



Key Traceability,  
Innovation Space, Halpern House,  
1 Hampshire Terrace,  
Portsmouth,  
PO1 2QF,  
United Kingdom.

Belize Fisheries Department  
P.O Box 148  
Princess Margaret Drive,  
Belize City,  
Belize

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Via email to [fisheries\\_department@fisheries.gov.bz](mailto:fisheries_department@fisheries.gov.bz) and [mg.cfu@ffsd.gov.bz](mailto:mg.cfu@ffsd.gov.bz)

**RE: Observer Data Request for Atlantic Ocean Tuna Longline (Starkist) Fishery Improvement Project Vessels**

Dear Belize Fisheries Department,

The submission of this letter is a formal request for data pertaining to vessels included in the Fishery Improvement (FIP) 'Atlantic Ocean Tuna Longline (Starkist)' The data request is made on behalf of all companies involved and signatories can be seen in the appendix.

Briefly, The fishery targets albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*), bigeye (*T. obesus*) and yellowfin (*T. albacares*) tunas. The pelagic longline vessels are flagged to Taiwan, St Vincent, Senegal, Panama and Belize and fish on the high seas (and occasionally in the national EEZs) in the Atlantic. The fishery is managed regionally by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) in the Atlantic Ocean.

This FIP aims to meet the rising global demand for tuna in a sustainable manner by assuring catches do not exceed sustainable levels, promoting the ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management and strengthening policy and governance systems in the region. The end goal is to achieve certification under the Marine Stewardship Council Fisheries Standard by 2025.

To find more information on the present FIP please view the FisheryProgress profile [here](#).

Currently to meet many of these aims, vessel catch, and operational data are required. Although the vessels within the FIP collect catch information, they are currently not sufficient in their scope and depth (species classifications, volumes etc.) to address many aims of the FIP - such as understanding the impacts of the fishery on non-target and endangered, threatened and protected (ETP) species. Once this is understood, the FIP can develop and implement appropriate management plans based on best available data. Therefore, the FIP requires data obtained through observer programmes to provide the scope and depth needed to address these aims.

As a Flag state of some of the FIPs vessels, we are writing to you to please help us with the acquiring of this data. The FIP has tried contacting ICCAT directly for this data however we have been requested to go through the Taiwanese Flag State to contact the ICCAT Secretariat to receive this data. If this is also not the appropriate channel to submit this request, it would be appreciated if you could direct us so we may follow the proper procedures.

**Data request**

In line with the Rules and Procedures for the Protection, Access to, and Dissemination of Data Compiled by the ICCAT (Annex 6, Adopted by the commission in 2010), on behalf of vessel owners, we please request aggregated observer data for years 2017 - 2019 for the longline vessels in this Atlantic Ocean Tuna Longline (Starkist) FIP (three years' worth of data). This data needs to be obtained by the submission of this request through the appropriate Chinese Authority.



This data will go towards helping to adopt an ecosystem-based approach to the FIP's management plans. Please see appendix 1 for vessel name, supplier, IMO, flag state, and appendix 2 for letters to boat owners and their signatures.

- Number of sets
- Fishing locations of sets
- Type of set (floating object or free school)
- Bycatch information, such as species, fate and condition if released
- FAD deployment information
- Estimate of weight (or number of individuals) caught of ETP species

If you require any further information that will help with the data request, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards,

Tom Evans – FIP Manager

Key Traceability Ltd



Skype/Mobile/Line: (+44) 7584659898

Website: [www.keytraceability.com](http://www.keytraceability.com)





**Appendix 1. Data request for vessels for years 2017 through to 2019 (three years):**

COMPANY	Vessel Name	IMO number	Flag



**Appendix 2: Signatories of the companies making data request**

**Name of Company:** G

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Authorised Company Representative:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Authorised Company Representative:** \_\_\_\_\_