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

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WORKING GROUP III: MONITORING, CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE

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

1. Working Group III held three meetings during the sixth session of the Preparatory Conference. Participants also consulted in smaller meetings on specific issues during the session.
2. In accordance with the information note circulated by the Chairman of WG.III before the Conference, the Working Group focused on the most urgent needs of the Commission concerning monitoring control and surveillance. Among the matters outlined in its tentative work programme agreed at PrepCon III (WCPFC/PrepCon/WP.6, paragraph 21) and prioritized in WCPFC/PrepCon/WP.26, WG.III identified the Commission's record of fishing vessels and fishing authorization and the scheme for vessel and gear marking as the most urgent matters for discussion. The Working Group also agreed that the proposals for the Commission's observer programme and vessel monitoring system were important and should be discussed if time permitted.
3. As a result of its discussions and consultations, WG.III produced a first draft of the Commission's record of vessels, and fishing authorizations¹ on the basis of proposals for the Commission's record for vessels and fishing authorizations submitted by the European Community (WCPFC/PrepCon/DP.28), Japan (WCPFC/PrepCon/DP.26) and the FFA (WCPFC/PrepCon/DP.30). WG.III recommended that this draft should be further discussed and finalized at the next session as a recommendation to the Commission. Some participants in the Working Group reserved the right to further consider certain specific provisions of the draft Chairman's text. In particular there was a broad sense that paragraphs 12 and 13 of the current draft required further discussion. In addition, Japan noted that further consideration was required with respect to paragraph 2, and Korea and Chinese Taipei expressed a similar view with respect to paragraph 16.
4. WG.III also discussed the Commission's scheme for vessel and gear marking on the basis of a working paper prepared by the Interim Secretariat (WCPFC/PrepCon/WP.18). WG.III agreed that the proposal for the Commission's gear marking scheme in Annex B of the Secretariat's paper was not urgent and could be discussed at the next session of the PrepCon or at the Commission's inaugural meeting. With respect to the Commission's vessel marking scheme, the Working Group agreed on a draft proposal for the Commission's vessel marking scheme prepared by the Chairman which could be submitted to the Commission.²

¹ Issued at the session as WCPFC/CRP.3. Final official document to be issued in due course.

² Issued at the session as WCPFC/CRP.4. Final official document to be issued in due course.

5. During the course of the discussions, two proposals emerged, from the EC and U.S., regarding status of cooperating non-contracting parties. While there was no time for consideration of these proposals by WG.III at PrepCon VI, there appeared to be broad support for an effort to marry the two documents into a proposal for consideration at PrepCon VII.

6. In addition, there was also discussion regarding possible linkages between the vessel record and future efforts by the Commission with respect to issues such as IUU fishing and measures to control fishing capacity. While the sense of the group was that the issue of fishing capacity, in particular, was not an issue for discussion within WG.III, some delegations including Japan, the United States and Korea, referring to paper WCPFC/PrepCon/DP.26, expressed the view that this issue should continue to be a priority for the Commission and that the vessel record could play a role in this area.

7. Owing to lack of time, the Working Group deferred further discussion of proposals on options for the Commission's observer programme and VMS.

8. With respect to the future work programme of WG.III, the Chair notes that WG.III will meet for the last time at PrepCon VII later this year. As limited time will likely be available for active deliberations, the work of the group may best be focussed on completing work on the draft document related to the Commission's Record of Fishing Vessels and Authorization to Fish and on adopting standards for cooperating non-contracting parties, which many delegates viewed as closely linked to the vessel record. The other items on the WG.III agenda will necessarily be passed to the Commission for further consideration. In this regard, a return to the procedures for boarding and inspection will continue to be a high priority, as well as other pending items on the agenda including the observer programme, VMS and port state controls.
