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UPDATE ON WPEA PROJECT

WCPFC-SC15-2019/RP-WPEA-01

Prepared by Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam and the Secretariat

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the progress of the West Pacific East Asia project for the information and noting of the Scientific Committee.

I. BACKGROUND

Indonesia and Philippines Data Collection Project (IPDCP)

2. In early 2000, while annual catches of key tuna species in the Philippines and the Pacific Ocean waters of Indonesia were estimated in a range of 20-30% of the total catch of WCPO, little or no information was available for WCPO tuna stock assessment. The lack of accurate catch statistics, effort data, and species composition and size composition data for the Philippines and Indonesia has been highlighted at meetings of the Standing Committee on Tuna and Billfish for many years and was responsible for much of the uncertainty in the MULTIFAN-CL stock assessments for bigeye and yellowfin tuna.

3. After years of effort, strong supports were expressed by agencies of Indonesia and Philippines. Since then, the data collection project started to take a concrete form through several meetings, working with IOTC, CSIRO, ACIAR, and Japan-OFCF. Throughout the Preparatory Conference period (2001 – 2004), the discussion evolved and fund raising was based on voluntary contributions from the Preparatory Conference participating countries. The activities of the proposed project include, for each country,

- a) a review of the tuna fisheries and the current monitoring systems;
- b) the compilation of historical catch and effort data;
- c) a workshop to formulate recommendations for the improvement of the monitoring system and to plan the sampling programmes;
- d) the establishment of a port sampling programme;
- e) the establishment of an observer programme;
- f) the analysis of data collected and compiled during the project; and
- g) a workshop to review the achievements of the project and to plan for future monitoring.

4. The budget for the activities at that time was about USD 184,000 for the Philippines and USD 229,000 for Indonesia, for a total cost of USD 413,000.

West Pacific East Asia Oceanic Fisheries Management Project (WPEA-OFM)

5. Funding support was the greatest issue for the continuity of the IPDCP project. The Secretariat advised the third IPDCP Steering Committee that the Global Environment Facility (GEF) had expressed interest in funding a project in Indonesia, Philippines and Viet Nam. The objectives of the project were (i) to establish or improve the collection of tuna fishery data, and (ii) to promote good governance with regard to the management of tuna fisheries. The Steering Committee recommended that the WCPFC Executive Director continue to liaise with GEF, Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam to develop a data collection and governance project for those countries. The Steering Committee recommended that, noting that GEF funding would not be available for another 18–24 months, CCMs continue to be invited to contribute to implement port sampling in Indonesia and Philippines, and that the Commission consider funding data collection in this area through its core budget. As a result, the Commission provided funding support to IPDCP and WPEA during 2006 – 2017.

6. To get the funding support from the GEF, the Secretariat, working with each country's focal point, coordinated and prepared the Project Implementation Form, National Project Preparation Reports and the Project Document. The Secretariat was advised that its medium size project was accepted by the GEF in May 2009.

Improvements

7. Since the commencement of the IPDCP data collection project, starting in Philippines in 2005 and in Indonesia in 2007, there have been improvements in 2011 assessments of the WCPO tuna stocks by reducing uncertainty of input data and information. Especially, the WPEA-OFM project has greatly enhanced the quality of Indonesian and Philippine fishery data that are applied to SPC-OFP's regional tuna stock assessments conducted for the WCPFC. During the project period, the following improvements have been noted:

- More accurate estimates of total annual tuna catch by species
- More accurate estimates of species-specific catches by major fishing gear types
- The first size composition data from Indonesian tuna fisheries in more than two decades
- The establishment of operational-level data collection programmes (logsheets) for the industrial tuna fisheries
- The initiation of an observer programme in Philippines

These enhanced data were used for the first time in the skipjack, yellowfin and bigeye stock assessments in 2011.

8. Throughout the WPEA-OFM project period, similar progress in data collection occurred in Viet Nam, and their data were incorporated into regional stock assessments. Tuna catch data in Viet Nam were originally collected in three provinces (Binh Dinh, Khanh Hoa, Phu Yen), which was expanded to additional six provinces in 2013 (Da Nang, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Ninh Thuan, Binh Thuan, and Bario-Vung Tau).

9. The WPEA-OFM was successfully completed in March 2013 and an independent evaluation report is available at:

<http://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/SC9-GN-IP-03-%5BWPEA-OFM-Independent-Evaluation-Report%5D.pdf>

Sustainable Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the West Pacific and East Asian Seas (WPEA-SM)

10. The UNDP and WCPFC Secretariat prepared a new full size project along with the following process:

Project Framework Document (PFD)

- 1) Project title: Reducing Pollution and Rebuilding Degraded Marine Resources in the East Asian Seas through Implementation of Intergovernmental Agreements and Catalyzed Investments
- 2) The UNDP started preparing a parent program PFD from mid-2011, which was submitted to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) on 29 March 2012, and a revision submitted on 12 April 2012. The PFD was endorsed by the GEF Secretariat in June 2012.
- 3) The list of projects under the PFD include:
 - a) YS LME Project: Implementation of the Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem Strategic Action Program for Adaptive Management (USD 7,562,430)
 - b) WPEA: Sustainable Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the West Pacific and East Asian Seas (USD 2,293,578)
 - c) PEMSEA¹: Scaling up the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (USD 10,143,992)
- 4) Participating countries: Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines, Thailand, Timor Leste, Vietnam

Project Identification Form (PIF) for the WPEA Project

- 1) Project title: Sustainable Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the West Pacific and East Asian Seas (WPEA-SM)
- 2) UNDP and WCPFC started developing a new WPEA project PIF since from 2012 and the final PIF was submitted to GEF on 5 April 2013. The PIF was approved by the GEF Council on 1 May 2013.
- 3) Total project cost is USD 2,233,578, a 3-year full size project, with the three participating countries (Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam).
- 4) PIF includes i) Indicative Project Framework, ii) Indicative co-financing, iii) Project Preparation Grant, iv) Project Justification, and v) Approval/Endorsement by GEF Focal Points of each country.

WPEA-SM Project Document

- 1) Drs Tony Lewis and Anna Tengberg developed the Project Document in consultation with UNDP, WCPFC Secretariat and the three participating countries from mid-2013.
- 2) After several reviews and revisions, the Project Document was endorsed by the GEF Secretariat on 12 May 2014, the final version was submitted to the GEF Council on 17 September 2014, and received their approval on 30 September 2014.

Commencement of WPEA-SM Project

- 1) Project Appraisal Committee Meeting
 - The *Project Appraisal Committee*, met in Manila on 28 May 2014, agreed that all three project partner countries (Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam) accepted WCPFC as the Project Implementing Partner. They also agreed that the Science Manager of the Commission should continue managing the WPEA-SM Project.

¹ PEMSEA: Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia, Manila, Philippines (<http://www.pemsea.org>),

- 2) A Project Cooperation Agreement between UNDP and WCPFC was made on 14 October 2014, and the WPEA-SM officially commenced on 28 October 2014.
- 3) The Project Inception Workshop was held in Da Nang, Viet Nam, 4-5 November 2014, and the Inception Workshop Report was adopted and submitted to the UNDP.

Extension of WPEA-SM Project

- 1) Background – Based on the findings and recommendations of the Mid-term Review of the project conducted in March 2017, it is unlikely that several of the envisaged results will be achieved by the planned closure date of 28 October 2017. Given this recommendation, it was decided during the 4th Project Board Meeting, and approved by the Project Board that an extension of the project period be requested to the GEF-UNDP.
- 2) Reasons for the extension – Progress towards results has been affected by the delayed start of project activities in Indonesia and Vietnam. The project was endorsed by the GEF CEO on 12 May 2014 and national governments approved the project document on 28 October, the official start date of the project, but it took nearly another year for registration of the project and domestic processes in Indonesia and Vietnam, including opening of a new WPEA bank account.
As a follow-up project, the allocated 3-year implementation timeframe was seen at first as a reasonable amount of time considering implementation arrangements were in place from the first phase 3-year WPEA Oceanic Fisheries Management Project and a certain degree of momentum had been achieved. The second phase, however, contains aspects that were not part of the first phase, including climate change analysis and planning, pilot implementation of ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM), facilitation of market-based approaches to sustainable fisheries, and development of harvest strategy elements. This unanticipated risk, and the level of preparedness for absorption of these risks was generally low, rendering achievement of project outcomes over the 3-year timeframe a great challenge.
- 3) Given the current circumstances, the extension was made until 27 April 2019.

II. SUMMARY OF KEY WPEA-SM ACTIVITIES DURING 2018-2019

11. The WPEA-SM Project has three components and several expected outcomes under each component are shown below.

Component 1	Regional governance for building regional and national adaptive capacity of IDN, PHL and VNM in the management of HMFS
Expected Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improved regional mechanisms for monitoring and assessment of HMFS 2. Enhanced capacity of technical staff, policy and decision makers to integrate climate change impacts on HMS into management regimes
Component 2	Implementation of policy, institutional and fishery management reform
Expected Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhanced compliance of existing legal instruments at national, regional and international levels 2. Adoption of market-based approaches to sustainable harvest of tunas 3. Reduced uncertainty in stock assessment and improved understanding of associated ecosystems and their biodiversity 4. Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM) guiding sustainable harvest of the oceanic tuna stock and reduced by-catch
Component 3	Knowledge sharing on highly migratory fish stocks
Expected Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regional knowledge platform established on Pacific Ocean Warm Pool LME and EAS LME's shared tuna stocks and associated ecosystems

12. The project specified targets to be achieved during the project period which are listed in the

Project Results Framework in the Project Document. To reach the targets under each component, key activities identified were as follows:

Component 1

- a) Capacity building of the participating countries in science
- b) Sub-regional collaboration and governance in tuna fisheries, including establishment of MCS programmes
- c) Estimation of annual tuna catches by species and by gear
- d) Development of general guidelines on adaptive management and monitoring of highly migratory stocks to address the impacts of climate change on tuna fisheries
- e) Reflection of climate change guidelines into national tuna management plan

Component 2

- a) Review of national fisheries legislation in line with WCPFC requirements
- b) Development of reference points and harvest control rules at national level
- c) Tuna supply chain analysis
- d) Establishment of an appropriate certification system
- e) Tuna catch data collection at landing sites and data review
- f) Training of observers and implementation of observer programme to selected fisheries
- g) Trial application of ecosystem approach to fisheries management to tuna fisheries

Component 3

- a) Knowledge sharing by participating in the biennial GEF-IW Learn Conference and PEMSEA East Asian Seas Congress
- b) Construction of a WPEA project portal
- c) Establishment of a WPEA monitoring and evaluation reporting system

13. Following the 2018-2019 annual work plans, which were developed with the three countries and approved by the Project Board, several activities have been implemented since SC14. As the three countries have similar targets, similar activities have been implemented in the three countries and outputs from one country have been shared with the other two. Key project activities include:

- data collection from port sampling and production of annual total tuna catch estimates;
- research consultancies on climate change, harvest strategies, EAFM, etc. and associated review workshops; and
- establishment of knowledge-sharing platforms, such as the WPEA Project portal.

Annual three-country, sub-regional workshops have been held for the selected topics to promote face-to-face information sharing and cost-effective delivery of international expertise by the invited international experts.

14. The Secretariat has been implementing all WPEA activities in collaboration with the designated national project coordinators in the country. The implementing process of each project activity is as follows:

- a) Convene consultation meetings to review the progress of the project to reach targets, and develop an annual work plan and budget for approval by the Project Board;
- b) National project coordinators submit individual activity proposals to the Secretariat ; and the Project Manager reviews and endorses the detailed activities and wire-transfers the activity budget to the country's official WPEA bank account;
- c) National project coordinators implement the approved activities by monitoring consultancies and preparing workshops;
- d) Project Manager leads the review workshops of consultancy outputs, and produce workshop reports with final consultancy outputs; and
- e) Project Manager reports the progress and outputs to the Project Board, UNDP, and the GEF.

15. For hard-to-achieve targets, the relevant activities started early in the life of the project, and constantly revisited by updating the consultancy reports and reviewing the reports at associated workshops. Since August 2018, the WPEA team in each country tried to finalize several consultancy reports through review workshops and consultation meetings. Key reports include:

- a) Guidelines to adaptively manage the impacts of climate change on tuna fisheries;
- b) Tuna supply chain analysis, eco-labelling and certification scheme;
- c) Application of reference points and harvest control rules;
- d) Application of EAFM to tuna fisheries;
- e) Review of fisheries legislation in line with WCPFC requirements;
- f) Update of national tuna fishery profile; and
- g) Update of national tuna management plan.

16. WPEA workshops and other meetings held during the last one-year are listed below:

Dates	Country	Title
2018.09.17-18	Vietnam	Consultation meeting, including selection of a new project coordinator of Vietnam
2018.10.23-25	Vietnam	Three-country Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invited expert: Dr David Kirby • Risk assessment and bycatch management
2018.11.03-08	Morocco	Ninth International Waters Conference <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ocean partnership for sustainable tuna fisheries
2019.01.21-25	Indonesia	Review workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review/Compilation of all project outputs
2019.01.28-30	Philippines	Consultative Forum with WCPFC, UNDP, PEMSEA, SEAFDEC and the three countries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultative Forum to eliminate IUU fishing • Establishing a sub-regional monitoring mechanism to combat IUU fishing
2019.01.31	Philippines	The 6 th Project Board meeting
2019.02.25-03.01	Vietnam	Consultation meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review/Compilation of all project outputs
2019.03.11-14	Philippines	Consultation meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review/Compilation of all project outputs
2019.04.22	Vietnam	Project Outputs Domestic Workshop
2019.04.23-26	Vietnam	Three-country Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invited experts: Dr Graham Pilling • Sub-regional stock assessment • Harvest strategy framework • CPUE standardization process

17. The GEF-funded WPEA-SM Project was officially terminated on 27 April 2019. The project team is anticipating the project terminal evaluation later this year.

III. STATUS OF WPEA-ITM PROJECT

18. Some of the current WPEA Project activities will be continued after the WPEA-SM project is terminated. The government of New Zealand has provided funding for the *Western Pacific East Asia Improved Tuna Monitoring Project* (WPEA-ITM). Project components include expanding the capacity of Enumerator Programs to gather fisheries catch landings and port sampling data, build the capacities and sustainability of fisheries observer programs, support additional national policy and legal reviews to

improve tuna fisheries catch monitoring and governance, and add to the capacities of national fisheries data management and analysis efforts.

19. Since the commencement of the WPEA-ITM Project in July 2017, it took almost two years to complete signing of MOUs between WCPFC and the three country representatives: with Indonesia in December 2018, with Vietnam in January 2019 and with Philippines in May 2019.

20. The WPEA-ITM Project had the first Project Steering Committee Meeting (PSC) on 7 December 2018 during the WCPFC15 meeting in Honolulu. The PSC covered 1) review of project progress in each country; 2) finance status; 3) review of targets, indicators and activities; and 4) project management issues.

21. In 2019, the three countries had some observer programme activities and catch estimates workshops as shown in the matrix below.

Dates	Country	Title
2018/2019	Indonesia	Data collection from port sampling
2019.03.21-22	Vietnam	Observer planning meeting for Vietnamese tuna fisheries
2019.03.25-26	Indonesia	Meeting for Observer Planning and Strategic Action Plan
2019.03.27-30	Indonesia	Port Sampling Review Meeting in Bitung
2019.04.8-12	IDN, PHL, VNM	Participation in SPC's Tuna Data Workshop
2019.04.31-05.04	Vietnam	Participation in SPC's Stock Assessment Workshop
2019.05.23-28	Philippines	Data Review and Catch Estimates Workshop
2019.06.20-21	Vietnam	Catch Estimates Workshop
2019.06. 24-26	Indonesia	Annual catch estimates (ACE) workshop in Bogor Indonesia
2019.08.12-20	IDN, PHL, VNM	Participation in SC15 Session

22. The WPEA-ITM Project Manager Mr Dale Withington, who was hired in July 2017, resigned his position in early June 2019. The WCPFC Science Manager is currently managing the project until a new Project Manager is recruited.