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

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[4]	587	85	45,908	78.2

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

Figure 1: Total jack mackerel catches and catch rates, 2003 -2010

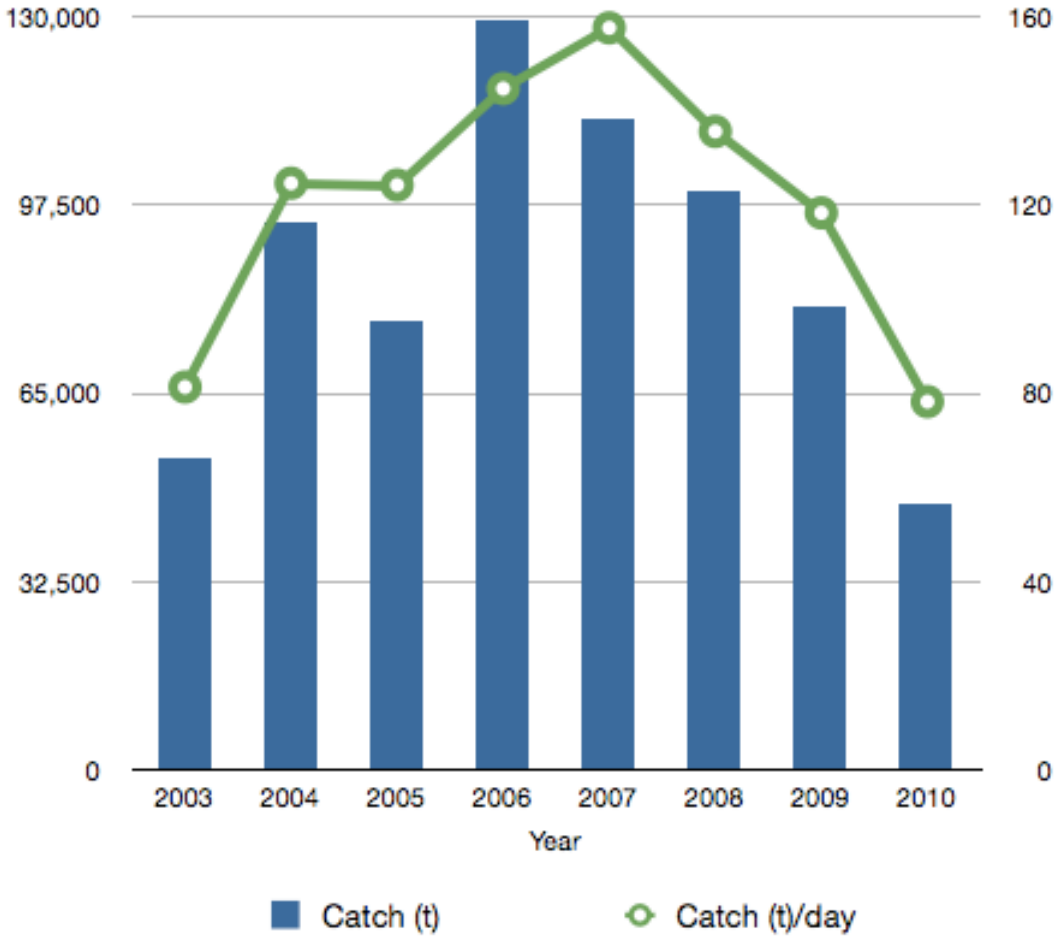


Figure 2: Detailed breakdown of days spent by the four Vanuatu vessels in the jack mackerel fishery in 2008 and 2010

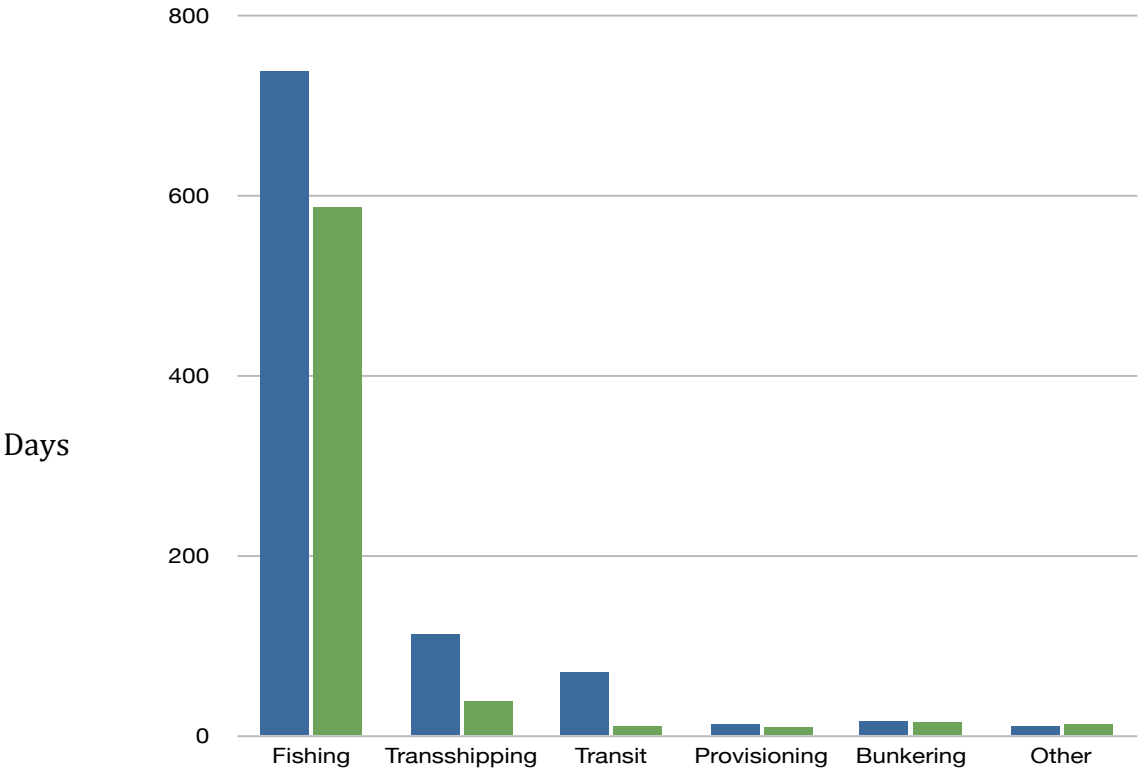


Figure 3: Average monthly catches per vessel 2004 - 2010

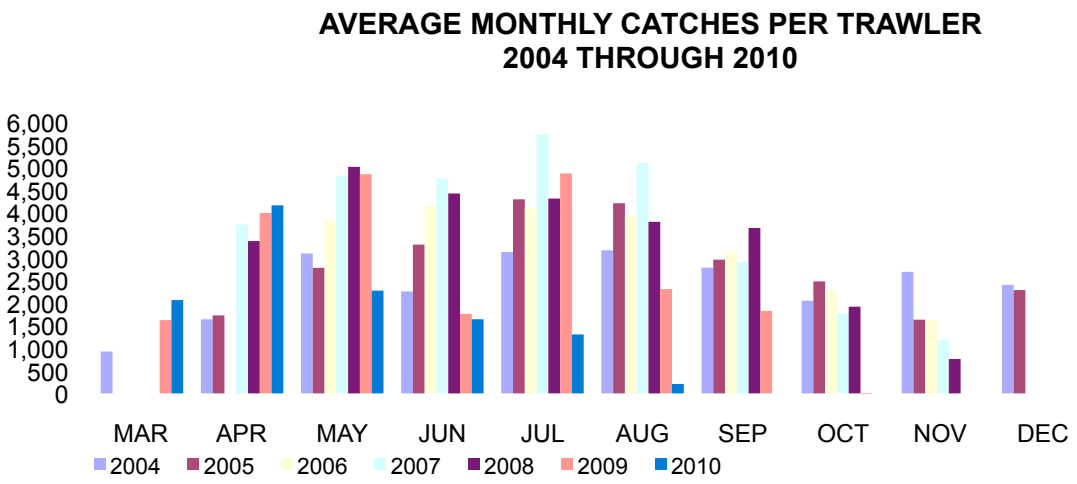
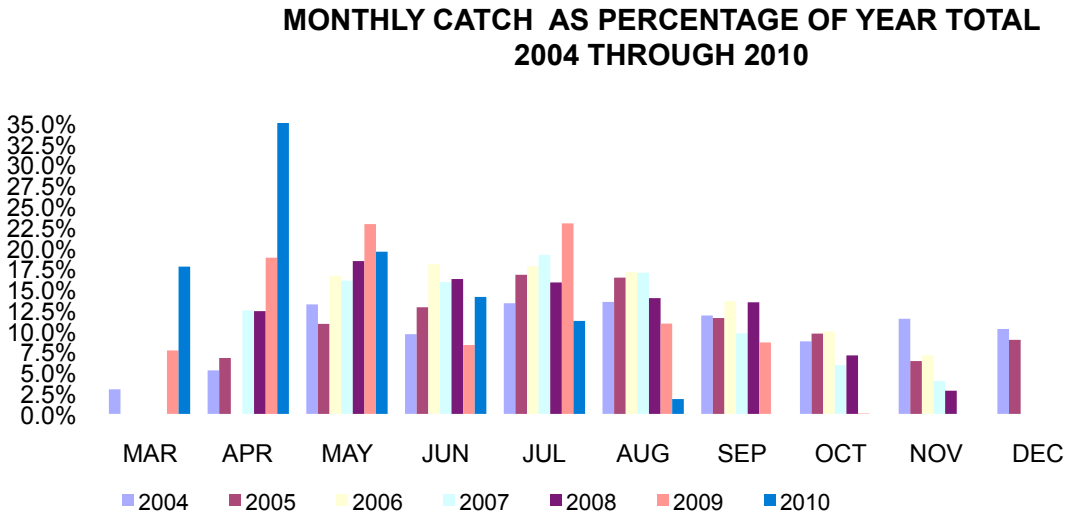


Figure 4: Average monthly catch as a percentage of annual total catch 2004-2010



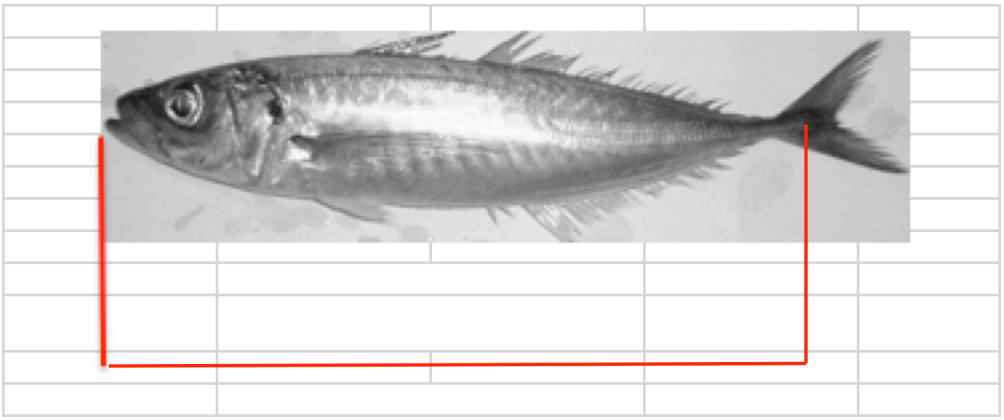
3. Fisheries data collection and research activities

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.

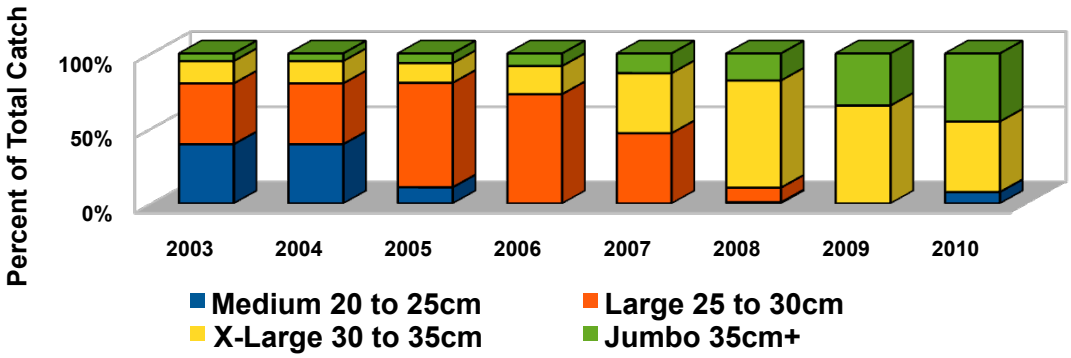
The commercial measurement of the jack mackerel is shown in the photo below.



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

Figure 5: Length Composition of Catches 2003 - 2010



In the 2010 season, smaller fish were again evident in the catch, comprising 7.6% of the total catch by weight.

By-catches were comprised solely of chub mackerel. Catches of chub mackerel totalled 4,901 t in 2009 and 676t in 2010.