

Assessment of options to mitigate dFAD loss and abandonments and their impacts

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- **SPC project:**

Assessment of the Impacts of dFADs on Marine Environment in Pacific Island Countries: Recommendations for Mitigation Strategies



July 2024 to February 2026

- Stranded FAD data collection and analyses of the regional stranded FAD database (Mourot et al., 2025 FAD-09-INF-A)
- Monitoring dFADs outside fishing grounds and analyses of trajectories of buoys attached to lost and abandoned dFADs to better determine FAD fates
- Legal study on the international and regional framework of dFAD loss and abandonment
- Feasibility and economic analyses of options to mitigate dFAD loss and abandonment, including retrieval
- Stakeholders consultations
 - On-line surveys and interviews
 - Regional workshop
 - Reports submitted to regional meetings

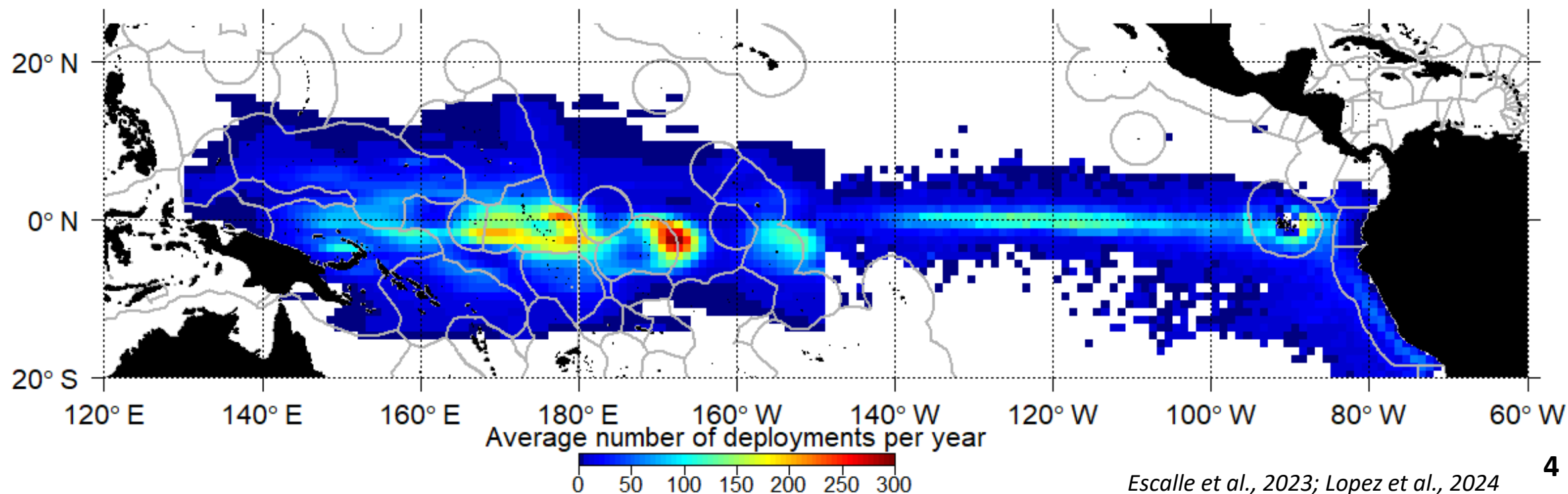


What do we know ?!

- Where dFADs are deployed
- How many are deployed
- Where most dFADs aggregate (dFAD density)
- FAD fate; where and how many dFAD strand
- Where dFADs are deactivated / exit fishing grounds
- Existing recovery program

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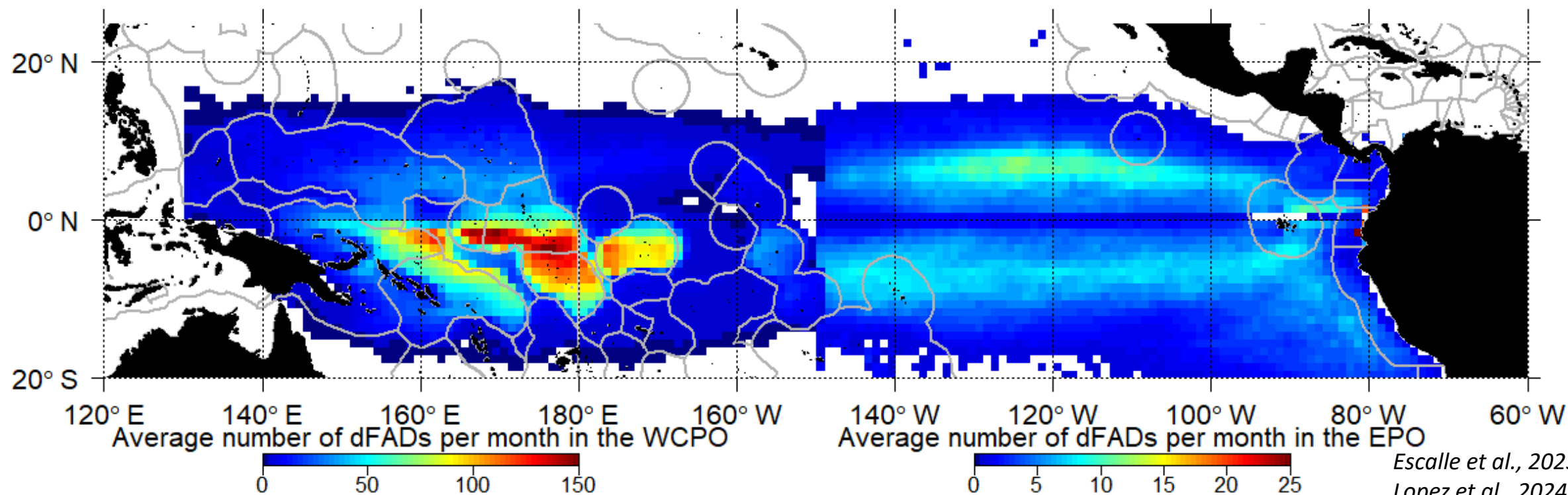
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→ 46,000–65,000 deployments per year in the Pacific (30,000–40,000 in the WCPO)

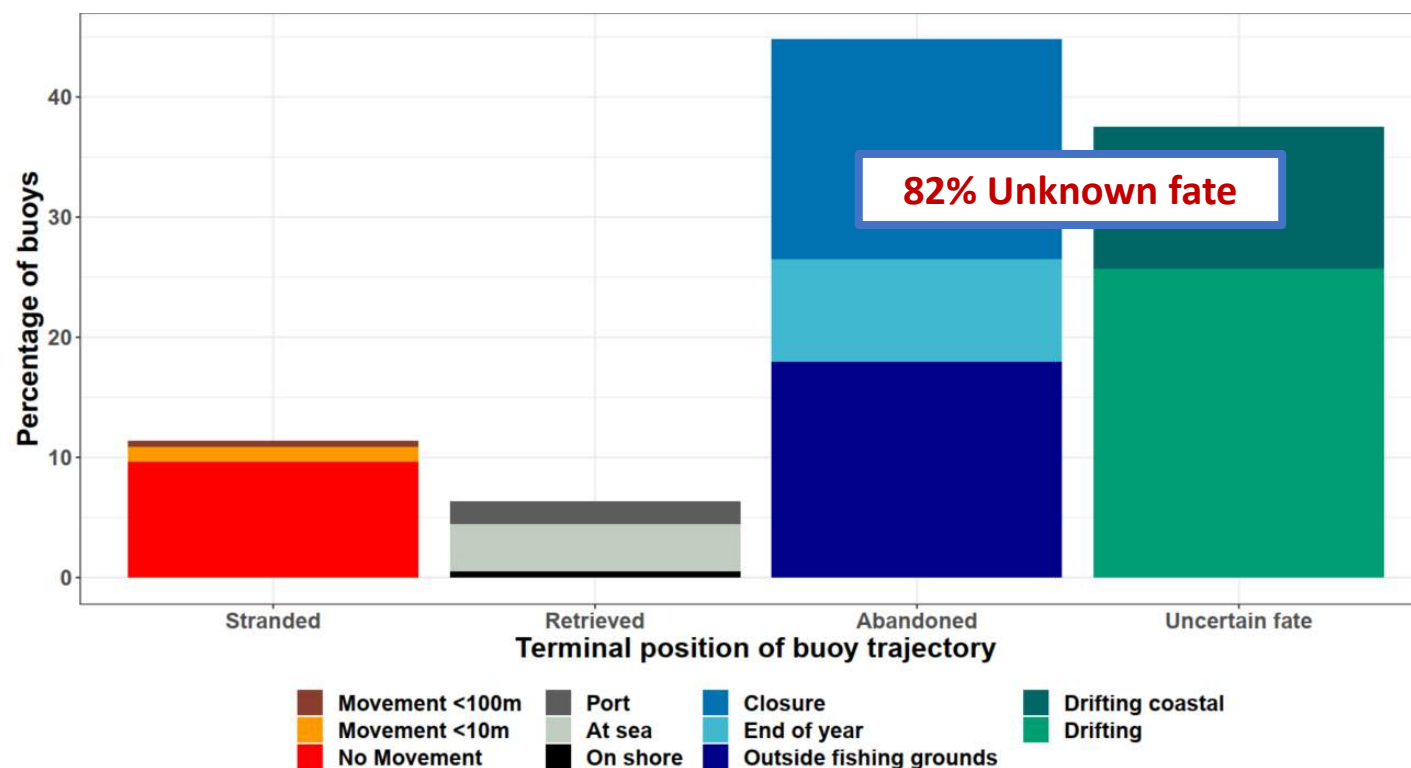
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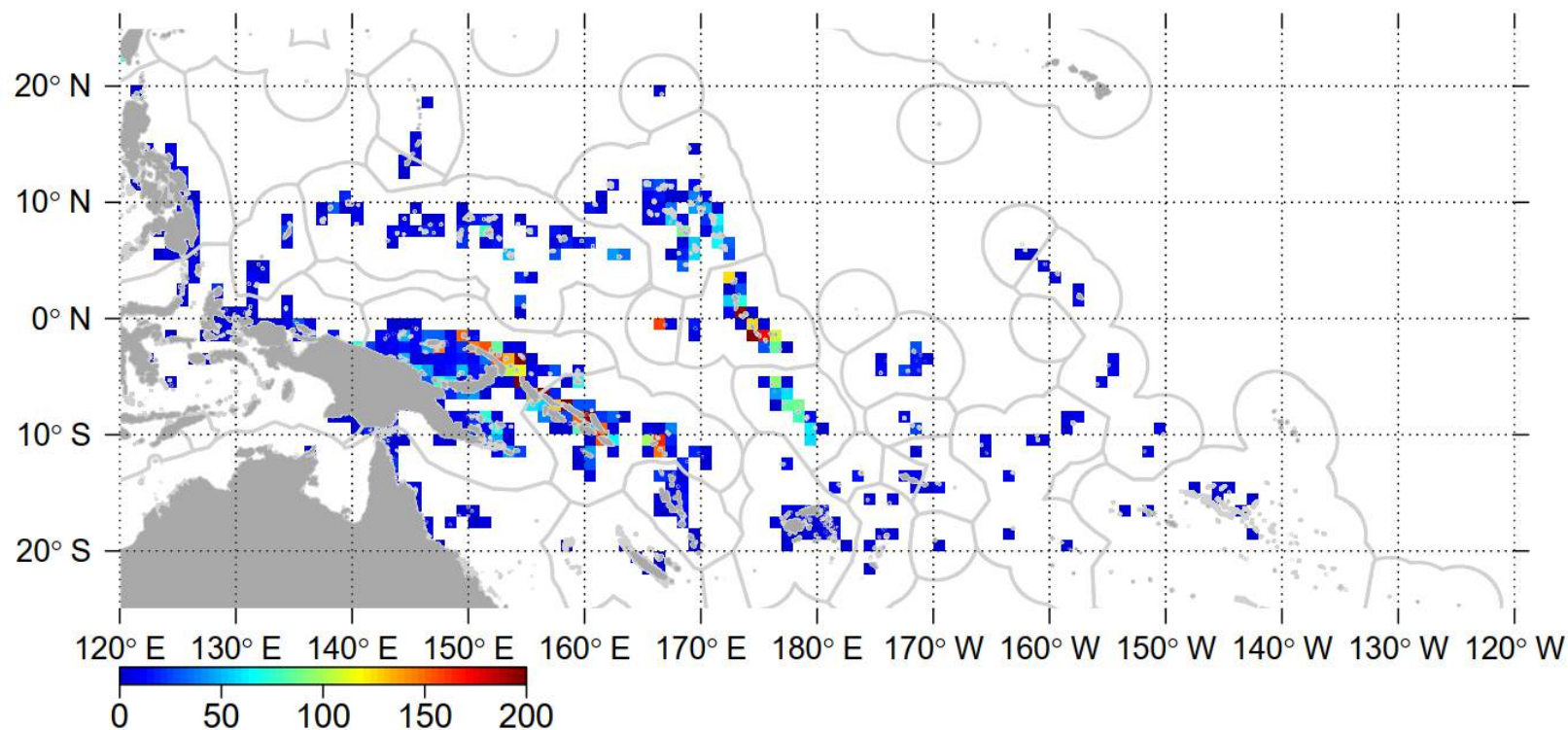
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- 11.3% stranded
- 6.0% retrieved
- 44.8% abandoned
- 37.6% deactivated or signal lost within the fishing grounds

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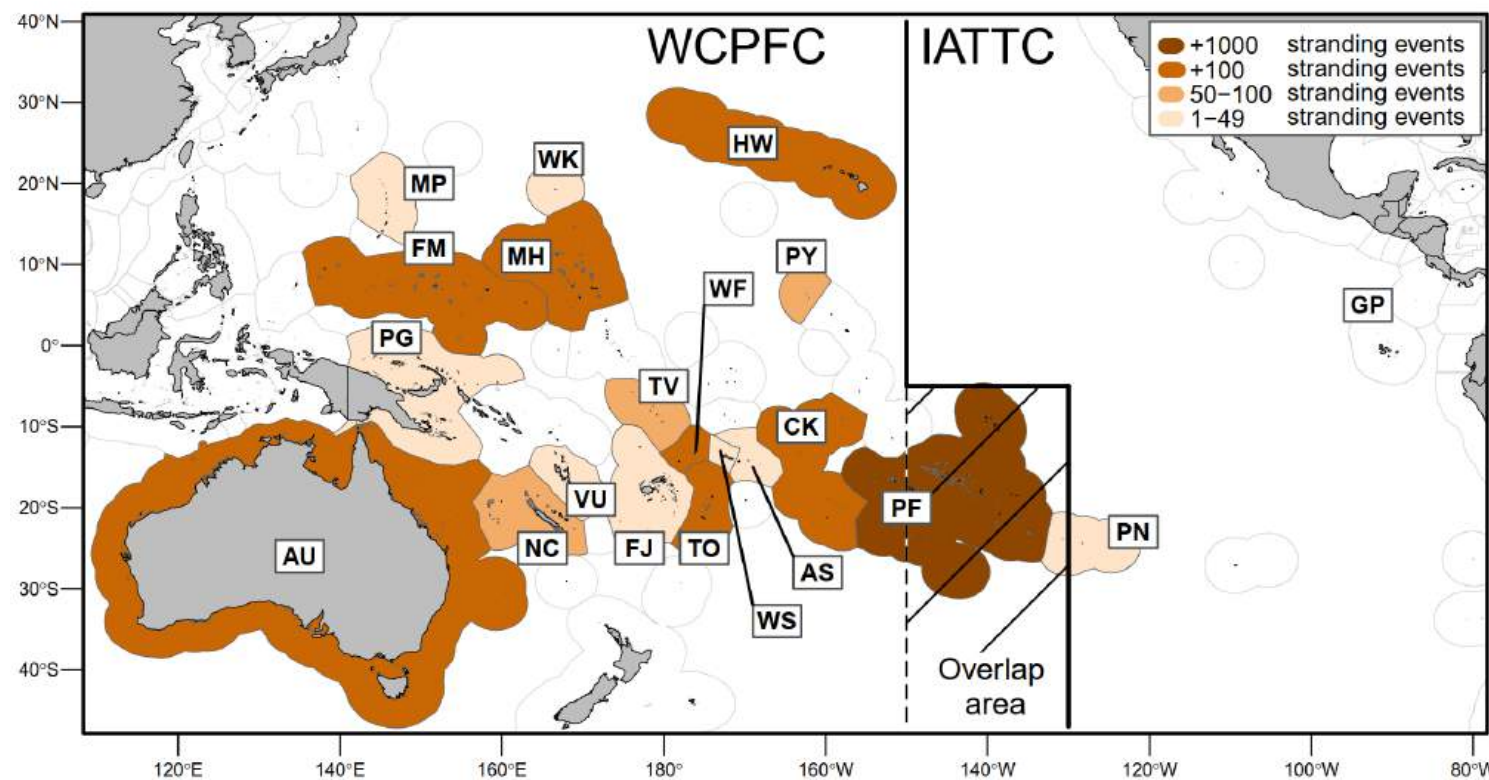
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FAD tracking data

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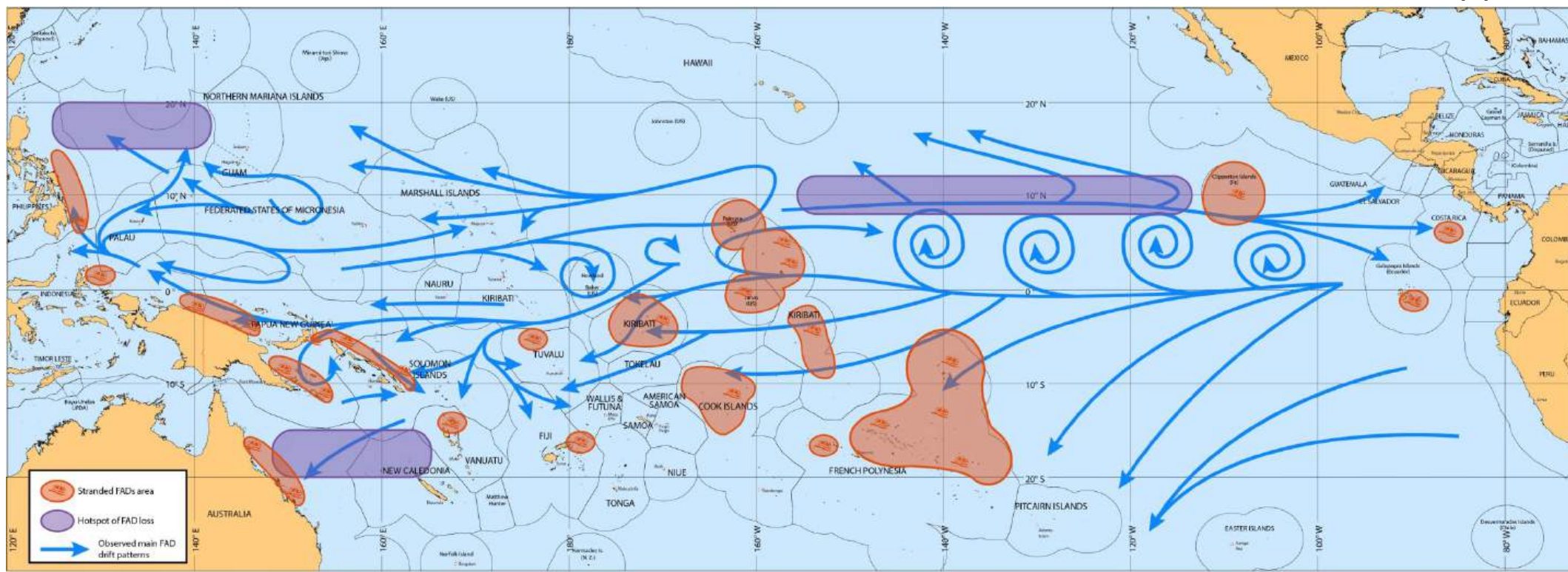


In-situ data collection

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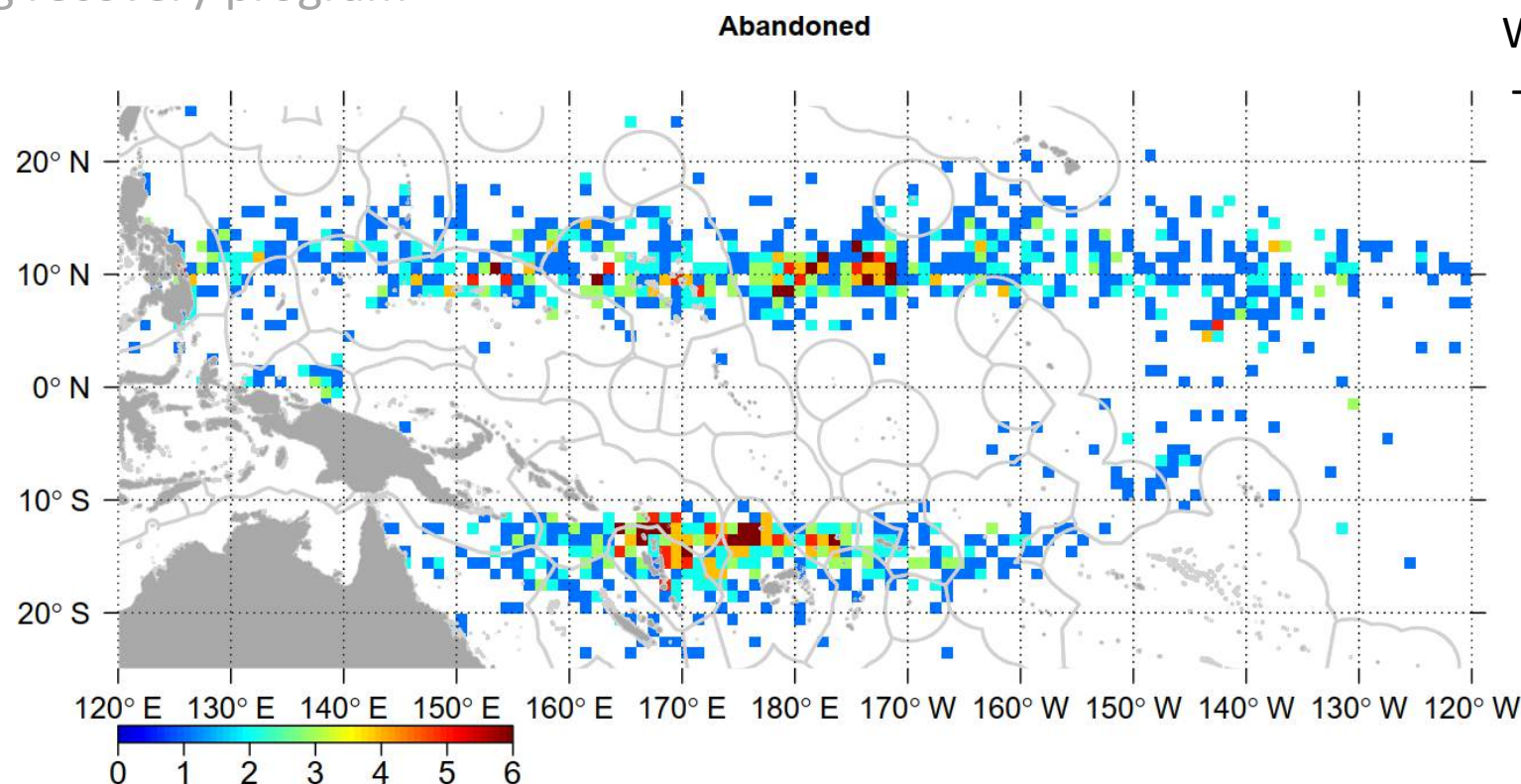
Skipper knowledge



Escalle et al.,
2024

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*Assessment of the Impacts of Drifting Fish Aggregating Devices on Marine Environment
in Pacific Island Countries:
Recommendations for Mitigation Strategies*



Pacific
Community
Communauté
du Pacifique

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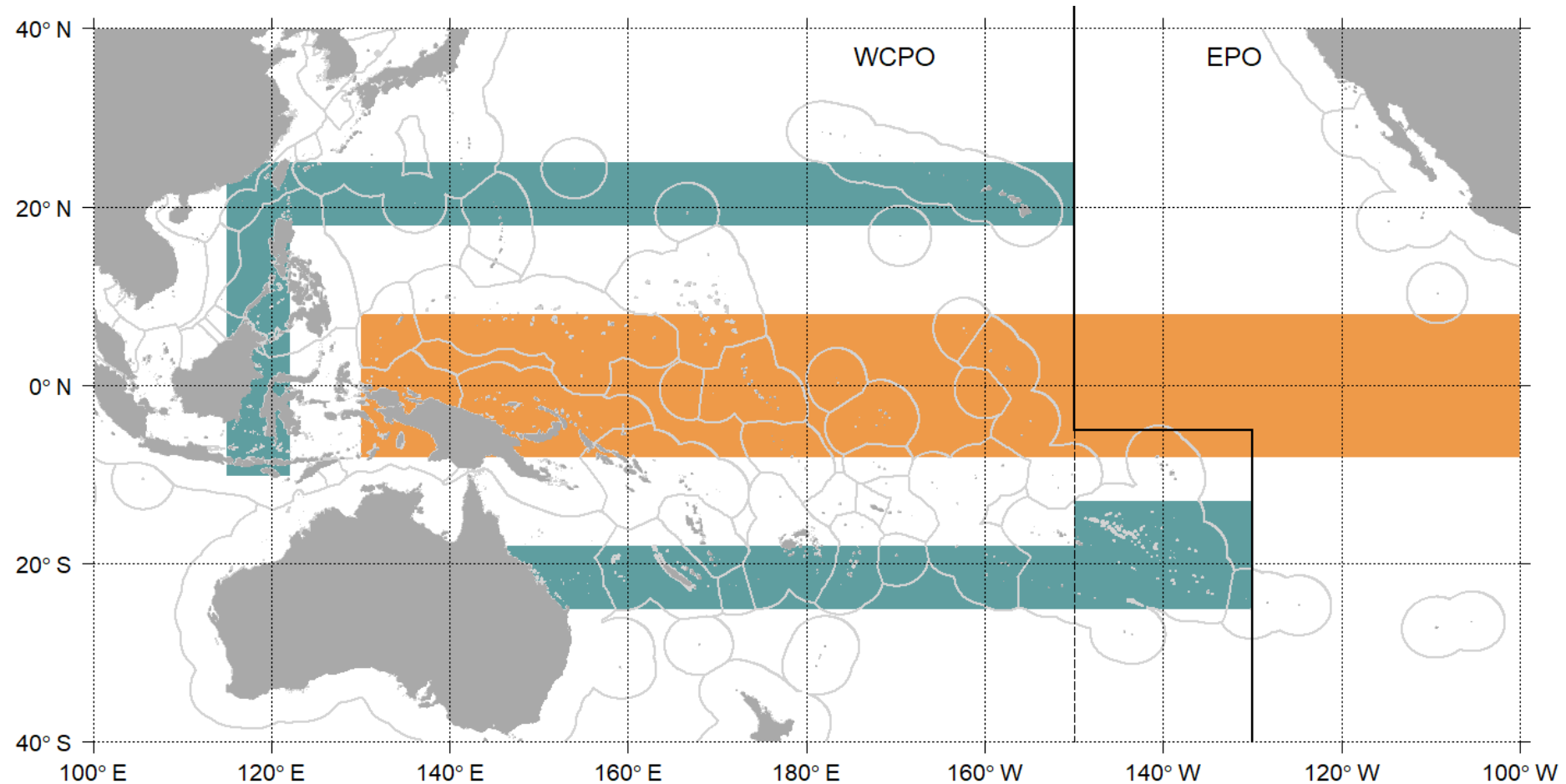
What do we DON'T know ?!

- What happens to dFADs after being deactivated / when they leave fishing grounds
- Real rates of dFAD strandings and environmental damages
- Potential to reduce dFAD loss and abandonment: cost component, acceptability (industry & PICTs), feasibility, side-effects (recycling/processing, increase in CO2 emissions, contamination, etc.)
- Detailed review on the legal framework of dFAD lost and abandonment (internationally and nationally)

Preliminary results

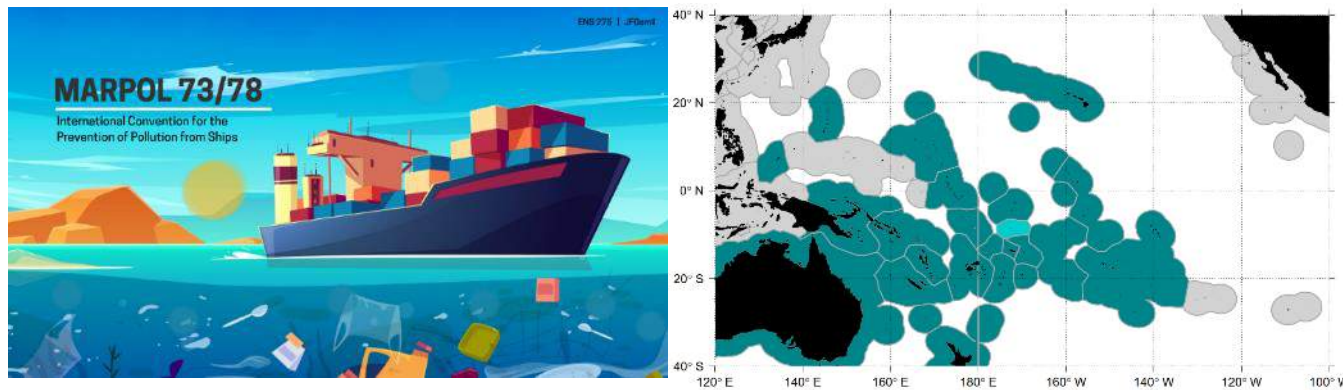
Monitoring dFADs outside fishing grounds

- Collaboration with partner fishing companies and Satlink
- Buoy reaching areas of current buoy deactivation (green zone)
- Transfer of monitoring from fishing companies to SPC

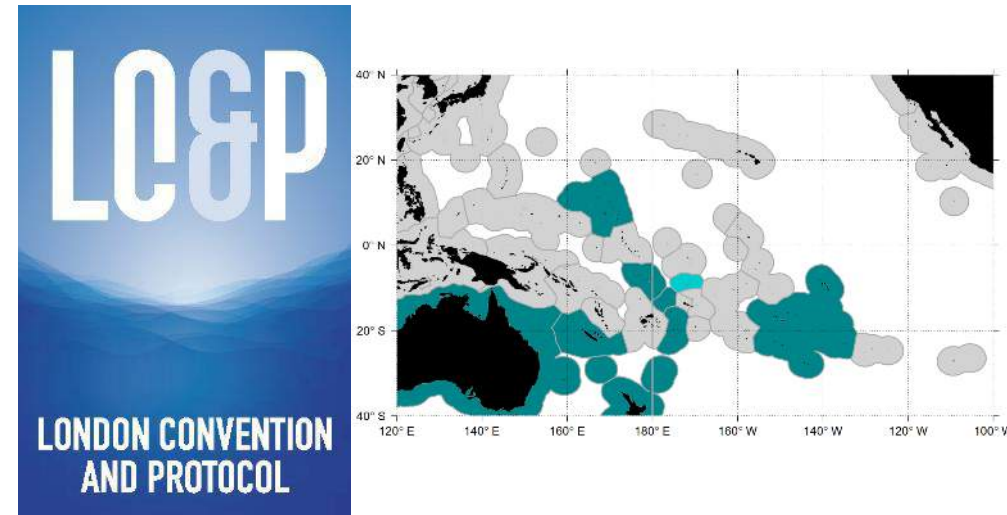


- Study to analyse the regulatory framework of dFADs in Pacific tuna fisheries to improve fisheries sustainability.
- Preliminary legal findings presented here; final report and policy brief to be finalised in a few months

1. International framework



International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL)



Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter

Legal scholars argue that, except in case of *force majeure*, the intentional abandonment of dFADs may trigger application of these specific treaties on marine pollution.

2. Regional framework: RFMOs or other

To strengthen legal accountability and environmental protection for sustainable dFAD use, suggestion from the draft report include:

- clarifying legal ownership of dFADs and all their parts;
- regulating/tracing dFAD ownership transfer;
- removing regulatory disincentives for retrieval
- establishing responsibilities for retrieval and damage compensation;
- establishing time-bound targets to increase retrieval rates;
- introducing fees or funds to cover cleanup and recovery costs;
- controlling satellite buoy deactivation;
- enhancing FAD registry systems;
- establishing robust compliance mechanisms,

3. National legislation: Pacific Island Countries and Territories

Economic and feasibility analysis to decrease dFAD loss and abandonment in the Pacific (focus on the WCPO), including retrieval programs

→ Desktop study and stakeholder consultations

Options to decrease dFAD loss and abandonment :

- Modification of the deployment areas to limit dFAD losses.
- A greater emphasis on owner collection before dFAD loss and abandonment (including collaboration between fishing companies).
- Charter of local vessels for at-sea collection of lost or abandoned dFADs at the edge of fishing grounds.
- At-sea collection of vessels (e.g., longliners) already present at-sea.
- A 'FAD watch' system that enables community collection of dFADs prior to stranding events in sensitive areas.
- Others ?

→ The nature and distribution of costs and benefits

→ Administrative, logistical, financial and other considerations (technical, operational, schedule, legal, etc.)

→ Overall outcomes and rationale for participation by industry, NGOs and communities.

→ Stakeholder consultations – general survey

[English]

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScMhpj158Dku-UmAly3CsZtvSgogOiO8nBrwwrZXZKEZbH0Og/viewform>

[Spanish]

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeD4eYx6Q2LNeaSa3IAhPNpVldOrmou3EZmoG1XQ4y-8ZaVtQ/viewform?usp=dialog>

→ Targeted consultations



→ Stakeholder consultations – general survey

- Regional workshop: February 9th to 12th 2026 in French Polynesia
Details to be provided later
- Reports submitted to regional meetings: 2026 IATTC FAD WG

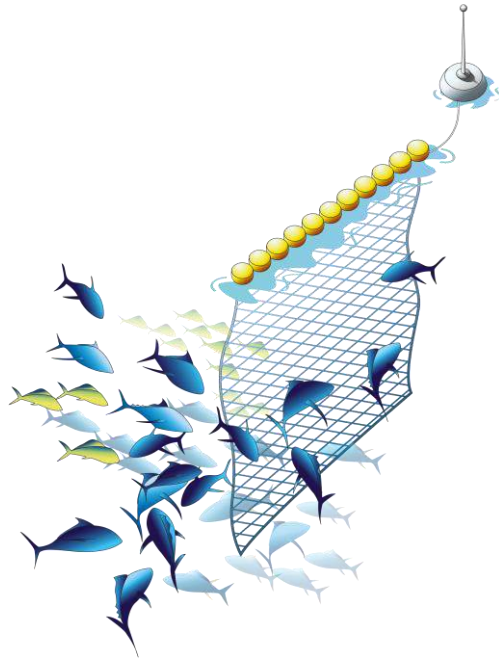




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Any questions ?

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