PNA COVID-19 Purse Seine Dashboard

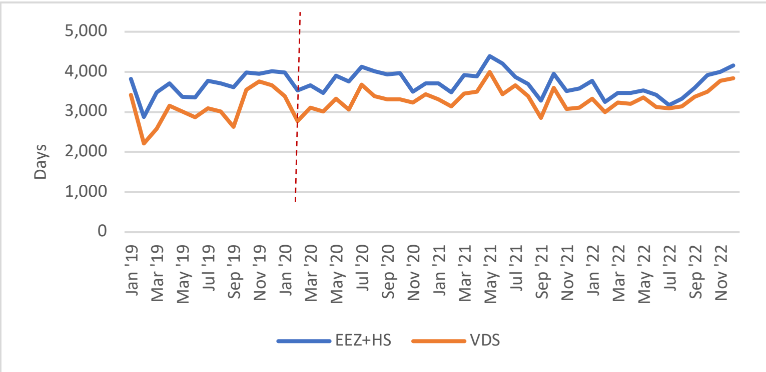
January 2023

Key trends:

- Preliminary figures indicate that overall purse seine fishing effort rose in December, with fishing intensity (fishing days/calendar day) increasing to the highest level in 2022. Note that December figures may be adjusted as NFDs are processed.
- Total purse seine catch (EEZs+HS) fell in Dec, down by around 14% on the November catch. Catch and effort remained concentrated in the west, with PNG and FSM collectively accounting for around 64% of total catch.
- Based on preliminary figures, fishing conditions deteriorated in Dec with overall catch rates down by 18%. Highest catch rates were in PNG and SB but as with catch rates in other EEZs were lower than in November.
- Reported transhipment volumes remained relatively stable in December, up by around 3% on the November figures. Reported volumes were highest in PNG and FSM. Note that transhipment volumes are not available for all vessels.
- Bangkok SKJ prices averaged $1,700 in December, similar to November prices, according to Thai Union figures. Singapore MGO price reduced to an average $949/mt in December. The differential between BKK SKJ price and Singapore MGO price rose, but remained below the 10-year average.
- Amongst PNA Parties, all countries (except Tokelau) have now experienced major COVID community transmission events at some stage during the pandemic, although new daily case numbers are now low in each country. Amongst key SE Asian processing countries, case numbers are at low levels relative to population size.

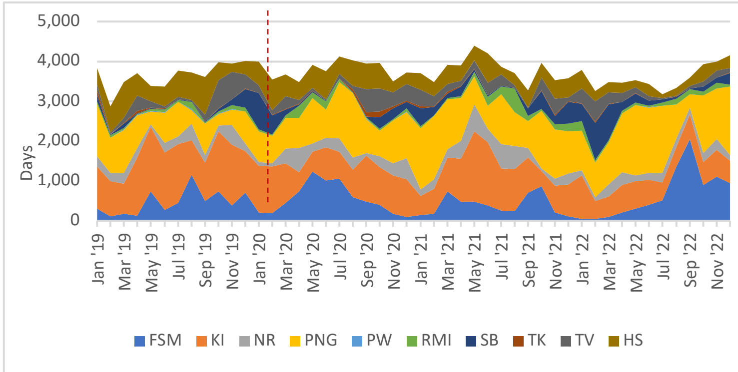
Fishing effort

Overall effort (PNA EEZs+HS)



- Overall fishing effort (EEZ+HS) rose slightly in Dec, up 4% on Nov (4,156 vs 4,001) but 16% higher than Dec 2021. Fishing intensity (fishing days/calendar day) marginally rose to a new peak in Dec, accounted for by the increase in HS activity that more than offset the declines in EEZs. VDS usage was at its peak (3,839) and was 10% above average for Dec during the 2015-21 period.

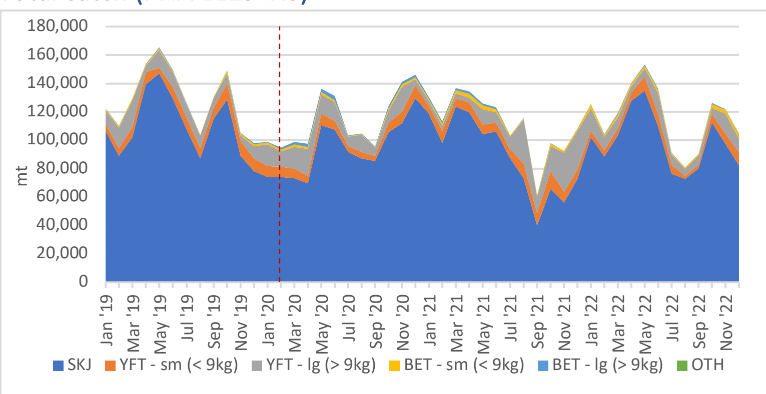
Distribution of effort (EEZs)



- Effort concentration remained in the West with highest in PNG (41%) and FSM, accounting for 64% of overall effort in Dec. Major shifts in effort saw PNG along with PW, SB and HS registering significant increases while FSM, KI, NR, RMI and TV registered declines, reversing the Nov trends.

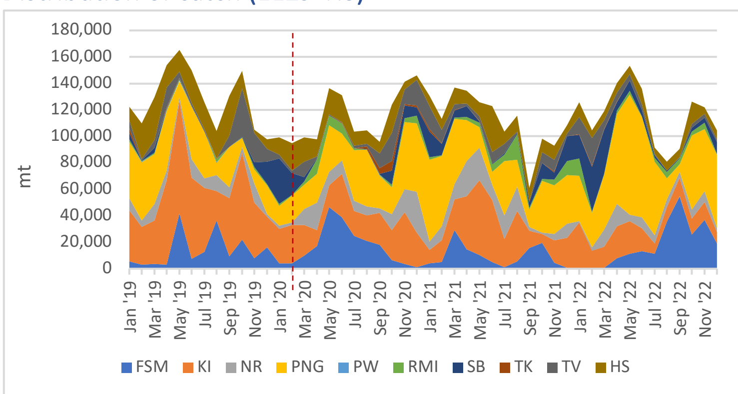
Catch

Total catch (PNA EEZs+HS)



- Total catch (EEZ+HS) declined 14% in Dec (104,502t vs 121,971t) driven by lower SKJ and yellowfin catches. This is despite the slight increase in total effort as overall catch rate declined noticeably across all EEZs except for HS. Total catch for Dec broadly compares with Dec '21 but 12% below average for the 2019-21 period.

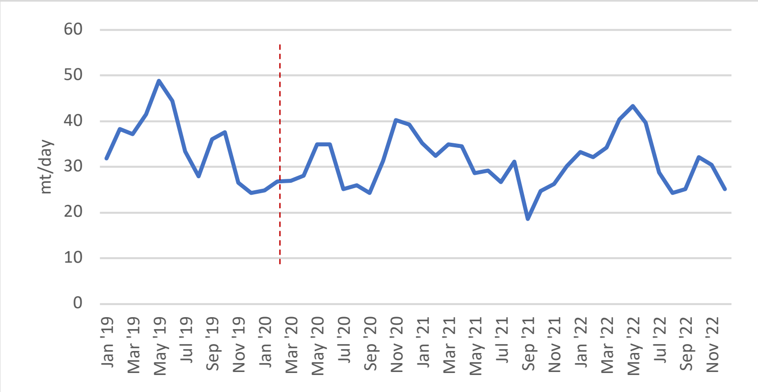
Distribution of catch (EEZs+HS)



- The distribution of catch amongst EEZs broadly reflected shifts in effort and the deterioration in catch rates across EEZs during the month. Catches in PNG, SB and HS registered significant increases while catches in FSM, KI, NR, RMI and TV all recorded decreases.

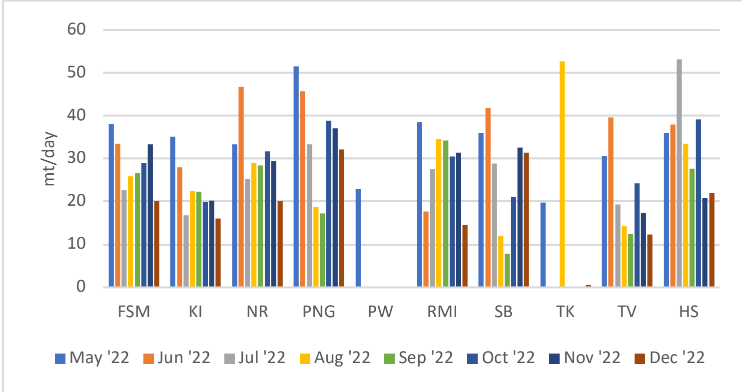
Catch rates

Overall (PNA EEZs+HS)



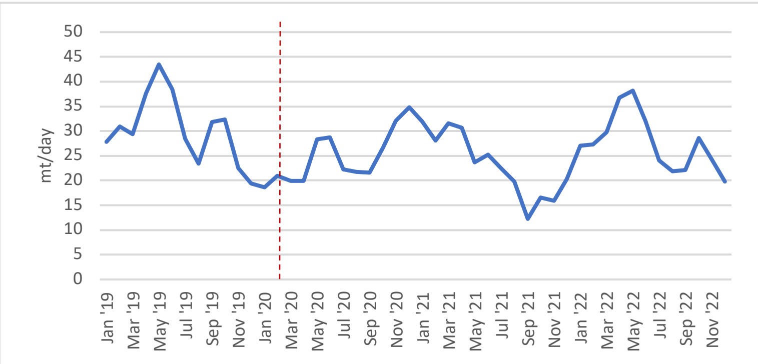
- Overall catch rate deteriorated by 18% in Dec compared to Nov (25.1t vs 30.5t), largely on account of the decline in SKJ catch rate. The Dec overall catch rate was also lower by the same margin against the Dec '21 catch rate and the 2019-2021 average (31.8t). Recent monthly catch rates are preliminary and may be adjusted as NFDs are processed and additional e-reporting is received.

Catch rate by zone (EEZs)



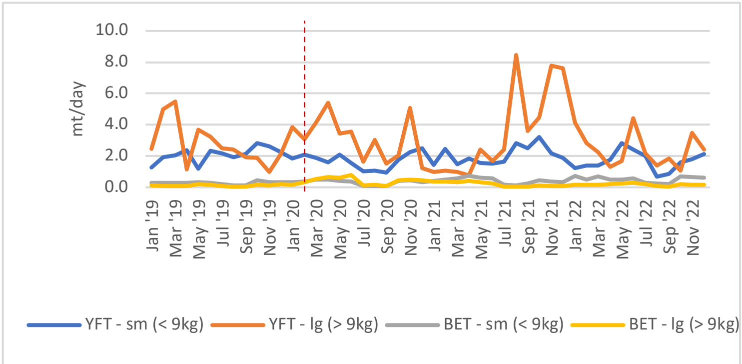
- Preliminary figures indicate that catch rates varied across the region, with rates highest in PNG and SB exceeding 30t/day for Dec. However, catch rates in all EEZs declined during the month with catch rates in FSM and NR down to around 20t/day and in other EEZs to around 15t/day or less.

Skipjack



- SKJ catch rate declined 19% to ~20t/day in Dec that follows from a decline of 15% in Nov. The Dec decline was the major contributor to the overall catch rate decline of 18% for the month. The Dec SKJ catch rate broadly reflects similar conditions to a year earlier with similar catch rate.

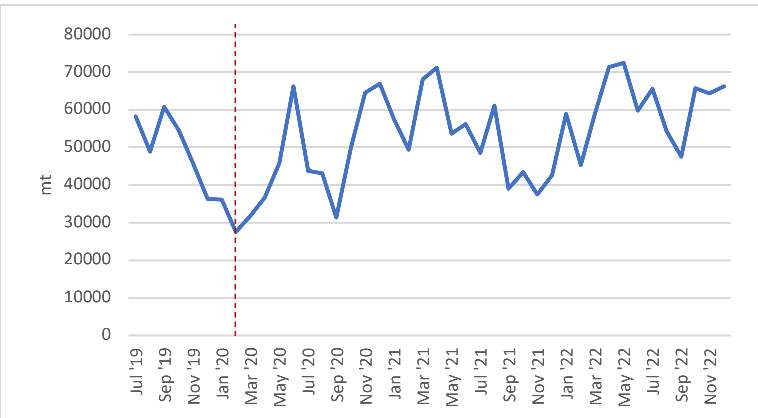
Other species



- Catch rates for other species showed a mix of performances with large YFT catch rate down 31% (as against a more than three-fold increase in Nov) while large BET showed a 14% increase (-24%). Catch rates for small YFT improved 18% (+15%) while small BET declined 4% (-8%) during the month.

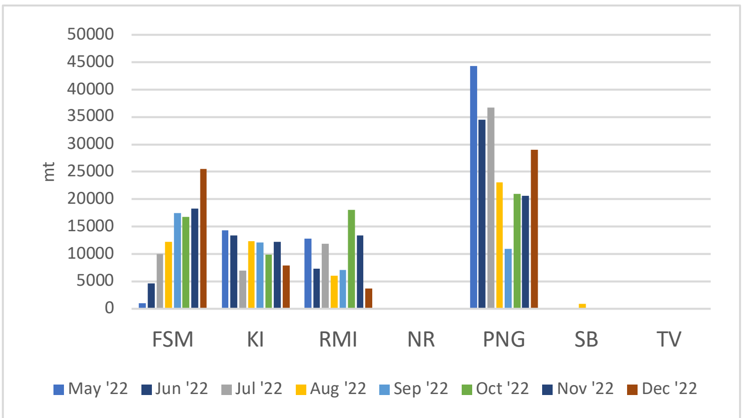
Reported Transhipment

Volume



- Reported transhipment volumes in PNA ports in Dec marginally rose 3% (to 66,183t) on Nov volumes. Note that transhipment volumes for some vessels are not available, so the figures reported here represent a sub-set of overall volumes.

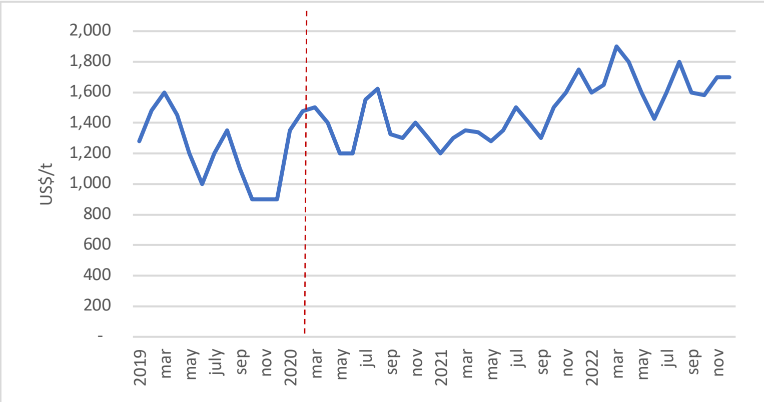
Location



- Reported transhipment volumes concentrated in the west in Dec, as in Nov, with highest volumes and significant increases in PNG and FSM where effort and catch concentration occurred. Transhipments in KI and RMI reduced substantially.

Prices

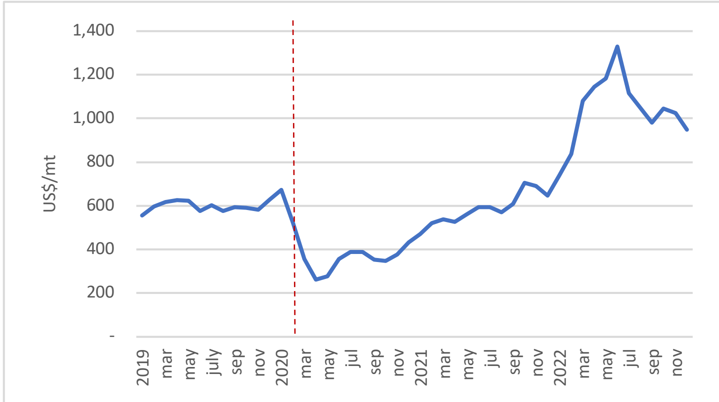
SKJ Price



https://investor.thaiunion.com/raw_material.html

- Bangkok SKJ prices as reported by Thai Union steadied at $1,700 in Dec, which is slightly below the Dec '21 price of $1,750 but higher than the preceding 12-month average of $1,667.

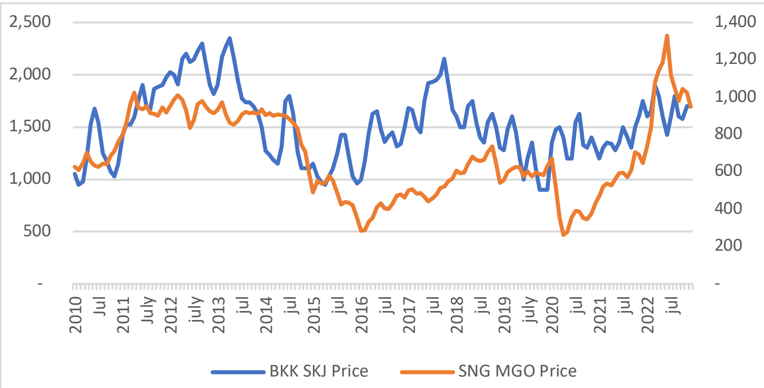
Fuel price



https://shipandbunker.com/prices/apac/sea/sg-sin-singapore#MGO

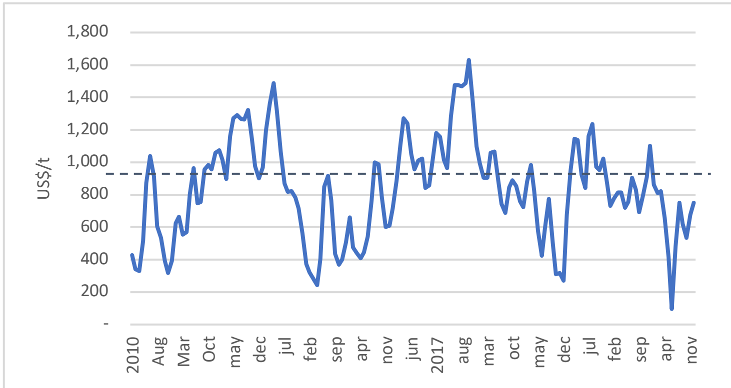
- Singapore MGO price declined further in Dec to $949/mt from US$1,025/mt in Nov. The downtrend has continued into mid-Jan with price at US$887/mt.

BKK SKJ Price vs Fuel price



- In Dec, the Singapore MGO price line and SKJ price converged further due to the fall in fuel price as BKK SKJ price remained stable.

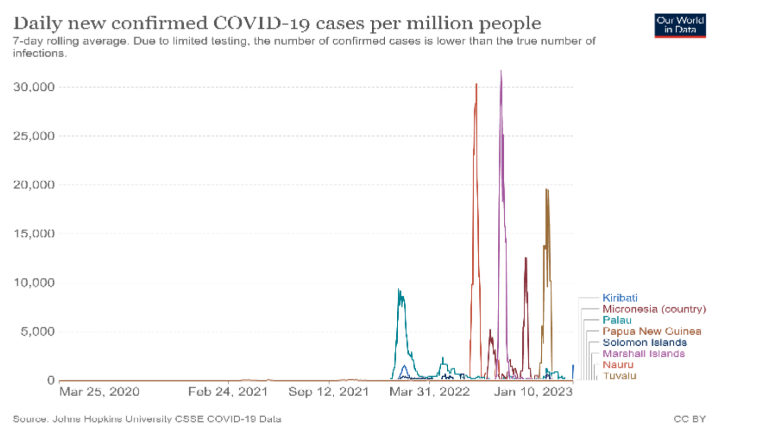
Price differential (BKK SKJ – Fuel)



- The differential between BKK SKJ price and Singapore MGO increased slightly in Dec to US$752, up from US$675 in Nov. The differential remains below the 10-year average of $885.

COVID-19 cases

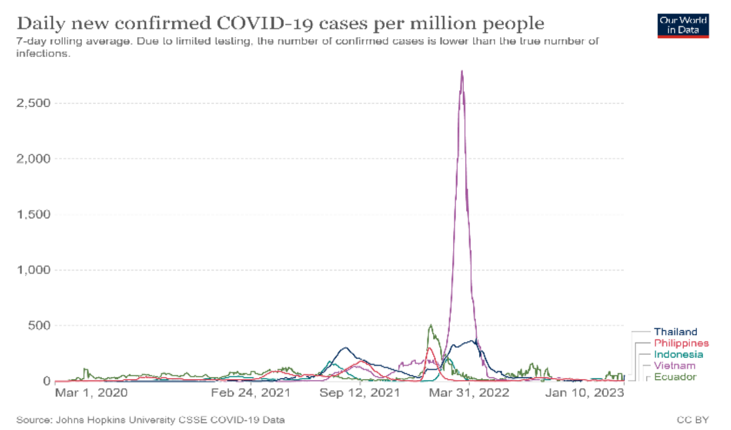
Daily confirmed cases – Pacific Island countries



https://ourworldindata.org/covid-cases

- Short, very sharp waves of community transmission experienced in PNA countries in the latter half of 2022 subsided in December, with new daily case numbers now at relatively low levels in each Party.

Daily confirmed cases – Processing countries

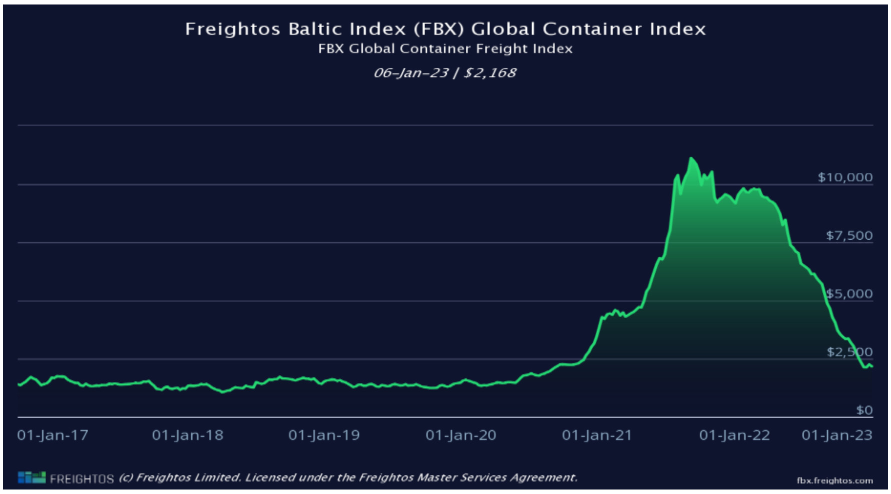


https://ourworldindata.org/covid-cases

- New daily case numbers across all main processing countries are now at low levels relative to population size.

Other issues:

- Amongst the PNA Parties, all (except Tokelau) have now experienced high levels of COVID community transmission at some point throughout the pandemic. New daily case numbers across all Parties have fallen to relatively low levels[1].
- SPC report that rates of vaccination in the Pacific are generally very high, with each of NR, PW, TV, TK and KI achieving >90% double dose vaccination rates amongst PNA Parties[2]. Vaccination rates in PNG remain very low.
- The FBX global container freight index for a 40ft container down trended to $2,246 by end Dec; currently sitting at $2,238 as at 13th Jan[3].



- The FAO Food Price Index declined further in Dec, ~2% and 1% lower than in Nov '22 and Dec '21 respectively, primarily driven by a steep drop in prices of vegetable oils along with some declines in cereal and meat prices. For '22 as a whole prices were higher 14% relative to '21 and at record levels[4].

Notes:

- Data on catch, effort, catch rates and transhipment is based on electronic reporting through iFIMS as at 16th January, 2023. Some data may change as more information is added over time. Figures for December 2022 should be considered preliminary.
- The EEZs+HS effort figures in the fishing effort graph do not include a VDS vessel size adjustment factor. The actual VDS usage figures are adjusted for vessel size. HS days may include some non-fishing time. HS effort figures are those for the eastern high seas and HSPs 4 and 5.
- A dashed-red line has been on many graphs at February 2020 to provide an indication of the time in which COVID-related restrictions were becoming more common globally and regionally.

[1] https://www.spc.int/updates/blog/2022/10/covid-19-pacific-community-updates#CurrentStatus
[2] https://www.spc.int/updates/blog/2022/06/covid-19-pacific-community-updates#CurrentStatus
[3] https://fbx.freightos.com/
[4] https://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/