



COMMISSION
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POTENTIAL REVISIONS TO THE
WCPFC REGIONAL OBSERVER PROGRAMME MINIMUM STANDARD DATA
FIELDS

WCPFC14-2017-DP21_rev2
06 December 2017

Discussion paper by the United States of America

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**Potential Revisions to the
WCPFC Regional Observer Programme Minimum Standard Data Fields**

**Discussion Paper Prepared by the United States of America
for the
Fourteenth Regular Session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission**

In 2016, the WCPFC convened two workshops that were funded by the ABNJ (Common Oceans) Tuna project to analyze the effectiveness of sea turtle mitigation in Pacific longline fisheries with respect to rates of interaction and mortality. The second workshop¹ included recommendations on data collection by fishery observers. The participants of the workshop agreed that one of the best approaches to obtaining high quality data for similar analyses in the future is to ensure that data collection protocols for turtle interactions with fisheries, and those describing the associated fishing effort, are standardized. The workshop recommended specific updates to the WCPFC Regional Observer Programme (ROP) Minimum Standard Data Fields.

We agree that improved data collection on sea turtle interactions would be useful for the Commission's work. We suggest that the Commission direct the Scientific Committee (SC), Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC), and the Secretariat to consider the workshop's recommendations and to recommend appropriate modifications to the ROP Minimum Standard Data Fields. We offer the following potential Commission decision:

WCPFC14 tasks SC14 to consider the recommendations of the recent Joint Analysis of Sea Turtle Mitigation Effectiveness workshops to modify the ROP Minimum Standard Data Fields with respect to improving the collection of data related to sea turtle interactions, taking into account capacity of observers and priority of data collection, and to recommend any modifications for the consideration of the ROP Coordinator, TCC14 and WCPFC15. SC may also consider possible modifications to operational level data requirements.

¹ See workshop final report presented at SC13: <https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/EB-WP-10%20Sea%20Turtle%20Mitigation.pdf>