



TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

Twenty-First Regular Session

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Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia (Hybrid)

UPDATE ON THE INTERSESSIONAL PROCESS TO DEVELOP VOLUNTARY REGIONAL HSBI GUIDES

WCPFC-TCC21-2025-24

15 September 2025

Submitted by HSBI-WG Chair

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide TCC21 with an update on the progress of the intersessional process to develop voluntary regional HSBI guides.

Background

2. At WCPFC21(December 2024), the Commission agreed to an intersessional process in 2025 to develop voluntary regional guides for the use of tools in conducting high seas boarding and inspection ([WCPFC21 Outcomes and Summary report Attachment 25](#)).
3. At WCPFC21, the Commission adopted the [Intersessional process to develop voluntary regional guides for the use of tools in conducting high seas boarding and inspections](#), and elected Mr David Power (Australia) as Lead for the HSBI WG. The intersessional process considered voluntary guides for the following indicative list of HSBI tools:
 - i. DNA testing (including benefits, recommended procedures for sampling and processing to an evidentiary standard),
 - ii. weight estimation,
 - iii. calibration certificates for measuring tools,
 - iv. measurement of tori lines,
 - v. measurement of weighted branch lines,
 - vi. collection of photographs and video evidence (including file type recommendations, and capturing actions of inspectors such as measurements and DNA sampling),
 - vii. recommendations for dissemination of photographic and video evidence consisting of many, or large files that cannot be sent via email, and
 - viii. update the Standardized Multi-language Questionnaire

2025 Updates

4. The Secretariat created a dedicated webpage on the WCPFC webpage to support collaboration: [Intersessional Process to develop voluntary regional guides for the use of tools in conducting high seas boarding and inspections | WCPFC](#).
5. A group of technical experts was established, with all CCMs and observers encouraged to participate in the Working Group.
6. In February 2025 Australia initiated the process and sought participation in a virtual meeting. The first meeting of the HSBI WG took place on Tuesday March 4, 2025, [Chairs Summary Report](#).
7. Australia and the WCPFC Secretariat collated the feedback and discussion points from the first virtual meeting into a draft set of voluntary HSBI regional guides, which were developed as:
 - i. DNA testing Guide
 - ii. Weight estimation Guide
 - iii. Measuring tool calibration Guide
 - iv. Bycatch mitigation measuring Guide
 - v. Photo and Video Evidence Guide
8. Australia circulated the draft set of guides and received feedback, and thereafter convened two additional virtual meetings to repeat the feedback and development loop for the guides:
 - **Virtual meeting 2, 26 June 2025:** [Chairs Summary Report HSBI WG02](#) | [Meeting site](#)
 - **Virtual meeting 3, 7 August 2025:** [Chairs Summary Report HSBI WG03](#) | [Meeting site](#)
9. From the 7th of August 2025, participants were invited to provide feedback on the drafted set of guides from the 3rd virtual meeting. The latest versions of the guides, including the feedback received to date, are provided in the following papers:
 - i. HSBI DNA Sampling Guide | [TCC21-2025-24A](#)
 - ii. HSBI Catch Quantification Guide | [TCC21-2025-24B](#)
 - iii. HSBI Measuring Tool Calibration Guide | [TCC21-2025-24C](#)
 - iv. HSBI Bycatch Mitigation Measuring Guide | [TCC21-2025-24D](#)
 - v. HSBI Collection and Dissemination of Photographic and Video Evidence Guide | [TCC21-2025-24E](#)
10. Feedback was also received from participants on the HSBI Standardised Multi-language Questionnaire | [TCC21-2025-24F](#).
11. A small working group meeting will be convened in the margins of TCC21 to discuss the following points:
 - i. Revisit the scope of the voluntary guides.
 - ii. Consider and discuss potential refinements to improve the voluntary guides.

- iii. Assess whether to support each voluntary guide for submission to WCPFC22.
 - iv. Identify and agree on next steps.
12. The HSBI WG Chair will present the selected draft voluntary HSBI regional guides to TCC21 for consideration and endorsement, ahead of their proposed adoption at WCPFC22.