

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU
GOVERNMENT DE LA REPUBLIQUE DE VANUATU



FISHERIES DEPARTMENT
SERVICE DES PECHES

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Annual Report to the SPRFMO Science Working Group

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1. Description of Fishery

Vanuatu flagged vessels commenced operations in the jack mackerel fishery in 2003. The number of vessels operating each year is shown in Table 1. The vessels are all 'sister ships' of 105 metres in length with a GRT of 7,805.

Table 1: Number of Vanuatu vessels operating in the Pacific jack mackerel fishery by year

Year	Number of vessels
2003	4
2004	4
2005	4
2006	6
2007	4
2008	4
2009	4
2010	4
2011	2

The vessels have a frozen storage capacity of around 3,500 tonnes of product in cartons. The vessels are periodically offloaded to reefer vessels that transport their catch to West African markets. The fishing vessels receive provisions, packaging, fuel and spare parts from the reefer vessels and are, as a result, able to stay on the fishing grounds for the entire season.

2. Catches and Fishing Effort

Table 2: Average Catch Rates

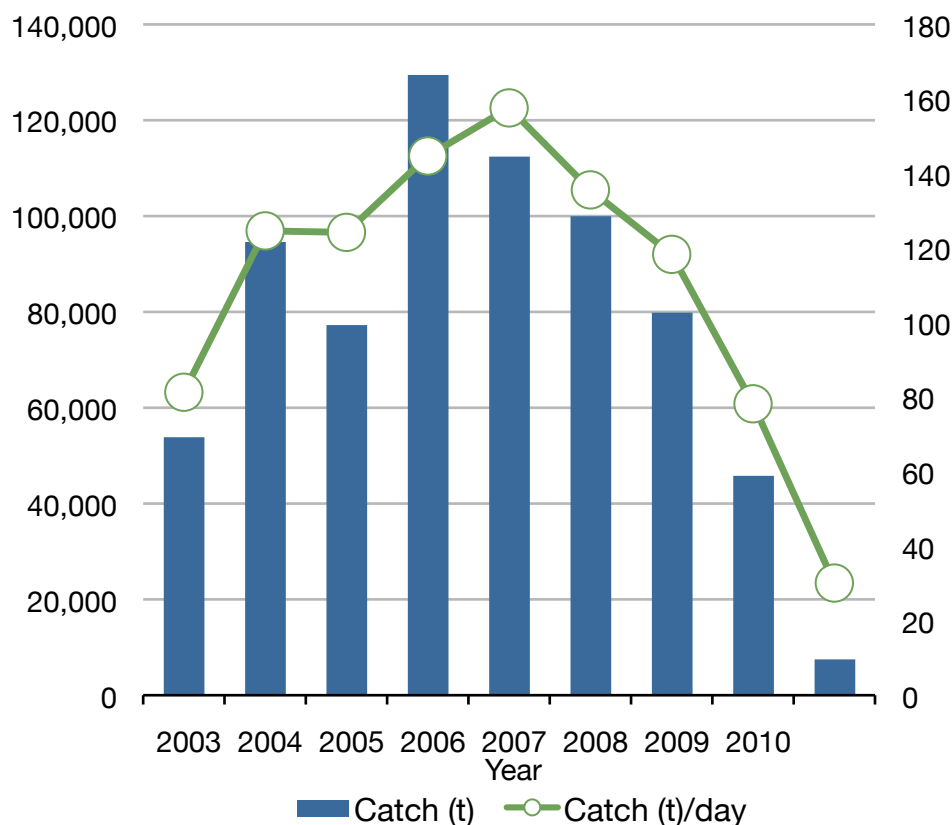
Year	Fishing days ¹	'Other' days ²	Catch (t) ³	Catch (t)/fishing day
2003	664	223	53,959	81.3
2004	760	415	94,685	124.6
2005	623	147	77,356	124.2
2006	895	267	129,535	144.7
2007	714	254	112,501	157.6
2008	738	223	100,066	135.6
2009	676	136	79,942	118.3
2010	587	85	45,908	78.2
2011 ⁴	253	38	7,617	30.1

1. 'Fishing days' includes days spent searching and fishing.

2. 'Other days' includes days spent transshipping, transiting to and from the fishery, bunkering and in port.
3. Catches of jack mackerel only.
4. Preliminary data.

Because of the poor fishing conditions in 2010, only two vessels entered the fishery in 2011. The two vessels fished from late April until early September and experienced a further deterioration in catch rates compared to 2010.

Figure 1: Total jack mackerel catches and catch rates, 2003 -2011

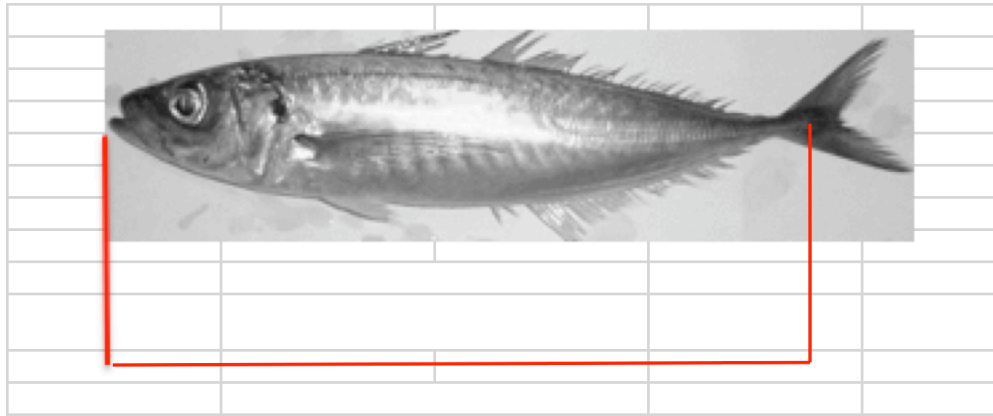


3. Fisheries data collection and research activities

Three types of data are available from the fishery; haul by haul logsheet data filled in by the captains; VMS data on vessel positions; and size composition of the jack mackerel catches which is collected by each vessel's processing factory manager.

The size composition data is collected for commercial purposes, with the fish size categories and method of fish measurement reflecting sales and marketing requirements rather than scientific needs. However as the data have been collected consistently since 2003, trends in catches of different size classes of fish are clearly evident.

The commercial measurement of the jack mackerel is shown in the photo below.

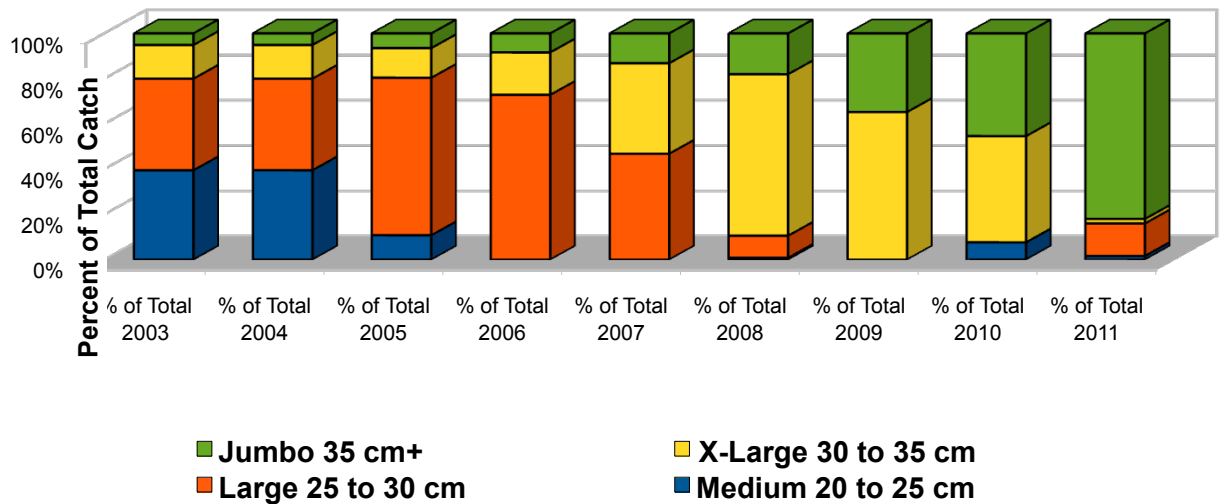


The jack mackerel are sorted and recorded in four length classes:

Medium (M)	20-25cm
Large (L)	25-30cm
Extra large (XL)	30-35cm
Jumbo (J)	+35cm

The figure below illustrates the continued increase in average size of the jack mackerel in the catch. In 2011 fish of length greater than 35cm dominated catches.

Fish Size 2003 - 2011



By-catches were comprised of chub mackerel. Catches of chub mackerel totalled 24 tonnes in 2011.

Observer data were collected for the 2011 season and will be reported in the 2012 annual report.