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**PREPARATORY CONFERENCE FOR THE COMMISSION FOR  
THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF HIGHLY  
MIGRATORY FISH STOCKS IN THE WESTERN AND  
CENTRAL PACIFIC**

Fourth session  
Nadi, Fiji Islands  
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**WORKING GROUP III: MONITORING, CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE**

Summary report by the Chairman of the Working Group to the fourth session of the Conference

1. Working Group III held three meetings during the fourth session of the Preparatory Conference.
2. In accordance with its tentative work programme, as agreed at the third session (PrepCon III) (WCPFC/PrepCon/WP.6, paragraph 21), WG.III began consideration of the principal elements of a boarding and inspection scheme. The Working Group discussed draft procedures for boarding and inspection pursuant to the Convention on the basis of a paper prepared by the Chairman of WG.III (WCPFC/PrepCon/WP.14). The comments and views of participants, which had been received informally by the Chairman of WG.III prior to the session, were voiced and documents containing comments on and suggestions for improvements to the Chairman's paper as well as alternative formulations of a boarding and inspection scheme were tabled by Chinese Taipei, the European Community, Japan, Korea, as well as by Papua New Guinea on behalf of the members of the Forum Fisheries Agency.
3. WG.III agreed, as a result of the discussions on the Chairman's paper and the various other proposals and suggestions that had been put forward, to request the Chairman of WG.III, with the assistance of the Interim Secretariat, to revise his paper in the light of those proposals and suggestions for further discussion at PrepCon V. In this regard, the Chairman noted that all comments received and papers provided by the various delegations would be taken into consideration in the elaboration of the subsequent draft, with a view to seeking the necessary balance to lead the working group toward its goal of developing an effective regime that can be accepted by consensus. Several participants in the Working Group noted that elements of the paper submitted by the European Community may well provide a useful basis for the revised document.
4. WG.III also began discussion of the development of the Commission's observer programme on the basis of an informal paper prepared by the Chairman, taking into account the principal elements of the observer programme identified by WG.III at PrepCon III (WCPFC/PrepCon/21, Annex III, paragraph B).
5. WG.III considered that some of the elements of the MCS component of the Commission's observer programme as identified in that document would also require close coordination with WG.II, including, for example, the effective level of coverage of the observer programme which will depend, among other things, on the data requirements of the Commission. In its discussion on the development of the Commission's observer programme, WG.III emphasized the following considerations:

- (a) the usefulness of coordinating and communicating with the Chairman of WG.II on the data collection needs of the Commission in order to determine an effective level of coverage;
- (b) the need to consider practical difficulties in implementing the observer programme which has bearing on the design of the observer programmes;
- (c) the need for coordination and planning to ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, compatibility with sub-regional and national observer programmes already in place in the region;
- (d) the desirability for standardization of data collection including standardized reporting formats for information that is collected;
- (e) procedures relating to data confidentiality;
- (f) that the purpose of the observer programme in its initial stages should be to focus on validation of catch but that other useful information such as vessel sightings could also be reported under the programme;
- (g) the value of ensuring standardized and quality observer training;
- (h) the significance of a phased or incremental approach to the Commission's observer programme; and
- (i) cost effectiveness.

6. WG.III agreed that the most appropriate next step would be to begin to build on the principal elements for the development of the observer programme agreed at PrepCon III, in close coordination with WG II. In this regard, WG.III requested the Chairman to prepare a discussion document on proposed guidelines for the rights, duties and responsibilities for observers, captains and crew, using similar guidelines adopted by other regional organizations and national governments as a starting point. The Chairman welcomed the offer by a number of delegations to contribute to this process. WG.III also identified the issue of the phase-in of the observer programme through the development of a pilot programme as a possible next step in this process, subject to further consideration by the Working Group at its next meeting.

7. WG.III also considered its tentative work programme for PrepCon V. It was noted that the issues of the Commission's record of vessels and authorization to fish, VMS and vessel and gear markings had not yet been discussed. As regards the establishment of procedures for the Commission's record for vessels and authorisation to fish, it was decided that this matter was adequately elaborated in article 24 and Annex IV of the Convention and needs no further deliberation by WG.III at this stage. In order to facilitate progress on other matters that had not been covered in the present session, WG.III requested the Interim Secretariat to prepare an information paper on vessel and gear markings. A paper on VMS would also be prepared, if possible. These information papers, together with the draft proposed guidelines on rights and responsibilities of observers would serve as the basis for substantive discussions at the next meeting of WG.III. It was agreed that these documents should be circulated sufficiently in advance of the next session to allow for adequate review and comment by delegations.