



**Scientific Committee
Fifteenth Regular Session**

Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia
12 - 20 August 2019

**A Proposal for the
GUIDELINES FOR THE SC CHAIR AND THEME CONVENORS**

WCPFC-SC15-2019/GN-WP-03

New Zealand

SC8 adopted a set of Guidelines for the SC Chairs and Theme Convenors to both assist with the running of the meeting and to ensure consistency throughout SC meetings. After comments made by SC12 (see Section 11.2: paragraphs 871-879 of the meeting report) the guidelines were reviewed and adopted by SC13 (WCPFC-SC13-2017-GN-IP-03). The Guidelines have been further updated in this document to account for the SC's additional role in the development of Harvest Strategies and associated Harvest Control Rules and Management Procedures.

Functions of the Scientific Committee

According to Article 12 of the WCPFC Convention, the role of the *Scientific Committee* is to ensure that the Commission obtains for its consideration the best scientific information available. To provide such information, the Convention lists a number of functions which the *Scientific Committee* shall perform (see Attachment A). These functions include the review of assessments, analyses, other work, and recommendations prepared for the Commission by the scientific experts prior to the consideration of such recommendations by the Commission. The *Scientific Committee* shall then report to the Commission its findings or conclusions on the status of target stocks or non-target or associated or dependent species in the Convention Area, and make recommendations to the Commission as directed, or on its own initiative, on matters concerning the conservation and management of these species. The *Scientific Committee* also recommends a research plan to the WCPFC and encourages coordination of scientific research in the Convention Area.

In addition the *Scientific Committee* has been assigned a substantial new piece of work with the development of Harvest Strategies and associated Harvest Control Rules and Management Procedures to be conducted during the next few years. Progress on Harvest Strategies is essential to the long term health of tuna stocks and tuna fisheries, and to make progress the Commission recognized that there may be a need for a dedicated Science-Management dialogue.

Given the work program of the *Scientific Committee* as outlined above, the SC agenda should be evaluated critically, and the number of items considered under the various theme sessions be limited to the key issues and priorities relevant to the Commission's work program to help

ensure the SC can effectively manage the expanded agenda, including its role in contributing to the Science-Management dialogue if established.

General guidelines for the SC Chair and Theme Convenors

1. The SC Chair shall request from the Commission Chair a list of priority issues and CMMs to review in any given year.
2. The SC Chair and Convenors shall develop a list of priority agenda items to address based on the priority list received from the Commission Chair and given the time available for the SC meeting.
3. The SC Chair and Convenors will coordinate with the Commission's Secretariat in finalising the provisional annotated agenda for the approval of Heads of Delegation.
4. The SC Chair will convene an SC Officer's Meeting prior to Heads of Delegation meeting. The Meeting will consider SC meeting procedures, including reviewing the indicative schedule according to the volume of theme papers to be covered, and the need for Informal Small Group meetings (the roles of which are outlined below).
5. The SC Chair and Convenors will direct discussions at the plenary, subject to the approval of Heads of Delegation.
6. The SC Chair and Convenors will coordinate and facilitate the presentations and related discussions in accord with the SC agenda. They will also make sure that all presentations and discussions should stay focused on the science and the relevant agenda item. Furthermore, while discussion on agenda items is to be encouraged, the SC Chair and Convenors are to remind the plenary to keep specific questions and commentary concise.
7. The SC Chair and Convenors will ensure observance of the Commission's Rules of Procedure, *mutatis mutandis*, to accord the right to speak, announce the list of speakers and, with the consent of the *Scientific Committee*, declare the list of speakers closed.
8. The SC Chair and Convenors should be mindful of non-English speaking delegations, particularly when text is edited on screen. Draft text will be circulated prior to being submitted for the approval of the SC. Appropriate time should then be given for plenary to consider the text prior to approval.
9. The SC Chair and Convenors, in consultation with the Informal Small Group (ISG) facilitators, will coordinate schedules for the reports of ISG meeting outputs for consideration by the plenary, making every effort to avoid duplicating discussions that were made at the ISGs.
10. The SC Chair and Convenors should help develop consensus by briefly summarising discussions across the floor. They should not indulge in monologues and should remain alert to CCMs wishing to make interventions across the floor of the meeting.
11. The SC Chairs and Convenors should not directly or indirectly advocate their own views or the positions of their own delegations when chairing the plenary or theme sessions.
12. The SC Chair and Convenors will consult on how non-consensus is to be handled and accommodated into the provision of advice to the Commission. The use of break-out groups may help to achieve a consensus view.

Guidelines for the SC Chair

1. The rules and powers of the SC Chair are explained in Rule 9 of the Commission's Rules of Procedure, which is annexed below.

Rule 9 (Function of the Chairman)

1. In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him or her elsewhere in these rules or by the Convention, the Chairman shall declare the opening and closing of each plenary meeting of the Commission, direct the discussions in plenary meeting, ensure observance of these rules, accord the right to speak, announce the list of speakers and, with the consent of the Commission, declare the list of speakers closed, put questions and announce decisions. He or she shall rule on points of order and, subject to these rules, shall have complete control of the proceedings at any meeting and over the maintenance of order thereat. The Chairman may, in the course of discussion of an item, propose to the Commission the limitation of the time to be allowed to speakers, the limitation of the number of times each representative may speak, the closure of the list of speakers or the closure of the debate. He or she may also propose the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting or the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion.
2. The Chairman, in the exercise of his or her functions, remains under the authority of the Commission.
3. The Vice-Chairman acting as Chairman shall have the same powers and duties as the Chairman.

Guidelines for the Theme Convenors

Preparation of Theme agendas

1. Convenors will provide a draft agenda for their Theme session. This will be done in consultation with the Commission's Secretariat to take account of specific requests and priorities from the Commission, and with the scientists who are providing papers to the Theme. The draft agenda should be provided to the Secretariat as soon as practicable after the deadline (as outlined below) for titles and preliminary abstracts has passed, and once Convenors have identified the Working Papers and Information Papers relevant to their sessions.
2. Noting the large number of target stocks or non-target or associated or dependent species under the purview of the Commission, the Convenors of the Stock Assessment Theme and the Ecosystem and Bycatch Mitigation Theme are requested to limit their agendas to only those species identified as priorities by the Commission **and** where substantive new information is available on matters concerning the conservation and management of these species.
3. Convenors should ensure that only items with Working Papers or substantive issues are considered by the SC. In preparing their draft agendas, Convenors, in consultation with the SC Chair, will also decide which papers will be presented as Working Papers and which will be provided as Information Papers. Working Papers, which will be presented to the meeting, should be limited to those papers that directly address agenda items of the SC, while Information Papers should be limited to those papers which provide additional supporting information to either Working Papers or the SC agenda. Information Papers, which are not presented verbally, may be referred to by the SC in discussion and in formulating recommendations to the Commission.
4. Papers that are not relevant to agenda items should not be accepted. All Working and Information Papers relevant to each agenda item should be clearly listed on the agenda for each Theme. During the sessions at the SC, Convenors should identify Information Papers that support and are relevant to Working Papers in line with the Theme Agenda. The Secretariat should also be notified (and sent a copy) of any updates to the draft agenda.

5. A summary of the timeline for preparation of the draft Theme agendas is as follows (with the relevant months shown based on the current schedule of early-to-mid August meetings):
 - 120 days before SC starts (early April) – list of priority items for SC sent from Commission Chair to SC Chair (SC Chair solicits input from Theme Convenors and Secretariat to develop draft SC agenda)
 - 100 days before SC starts (late April) – draft SC agenda sent from SC Chair to Secretariat
 - 90 days before SC starts (early May) – draft SC agenda provided by Secretariat to CCMs, Commission Chair, and ED
 - 60 days before SC starts (early June) – supplementary SC agenda items requested by CCMs, Commission Chair, and ED to SC Chair/Secretariat
 - 35 days before SC starts (early July) – draft Theme agendas sent by Theme Convenors to SC Chair/Secretariat

Submission of papers for the SC meeting

6. The submission of papers for sessions of the SC should be in accordance with the timeline summarized below and specified in the Meeting Notice. Recognizing the needs of CCMs to have sufficient time to consider papers domestically and with other CCMs, Convenors, in consultation with the SC Chair, should give stringent consideration towards deadlines for submission of papers. Late papers should not be accepted. Exceptions may be made for late papers from the Scientific Services Provider and other papers from CCMs that are delayed due to late data provision.
7. A summary of the timeline for paper submission is as follows:
 - 42 days before SC starts (late June) – draft paper titles and Abstracts submitted to Secretariat
 - 30 days before SC starts (early July) – annual Country reports submitted to Secretariat
 - 28 days before SC starts (early July)– full papers submitted to Secretariat

Conduct of plenary sessions

8. Convenors will provide guidance to each presenter on the time allowed for the presentation and discussion of their paper in order to facilitate staying within the time allocated to the Theme session.
9. Convenors will liaise with the Head Rapporteur to ensure that all presentations and related discussions made during their Theme Session are correctly recorded for inclusion in the SC Summary Report. This may entail the enlisting of support rapporteurs, if necessary, assisting with the collection of the summary of each presentation, and working with the Head Rapporteur on the production of the final summary report for each Theme session.
10. After the completion of presentations and the discussions of agenda items with potential management advice, Convenors will draft recommendations based on the discussions and views expressed by the SC during their Theme session and circulate these to the meeting

seeking comments and feedback. Where Theme sessions are spread over several days, the process of drafting and circulating recommendations can be undertaken in a staged process, and where possible at least two days should be provided to receive feedback from delegations on the draft recommendations. Each Theme will then reconvene during times provided for in the Meeting Schedule to undertake the final review and adoption of recommendations for their Theme. For this final review, changes made to the initial draft recommendations based on the initial feedback received from delegations are to be presented in track changes format. The Head Rapporteur (or someone else appropriate) will assist in the finalization of the recommendations for each Theme.

11. Convenors should assist the plenary in reaching consensus in adopting recommendations.
12. Convenors should be mindful of the time allocated to their session and where possible take advantage of any time saving opportunities.

The role of Informal Small Groups (ISGs)

1. The SC Chair and Convenors, in consultation with the Secretariat, will identify the need for Informal Small Group (ISG) meetings that will be held, as needed, in the margin of the plenary to formulate a conceptual framework and/or develop consensus views. The need for each ISG will be finalized by the plenary. Each ISG will be given a number and submit a summary paper of the ISG discussions to the plenary for consideration. The plenary will try to make every effort to avoid duplicating discussions that were made at the ISGs.

2. If possible, the need for ISGs should be identified by Convenors prior to the SC meeting and discussed at the SC Officer's Meeting. The number of ISGs should be kept to a minimum and, where possible, commence their work as soon as the SC opens to avoid an overload towards the end of the meeting..

3. Each ISG shall agree by consensus a facilitator to chair each session of that ISG. The SC Chair and Theme Convenors will consult with the facilitators of ISGs to coordinate meeting schedules which will be displayed on the 'white board' used to display the schedule of ISG meetings and other meeting notices. The facilitator shall prepare a short report summarizing the work of the ISG and any relevant conclusions and recommendations. This report will be included in the SC Summary Report, and if required the facilitator will also present this report to the SC plenary.

Attachment A

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF HIGHLY MIGRATORY FISH STOCKS IN THE WESTERN AND CENTRAL PACIFIC OCEAN

Article 12

Functions of the Scientific Committee

1. The Scientific Committee is established to ensure that the Commission obtains for its consideration the best scientific information available.
2. The functions of the Committee shall be to:
 - (a) recommend to the Commission a research plan, including specific issues and items to be addressed by the scientific experts or by other organizations or individuals, as appropriate, and identify data needs and coordinate activities that meet those needs;
 - (b) review the assessments, analyses, other work and recommendations prepared for the Commission by the scientific experts prior to consideration of such recommendations by the Commission and provide information, advice and comments thereon, as necessary;
 - (c) encourage and promote cooperation in scientific research, taking into account the provisions of article 246 of the 1982 Convention, in order to improve information on highly migratory fish stocks, non-target species, and species belonging to the same ecosystem or associated with or dependent upon such stocks in the Convention Area;
 - (d) review the results of research and analyses of target stocks or non-target or associated or dependent species in the Convention Area;
 - (e) report to the Commission its findings or conclusions on the status of target stocks or non-target or associated or dependent species in the Convention Area;
 - (f) in consultation with the Technical and Compliance Committee, recommend to the Commission the priorities and objectives of the regional observer programme and assess the results of that programme;
 - (g) make reports and recommendations to the Commission as directed, or on its own initiative, on matters concerning the conservation and management of and research on target stocks or non-target or associated or dependent species in the Convention Area; and
 - (h) perform such other functions and tasks as may be requested by or assigned to it by the Commission.
3. The Committee shall exercise its functions in accordance with such guidelines and directives as the Commission may adopt.
4. The representatives of the Oceanic Fisheries Programme of the Pacific Community and the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, or their successor organizations, shall be invited to participate in the work of the Committee. The Committee may also invite other organizations or individuals with scientific expertise in matters related to the work of the Commission to participate in its meetings.