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The management of Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) and their systemic loss and abandonment

Jamie Davies

Manager, By-catch and Ecosystem Management
Integrated Initiative



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Who we are:

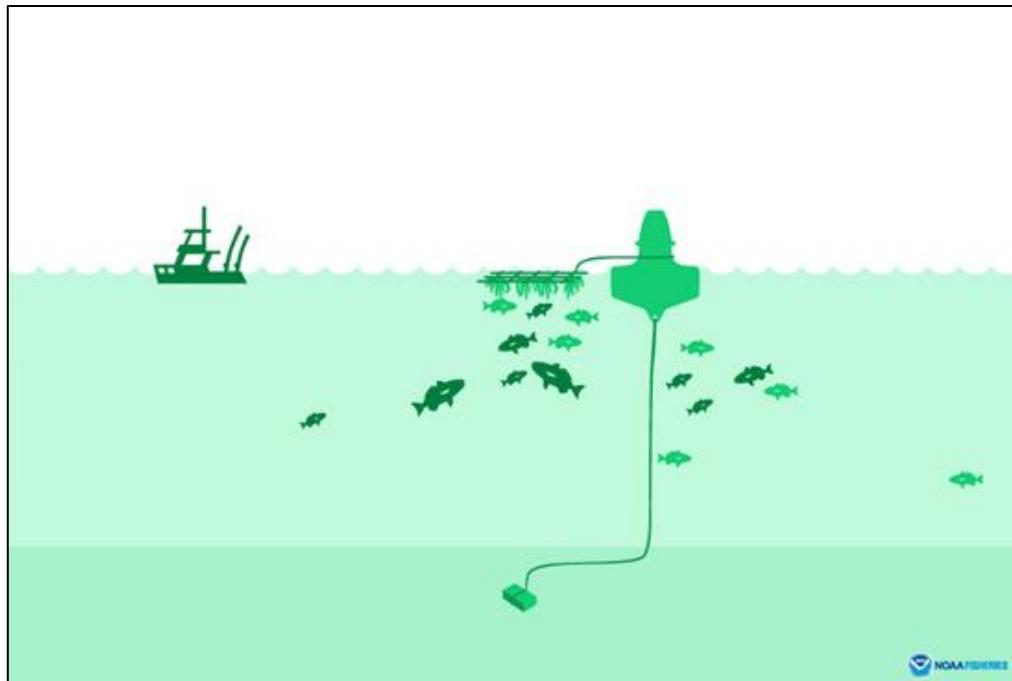
- **Mandate:** to promote cooperation in the Pacific region and provide assistance in order to protect and improve its environment and to ensure sustainable development for present and future generations.
- **Vision:** “A resilient Pacific environment, sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures”.
- **Members:** SPREP has 21 Pacific island member countries and territories and five metropolitan countries

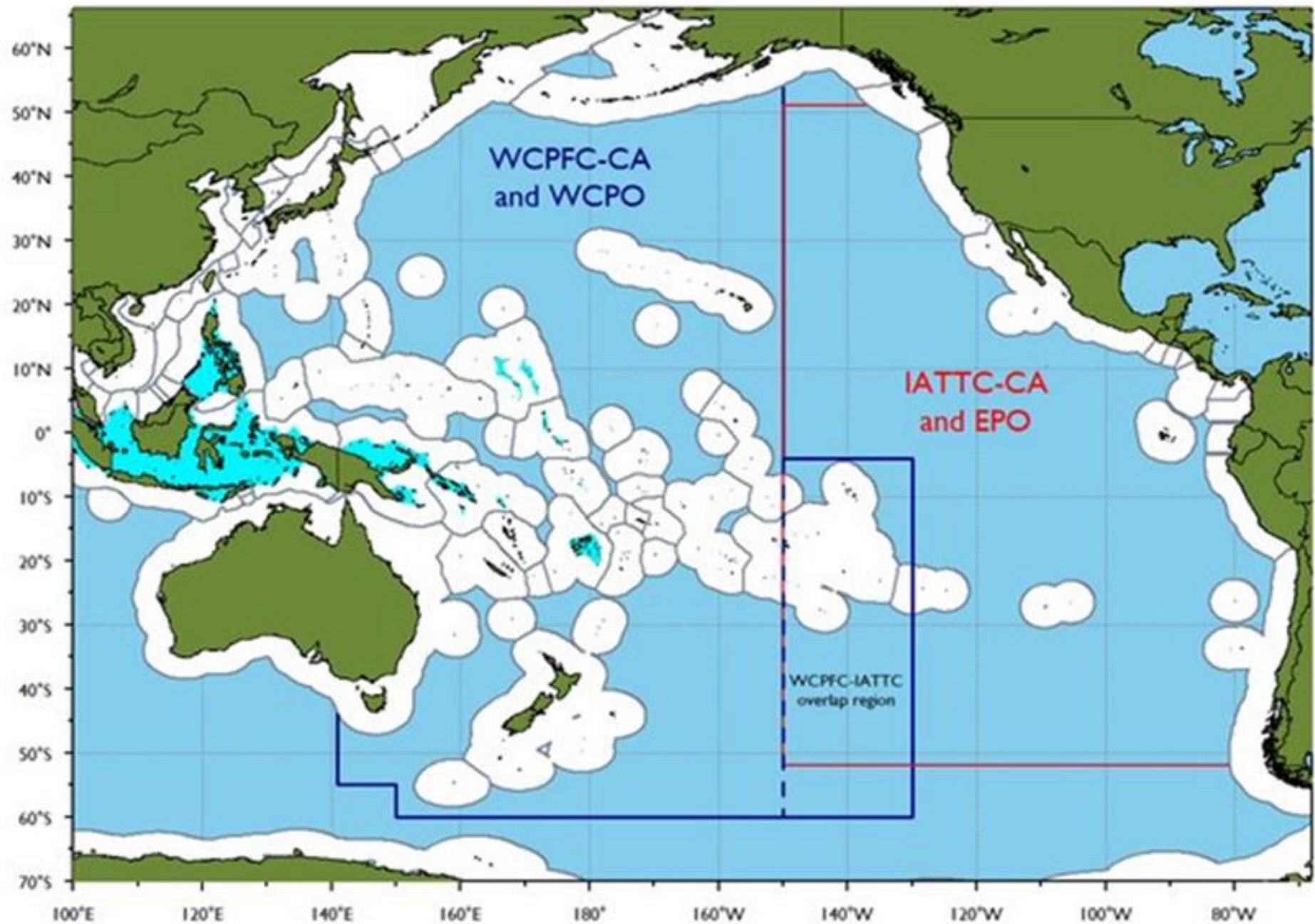


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- Drifting FADs are rafts with hanging rope used by the industrial purse seine tuna fleet to attract schools of tuna
- They have satellite buoys that enable vessels to track & estimate the of number of tuna aggregated under each one.







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- Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC): 270 registered vessels, each allowed to deploy 500 FADs at one time (135,000)
- In the Western & Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC): 269 vessels registered, each allowed to deploy 350 FADs (94,150)
- Potential for 230,000 'active' FADs to be deployed at any one time
- It is estimated that >42% of dFADs are lost at sea (i.e. drift outside the fishing grounds/or not actively fished)
- Only 9.4% of those lost are retrieved



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What's the problem?



- Hazards to vessel navigation
- Marine animal entanglement and smothering
- Loss of public amenity (tourism) & public goods (i.e. damage to reefs)
- Potential vehicle for aquatic invasive species transport
- Transport and release of plastics/ microplastics



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Legal & Policy framework

- International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) & WCPFC Conservation Management Measure
- In 2000 SPREP requested that fisheries observers collect information on marine pollution as a tool to monitor fishing vessel violations under MARPOL Annex I & V. Resulted in:
 - the creation of the SPC/FFA Regional Observer Pollution Report, Form GEN-6; and
 - CMM 2017-04 05 to **encourage** fishing vessels to retrieve abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear. Where retrieval is not possible or does not occur, ...**encourage** fishing vessels to report the latitude, longitude, type, size and age of abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear.



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What are the solutions?

- Use of bio-degradable FADs
- Adoption of ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management = reduction of FADs allowed to be used by each purse seine vessel in WCPFC & IATTC waters.
- Tuna industry to improve their management & retrieval of deployed FADs: Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Criteria
- Consumer driven action: Marine Stewardship Council certified fisheries to address FAD (& other abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear).
- Improve port state facilities for rubbish disposal
- Strengthening of WCPFC CMM requirements



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Thank you

