ISSUE 28
APRIL 2026

DAN NOU KAZYE

The Seychelles Fisheries Authority Newsletter

TOP NEWS

- SFA Marks More Than 40 Years of Fisheries Science and Innovation
- FAD Watch Project Successfully Completes Third Mission
- Protecting the Future of Seychelles Fisheries Through Science

"Excellence in Sustainable Fisheries Management and Sector Development"

SFA Commemorates over four decades of Fisheries Science & Innovation

The Seychelles Fisheries Authority (SFA) celebrated over 40 years of dedicated service, innovation, and commitment to the sustainable development of the nation's fisheries sector with a Scientific Symposium held at the Savoy Resort & Spa.

Bringing together lecturers, students, entrepreneurs, stakeholders, and partners, the symposium created a dynamic platform for knowledge sharing and collaboration on the future of fisheries and marine science in Seychelles. This gathering reflects the SFA's enduring role in advancing research and fostering partnerships within the sector.

At the opening of the event, the European Ambassador, Mr. Oskar Benedikt, emphasized the importance of the milestone, highlighting four decades of research and commitment to ocean stewardship. He reaffirmed the EU's ongoing support for Seychelles in marine research and sustainable fisheries.

The CEO of SFA Dr. Jan Robinson, highlighted the symposium as both a celebration of achievements and a platform to tackle challenges like climate change and evolving markets. He encouraged participants to engage and collaborate to shape a sustainable future for the fisheries sector.

The morning's scientific session delivered a rich exchange of knowledge, with presentations addressing key areas shaping the future of Seychelles' fisheries. Topics included advancing the sustainable management of drifting Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) in the Indian Ocean, as well as findings from the Fishery Independent Survey of Spanner Crab (Ranina ranina), locally known as 'Krab Ziraf', on the Mahé Plateau (Zones 2 and 3).

Participants also gained insights into the sea cucumber fishery in Seychelles and were introduced to the FAO Weight of Evidence Framework, highlighting its application in strengthening fisheries decision-making at the national level.

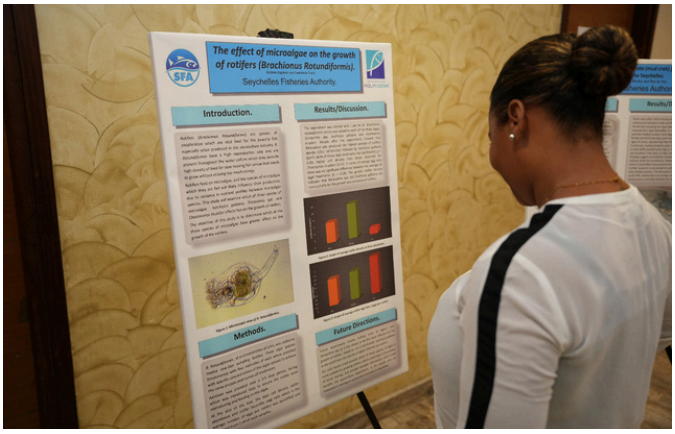
The session concluded with a presentation on assessing demersal fish communities along the drop-off of the Mahé Plateau using dropline surveys, offering new perspectives on deep-water ecosystems.

The symposium continued into the afternoon with presentations focusing on enhancing fisheries management through data integration and exploring different aspects of aquaculture development in Seychelles, including Finfish larval rearing, and optimizing aquaculture protocols for Tripneustes gratilla.

The interactive sessions throughout the day allowed participants to ask questions and share perspectives on the various topics presented, further enriching the discussions. The event concluded with a viewing of an exhibition, showcasing the research work and sciences of the sector.

The Scientific Symposium 2026 stands as both a celebration of the SFA's legacy and a renewed commitment to science-driven decision-making and the sustainable management of marine resources for generations to come.

SFA Scientific Symposium



Seychelles Tuna Conference 2026 Focuses on Sustainability and Future Growth of the Sector

Seychelles hosted the second edition of the Seychelles Tuna Conference at Eden Bleu Hotel, bringing together regional and international stakeholders to discuss the future of the tuna sector in line with World Tuna Day, which is celebrated on 2 May.

The event was organized by the Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture and Blue Economy, in partnership with SFA, the European Union and the Indian Ocean Tuna Limited.

Held under the theme "Securing the Future of Tuna in the South-Western Indian Ocean – Sustainability, Value Creation and Ocean Stewardship," the conference set the stage for meaningful dialogue on sustainability, governance, and economic opportunities, ensuring that tuna resources continue to benefit both present and future generations.

The event opened with a welcoming address by EU Ambassador Mr. Oskar Benedikt. He reaffirmed the European Union's strong partnership with Seychelles and stressed the importance of science-led sustainability, highlighting progress within the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, including binding catch limits for key species.

The official opening was delivered by Minister for Fisheries, Agriculture and Blue Economy Mr. Wallace Cosgrow, who emphasized tuna's vital role in the country's economy, food security, and livelihoods. He noted that Port Victoria remains one of the busiest tuna ports in the region and a key hub in the global value chain.

Discussions at the conference focused on sustainability and climate resilience, governance and transparency, economic value creation, and ocean stewardship beyond national jurisdictions. Experts and stakeholders examined the latest scientific data on tuna stocks and the impacts of climate variability, emphasizing the need for adaptive, science-based management to safeguard resources for the long term. Deliberations also emphasized the importance of stronger governance frameworks, improved monitoring and compliance, and enhanced regional cooperation through bodies such as the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission.

In addition, participants explored ways to transform the tuna industry by increasing value addition, promoting local participation, and encouraging investment across the value chain, from harvesting to processing and export. Together, these exchanges contributed to shaping practical solutions to ensure a more resilient, transparent, and inclusive tuna economy for Seychelles and the wider South-Western Indian Ocean region.

The third mission of the FAD Watch project has been completed successfully

From 10th March to 2nd April, 2026, the Seychelles Coast Guard Vessel (SCGV) Saya de Malha, under the direction of the SFA, participated in a mission to recover drifting fish aggregation devices (dFADs).

As with previous missions, the main objective was to collect any dFAD-related materials that may have washed ashore or been found in close proximity to the monitored islands. This mission also included beach clean-ups to remove plastics and other debris.

The vessel visited 12 islands, including Aldabra and most of the Amirante Islands. The mission successfully collected over 120 items of dFAD parts and related materials, along with more than 45 sacks (approximately 500 kg) of waste discovered during the beach clean-ups.

The collected dFAD components and waste were returned to Mahé for proper disposal, storage, and recycling.

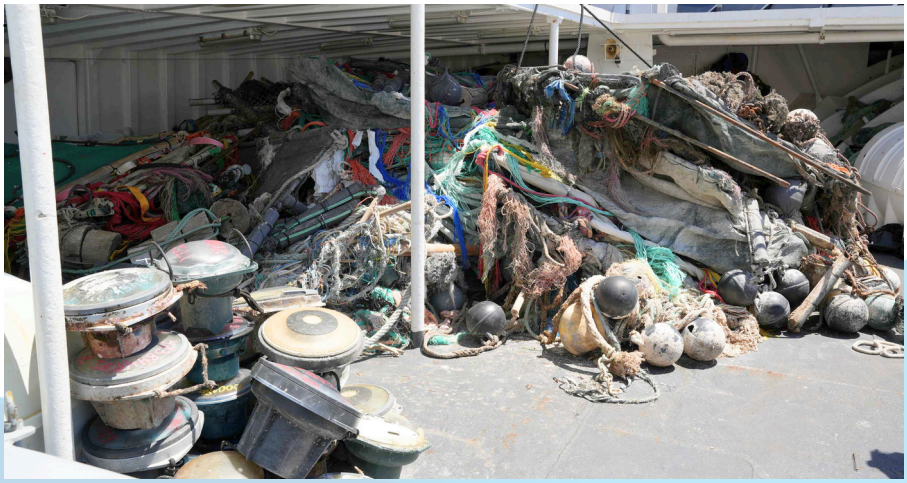
The mission was carried out during the inter-monsoon season to ensure safe access to the islands by the tenders from the SCGV Saya de Malha.

Since the early 2000s, the use of drifting Fish Aggregating Devices (dFADs) has been increasingly common in the Western Indian Ocean and has become the primary method of tuna fishing in all major oceans.

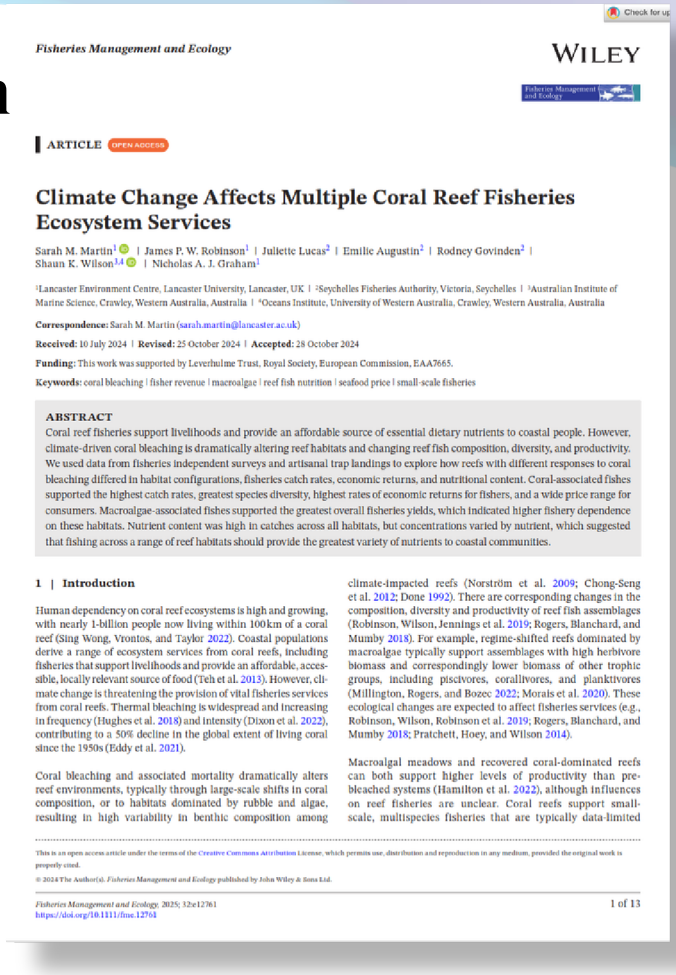
SFA supported by the Sustainable Indian Ocean Tuna Initiative (SIOTI), which includes European processors and fleets, as well as the Association of Large Tuna Freezers (AGAC), has gained access to an advanced dFAD tracking software suite. This software enables the tracking of any dFADs that may have become stranded, particularly on the outer islands

Currently, a total of fifteen island groups are monitored using this software, with plans to include more islands, including Aldabra, in the tracking system later this year.

Further missions of this kind are planned for later this year, and ongoing collaboration with local island environmental groups and NGOs will be strengthened.



SFA Fisheries Data Gains International Recognition Through Global Scientific Publication



Fisheries Management and Ecology WILEY

ARTICLE OPEN ACCESS

Climate Change Affects Multiple Coral Reef Fisheries Ecosystem Services

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Received: 10 July 2024 | **Revised:** 25 October 2024 | **Accepted:** 28 October 2024

Funding: This work was supported by Leverhulme Trust, Royal Society, European Commission, EAA7665.

Keywords: coral bleaching | fisher revenue | macroalgae | reef fish nutrition | seafood price | small-scale fisheries

ABSTRACT

Coral reef fisheries support livelihoods and provide an affordable source of essential dietary nutrients to coastal people. However, climate-driven coral bleaching is dramatically altering reef habitats and changing reef fish composition, diversity, and productivity. We used data from fisheries independent surveys and artisanal trap landings to explore how reefs with different responses to coral bleaching differed in habitat configurations, fisheries catch rates, economic returns, and nutritional content. Coral-associated fishes supported the highest catch rates, greatest species diversity, highest rates of economic returns for fishers, and a wide price range for consumers. Macroalgae-associated fishes supported the greatest overall fisheries yields, which indicated higher fishery dependence on these habitats. Nutrient content was high in catches across all habitats, but concentrations varied by nutrient, which suggested that fishing across a range of reef habitats should provide the greatest variety of nutrients to coastal communities.

1 | Introduction

Human dependency on coral reef ecosystems is high and growing, with nearly 1-billion people now living within 100 km of a coral reef (Sing Wong, Vrontos, and Taylor 2022). Coastal populations derive a range of ecosystem services from coral reefs, including fisheries that support livelihoods and provide an affordable, accessible, locally relevant source of food (Teh et al. 2013). However, climate change is threatening the provision of vital fisheries services from coral reefs. Thermal bleaching is widespread and increasing in frequency (Hughes et al. 2018) and intensity (Dixon et al. 2022), contributing to a 50% decline in the global extent of living coral since the 1950s (Eddy et al. 2021).

Coral bleaching and associated mortality dramatically alters reef environments, typically through large-scale shifts in coral composition, or to habitats dominated by rubble and algae, resulting in high variability in benthic composition among climate-impacted reefs (Norström et al. 2009; Chong-Seng et al. 2012; Done 1992). There are corresponding changes in the composition, diversity and productivity of reef fish assemblages (Robinson, Wilson, Jennings et al. 2019; Rogers, Blanchard, and Mumby 2018). For example, regime-shifted reefs dominated by macroalgae typically support assemblages with high herbivore biomass and correspondingly lower biomass of other trophic groups, including piscivores, corallivores, and planktivores (Millington, Rogers, and Bozec 2022; Morais et al. 2020). These ecological changes are expected to affect fisheries services (e.g., Robinson, Wilson, Robinson et al. 2019; Rogers, Blanchard, and Mumby 2018; Pratchett, Hoey, and Wilson 2014).

Macroalgal meadows and recovered coral-dominated reefs can both support higher levels of productivity than pre-bleached systems (Hamilton et al. 2022), although influences on reef fisheries are unclear. Coral reefs support small-scale, multispecies fisheries that are typically data-limited

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Fisheries Management and Ecology. 2025; 32:e12761 1 of 13
https://doi.org/10.1111/fme.12761

The publication examines how climate change and coral bleaching are affecting coral reef fisheries in Seychelles, including impacts on fish diversity, fisher revenues, seafood prices, and the nutritional value of reef fish catches. Using fisheries-dependent and fisheries-independent data collected over many years, the research demonstrates how different reef habitats continue to support fisheries, livelihoods, and food security for coastal communities.

Among the key findings of the research, the study revealed that coral-associated fish species supported the highest catch rates, greater species diversity, and higher economic returns for fishers. At the same time, reefs dominated by macroalgae continued to support high overall fisheries yields and provided catches rich in important nutrients such as iron and zinc. The research also found that different reef habitats contribute different nutritional benefits, highlighting the importance of maintaining a diversity of reef ecosystems to support both fisheries productivity and food security.

The study further showed that despite the impacts of coral bleaching and climate change on reef systems, Seychelles' reef fisheries continue to provide affordable and nutritious food for local communities. Researchers noted that maintaining healthy coral reefs and diverse fish stocks will remain critical for sustaining fisher livelihoods, consumer access to fish, and the long-term resilience of the fisheries sector.

A key strength of the study lies in the comprehensive datasets maintained by SFA through its Catch Assessment Survey and long-term reef monitoring programmes. The article specifically references the fisheries data collected daily by SFA across landing sites on Mahé, Praslin, and La Digue, emphasizing the critical role of consistent data collection in understanding the changing marine environment.

The recognition of SFA's datasets and technical contributions in an international peer-reviewed journal further reinforces Seychelles' reputation as a leader in marine and fisheries science within the region and beyond. Through continued collaboration with international partners and research institutions, SFA remains committed to advancing knowledge and supporting evidence-based fisheries management for future generations.

Protecting Tomorrow's Catch: How Science Is Guiding Sustainable Fisheries in the Seychelles

Safeguarding the future of Seychelles' fisheries depends on strong science and responsible management. SFA plays a central role in this effort, carrying out targeted research to better understand fish stocks and guide sustainable harvesting practices.

A key focus is fish size. Under the Mahe Plateau Trap and Line Co-Management Plan introduced in 2022, minimum size limits were set for species such as Emperor Red Snapper (bourzwa) and Green Jobfish (zob gri). These measures are designed to reduce the capture of juvenile fish, allowing them to grow and reproduce before being caught. This is critical because fish populations depend on individuals reaching maturity to sustain future generations.

Between 2022 and 2023, the SFA Fisheries Research Department conducted studies on the reproductive biology of key commercial demersal species in the artisanal fishery. Supported by the SFA, the EU Sustainable Fisheries Agreement, and the Ocean5 project under SeyCCAT, the research helped improve understanding of when fish reach maturity and how stocks can be managed more effectively.

Fish were collected from landing sites and with the help of fishers. Researchers measured and weighed each specimen, then examined gonads under a microscope to determine maturity. In total, the study covered hundreds of fish across important species including groupers, snappers, and green jobfish.

The findings showed that Brownspotted grouper matures at 22.6 cm, Two-spot snapper at 43.4 cm, Humphead snapper at 50.8 cm and Green jobfish at 40.2 cm. These results closely match international studies, strengthening confidence in their accuracy. The research also provided valuable insights into growth patterns, size-weight relationships, and reproductive behaviour—filling important gaps in knowledge about Seychelles' demersal fisheries.

Importantly, the findings were shared with fishers and stakeholders and presented to the Implementation Committee for the Mahe Plateau Co-Management Plan (ICCP) to guide future regulations. This collaborative approach ensures that science directly informs policy and management decisions.

World Tuna Day Celebrated with Nutrition Talk and Healthy Tuna Dishes

As part of activities to mark World Tuna Day, SFA organised a special nutritional awareness session in collaboration with nutritionists from the Ministry of Health on 28 April at Grand Anse Primary School. The event targeted students who were camping at the school and aimed to educate children on the importance of including fish, especially tuna, in their daily diets.

During the session, the nutritionists spoke about the many health benefits of eating fish and highlighted why tuna is considered an excellent source of nutrition. They explained that fish contains essential nutrients, including omega-3 fatty acids, which play an important role in children's growth and brain development. The students were encouraged to learn more about healthy eating habits and the value of consuming locally available seafood.

To make the session interactive and enjoyable, the nutritionists organised a fun educational game where the children tested their knowledge of different fish species. The activity encouraged students to identify fish commonly prepared at home by their parents, helping them connect familiar meals with healthy eating practices.

A live food demonstration was also held, where the nutritionists prepared a simple and nutritious tuna snack for the students to taste. The recipe included canned tuna mixed with plain Greek yogurt, carrots, and onions, served on sliced cucumbers and bread.

While the initiative sparked curiosity among the children, many of them were hesitant about the tuna and yogurt combination, possibly because it was their first time trying it. Some students amusingly chose to eat only the bread without the tuna filling.

Despite the mixed reactions to the tasting session, the event successfully raised awareness about the nutritional value of fish and encouraged children to explore healthier food choices.

The celebration of World Tuna Day served as both an educational and engaging experience, reinforcing the importance of tuna and other fish in supporting a balanced and healthy diet.

Seychelles Showcases Sustainable Aquaculture Through High-Level Visits

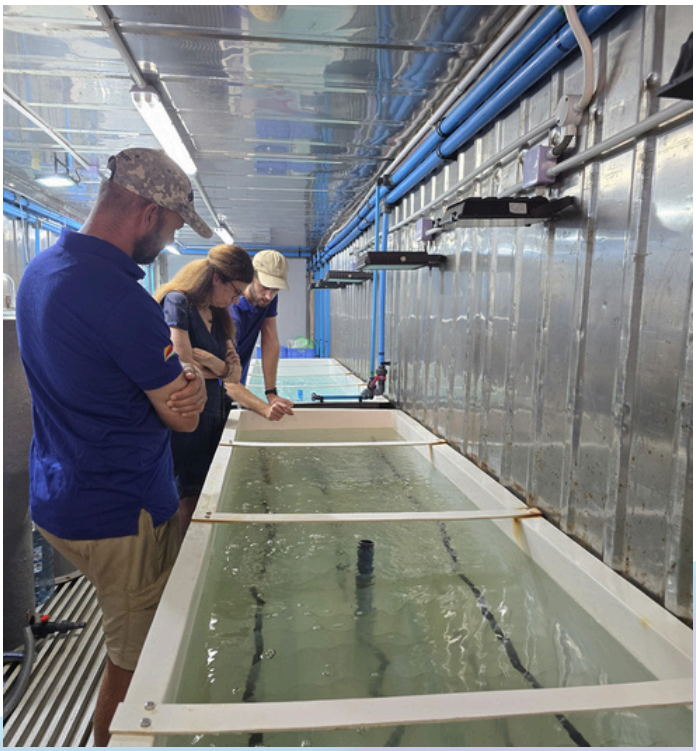
The Aquaculture team recently welcomed two significant high-level visits to its aquaculture facilities, underscoring the country's growing role in sustainable marine development and ocean governance.

In April, Seychelles had the honour of hosting participants of the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) clinic, bringing together leaders from various countries. The visit included a guided tour of SFA's aquaculture facilities, offering guests a first-hand look at the country's expanding mariculture industry.

The engagement provided a valuable platform to showcase how Seychelles is aligning its Blue Economy vision with global efforts to protect marine biodiversity. Through on-site demonstrations and discussions with local stakeholders, participants gained insights into sustainable aquaculture practices and the country's commitment to responsible ocean resource use, both within and beyond national waters. The exchange also reinforced the importance of international collaboration in advancing effective and inclusive ocean governance.

In a separate visit, SFA also welcomed Ambassador Anne Tallineau to its aquaculture facilities. The visit highlighted ongoing national efforts in sustainable aquaculture development and provided an opportunity for in-depth discussions with technical teams.

The Ambassador's engagement and interest in the sector were warmly appreciated, with exchanges focusing on strengthening partnerships and supporting the continued growth of the blue economy. The visit further emphasized the value of international cooperation in driving innovation and sustainability in aquaculture.



Together, these visits reflect Seychelles' continued commitment to promoting responsible aquaculture development while positioning itself as an active and engaged leader in global ocean sustainability efforts.

Praslin Fishers Call for Urgent Action on Safety and Fisheries Challenges

On Friday, 17th April, members of the Praslin Fishers Association (PFA) met with representatives from various departments of the SFA to discuss challenges affecting the daily activities of the fisher community.

One of the key issues raised was navigational safety, particularly the blocked channel at Baie Ste Anne, which has made it difficult for fishers to navigate their vessels during low tide.

Fishers also expressed concern over the long-delayed project to extend the pontoon, which would allow more fishing vessels to operate efficiently. In the presence of the Deputy CEO Mr. Aubrey Lesperence, the SFA Project Department assured members that the pontoon installation and extension project is underway and scheduled for completion by early 2027.

In addition, PFA representatives recommended that SFA address several other pressing matters:

- Enforcement against illegal fishing around the island, particularly activities carried out by GOP holders.

- Ensuring the proper use of the ice plant.

Considering assistance for boat owners through the provision of a slipway.

- Reviewing and amending fisheries regulations to allow local boat owners to employ GOP holders in artisanal fisheries, as many vessels remain inactive due to a shortage of trusted local fishers.

The meeting highlighted the importance of collaboration between the fisher community and SFA to ensure sustainable and safe fishing practices on Praslin and other neighboring islands.

Retirement Feature: Reflections from Mrs. Cécile Botsoie on Her Career at SFA

Q: Can you introduce yourself and share your journey at SFA?

A: My name is Cécile Botsoie, and I previously worked at the Statistics Office within the Seychelles Fisheries Authority (SFA). My time at SFA was a meaningful part of my career, where I was involved in statistical work and supporting data-related activities across the organisation.

Q: What inspired you to join SFA?

A: I joined SFA because I was interested in working in an environment where data and statistics play an important role in national development. I wanted to contribute to something meaningful and be part of a structured and impactful organisation.

Q: How would you describe your overall experience at SFA?

A: Overall, my experience was very positive. The work was interesting and gave me the opportunity to learn and grow professionally. I found satisfaction in contributing to the organisation's work through statistics and reporting.

Q: What were some of the main challenges you faced?

A: Like many roles involving deadlines and data reporting, the work could be demanding. At times, there was pressure to meet deadlines and manage a heavy workload. However, these challenges also helped me develop resilience and improve my time management skills.

Q: What kept you motivated throughout your career?

A: What motivated me was knowing that my work contributed to a bigger purpose. Being part of a team and supporting important statistical work kept me focused. I also appreciated the learning experience and the professional environment.

Q: How was your experience working with your team and supervisors?

A: I had a good working relationship with my colleagues and supervisors. There was teamwork and support, especially during busy periods, which made the workload more manageable.

Q: How do you feel now that you are retired?

A: I feel a mix of emotions, gratitude for the years spent at SFA and appreciation for the experience gained. Retirement feels like a new chapter, and I am looking forward to it.

Q: What are your future plans after retirement?

A: After retirement, I plan to focus on personal time, rest, and spending more time with family. I also look forward to enjoying life at a slower pace and taking care of myself.

Q: Any final message or reflection?

A: I am grateful for my time at SFA and for the experiences I had. It was a journey of learning, challenges, and growth. I wish the organisation continued success in its important work.

A day in the life of … Development Chef - Moses Julius

In this month's edition, we meet Mr. Moses Julius, who shares his daily experience as a Development Chef. Mr. Moses has been working as a Development Chef within the Product Development and Quality Assurance department for 5 years.

What time do you usually arrive at work?

I usually arrive at work around 8:00 a.m.

What is the first thing you do upon arriving?

The first thing I do is switch on any equipment that needs to be on, check emails, and begin sanitizing all working surfaces and equipment. After that, my day officially begins.

Are your daily tasks the same every day, or do they vary?

My tasks vary from day to day. Some days, I have visitors or students coming in to learn about fish processing and value-added fish products. On other days, I focus on developing new recipes or conducting research on how to produce new products.

There are also times when I participate in national events with my organization. During these events, I may prepare products or dishes for sale, promotion, or to raise awareness about product quality assurance. In addition, I follow a weekly schedule for deep cleaning.

What time does your workday usually end?

My workday usually ends at 4:00 p.m., although sometimes I work later depending on the type of project I am handling.

What part of your job requires the most attention?

Maintaining hygiene in the workspace requires the most attention, as it is a key area where pressure is often highest.

What challenges do you face during a typical day?

I do not usually face major challenges. However, when challenges arise, I do my best to manage them effectively.

What are your core responsibilities as a Development Chef?

My responsibilities include ensuring compliance with food safety systems such as HACCP, selecting appropriate fish species and raw materials based on availability and cost, and optimizing recipes for cost-efficiency without compromising quality.

I also ensure that products remain appealing and safe over time, and I analyze food trends and consumer preferences, such as convenience, sustainability, and health.

Climate Change and Mental Health Resilience: An Emerging Connection

Climate change is increasingly recognized not only as an environmental and economic challenge, but also as a significant public health issue with profound implications for mental well-being. Long-term shifts in weather patterns and rising global temperatures are contributing to more frequent and severe extreme events such as heatwaves, floods, droughts, and storms. These disruptions can have direct and indirect effects on mental health, making resilience a critical component of adaptation.

Climate Change as a Stressor on Mental Health

Mental health refers to a state of emotional, psychological, and social well-being that enables individuals to cope with life's stresses, work productively, and contribute to their communities. It is not simply the absence of mental illness, but a dynamic condition shaped by a range of social, environmental, and biological factors.

Climate change can disrupt this balance. Extreme weather events and gradual environmental degradation often lead to heightened psychological stress, including anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). For example, individuals affected by floods or prolonged droughts may experience loss of homes, livelihoods, and community stability—each of which can significantly strain mental health.

These impacts are often amplified in vulnerable populations, including children, older persons, and individuals with pre-existing mental health conditions. At the same time, underlying social factors such as poverty, inequality, and limited access to health services can further increase susceptibility to climate-related psychological distress.

Understanding Mental Health Resilience

In the context of climate change, resilience involves not only coping with immediate impacts such as disasters, but also adapting to long-term environmental and social changes.

Protective factors—such as strong social networks, access to mental health services, education, and community support systems—can strengthen resilience. Conversely, exposure to repeated climate shocks without adequate support can weaken coping capacity and increase long-term mental health risks.

Climate Change, Food Security, and Psychological Well-being

In many small island developing states, including Seychelles, climate change also poses risks to food security and livelihoods. Although agriculture represents a small share of GDP, fisheries play a critical role in both the economy and national nutrition. Climate-driven changes in ocean temperature, coral reef health, and fish distribution can therefore have cascading effects on economic stability and food availability.

Such pressures contribute indirectly to mental health stress, particularly among communities dependent on natural resources. Uncertainty about income, food supply, and environmental stability can intensify anxiety and reduce overall well-being.

Integrating Mental Health into Climate Adaptation

Addressing climate change effectively requires a holistic approach that includes mental health support as part of resilience planning. Adaptation strategies should therefore consider psychological well-being alongside environmental and economic priorities.

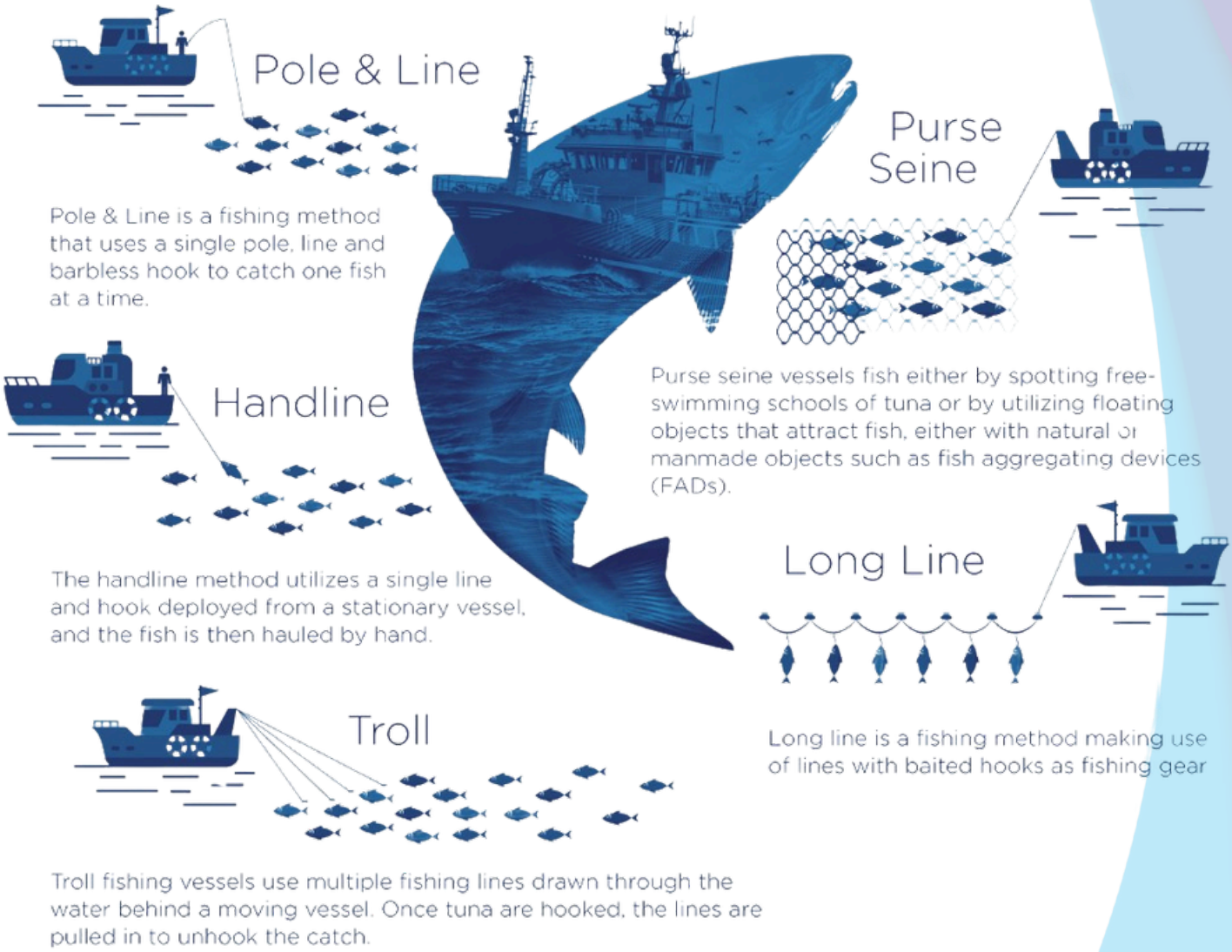
Strengthening community networks, improving access to mental health services, and integrating psychosocial support into disaster response systems are essential steps. Equally important is raising awareness of the mental health impacts of climate change, helping individuals and communities recognize early signs of distress and seek support when needed.

Did You Know!!

Tuna Fishing methods

Tuna fishing is vital to the global economy, generating over $42 billion annually and supporting millions of livelihoods. As a key protein source, it sustains global food security, while its role as an apex predator maintains marine ecosystem balance. However, unsustainable fishing levels threaten some species, necessitating improved, science-based management.

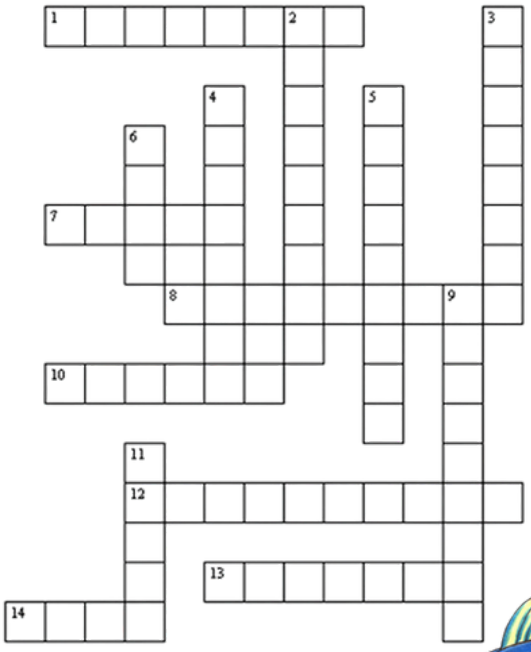
Tuna fishing utilizes diverse techniques ranging from sustainable pole-and-line to high-volume purse seining. Key methods include trolling with artificial lures, vertical jigging, and drifting with live bait. These techniques, particularly one-by-one methods, offer benefits like low bycatch, reduced environmental impact, and supporting local livelihoods.

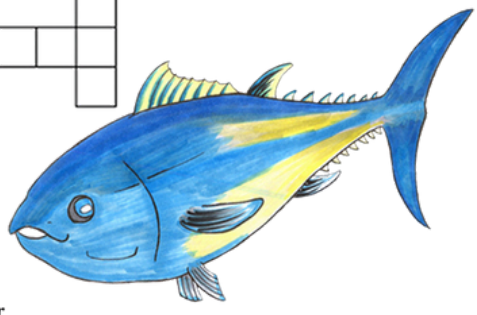


Healthy Tip

Both canned and fresh tuna are healthy sources of omega 3 fats, which have been shown to contribute to lower blood pressure and prevention of heart disease and stroke. Omega 3 fats are also associated with reducing inflammation which can boost the body's ability to fight other chronic diseases like breast, prostate and colorectal cancers and macular degeneration. Omega 3 fats are also important for fetus development and improved infant health outcomes. For adults, they play an important role in brain health, preventing Alzheimer's disease and other dementia.

Test Your Skills





ACROSS
1 I have a mane of long venomous spines
7 A type of ray also known as a devilfish
8 An invertebrate that is 90% water
10 Clams can make these
12 A shark named after a building tool
13 Clownfish call me homne
14 A bulge moving along the surface of the water

DOWN
2 I come out of the sea to lay my eggs in beach sand
3 most of us have five arms
4 This fish looks like a snake
5 A circus fish
6 A fish found in water and in cans
9 Marine water is also called _____
11 The largest shark in the world is the great _____ shark

Contact the PR Team to book a slot in the SFA newsletter for any internal communication and awareness, including:

- Department events and trainings
- Processes and procedures
- Upcoming committee and club events etc...

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