



# **Western Pacific East Asia (WPEA) Improved Tuna Monitoring Activity**

**Progress Report  
2023**

## 2023 Activity Progress Report: WPEA – Improved Tuna Monitoring Activity

### Summary

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#### Activity information

<b>Activity Title</b>	Western Pacific East Asia – Improved Tuna Monitoring
<b>Goal</b>	To improve monitoring and management of tuna catches in Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam and contribute to reduced Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing.
<b>Intended outcomes</b>	<p>Long Term: National and international cooperation for the management of highly migratory fish stocks in the Western Pacific and East Asia Seas (Indonesia Philippines and Vietnam) results in the sustainable management of Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) stocks and reduced IUU fishing.</p> <p>Medium Term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Integrated fishery monitoring programmes for tuna species implemented by Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam which are compliant with WCPFC requirements.</li><li>• Uncertainties in WCPO catch and stock estimates reduced.</li><li>• Improved national catch estimates and stock assessments inform national fisheries management and harvest strategies.</li></ul> <p>Short Term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vietnam, Philippines and Indonesia governments require adequate resources for tuna monitoring and assessments within coordinated and supportive policy and legal frameworks.</li><li>• Strengthened national capacities in fishery monitoring and catch estimations.</li><li>• Improved national data and knowledge management systems and processes for catch estimation and stock assessment.</li></ul>

#### Contract or grant information

<b>Start and end dates</b>	January 1, 2017 to June 30, 2024.
<b>Total cost</b>	NZ\$5,225,538 (original NZ4,912,052 + NZ\$313,486 top up for 2024)

<b>Reporting period</b>	1 January 2023 through 31 December 2023
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#### Progress report preparation

<b>Prepared by</b>	Lars Olsen, Project Manager
<b>Others involved or consulted</b>	SPC, WCPFC Secretariat staff and Country contacts (Indonesia, Vietnam & Philippines)
<b>Date of report</b>	4 February 2024

## Key Conclusions and Necessary Actions

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### 1. Highlight the most significant achievements (or difference made) during the period. Please clearly indicate this Activity's contribution to achievements.

WPEA-ITM Key Activities and Achievements in 2023:

The WPEA-ITM continued to improve the quality and quantity of tuna data in the East Asia region through the maintenance of critical national tuna data collection programs in all three countries. The project was able to support enumerators in all three countries to enable this critical data collection. The data from these sets of enumerators is crucial for the calibration and validation of the data submissions to WCPFC. The Annual Catch Estimates workshops were held in each country with in-person contribution from SPC. The WPEA collected data at these workshops is used to calibrate the other data sources coming from other agencies or NGO's.

A WPEA focused Stock Assessment workshop was held in Sydney, Australia on 27-31 March 2023. The SPG team of experts was able to review the data and techniques used by WCPFC to conduct tuna stock assessments with a special focus on the importance of the WPEA region. The workshop was successful in building capacity of the participants to understand the WCPFC stock assessment process, but was also useful in highlighting the importance of the data gathered in the WPEA region.

Another highlight was the completion of the End of Project Gap Analysis completed before SC19. This piece of work was very timely in that the WPEA-ITM is due to wrap up in 2024 and at the time, no future phase of the project had been developed or approved, leaving future work in the space uncertain. The Gap Analysis was reviewed and accepted by SC19, TCC19 and finally WCPFC20, by which time New Zealand had indicated their intent to fund another phase of this project. It was the information in the Gap Analysis that enabled this

Since the last Progress Report, key activities of the WPEA-ITM have included:

#### **Policy and legal frameworks**

- WPEA-ITM: During the week of 27-31 March, 2023, SPC ran a Stock Assessment Workshop/Training focused on the Region 5 WPEA countries. Key representatives from each country attended this workshop in Sydney, Australia. The workshop focused on:
  - An improved understanding of WCPFC stock assessment data requirements, methods and interpretation of stock assessment outcomes.
  - A discussion on the data needs/enhancement for the WPEA region that could improve stock assessment outputs and related management advice for the WPEA region.



*Building capacity of the WPEA members to interpret stock assessment outputs and consider these in relation to provision of management advice for their WPEA region including implications harvest strategies for tuna species.*

## Data collection and catch estimates

- Enumerators for all three countries were supported by WPEA-ITM. This included 32 in the Philippines, 9 in Indonesia, and 12 in Vietnam to support that national enumerators in each country providing valuable port sampling data used to generate catch estimates for the WCPFC.
- Annual Data Review Workshops and Catch Estimation Meetings were supported in all three countries, with final catch estimates produced from each workshop and submitted to the WCPFC. The workshops demonstrated continued improvements in the collection and analysis of data on the total oceanic tuna catches that the countries and the Commission need to ensure sustainable management of tuna stocks and species. They also identified key issues compromising further improvements in the data, with recommendations made across all three countries for further action in 2023 and 2024.



*Indonesia: The 14<sup>th</sup> Indonesia Annual Tuna Fisheries Catch Estimate Review Workshop (ITFACE-14) was held in person in Bogor from 30-31 May 2023.*



*Philippines: The 16th PTUNASTAT Annual Catch Estimates Review Workshop was held in person in Legazpi City from 25-26 May, 2023.*



*Vietnam: The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Catch Estimates Workshop (VTFACE-12) was held in person in DaNang from 3-4 April, 2023.*

## Capacity building in IT area

- Philippines: The development of the Philippines National Stock Assessment Project (NSAP) database system which was completed in June 2021 continued with the roll-out of the system by SPC in January 16-19, 2023 which was attended by 60 people from NFRDI and BFAR. Additional IT equipment including tables for this rollout was sourced by the WPEA-ITM project. This new system has been developed on a web-browser/cloud hosted platform and will facilitate the entry and management of Philippines landings and port sampling data collected from hundreds of landing sites in Philippines provinces.

- Indonesia: Procurement of 5 new laptops, 3 portable hard drives and data projector were supported by the WPEA project.

### **Capacity building in fishery monitoring**

- Vietnam held a SPC support port sampling data collection workshop on 21-22 December, 2023 with a focus on defining the difficulties and challenges in collecting tuna data in general and collecting the port-sampling data in particular; understanding in data requirements for stock assessments and data collection methodologies in marine capture fisheries; understanding forms and protocols used to collect the tuna port-sampling data in 2024 and forwards; and collecting information and filling in the port-sampling data forms. It was attended by 42 people, 30 of which were from fishing ports around Vietnam. The rest were from DoF, RIMF, Nha Trang University, VINTUNA.
- A shared Observer training for Indonesia and Vietnam was scheduled to be delivered by the Philippines in late 2023. This was postponed to early 2024 to optimize the attendance and logistics of this important shared training.

### **WPEA support by the SPC-OFP**

- The contract for SPC's continued support under the project was maintained in 2023, allowing SPC to provide a range of forms of assistance in 2023. In addition to the support listed above, SPC also:
  - Continued development and ongoing support for the new National Stock Assessment (NSAP) Database system and the related mobile app (NSAP eDGES) used to collect data at landings sites throughout the Philippines. The cloud hosting of this system was moved from MS Azure to the SPC cloud server in late 2023.
  - Conducted the Philippines NSAP Database System Workshop (January 2023) in General Santos City which included training in the use of NSAP eDGES in both the meeting room and at the landing sites, and a review of NSAP reporting requirements.
  - Conducted a stock assessment and harvest strategy capacity building workshop (attended by six SPC staff) for the three WPEA countries (Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam), in Sydney, Australia over the period 27-30 March 2023.
  - Provision of technical advice through participation at the Annual Catch Estimates and Data Review Workshops in Vietnam (April 2023), Philippines (May 2023) and Indonesia (June 2023).
  - Facilitated submission of 2023 scientific data submissions from three countries into WCPFC databases;
  - Provision of technical advice to Indonesia participants through the Stock Assessment Workshop (SAW) in June 2023.
  - Continued remote helpdesk support to Philippines and Vietnam for their use of SPC-developed database systems, and various support/advice to all WPEA countries regarding reporting from database systems and preparation of annual national catch estimates.

### **Optional: Success story**

#### **WPEA stock assessment workshop**

The Stock Assessment Workshop held in Sydney from 27-31 March 2023 was another great opportunity for all three countries to spend time together focused on data collection used by the WCPFC and SPC to form the stock assessments used to guide the WCPFC. The first four days were run

by SPC and the last day focused on the end of project gap analysis which was run by Barbara Hanchard, the consultant engaged to do this work. The project supported two people from each country to attend, with the Philippines self-funding another 3 people to attend.

Day 1 (27th March): SPC started with some background on stock assessment and statistical catch at age model theory. This was followed by a review of the various components that go into the skipjack stock assessment such as fish biology, model structure (spatial and fishery definitions), data inputs, how selectivity is handled in the model tagging data and other model settings. Further information was given on developing a new diagnostic model: the stepwise (or bridging) analysis. The day finished with discussions on sensitivity and dealing with uncertainty: structural grids, ensembles and other methodologies. Model predictions, management qualities, projections and TRP evaluations were also discussed.

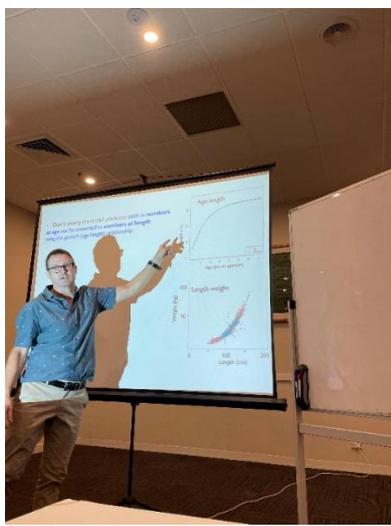
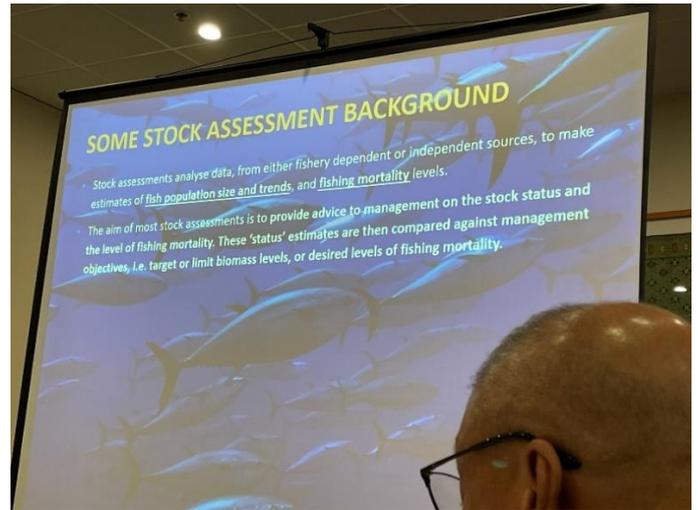
Day 2 (28th March): SPC ran a detailed session on how CPUE is calculated and used in the model for stock assessment or fishery data analyses, noting that improved abundance indices in the WPEA region would be useful for assessment. The day also included a session to discuss the observed/perceived dynamics of tuna in each WPEA country's waters to help improve the understanding of how tuna populations and dynamics in the WPEA region relate to the broader stock in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.

Day 3 (29th March): There were more sessions that went further into data requirements for stock assessment including a focus on how and what data improvements will be required to improve the certainty of stock assessment results for the WPEA region, and in to include appropriate estimations of data uncertainty for WPEA countries, both historically and for future assessments. The WPEA countries presented their data collection challenges and approaches. The session concluded with discussions of scenarios for catch uncertainty to be include in the stock assessment for the region.

Day 4 (30th March): This was focused on the harvest strategy approach with an emphasis on the skipjack interim management procedure recently adopted by the WCPFC. A session was also run as a refresher on the mixed fishery approach and its further development followed by some discussion on objectives for yellowfin and bigeye tuna.

Day 5 (31st March): The last day of the workshop was run by Barbara Hanchard, the consultant engaged to conduct the end of project gap analysis. A workshop exercise was conducted to get a preliminary feel for the perceived progress, gaps and priorities for future activities. This data then validated by the consultant with relevant stakeholders in the three countries in the following months, which culminated in the End of Project Gap Analysis presented at SC19 and WCPFC20.

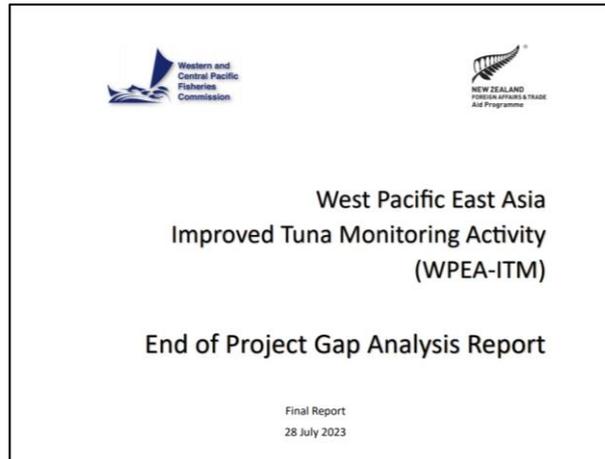
Some photos from the week are shown below:



*The WPEA stock assessment workshop held in Sydney from 27-31 March 2023*

**WPEA-ITM End of Project Gap Analysis integrated with Annual Catch Estimates Workshops**

The End of Project Gap Analysis was a key piece of work conducted during 2023. Its key objective was to inform the development of a future project phase as the current project is due to conclude in 2024. This was done by consideration of progress made by the WPEA-ITM activities, a revisit of the recommendations from Mid-Term Evaluation, along with relevant stakeholder consultations. These consultations were primarily conducted during each country's Annual Catch Estimates workshops held in April and May (see Data collection and catch estimates section of report above). This was an ideal and fortuitous time for the consultant to see firsthand the progress made and robustness of the data collection that is crucial to the WCPFC. The key output of this work and the report was an assessment of progress and costed activities that should continue after the WPEA-ITM project concludes in 2024. These findings were presented to and reported at SC19, TCC19 and WCPFC20.



The key conclusions presented were that:

1. WPEA-ITM progress remains on track;
2. Participating countries remain committed to addressing gaps;
3. Any process to build a further phase of assistance should include clear and concise Transition/Exit strategies agreed to by all stakeholders before commencement of a new project;
4. Every effort should be made to identify and secure donor commitment, preferably for a 5-year period;
5. Further prioritisation may be necessary to preliminary estimate options:
  - a. Option 1: Comprehensive 5-year programme of assistance USD 6.8 m or USD 1.36m per year (avg);
  - b. Option 2: 3-year programme USD 4.4m or USD 1.46m per year (avg);
  - c. Option 3: 3 years; activities have been arbitrarily prioritized USD 3.5m or USD 1.17m per year (avg);
6. Technical assistance and regional training opportunities provided by WCPFC and SPC should remain a feature of any new project; and
7. The introduction of communication and outreach activities is expected to be important for raising awareness of WCPFC data obligations.

At the end of 2023, the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade indicated that New Zealand was planning to support another future phase of the WPEA project. Scope and planning for this project will commence in 2024.

## **2. Comment on whether the Activity is making adequate progress to justify the level of investment provided.**

Reflecting back to the end of 2021, when the Mid-Term Evaluation was completed, it found that “through the support of the Activity, there has been on-going improvements in all three countries in respect of the quality and scope of fishery monitoring activities as evidenced in various data audit reports prepared by SPC for the three participating countries and associated reports presented to the WCPFC Scientific Committee regarding scientific data available to the Commission and related data gaps. This is validation that the WPEA-ITM is having a positive impact in terms of supporting national compliance with the obligations of WCPFC and in improving the data available to assessments of WCPO oceanic tuna stocks.” It also found that “Given the relative importance of tuna fisheries in Indonesia, Philippines, and Vietnam, this makes a significant contribution to reduce uncertainties in the data available for assessments.”

This was further validated by the 2023 End of Project Gap Analysis which concluded that progress of the WPEA-ITM remains on track despite pandemic disruptions and that participating countries remain

committed to making inroads to data collection improvements necessary for them to meet their WCPFC data obligations. The WPEA countries remain fully engaged and committed to progressing data collection programmes so that they are sustainable and self-funded, at the same time recognizing that they have diverse multi-gear fisheries for oceanic tunas which are likely to require significant investment over a long period of time to achieve sustainable outcomes.

Further reflecting on the discussions of the importance of the WPEA region to the WCPFC fish stocks at SC19, TCC19 and WCPFC20, the progress made to date by the WPEA-ITM progress was appreciated by CCMs. There were a number of strong interventions at WCPFC20 by key CCMs supporting the progress and continued work in the WPEA area.

### **3. Highlight any specific lessons learned**

The key lesson learned builds on the lesson learned last year which was “that managing the budget and workplans requires quite a bit of flexibility. This is because project activities are not fully costed at the start of the year, rather they are submitted as project proposals throughout the year. This often means that what is proposed, doesn’t fit neatly into what was planned and budgeted. Costs, needs and circumstances change throughout the year.”

Each of the countries are very busy managing their own fisheries on top of the regional/international requirements from their participation in other RFMOs. While project activities from the WPEA-ITM complement much of this work, it can be a challenge to find the time that all the various moving parts can come together. Often this scheduling requires participants from many different provinces to travel to a central location. This coupled with the very busy schedule of the Science Service Provider, SPC, has at times made finding suitable times and venues for various project activities challenging. It will be important for future years of project work to map out indicative schedules for project work early in the year to attempt to avoid some of these scheduling challenges.

### **4. Summarise key issues and challenges addressed. Include any adaptation made to scope, timeframe, budget.**

From the project management perspective, the key challenge in 2023 was planning for the end of the WPEA-ITM project in 2024 given that the original resourcing for the project was for 2017-2022. Given the project underspends and delays, primarily due to the Covid pandemic, the project was granted a “no cost” extension to 2023 and then to 2024. With project activities resuming in the second half of 2022 and picking up momentum in 2023, resources to fund activities in 2024 started to look like it was going to be a challenge. About mid-way through 2023 it was estimated that most of the funding allocated to the project would be utilized in 2023 leaving very little for the continuation of project activities in 2024. This led to some restriction of activities in 2023 in an attempt to balance out project resources for 2024. The New Zealand government came to the rescue with a project funding “top up” of NZ\$ 313,486.00. As the 2023 year started to draw to an end, it became apparent that even with the “top up”, 2024 would need to be run on minimal resources.

Building on the resourcing challenge for 2024, it was uncertain if there would be any funding for a future phase of the project after 2024. Once again, New Zealand came to rescue announcing that they intend to support another phase of the WPEA project. They solved the funding pressure for 2024 by indicating that the new project could commence from July 2024, thereby allowing us to utilise the remaining project resources for the first half of 2024. This is and was a fantastic outcome for the WPEA-ITM project.

Activities planned but not executed in 2023 were as follows:

- National Tuna Management Plan Workshop for Indonesia (Output 1.4)

- This was pushed to 2024 due to scheduling and budget challenges
- Training workshop on the data analysis for the tuna fisheries management in Vietnam (Output 2.6)
  - This was scheduled for late in 2023, but was pushed to 2024 due to scheduling and budget challenges.
- Port Sampling data collection review workshop in Vietnam was partially completed (Output 2.9)
  - A port sampling data collection review workshop was completed in December, but a follow up training workshop in 2024 will focus on techniques and training of more staff at local ports in collecting and entering data into T2 with the participation of SPC experts.
- A shared observer training for all WPEA countries to be hosted by the Philippines (Output 3.1)
  - This was to be major training and collaboration event. It nearly happened in October, but were some scheduling challenges that ultimately made us push the activity into early 2024. Moving this into 2024 also helped with budget constraints.
- Observer cost recovery evaluation study in Vietnam (Output 3.2.1)
  - This was pushed to 2024 in part due to wanting this to happen after the shared observer training which was delayed, but also to help with budget constraints.
- Automatic reporting of data landing from WPEA activities in Indonesia (Output 5.6)
  - This was initially delayed due to scheduling issues, but may be reprioritized into a different project activity in 2024.

#### Budget underspend for project

- The underspend of this year's budget of \$158,153.65 is actually lower than anticipated. Given the budget for 2023 was \$858,744.75 and the indicative budget for 2024 was only \$166,662.00, it was hoped that fewer activities would have occurred in 2023 to enable adequate carryover to 2024. This was not the case with a robust spend of \$700,591.10. Fortunately, New Zealand came to the rescue with a "top up" of NZ\$313,486 and a new project end date of 30 June 2024. Both of these ended up enabling the project to continue more or less at current levels to 30 June 2024. The half year budget for 2024 will be \$512,032.00.

The Philippines offered the following key issues and challenges along with potential solutions:

- Project Planning and Implementation (including budgetary requirements) - by email exchange / online
  - the major activities
- Negotiate on WCPFC issues that impact ID, PH, and VT (e.g. FADs, other commercial fisheries, etc.) including continued capacity building through participation in WCPFC meetings and related workshops
  - PH, ID, VT should meet before WCPFC meetings (SC, TCC, Commission) to discuss and how to lobby for common interest
  - Continued capacity building and funding assistance for 3-countries participation
- Port samplers/enumerators' salary (Low)
  - An increase in the budget be considered to accommodate salary increase (if possible)
  - As of December 2023, there are a total of 77 NSAP enumerators covered by NFRDI for one year and 32 tuna enumerators for six (6) months covered by WPEA Project.
  - Proximity of port samplers/enumerators' residences in their area of assignment be considered
- Maintaining and improving the level of port sampling (NSAP) including observer program coverage

- Continue to lobby for funding to maintain and improve the port sampling and observer program coverage (e.g. NFRDI, BFAR, WPEA)
- Data provision to WCPFC
  - Continued capacity building and technical assistance from SPC/WCPFC

Indonesia offered the following key issues and challenges along with potential solutions:

- Data Collection: Port sampling, Log book, Observer has Limited Funding provided by Government (DGCF and BRIN) and is challenged by the Transition of research organization from KKP to BRIN
  - Increase participation of Industry (through the requirement by market, i.e. Ecolabelling certification and FIP), Participation of Non organizational Organization
  - The expectation is to Secure funding from non-tax revenue of fisheries sectors (PIT policy-Quota based policy) - (under review) for data collection and additional Collaboration with Universities (Provinces) under BRIN management talented program, Forming of Fishing Association (i.e. ATLI, AP2HI, ADI, APSI), and Regular training, supervision and evaluation (DGCF and BRIN).
- National policy, institutional, governance & coordination arrangements implemented with Support national level harvest strategy and Quota based Policy including the challenges of NTMP and HS established, CMM of WCPFC adopted but compliance and implementation remain challenges; Autonomous right of Provinces to fished <12Miles; Quota based policy deferred to be implemented in 2025; and on-going low Stock Status of Tropical tuna in Reg 5/7 of WCPO
  - Increase the literacy and awareness of central and provincial governments, Industrial owner, private sectors (Sustainability, Fishing permit, Quota based policy and relevant RFMO CMM) is ongoing but need to speed up.
  - Co-management approach (Community involvement for monitoring, FADs, IUU activities)

Vietnam offered the following key issues and challenges along with potential solutions:

- Long time to get approval of project document
  - submit document asap
- Receiving mechanism of ODA
  - MFAT letter to MOF
- Capacity in implementing scientific-based fisheries management
  - Training, data analysis
- Implementing quota management system
  - Revised regulations, training
- Tuna (e.g. skj) as bycatch of small-scale fisheries
  - Sampling to catch estimate, HCR?
- Domestic databases and tufman2
  - Data warehouse
- Limitation of server capacity
  - Provide server
- Understanding obligations of a CNM is unclear
  - Secretariat's letter to minister of MARD

- Understanding tuna stocks in the region is limited
  - Data sharing
- No extra salary for staffs
  - Project provide some budget for staffs to conduct activities

**5. The following key actions are planned or underway as a result of issues identified in this assessment (include issues relevant to transition/ exit):**

1. The Steering Committee meeting scheduled for January 24-25, 2024 will have a focus on what is needed to wrap up this current phase of the project by mid-2024 and to plan project activities for 2025 and beyond.
2. The exact scope and details of future project activities and associated transition/exit strategies will be planned once the resourcing amount and duration of the next phase is confirmed by New Zealand.

**6. The results of actions from the previous progress report were:**

*Key actions from 2022 Activity Progress Report:*

1. *Special focus of transition planning for end of this project and development of a potential new project.*
  - Activity Exit Strategy - Transition Plans were prepared by each country as part of the End of Project Gap Analysis. While these plans will not be used specifically to “exit” from the WPEA project given the project is continuing post June 2024, they will provide a very useful basis to develop activities in the new project along with new Exit Strategies – Transition Plans for the new project.
2. *Special note that budget for 2024 will need to come from savings from 2023.*
  - \$158,153 in budget savings were carried over to the 2024 budget from activities not completed. This was complemented with a “top up” from New Zealand of NZ\$313,486 to be used in the first six months of 2024. The half year budget for 2024 is \$512,032.00.

## **Review of Progress to Date**

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### **Effectiveness**

- 1) **Assess the progress of this Activity against the intended outputs and outcomes defined in the Results Framework by annotating the Results Measurement Table with data and explanation of any variance (an example is attached in Appendix A).**

The annotated Results Measurement Table is attached in Appendix A.

- 2) **Assess the effectiveness of this Activity by considering the following:**

- a) **Progress in delivering outputs. Consider (if appropriate) quality, relevance, timeliness of outputs and whether the Activity is reaching the intended people.**

Good progress was made at the Output level in most areas, although some planned activities were pushed to 2024 due to budget constraints and scheduling challenges in some instances. A review of each Output level is presented below:

## **Output 1 National policy, institutional, governance, coordination and technical networking implemented**

- During the week of 27-31 March, 2023, SPC ran a Stock Assessment Workshop/Training focused on the Region 5 WPEA countries which delivered an improved understanding of WCPFC stock assessment data requirements, methods and interpretation of stock assessment outcomes. Training in stock assessment methodology is highly relevant to the data needs of the WCPFC from the WPEA region. As this kind of capacity building contributes directly to the need and importance of quality data from the WPEA region, it is hoped more of this kind of training can occur in the future. It helps to elevate the importance of quality data within each WPEA country.
- Review of the Indonesia National Tuna Management Plan was delayed to 2024 due to both time constraints and the need to save some budget for 2024.

## **Output 2 Increased port catch measurement and sampling – Indonesia and Vietnam – and enhanced data acquisition in all three countries**

- A national data acquisition adviser (NDAA) in Vietnam continued to be supported by the WPEA project. This person worked with SPC to assist local staff in Vietnam to operate Tufman2. This is an important role to facilitate the use of Tufman2 in Vietnam. This year it focused on coding and updating new vessels and users in the Tufman2 system for local staff entering the data, guiding and supporting the local staff and other users in entering data and extracting data from database, and assisting local staff in reviewing, correcting, erasing data in the database.
- The project supported SPC to run Data Audit Review Workshop's in each country. These workshops are critical for each country to prepare for their Annual Catch Estimates (ACE) workshops that prepare the tuna data that is submitted to WCPFC. As the Data Audit Review workshops are run immediately before the ACE workshops, they are a very effective use of time and resource.
- 12 enumerators were supported in Vietnam across 12 Provinces: Da Nang, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Khanh Hoa, Ninh Thuan, Binh Thuan, Vung Tau, Quang Tri, Thua Thien – Hue and Tien Giang. They collected 31,406 samples (about 64% of the proposed total) coming from 14,070 logbooks, 16,715 off loadings and 621 port samplings. This is the key data used to develop the annual catch estimates used in the submission of WCPFC data. It is noted that there appears to be a delay or back log in the data being entered/uploaded into Tufman2.
- Training and pay for 9 enumerators and 2 data entry staff was supported in Indonesia. This was part of the "restart" of the enumerator program in Bitung that was forced to restart in 2023 due to a funding lapse from WPEA (due to internal restructure issues in Indonesia). The data from these enumerators is also very important in the calibration of the annual catch estimates used by Indonesia to submit to WCPFC.
- The WPEA project supported six months of salary for 32 enumerators in the Philippines, with the rest of the costs supported by the Philippine government. In addition to the data collected by these enumerators being used to calibrate the annual catch estimates provided to WCPFC by the Philippines, the funding also supported training and the continued trial of the mobile application called NSAP Edges.
- A tuna data analysis workshop in Vietnam was delayed to 2024 to spread available budget into 2024.
- A port sampling data workshop was held in Vietnam in December with 42 participants. It focused on reviewing the port-sampling data in provinces, exploring all issues and challenges in the existing tuna port-sampling data collection at the local ports, and introducing the tuna

port-sampling data program and guide implementation of the program in 2024 and forwards. This workshop will be followed up with another workshop in 2024 that will focus on port sampling techniques and data entry into Tufman2.

### **Output 3 Expanded Observer Programme – Indonesia and Vietnam**

- The planned shared Observer training for Indonesia and Vietnam hosted by the Philippines was delayed to 2024 due to scheduling challenges. It was also helpful to delay due to budget constraints. While not completed in 2023, this activity is a fantastic outcome in that it demonstrates how the three countries can help each other to build data collection programs. The Philippines has been a success story, especially for its observer program and the fact that the other two countries want to learn from the successes in the Philippines is a great thing.
- An observer cost recovery study in Vietnam was delayed to 2024, both to save some budget, but also so that it can occur after the shared observer training in the Philippines.

### **Output 4 National sampling plans, data analysis, catch estimates and reporting.**

- Annual Catch Estimate workshops were held in each of the 3 countries. These workshops are attended by all the relevant tuna data organizations in each country including SPC. This is where the catch estimates submitted to the WCPFC are generated. Of all the WPEA project activities in each of the countries, the ACE workshops provide the best opportunity to identify and address data gaps or deficiencies as all the key stakeholders are in the room.
- Support was also provided to attend SC19, TCC19 and WCPFC20. While each of the countries is obligated to send their own staff to these meetings, which they do; the WPEA project support enables the key WPEA focused (i.e.: National Coordinators) to attend thereby linking the WPEA data programs to Commission activities.
- An End of Project Gap Analysis was conducted to evaluate progress of the project and to inform options for the development of a new or continuing phase of the WPEA project. The analysis also contributed country level exit/transition strategies that will be useful in the development of the new phase of the project. This was seen as an effective output in that it helps to speed up the development process of the new project.

### **Output 5 National databases developed, functional and utilized**

- Some data entry, storage and presentation equipment were sourced for Indonesia. This was to equip enumerators and the database managers with laptops and data storage to make them productive. A projector was also provided to facilitate online meetings and trainings between regional staff and head office.
- The project provided resources for SPC's ongoing database support for Tufman2 and NSAP Edges along with continued development and cloud hosting of the NSAP Edges mobile application.
- Development of a system for automatic reporting of data landing from WPEA activities in Indonesia was again delayed and pushed to 2024. It is not clear if this is still a need within Indonesia.

### **b) What unintended consequences (positive or negative) might have also resulted? If negative, how are these being addressed?**

Depending on how you look at it, the need to delay some of the project activities to 2024 can be positive or negative. Either way, it was necessary in that there would not have been enough budget in 2024 to even continue on with baseline activity programming as we not limited

activity in 2023. It should be noted, that overall project activity in 2023 did increase and in fact was the highest of all the WPEA project years. The downside of the no cost extensions was that we ended up with a very limited budget for 2024 activities. Again, depending on you look at it, this prompted the solution we have arrived at for 2024. That solution includes a “top up” from New Zealand of NZ\$313,486 and a rephrasing of the project so that it will conclude at the end of June 2024. Given that NZ is supporting another phase of the project and their new portfolio funding program starts in July 2024, this was a good outcome.

**c) Assess how achieved outputs are contributing to reaching outcomes**

There has been progress on a number of short-term outputs in 2023 which have further contributed to progress on medium-term and long-term outcomes. Please refer to the Results Framework below. The End of Project Gap Analysis validated the Mid-Term Evaluation report which concluded “there has been on-going improvements in all three countries in respect of the quality and scope of fishery monitoring activities as evidenced in various data audit reports prepared by SPC for the three participating countries and associated reports presented to the WCPFC Scientific Committee regarding scientific data available to the Commission and related data gaps. This is validation that the WPEA-ITM is having a positive impact in terms of supporting national compliance with the obligations of WCPFC and in improving the data available to assessments of WCPO oceanic tuna stocks.”

**d) If relevant for this period of Activity reporting, comment on progress against short term outcomes and medium-term outcomes**

**i) What difference is the Activity making, if any?**

This project continues to make an important difference to the improvement of national catch estimates in the three countries. The quality, quantity and utility of this information continues to improve, and therefore has increasing benefits to the management of national fisheries and the tuna fisheries of the WCPFC. These improvements are accomplished through support to the national catch estimation workshops, participation in the SPC Tuna Data Workshops, increased participation in WCPFC meetings, and other support that SPC provides to the three countries to improve the collection and analysis of fisheries data from logbooks, observer reports, and monitoring landings of oceanic tuna at fishing ports and other locations. The maintenance of core data collection activities throughout 2023 all three countries is also a clear demonstration of the increased importance of these activities in these countries. The improvements made and commitment from the three countries was recognized at WCPFC20. This is particularly important given how critical the data from the WPEA region is to the sustainability of the wider WCPFC region tuna stocks.

**ii) Which aspects are working better, for whom, why?**

The core project activities being the support of port sampling programs, annual catch estimates workshops and involvement in key WCPFC regional meetings continue to raise the profile of WCPFC data needs in each of the three countries. This was reinforced with capacity development in the form of stock assessment training. This continued work and awareness raising helps the central governments impress upon the provincial governments the importance of collecting this data. While not much progress was made in developing the observer programs in Indonesia and Vietnam, the project is poised to better support this in 2024 and beyond through the shared training opportunity made available by the Philippines.

e) Comment as appropriate on Cross-cutting issues:

- i) Describe how Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment are being enhanced or protected and demonstrate how the principles outlined in the Gender Analysis guideline are being addressed in this Activity

Project activities carried out in 2023 had the following gender statistics:

Project number	Name	Dates	Total Attendees	M	F
WPEA-2023-01	SAW training Sydney	27-31 March 2023	16	11	5
PHL-2023-03	Hiring of Regional Technical Data Enumerators	July-Dec 2023	32	11	21
IDN-2023-03	Recruitment & Training and Monthly Salary for Enumerator/port sampler	May-Dec 2023	15	12	3
VNM-2023-01	Implement the tuna enumerators in Viet Nam	Jan-Dec 2023	9	9	
VNM-2023-02	Implement the tuna enumerators in Viet Nam – Additional provinces	Jan-Dec 2023	3	3	
VNM-2023-03	National data acquisition adviser (NDAA)	Jan-Dec 2023	1	1	
WPEA-2023-02	Gap Analysis	August 2023	N/A		
PHL-2023-01	Upgrade IT for Data Entry and Maintenance	March 2023	11	3	8
PHL-2023-02	Annual Catch Estimation Workshops	21-27 May 2023	53	31	22
IDN-2023-02	Annual Catch Estimation Workshops (ITFACE14)	30-31 May 2023	39	24	15
IDN-2023-04	Advanced Stock Assessment Workshop	July 2023	2	1	1
VNM-2023-04	The twelfth Vietnam Tuna Fishery Data Collection and Annual catch estimation Workshop (VTFACE-12)	3-4 April 2023	46	42	4
IDN-2023-01	Upgrade IT for Data Entry and Maintenance	August 2023	N/A		
VNM-2023-05	Port Sampling Data Collection Workshop	Dec 21-22, 2023	42	37	5
	Total Numbers	2023 total	227	148	79
	Total Percentages	2023 total		65%	35%

Although the WPEA project really doesn’t have any control over gender issues in each of the three countries, it should be noted that one of the three WPEA National Coordinators is female and the rate of female participation in WPEA activities overall is about 35% compared to about 65% for male participation. It should also be noted that there are females in senior leadership that represent both the Philippines and Indonesia at WCPFC meetings. Vietnam has also recently designated a female to be lead in WCPFC activities for Vietnam.

The Philippines highlighted the following in regards to gender, youth and disadvantaged:

- Philippines develops activities on WPEA’s promotion and commitment to gender and development awareness in accordance with the Philippines Commission on Women Memo Circular and must identify the attendance of the various clients and employees.
- Posting of Projects Calendar of Activities and Activity Photos (*e.g. Encourage to send their lineup of activities and photos on NFRDI/BFAR website and /or social media pages*).
- #Purple Tuesdays–Wear anything purple on all the Wednesdays of March to signify support for women’s empowerment and gender equality.
- Project participants will be encouraged to support the online campaign by posting and sharing posts and developing project campaigns. Project may also use for the promotion of Advocacy Profile Photo and other online materials under the hashtag #WE can be EquAll.
- The project has no specific activities for disadvantaged but the Philippines may continue to encourage everyone involved in the project are encouraged to observed the Council for the Welfare of Children as well as the Women with Disabilities Day celebration spearheaded annually by the Council on Disability Affairs

Indonesia noted the following gender statistics for their ports of Bitung and Kendari:

Location	Estimated Proportion of Male and Female					
	At Port		Processors		Local Fish Market	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
PPS Bitung	0,6	0,4	0,4	0,6	0,4	0,6
PPS Kendari	0,8	0,3	0,4	0,6	0,2	0,8

Indonesia also noted the following potential activities for consideration in relation to gender, youth and disadvantaged:

- Increase capacity and literacy for Women, disable person, disadvantaged person for participating in data collection (Community based approach)
- Developed specific Apps for Women, disable person, to participate in data collection at port, Processing plant and market data (Industrial Owner approach)
- Establish e-monitoring (camera) at port and onboard vessel (incorporated AI): data capture and analysis by GYD (through pilot, training and supervision)
- Enhance fishers’ knowledge and skill with involvement of GYD for high standard quality product and fulfil data reporting and its traceability.

Vietnam suggested the following activities to promote gender, youth and disadvantaged:

- Training safety skills for fishermen
- Publishing safety handbook for fishermen
- Rescuing protected species at sea
- Implementing outreach programs for youth at local fishing
- Inviting more female to conduct sampling at ports and training workshops
- Providing non-fishing occupation training for local fishermen

**ii) Describe how Human Rights are being enhanced or protected and demonstrate how the principles outlined in the Human Rights Guideline are being addressed in this Activity**

Labor rights awareness was part of the observer training planned for 2023, noting that this activity was postponed to 2024.

The Philippines is still reeling from COVID 19 pandemic. Project will adhere to PCW that reminds all stakeholders to observe relevant health protocols and safety protocols in conducting physical gatherings in their respective areas. Consultation with stakeholders, LGUs, and responsible agencies for environmental protection and conservation: encourage sharing of information data to find solution that meets the goal of the project the community and the environment.

**iii) Describe how the Environment is being enhanced or protected in keeping with the Environmental and Social Impacts Guideline and how climate change is being addressed in keeping with the Climate Change Operational Policy.**

Improving the monitoring and analysis of catches of oceanic tuna fisheries provide fisheries managers with the information they need to take actions to prevent the fishery from being overfished and to minimize negative impacts on species of special concern that are bycatch. In relation to bycatch, Indonesia is continuing to work with SPC to address a recurring issue raised with their shark data, with a workshop and related activities being planned for 2024 with the support of the Activity. A similar workshop is planned for the Philippines in 2025. The Philippines also developed a proposal to focus more observers on species of special interest. This was not able to be funded in 2023, but it is hoped to be supported in the new phase of the WPEA project.

The continued improvements in the quantity and quality of data resulting from the Activity is contributing to reducing uncertainties in the stock assessments for tuna in the WCPFC, and is allowing more sophisticated management of the fisheries to be developed at national and regional levels. For example, Vietnam continues its move towards the implementation of a quota-based management system for tuna based on the improved data now available as a result of the WPEA projects. In addition, the data has allowed SPC and national agencies to advise the WCPFC on the fisheries relevant to management under the tropical tuna CMM. These advances in management are clear evidence of benefits being delivered to the environment in the oceans of East Asia and the Western Pacific more broadly.

Indonesia noted the need for enhancement of additional data on processing plant, marine debris (Decreasing of plastic use on board and at port, related activities to plastics/debris management), safety issue and welfare of GYD income (management and behaviour).

## **Relevance**

**iv) Has there been any change in the Activity's relevance during the assessment period? (i.e., from design phase or previous report)**

There has been no real change since the last report, although the increase importance of catches from the WPEA region, particularly for yellowfin tuna was raised and discussed at the WCPFC20 meeting. The WPEA-ITM Project provides critical support to the continued efforts to improve the data collected, analyzed and submitted to WCPFC. The three WPEA countries harvest around 30% of the WCPFC tuna catch, including a significant proportion of the juvenile catch of bigeye and yellowfin tuna in particular. Understanding these fisheries and improving their management is critical to sustainable management of the entire WCPFC,

especially since recent stock assessments indicates there is potential for some issues in the future with the yellowfin tuna stock and that these issues are likely to be a result of catch in the WPEA region.

This has been verified by the independent Mid-Term Evaluation undertaken, which found that the “WPEA-ITM design, objectives and associated activities are directly relevant to the sustainable conservation and management of oceanic tuna fisheries in the three participating countries and to the WCPO region. Given the shared nature of WCPO oceanic tuna resources and the fact that Indonesian, Philippine, and Vietnamese tuna fisheries account for 30% to the total tuna catch from the WCPO, comprehensive catch information is required from those fisheries for input to assessments of the status and trends of WCPO tuna resources and to inform decisions on appropriate fishery management options including regional and national harvest strategies and associated WCPFC CMMs.” Further to that it found “In relation to both coherence and relevance, the Activity directly identifies with New Zealand’s international engagement strategy”.

**v) Are there any changes in the context that require adjustments to the planned outputs or risk management (e.g., timing, approach or scope) to ensure they remain relevant and effective? If yes, describe briefly what adjustments have been or will be made.**

There was a significant adjustment to the project due to the no cost extension and resources remaining to complete this phase of the WPEA project. The downside of the no cost extensions was that we ended up with a very limited budget for 2024 activities. This solution to this included a “top up” from New Zealand of NZ\$313,486 and a rephrasing of the project so that it will conclude at the end of June 2024. Given that NZ is supporting another phase of the project and their new portfolio funding program starts in July 2024, this was a good outcome. The Risk Matrix was updated in 2023.

## **Efficiency**

**Attach an annotated version of the original workplan and budget which clearly reports actual against planned expenditure and explanation of any variances (see example in Appendix B).**

- Where expenditure is less than forecast, provide an updated expenditure forecast which confirms whether savings to date are permanent or temporary and describe the impact on timing of completion of the contract.
- Where expenditure is more than forecast, provide details of why, impact on the total cost of the outputs and impact on the contract.

The budget for 2023 was underspent but this was by design. The underspend of this year’s budget of \$158,153.65 is actually lower than anticipated. Given the budget for 2023 was \$858,744.75 and the indicative budget for 2024 was only \$166,662.00, it was hoped that fewer activities would have occurred in 2023 to enable adequate carryover to 2024. This was not the case with a robust spend of \$700,591.10. Fortunately, New Zealand came to the rescue with a “top up” of NZ\$313,486 and a new project end date of 30 June 2024. Both of these ended up enabling the project to continue more or less at current levels to 30 June 2024. The half year budget for 2024 will be \$512,032.00 which should fully expend the project budget at completion.

**Comment on whether this Activity is being managed and delivered cost effectively with the least waste of time and effort. Consider if relevant:**

- *Funds spent against results achieved during the assessment period were reasonable and good value for money*

- *The requisite knowledge, skill and industry was available and used*
- *Leveraging coordination with other donors/partners to maximise Activity results*

The project continued to be delivered as cost effectively as possible during 2023 with most activities directly focused on data collection and analysis relevant to the WCPFC. A good example of the project being nimble is that the consultant for the End of Project Gap Analysis was engaged to synchronize timing of her activities with the three Annual Catch Estimates workshops where all the relevant national stakeholders would be present. This saved a lot of time and expense for this data gathering for the project analysis. In fact, the consultant was able to meet and plan her in country work by meeting with the countries on the last day of the SPC Stock Assessment training workshop in Sydney.

## **Sustainability**

### **Is the plan for sustainability of benefits (including transition/exit plan) adequate?**

The original plan for this project included a phasing down of funding support for key project activities such as enumerators, observers and port sampling work. This was summarily disrupted by the global coronavirus pandemic, which put significant budget strain on national governments leading to their continued need for WPEA project support. The End of Project Gap Analysis did include a transition/exit strategy plan for each country, but this was done in the context of recommending the need for another phase of the project. It is anticipated that these transition/exit strategies will be helpful in informing the design and exit plans for the new phase of the project. It is unfortunate that the pandemic disrupted the original exit plans, but it is hoped that the next phase of the project will see full execution of the project exit plans.

### **What is the Activity doing to ensure benefits will continue beyond MFAT funding? (For example, building country capacity and ownership)?**

The primary mechanisms to ensure benefits will continue beyond the completion of this Activity are

- (1) Continuing to build an awareness and understanding of the benefits of improved tuna data and the requirements of WCPFC for stock assessment and management purposes,
- (2) Building capacity among national programmes to collect, view, and use tuna data,
- (3) To establish robust and accessible databases for the tuna data collected, and
- (4) Work with countries to establish sustainability mechanisms to ensure that activities (including for example observer programme and catch estimate workshops) are funded and implemented beyond the end of this Activity.

There has been progress on the first three of these mechanisms in 2023. For the future sustainability of the WPEA work, there remains a clear commitment to increasingly self-fund tuna data activities by all three countries. How this plays out will be evident in the development of the next phase of the project with the new transition/exit strategies.

### **What challenges are faced in addressing sustainability?**

The challenges faces are the same as reported in 2022:

Some sustainability challenges reported on in previous Annual Progress Reports are being addressed, in particular there is increasing confidence that annual the submission of data to WCPFC will continue, and rates of data input to national and regional databases will continue to improve. However, there are a number of sustainability challenges, including:

1. Whether Indonesia and Vietnam can continue to increase their logbook program (for larger vessels) to a sufficient level of coverage.
2. Whether increased data collected by observers as the national programs are developed can be entered into databases in an accurate and timely way, and submitted to WCPFC as appropriate.
3. Whether all three countries can continue to meet their commitments to gradually cover an increasing cost of Enumerators over the remaining years of the project and all their costs when the project is completed.
4. Whether Indonesia and Vietnam will be able to fund other key activities associated with monitoring and analysing tuna catches, especially the national catch estimation meetings, as well as travel to the SPC Tuna Data Workshops and travel to WCPFC meetings (SC, TCC, etc.).
5. Whether Indonesia and Vietnam will be able to continue Observer Program activities supported by the project, particularly training programs, briefing and debriefing workshops, and cost recovery programs.

The End of Project Gap Analysis concurred with the Mid-Term Evaluation findings that: “Although significant progress has been achieved in each participating country significant work remains. While Philippines has demonstrated a commendable capacity to gradually assume responsibility for the costs associated with fishery monitoring, external support is still required to build capacity in fishery data systems and processes and in stock assessment. There will be a need, for some time, for the WCPFC Secretariat’s and SPC’s advice and nurturing across all facets of fishery monitoring, data systems development and application, and stock assessment capacity building through the TDR and ACE Workshops, the stock assessment workshops in Noumea and continued mentoring support to the observer programme. Significantly increased government financial support to WPEA-related activities will be a challenge to secure from participating countries in the medium term.” A focus on the future (post WPEA project) sustainability will be an important consideration in the development of the next phase of this project.

### **Relationship between Partners, Beneficiaries and Other Stakeholders**

**Comment on any changes, problems or important features of (a) relationships with key stakeholders, and (b) contributions by partners and sub-contractors.**

Relationships between key stakeholders, partners and national coordinators is very good and has continued to improve. Support from and working with SPC continues to be excellent. Two things happened during 2022 (repeated in 2023) that indicate a strengthening of the relationship between the WPEA countries. The first is that they agreed to conduct their annual Observer training together in the Philippines to leverage the great system they have and to share in the benefits. This is scheduled for late February/early March 2024. The other is that the three WPEA countries have continued meeting in the margins of WCPFC to better understand their subregional needs and positions.

### **Updates to Key Activity Management Documents**

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#### ***Activity Results Framework***

**Have the Results Diagram, Measurement Table and Monitoring and Evaluation workplan been reviewed to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate?**

Updated documents are provided in:

- Appendix A: Progress Against the Results Framework
- Appendix B: Progress Against the Agreed Work Plan and Budget for 2023
- Appendix C: Agreed Workplan and Budget for 2024

- Appendix D: Updated Risk Matrix

**Are there justifiable changes/updates needed due to changes in context/need and lessons learned?**

The needed changes have already been agreed to by the WPEA countries, WCPFC and NZ MFAT through the no cost extension to June 30 2024. The 2024 half year work plan has been developed to consider the lessons learned and changes in the landscape since the start of the project.

**Briefly summarise any proposed changes to the Activity Results Framework. Attach an updated version of the Results Framework as proposed.**

There are no proposed changes to the Activity Results Framework.

***Costed workplan***

**Where relevant, attach a costed workplan for the subsequent period. Describe any implications for, or changes to, the Activity's overall costed workplan and/or budget.**

A costed work plan for the first half of 2024 is provided at Appendix C. The budget has been developed to complete as many of the remaining activities as possible due to pandemic delays and to fully utilize all project budget.

***Risk management matrix***

**Review the risk management matrix and attach the updated version in the Appendix. Describe any key risks that have emerged during the reporting period and how they have been mitigated.**

An updated risk management matrix is provided at Appendix D. The risk profiles have not changed since the 2020 APR, however updates against some of the risks has been provided in the matrix.

***Governance and management arrangements***

**Describe any necessary changes to the governance and management arrangements between NZ, partners, contractors and other donors.**

In December 2023, NZ MFAT granted a no-cost extension to the Activity to June 20 2024 along with some "top up" funding to enable full expenditure of the total Activity budget by project end.

## Authorisation

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I declare that the information contained in this report is true and correct and confirm:

- MFAT Funds were received and used only for the agreed purpose(s); and
- All conditions attached to MFAT's Funding have been met; and
- ~~MFAT Funds have been fully utilized for the intended purpose, OR~~
- There are unspent Funds and I understand that MFAT may deduct this amount from the next tranche payment of Funds ~~OR a cheque is attached returning these Funds to MFAT.~~

Lars Olsen

*Full Name*

WPEA-ITM Project Manager

*Title / Position (e.g., CEO)*

*Signature*

*Date*

## Appendices

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This report includes the following appendices:

- Appendix A: Progress against Results Framework (below)
- Appendix B: Progress Against Agreed Workplan and Budget (below)
- Appendix C: Costed workplan for subsequent period (separate document)
- Appendix D: Updated risk management matrix (separate docu

## Appendix A: Progress Against Results Framework

This table shows progress of the Activity against the intended outcomes and outputs defined in the Results Framework, which has been amended from that in *the Sept. 2019 ADD Variation*, based on recommendations from the Mid-Term Review.

From agreed Results Measurement Table in the Activity Design Document				Data up to and including this reporting period	
Results	Planned indicators	Baseline Information and Targets	Planned methodology and data sources	Actual measurement against targets and data sources	Variance explanation
<p><b>Long-term outcome</b></p> <p>National &amp; international cooperation for the management of highly migratory fish stocks in the West Pacific Ocean and East Asia (Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam) results in the sustainable management of WCPO stocks and reduced IUU fishing</p>	<p>Status of harvesting of shared oceanic tuna stocks in the WCPFC Statistical Area vis-à-vis sustainability criteria set by the WCPFC Convention.</p> <p>Number of oceanic fish stocks within safe biological limits</p>	<p>Baseline: Primary target WCPO oceanic tuna stocks taken in Philippine, Indonesian and Vietnamese tuna fisheries (YFT, SKJ and BET) are not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. However, WCPFC's 16th Session of its Scientific Committee recommended, as a precautionary approach, that the fishing mortality on YFT and BET should not be increased from the level that maintains spawning biomass at 2012-2015 levels until the Commission agrees on appropriate target reference points (TRPs).</p> <p><b>Target:</b> Primary target oceanic tuna stocks taken in Philippine, Indonesian and Vietnamese tuna fisheries (YFT, SKJ and BET) are not exploited beyond agreed TRPs (or in the absence of agreed TRPs, the level that maintains spawning biomass at 2012-2015 levels).</p> <p><b>Target:</b> Improved monitoring of oceanic tuna fisheries in the EAS and coverage increased to 40%</p>	<p>Annual CMM compliance reviews and reports</p> <p>Stock assessment reports</p> <p>WCPFC reports, statistics and meeting papers.</p> <p>Annual national TDW Reports</p> <p>Annual national ACE Reports</p> <p>Annual national Part 1 Reports to WCPFC</p>	<p>Improvements in reporting and increased logbook coverage have been evident. This was recognized at WCPFC20.</p> <p>Improved data on yellowfin and bigeye catch in the three partner countries contributed to new stock assessments for these species in 2023.</p> <p>Three key tuna species caught in WPEA countries waters (skipjack, yellowfin and bigeye tuna) are assessed to be within safe biological limits and WCPFC sustainability criteria, although WCPFC20 noted some localized depletion in the WPEA region.</p> <p>Long term targets related to data coverage are not yet met.</p>	