

# Falling tuna catches sends Filipino fishers further offshore

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the catches of purse seiners and handline vessels have decreased from 18 tons to 7 tons per set and from 1.7 to 1.5 tons per trip respectively over the past two decades.

The results are of concern for the domestic Filipino tuna fishing industry and explains to a large extent the increasing tendency for importing tuna for processing. To maintain a stable supply for the canneries, this may lead to an increased need for access agreements with neighbouring countries, particularly Indonesia and the Pacific Island Countries.

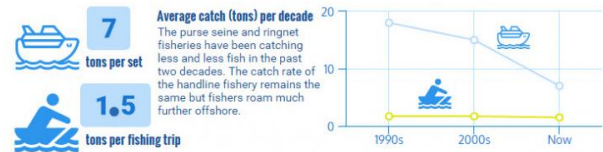
New research reveals that Filipino tuna fishermen in General Santos City are fishing further offshore whilst facing declining individual catches.

There are eight [tuna](#) canneries in General Santos and Zamboanga Cities in Mindanao that require around 124,000 metric tons of tuna supply per year. To meet this demand fishermen now have to [fish](#) further offshore as tuna supplies in Philippine waters have halved in recent years. This also results in a demand for alternative fishing grounds to deploy more FADs. That was the message of a recent paper published in *Marine Policy* by BESTTuna researcher Edison Macusi and colleagues.

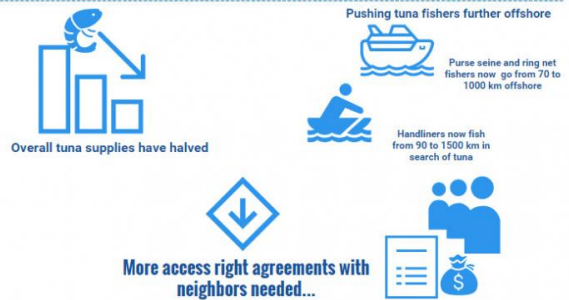
From a high of 500,000 mt in the 1990s to about 325,000 mt in 2005, the annual catch of the Philippines was reduced to 229,000 MT of skipjack, yellowfin and bigeye tunas in 2014 (WCPFC, Philippines annual report). Purse seine fishers now fish between 70 to 1000 km from the harbour; tuna handline fishers now fish up between 90 and 1500 km from the shore. At the same time,

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Average tuna catch have decreased in the past two decades



## Alternative fishing grounds would be required for FAD deployments



...to maintain stable supply of 124, 000 MT of tuna for the 8 canneries of Mindanao



To read more about the paper go to: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X15002511>

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Provided by Wageningen University

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