the dinghies are monitored by the NFA by satellite for compliance and safety reasons



PARTICIPATION IN POLICY MAKING AND COLLABORATIONS

FIA PNG plays an active role in shaping fisheries policy at national, regional, and international levels. The association participates annually in the PNG delegation to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), contributing technical expertise on science-based fisheries management, labour rights, observer programmes, sustainability measures, and traceability systems.

FIA PNG also supports government and industry initiatives relating to:

- Access rights and resource allocation
- Ecosystem protection and sustainable fishing practices
- Labour standards and human rights at sea
- Digital traceability and IUU prevention

The association's leadership is reflected through active participation in national and international governance bodies, advisory committees, certification systems, and technical working groups (see overview on the right).

FIA PNG also collaborates with universities and research institutions to support scientific research on labour rights, crew welfare, fisheries management, bycatch mitigation, and shark conservation.

A significant milestone was achieved in April 2024 when PNG acceded to the FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA). This step, led by the NFA, strengthened national efforts to prevent IUU-associated seafood products from entering PNG ports, complementing FIA PNG's own traceability and transparency initiatives.

PARTICIPATION OF FIA PNG REPRESENTATIVES IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL BODIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Sylvester Pokajam, FIA PNG Chairman & President

- NFA - Board member (since 2023)
- PNG Biosecurity Authority - Chairman (since May 2025)
- WCPFC - Observer (since 2010)

Marcelo Hidalgo, FIA PNG COO

- AQUA-LIT - Strategic Advisor (since March 2020)
- FISH Standard for Crew - Oversight Committee member (since May 2021)
- GSSI - Steering Board member (since November 2021)
- MSC - Stakeholder Technical Advisory Committee member (since July 2022)
- GDST - Supervisory Board member (since October 2022)
- MarinTrust - Improvement Project Committee member (since February 2023)
- International Association of Fish Inspectors (IAFI), President elected (since 2025)
- WCPFC - Observer (since 2022)

Nialangis Posanau, FIA PNG Sustainability & MSC Coordinator

- Australia-Papua New Guinea Bilateral Security Agreement (Torres Strait Treaty) - Observer (since December 2023)
- WCPFC - Observer (since 2022)

BUSINESS CONDUCT, ANTI-CORRUPTION AND FAIRNESS

FIA PNG operates under a governance model that promotes fairness, transparency, and equal treatment of all members while maintaining full compliance with MSC group fishery requirements.

Membership criteria, vessel eligibility requirements, and decision-making processes are transparent and subject to annual review and audit. The association maintains:

- Open and non-discriminatory participation requirements for the MSC group certificate
- Standardised internal audit procedures
- Clearly defined corrective and preventive action processes
- Public disclosure of vessel lists, licences, and compliance records

Ethical conduct is a fundamental component of FIA PNG governance. The [Social Accountability and Human Rights Onboard Procedure](#) incorporates a zero-tolerance approach to corruption, bribery, fraud, and illegal fishing activities.

All participating vessels are required to:

- Hold valid licences and comply with national and international regulations
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date operational records
- Avoid any association with vessels listed for illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing activities
- Participate in internal, second-party, and independent third-party audit programmes

These requirements are reinforced through the FIA PNG RSP, Modern Slavery Statement, and the FISH Standard for Crew framework. Non-compliance may result in corrective actions, suspension, or removal from FIA PNG programmes and certification systems.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND CREW WELFARE

Since its inception in 2018, the due diligence approach for Social Responsibility at FIA PNG has been holistic, aiming to establish a multi-layered control system around crew welfare within the tuna fleet.

Initially, for crew working onboard the tuna fleet, FIA PNG developed its very own “self-sustaining system” that combines real-time digital traceability, multiple verification layers, and operational transparency extending from the vessel to the public domain, for example, sharing a vessel’s location. This system integrates government oversight, control mechanisms, technology applications, fleet self-monitoring, and FIA PNG office oversight.

The journey began conventionally enough. In 2014, consultancy Seafoodmatter developed an onboard Social Responsibility benchmarking tool to assess crew welfare, which FIA PNG used to initiate implementation in 2019 with the tuna fleet of its member Frabelle. This tool was

The framework incorporates the 53 articles of ILO Convention 188 (C188) and internationally recognised human rights principles, with a strong focus on the following areas:

Management systems overseeing working and living conditions

- Adequate sleeping quarters, sanitation facilities, and safe food storage systems
- Mandatory medical certificates for all crew members
- Appropriate accommodation, food, and welfare provisions
- Safe food handling practices and a reliable supply of potable water
- Adequate onboard water quality and supply systems
- Pre-embarkation briefings covering safety procedures, crew rights, grievance mechanisms, and vessel regulations
- Safety, health, and crew protection
- Compliance with PNG licensing requirements for seaworthiness and vessel inspections

subsequently refined and adapted to align with the robust and credible standards for social responsibility emerging at the time, including the [FISH Standard for Crew](#).

Consequently, the framework was anchored within FIA PNG’s RSP that was launched in 2018 and which established Social Responsibility and Crew Welfare as a core pillar alongside its three other pillars Sustainability, Traceability, and Marine Litter and Fishing Gear.

In 2019, the implementation of a comprehensive ISO management system established a solid foundation for policies, procedures, training programmes, and audit tools.

The starting point for the initial control framework was a multi-layer verification system involving internal audits conducted by member companies, second-party audits carried out by qualified FIA PNG auditors, and independent third-party certification audits. This robust approach creates overlapping layers of social responsibility that help identify and address issues that any single system might miss.

- Occupational health and safety protocols aligned with ILO C188 standards
- 100% observer coverage across the tuna fleet, providing an additional layer of independent oversight
- Mandatory emergency drills, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and documented safety procedures
- Accessible grievance mechanisms for all crew members
- Wi-Fi access to support communication with family and external contacts

Training and capacity building

- Crew welfare and FISH Standard requirements
- Human rights awareness and modern slavery prevention
- Use of grievance mechanisms and reporting channels
- Handling of ETP species and bycatch mitigation practices

FISH STANDARD FOR CREW

4

PRINCIPLES

28

CRITERIA

100+

INDICATORS

This standard contains core elements found in social standards (e.g. SMETA) but is tailored for, and contains additional elements, specific to fishing vessels that land-based programmes don't address. Based primarily on the ILO Work in Fishing Convention 188 (C188) and related guidance, the intent is a practical interpretation of C188.

1. Emphasize Socially Responsible Labor Practices and Ethical Behaviours

- 1.1 No Child Labor
- 1.2 No Forced Labor
- 1.3 Crew List
- 1.4 Respect the Dignity of Fishers
- 1.5 Protect Migrant Fishers
- 1.6 Fair Recruitment and Placement of Fishers
- 1.7 Provisions for Repatriation

2. Establish Fair Conditions of Service for All Fishers

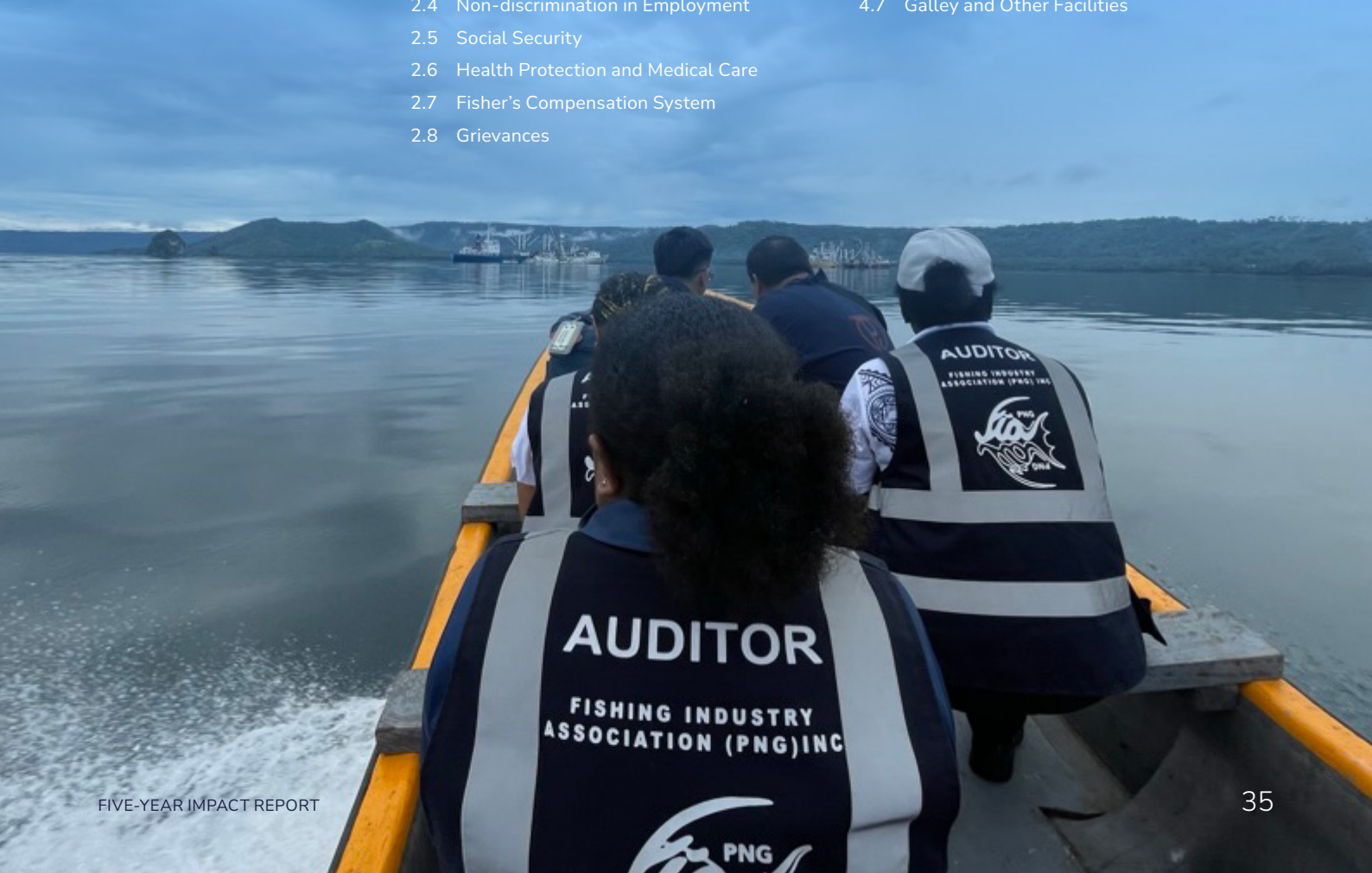
- 2.1 Fisher Work Agreement
- 2.2 Fair Remuneration
- 2.3 Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining
- 2.4 Non-discrimination in Employment
- 2.5 Social Security
- 2.6 Health Protection and Medical Care
- 2.7 Fisher's Compensation System
- 2.8 Grievances

3. Ensure the Safety and Health of All Fishers

- 3.1 Defined Roles and Accountability
- 3.2 Occupational Safety and Health
- 3.3 Safety Orientation and Training
- 3.4 Rest Periods and Hours of Work
- 3.5 Fitness Standards and Medical Exams
- 3.6 Medical Treatment

4. Provide Decent Accommodations, Water and Food

- 4.1 A Framework for Oversight
- 4.2 Accommodations are Appropriate
- 4.3 Spaces are Well Maintained
- 4.4 Spaces are Comfortable and Safe
- 4.5 Sanitary Facilities are Provided
- 4.6 Food and Potable Water
- 4.7 Galley and Other Facilities



TRANSPARENCY IN FISHING OPERATIONS TO ADVANCE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

In 2022, FIA PNG took the initiative to approach Global Fishing Watch (GFW) with the objective of making our Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) data publicly available to enhance transparency in fishing operations. GFW advised that such agreements could only be established directly with governments. FIA PNG subsequently worked with the Government of Papua New Guinea to facilitate the process, and in 2022, an agreement was formally signed between the PNG Government and GFW, with FIA PNG acting as a witness.

Following this agreement, the FIA PNG tuna fleet began sharing near-real-time vessel monitoring data with GFW, making vessel locations publicly visible. This transparency measure addresses one of the root causes of forced labour at sea: isolation. When vessel activities can be monitored publicly, the risk environment changes significantly.

Our vessel monitoring data demonstrates that fishing vessels regularly return to port, typically every 25 days. During these port calls, crew members have opportunities to interact with local authorities, access services, and maintain contact with their families and friends whenever communication facilities are available.

This regular port access provides an additional safeguard for crew welfare and reinforces transparency throughout our operations.

Continuous improvement and industry leadership

In 2023, the UK-based NGO [Human Rights at Sea \(HRAS\)](#) reviewed the FIA PNG due diligence model for Social Responsibility and Crew Welfare as part of its analysis of emerging best-practice frameworks within the fishing industry. While the FIA PNG model is not a standalone certification scheme, it prescribes, audits, and verifies best practices aboard fishing vessels through independent auditing and certification requirements. This recognition further strengthened FIA PNG's position as a leading model for social responsibility within the Pacific region and the global tuna sector.

Integrating social responsibility into operational traceability

In 2023, FIA PNG initiated the integration of Key Data Elements (KDEs) for social responsibility into iFIMS. The project involved more than six months of consultation with crew members, fishing company representatives, the NFA, and FIA PNG stakeholders to determine which social responsibility indicators could be effectively monitored and documented.

The resulting framework requires vessel-by-vessel and trip-by-trip documentation of worker protection measures. This represents a significant evolution in social responsibility management by moving beyond periodic audits toward continuous operational monitoring, similar to the way fisheries track safety, compliance, and catch data.

Because FIA PNG already relies on the iFIMS for fishing trip traceability, the system was enhanced to incorporate these social responsibility KDEs, creating a direct link between traceability and worker welfare.



FIA PNG monitors fishing trips and RSP compliance through the integrated Fisheries Information and Management System

Contributing to global standards

FIA PNG is proud that its recommendations and social responsibility KDE framework were considered by the Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST) during stakeholder consultations held in Barcelona, Singapore, South Africa, and Boston throughout 2024. Following extensive review and discussion, social responsibility data elements were incorporated into the GDST's extended scope for seafood traceability.

These KDEs continue to evolve as industry stakeholders refine approaches to measuring and demonstrating responsible labour practices throughout seafood supply chains.

Enhancing crew connectivity and welfare

A major milestone was achieved in 2023 when the FIA PNG tuna fleet invested in onboard Wi-Fi systems, providing crew members with daily internet access at no cost. This transition from limited and expensive communication services to fast, free connectivity has significantly improved crew welfare.

The ability for crew members to communicate regularly with their families and friends helps reduce isolation, strengthens mental wellbeing, and provides an additional safeguard against labour abuse by maintaining direct connections with the outside world.

Government oversight and operational transparency

The final component of the self-sustaining system is strong government oversight. The NFA maintains 100% observer coverage across the tuna fleet and operates continuous vessel monitoring systems on a 24-hour basis.

The PNG Government's 2022 agreement with GWF to share vessel monitoring data in near real time represented a significant commitment to transparency. From 2022 through 2024, the FIA PNG tuna fleet operated with a level of public visibility unmatched elsewhere in the global tuna industry, allowing vessel activity to be independently monitored by governments, buyers, civil society organisations, and the public.

A self-sustaining model for worker protection

The FIA PNG Modern Slavery Statement is founded on the principle that effective worker protection requires multiple, reinforcing mechanisms operating simultaneously. The model combines:

“No single element is sufficient. Together, they create what resilience theorists would call redundancy – when one system has gaps, others catch what falls through.”

FIA PNG Chief Operating Officer Marcelo Hidalgo

- Government oversight through 100% observer coverage and continuous vessel monitoring
- Industry self-regulation through internal audit protocols and member screening
- Independent verification through FISH Standard for Crew and MSC certification
- Digital traceability through the iFIMS system, providing near real-time trip-by-trip monitoring
- Operational transparency through public vessel tracking via GWF
- Documented procedures through social responsibility KDEs embedded within operational systems
- Robust management systems governing labour, welfare, and human rights requirements
- Onboard Wi-Fi access supporting crew wellbeing, communication, and psychological welfare
- Continuous stakeholder engagement involving government, industry, crew representatives, and civil society

This integrated approach demonstrates that effective prevention of forced labour and protection of crew welfare is achieved not through a single intervention, but through a resilient network of mutually reinforcing controls, transparency measures, and responsibility mechanisms.

THE FIA PNG FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN FISHERIES

What makes FIA PNG’s approach a model worthy of consideration is not a claim that all risks have been eliminated – such a claim would neither be realistic nor credible. Rather, the strength of the model lies in its ability to systematically reduce risk, increase transparency, and strengthen mechanisms for the detection and prevention of labour abuses. The FIA PNG framework demonstrates how social responsibility can be distributed across multiple stakeholders rather than concentrated within a single organisation. It also shows how protection mechanisms can evolve and strengthen over time through continuous improvement, stakeholder engagement, technological innovation, and independent verification.

Based on these elements, FIA PNG’s integrated approach provides a practical reference point for how social responsibility can move beyond policy commitments and become embedded within day-to-day fishing operations. The combination of public vessel tracking, integrated data systems, multiple layers of auditing, independent certification, and continuous government oversight represents a comprehensive management framework rather than a single intervention.

Independent research and knowledge sharing

Between 2024 and 2025, FIA PNG shared the findings of second-party and third-party audit non-conformities with the [Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security \(ANCORS\)](#) at the University of Wollongong. The objective was to support an independent scientific assessment of social responsibility and crew welfare risks within the tuna purse seine sector and to better understand areas requiring improvement.

This collaboration resulted in the publication of the [first publicly available white paper](#) analysing the practical implementation, monitoring, and reporting of ILO Convention 188 and human rights protections onboard fishing vessels. The publication contributed to a broader understanding of both the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing international labour standards within industrial fishing operations.

Strengthening social responsibility through certification reform

A significant strategic decision was taken in 2025. FIA PNG recognised that the existing centralised group certification model would face increasing challenges as additional fishing fleets entered the second-party and third-party audit programmes. To maintain the integrity of oversight, strengthen social responsibility, and reduce the risk of losing effective control of the group certification process, FIA PNG decided to transition from a single FIA PNG group certification model to individual fleet-level FISH certifications.

Third-party audit results conducted during 2025 demonstrated strong performance across participating fleets, with audit findings limited to minor non-conformities that were addressed through corrective action processes.



Frabelle fishing crew

4

Standards for
Social Accountability that
FIA PNG adheres to:

ILO C188, SA8000,
FISH Standard,
MSC CoC



RD tuna group personnel after a FIA PNG workshop in 2025

Building capacity within the tuna fleet

Today, FIA PNG member fleets have significantly strengthened their internal auditing capabilities and are able to increase monitoring and sampling activities throughout their operations. This enhanced ownership of social responsibility performance ensures that each fleet is directly responsible for achieving and maintaining FISH certification requirements.

To support this transition, FIA PNG's COO continues to serve as Crew Welfare Advisor to participating companies, providing technical guidance and support throughout the certification process. FIA PNG anticipates that all participating fleets will achieve individual FISH Standard for Crew certification by the second quarter of 2026.

Lessons learned from six years of implementation

The journey from the initial assessments conducted in 2019 to the integrated management systems operating in 2025 demonstrates that transformation in social responsibility requires long-term commitment. Progress is measured in years rather than months and depends upon effective collaboration between government authorities, industry participants, certification bodies, technology providers, researchers, and crew members themselves.

Replicating the Social Responsibility framework beyond the tuna fishery

The FIA PNG Social Responsibility framework has evolved into a proven operational model that can be adapted to other fisheries and workforce environments. Building on the lessons learned from the tuna sector, FIA PNG is now implementing the same principles within its second MSC certified fishery on rock lobster, where a Diver Welfare Plan has been developed in partnership with the NFA.

FIA PNG's strategic approach recognises that sustainable fisheries management and worker welfare are closely linked. For this reason, the policy is to first achieve MSC certification and then undertake a comprehensive welfare assessment and implementation programme tailored to the specific fishery workforce.

This phased approach ensures that environmental sustainability and social responsibility develop together, creating a stronger and more resilient fishery management model.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ACHIEVEMENTS 2019–2025

Over the past five years, FIA PNG has progressively strengthened its Social Responsibility framework through auditing, training, certification, and continuous improvement initiatives.

Audit and verification coverage

100% Of the FIA PNG tuna fleet has been subject to internal audits conducted by member fishing companies

60% Of the FIA PNG tuna fleet underwent second-party social responsibility audits conducted by FIA PNG-qualified auditors

40% Of the FIA PNG tuna fleet successfully completed independent third-party certification audits

1,484 Crew members directly covered and impacted

Capacity building and professional development

ISO 19011:2018 Auditing and ILO Convention 188 Implementation

4 Workshops delivered

128 FIA PNG internal auditors trained

ILO Convention 188 – International Labour Standards

4 FIA PNG internal auditors successfully completed the International Training Centre (ITC) of the ILO programme on the Inspection of Labour Conditions on Fishing Vessels

FIA PNG Board meeting, Manila - Philippines, 2022



The FIA PNG experience demonstrates that effective social responsibility is built through continuous investment in transparency, oversight, and worker welfare. As the model expands to additional fisheries, FIA PNG remains committed to strengthening protections for fishers through continuous improvement and responsibility.

FISH Standard for Crew

3

Workshops on standard introduction delivered and 42 participants trained

20

Participants trained in practical implementation of the standard and compliance requirements



FIA PNG social auditors Alice Posanau and Stephanie Pokajam onboard a TPJ fishing vessel, 2025



RSP training in General Santos, Philippines - December 2025

Responsible Sourcing Policy and Crew Welfare



128 Participants trained

SA8000 Social Accountability Standard

16 Staff members trained in internationally recognised social accountability management systems

AVAILABLE RESOURCES:

FIA PNG Social Responsibility

- FIA-PNG RSP MANUAL V7.0 https://www.fia-png.com/_files/ugd/8d5db0_b7b57f1d1b8b4a52a6ed4cb-fbb9cdcbc.pdf
- Social Responsibility and Human Rights onboard https://www.fia-png.com/_files/ugd/872bdb_1da3c17d41ff40ac870b2109c4013588.pdf
- FIA-PNG RSP Internal Audit Procedure V2.0 https://www.fia-png.com/_files/ugd/8d5db0_47b-888099fa9412b8131f5b78ecb7b5f.pdf
- FIA PNG Modern Slavery V2.0 https://www.fia-png.com/_files/ugd/8d5db0_43896fb1f22543999794f6f-d9244298c.pdf
- Social Accountability Auditors Competence V2.0 https://www.fia-png.com/_files/ugd/8d5db0_43ba0be-2344d4ed8be18e7915d1eea12.pdf
- Grievance Mechanism Procedure V1.0 FIA PNG https://www.fia-png.com/_files/ugd/8d5db0_5f07aeaf73d94989931d62c96a0bf71d.pdf
- Decent Working and Living Conditions https://www.fia-png.com/_files/ugd/8d5db0_46cd-40d9ce934c2bb9dd1a495241890c.pdf
- Aligning with Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) Principles https://www.fia-png.com/_files/ugd/8d5db0_2fd775e7869942419e46546e67508f97.pdf
- White Paper_ Ensuring Social Accountability in Tuna Fisheries_ Lessons Learned from the Pacific January 2025 https://www.fia-png.com/_files/ugd/872bd-b_9f430e33bd634b13ab2b592f078c4102.pdf
- Key Data Elements on Traceability - Social Responsibility and Crew Welfare on Board https://www.fia-png.com/_files/ugd/872bdb_9351b2cdd19140aba948fb-daf403ce19.pdf

LOCAL COMMUNITY AND LOCAL EMPLOYMENT



Tuna fishery

FIA PNG's tuna vessels operate exclusively offshore and therefore have minimal direct interaction with Indigenous land, communities, or cultural sites. The association's impact on Indigenous rights is consequently assessed as low. Fishing operations are supported through landing and processing facilities located in Wewak, Lae, Madang, and Rabaul (transhipment).

While the tuna fishery has limited direct interaction with Indigenous communities at sea, it generates substantial economic benefits on land. The six tuna processing facilities operating at full capacity in PNG employ more than 15,000 workers directly, approximately 80% of them being female. In many households, these positions provide a primary source of family income.

In addition to direct employment, the tuna industry supports an estimated 1,500 to 2,250 indirect jobs across logistics and transport services, shipping operations, harbor activities, cold-chain management, packaging production, plant maintenance, and local catering services.

At sea, FIA PNG member vessels comply with PNG fishing license requirements by employing a minimum of three local crew members per vessel. Across the fleet, this represents 159 local crew members directly employed on board fishing vessels.



Lobster fishery

The lobster fishery is a small-scale fishery (SSF) that provides direct employment opportunities for local coastal communities. The fishery currently supports 49 local divers and 49 local skippers operating at sea. Two seafood processing facilities located on Daru Island process fresh and frozen lobster, mud crab, reef fish, and banana prawn. Together, these facilities employ approximately 30 workers, of whom 90% are women, providing an important source of income.



Mud crab and banana prawn fisheries

The mud crab and banana prawn fisheries are currently undergoing MSC assessment. FIA PNG's current priority is achieving compliance with the MSC Fishery Standard and strengthening fishery traceability systems. Following MSC certification, FIA PNG intends to apply the same worker welfare and social responsibility framework successfully implemented within the tuna fishery.



Community engagement, social initiatives and respect for indigenous rights

Beyond direct employment, FIA PNG member companies support local communities through worker welfare and community programmes, including employee transport, meal services, water infrastructure projects, environmental education, and beach clean-up campaigns. In one recent initiative, teams from Frabelle, Majestic, and Nambawan collected 1,260 kilograms of plastic and waste from coastal areas in just two hours, helping promote environmental awareness and stewardship.

FIA PNG respects national legislation relating to Indigenous rights and community engagement and works closely with the NFA, provincial and coastal authorities, Torres Strait co-management partners, and local communities involved in fisheries activities.

Through these partnerships, FIA PNG aims to support sustainable fisheries, local livelihoods, and community wellbeing.

MARKET ENGAGEMENT, COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS

The growing level of market engagement, improved communication, and increased sustainability awareness within the global tuna industry reflect a stronger commitment to responsible sourcing and ethical business practices, consistent with the principles of the FIA PNG RSP.

Over the past five years, FIA PNG has established itself as a recognised industry reference for bilateral, domestic, and locally based fishing fleets, as well as associated traders, processors, and marketers. The organisation’s work has also gained recognition across the Pacific region and within global tuna markets.

Maintaining this level of performance has required FIA PNG to build a competent and professional team with the qualifications, technical expertise, and industry experience necessary to implement the RSP. Continuous monitoring of global market developments, sustainability trends, and stakeholder expectations enables FIA PNG to adapt its approach and communicate progress transparently on an annual basis.

The FIA PNG team is supported by a Technical Working Group that includes representatives from member companies who meet regularly to review RSP implementation, discuss emerging issues, and identify opportunities for improvement. These discussions form the foundation of FIA PNG’s outreach, stakeholder engagement, and communication strategy.

As consumers become increasingly aware of the environmental and social impacts of their purchasing decisions, FIA PNG members are placing greater emphasis on transparent communication, stakeholder and consumer engagement, and raising awareness of sustainability issues throughout the seafood value chain.

Within this framework, FIA PNG members not only respond to growing consumer demand for responsibly sourced seafood products but also contribute to positive change across the industry by protecting marine ecosystems, safeguarding human and labour rights at sea, supporting fishing communities, and reducing the environmental footprint and impact throughout their operations.

The RSP has proven to be an effective framework for driving continuous improvement and contributes to the long-term resilience and sustainability of fisheries resources and ocean ecosystems.

As such, the RSP has also created opportunities for FIA PNG to share its journey, challenges, lessons learned, and achievements at national, regional, and international seafood conferences, workshops, and industry events. This has enabled FIA PNG to showcase its sustainability initiatives while contributing to broader discussions on responsible fisheries management. Therefore, the RSP not only provides assurance to seafood buyers regarding accountability, transparency, and ethical business practices but also strengthens trust and protects brand reputation.

The NFA has played a critical role throughout this journey by supporting initiatives that promote sustainable fisheries management, responsible sourcing, seafood traceability, and market confidence in PNG’s fisheries sector.

FIA PNG annual Board meeting, Manila - Philippines, November 2025



Representatives of the University of Queensland, GDST CEO, GFW, and FIA PNG meeting, Nadi - Fiji, October 2025



FIVE YEARS OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Over the past five years, FIA PNG representatives have participated in numerous stakeholder meetings, conferences, workshops, technical committees, and international events to share experiences, contribute to policy discussions, and promote responsible fisheries management.



21 COUNTRIES



GLOSSARY

ALDFG	Abandoned, Lost or otherwise Discarded Fishing Gear	HRAS	Human Rights at Sea
ANCORS	Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security	ILO	International Labor Organization
BFAR	Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources	IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing
CAB	Conformity Assessment Body	KDEs	Key Data Elements
CAP	Client Action Plan	KPI	Key Performance Indicator
CASS	Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions	LBFV	Locally Based Foreign Vessels
CDS	Catch Documentation Scheme	MAP	Marine Protected Area
CoC	Chain of Custody	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
EEZ	Economic Exclusive Zone	MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
EJF	Environmental Justice Foundation	MT	Metric tonnes
ETP	Endangered, threatened and protected species	NFA	National Fisheries Authority
FAD	Fish Aggregating Device	PNA	Parties to the Nauru Agreement
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	PNG	Papua New Guinea
FFA	Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency	RFVS	Responsible Fishing Vessel Standard
FIA	Fishing Industry Association	RSP	Responsible Sourcing Policy
FIMS	Integrated Fishery Industry Management System	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
IAFI	International Association of Fish Inspectors	SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
iFIMS	integrated Fisheries Information and Management System	SSF	Small-scale fisheries
FISH	Fairness, Integrity, Safety, and Health Standard	SUP	Single-use plastic
GDST	Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability	TSPZ	Torres Strait Protected Zone
GGGI	Global Ghost Gear Initiative	UoA	Unit of Assessment
GFW	Global Fishing Watch	VMS	Vessel Monitoring System
GSSI	Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative	WCPO	Western Central Pacific Ocean
GTA	Global Tuna Alliance	WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
HCR	Harvest Control Rule		

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