



Apologies from the ABF desk for our silence. We have been out and about, but once again it is that time of the season when we start preparing reports and news on the developments as well as the projects in the pipeline.

We are delighted to share our news with you, and to know that you are a greater part of this on-going cause.

## *Tagging, tagging and tagging!*



- Thanks to the relentless efforts of the captains, anglers and crews - **2,529 billfish** have been tagged already since the beginning of this 2011/2012 season.
- We are most grateful for the monetary donations from Lars Korschen, David Johnson and Henry Henley which once again enabled us to supply free tags for the 2011/2012 season
- **Billfish tagging in the Middle East** - Thanks to our representatives in Oman and United Arab Emirates (Luke Chang and Ed Nicholas) - we are now running a billfish tagging programme in this region.

Our United Arab Emirates counterparts held their first ever billfish tagging tournament in December. The Fujairah Billfish Classic had 7 boats and brought together 28 anglers. The anglers in Fujairah are optimistic that there is a healthy stock of sailfish off the Musandam Peninsula.

- **Billfish tagging in the Seychelles** - Thanks to Captain Ali Harazi and Faizal Suleiman for spreading the word in the Seychelles and deploying our tags.
- **Growing interest** for tagging in Tanzania, Mozambique, Madagascar and South Africa.
- **We need help** - With the increased interest and requests from sportfishing operators from around the Indian Ocean, we need help with sponsors/donors and manpower on the ground to help co-ordinate.

## *Billfish Recaptures*

- **72 billfish recoveries** in this season with the notable recapture of two Sailfish tagged in Diani and recovered in Malindi and Watamu in a span of two weeks.
- **More tag recoveries in Pemba and Zanzibar.** Fishermen in this region have been informing us about tag recoveries. Our trip to Zanzibar, Tanzania and the islands of Pemba and Mafia is next week (To date, we have had **38** recoveries from Tanzania and it's outer Islands)



### *More in the pipeline*

- **Satellite Tagging Project** - We have been pledged 5 - 10 satellite tags by the International Game Fishing Association (IGFA) and hope to deploy this next season .... *Watch this space.*
- **Circle hooks project** - We will be teaming up with Joan Vernon of the Presidential Challenge Charitable Foundation and Eagle Claw to drive the Circle Hooks campaign in the region. Please follow this link: <http://www.preschallenge.com> and click on their magazine to read more

The emergence of circle hooks for bait fishing has been noted as one of the most exciting recent changes in billfish angling. Circle hooks have gained popularity due to their well-publicized use by several very successful charter captains. The greatest advantage of the circle hook is that it almost always hooks the fish in the corner of the mouth, making hook removal easier and greatly decreasing the chance of gut hooking the fish. This is clearly one tackle change that can have a positive impact on the number of released billfish that survive to fight another day.

- **Migrating with the BILLFISH expedition** - expanding on the previous work, the ABF team will be visiting the West Indian Ocean regional countries in order to educate fishermen on the importance of reporting billfish recoveries

### *Outside News*

#### **The South Africa Angling Association (SADSAA) Billfish Satellite tagging project-** (February, 2012)

We would like to congratulate SADSAA for organizing this activity that will put not only South Africa but also Africa at large on the map of Billfish Research.

**Membership** continues to grow, but we need more members to help us achieve our goals. Please register as a member if you are not already one, the African Billfish Foundation needs your support to continue our work here in Kenya and the other regional areas.

Join us ONLINE at: <http://www.africanbillfish.org>

### *Our Appeal*

With more tagging comes the responsibility of data collection and managing the recaptures in each region, therefore we kindly request our members and supporters to help us on this initiative. We need contact people on the ground that can educate the local fishermen on the importance of tag returns.