



**COMMISSION
SIXTEENTH REGULAR SESSION**
Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea
5 – 11 December 2019

SOUTH PACIFIC ALBACORE ROADMAP AND HARVEST STRATEGY

**WCPFC16-2019-DP05
5 November 2019**

SUBMITTED BY FFA MEMBER CCMs



1 November 2019

Jung-Re Riley Kim
CHAIR
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
PO Box 2356, Kolonia
Federated States of Micronesia

Dear Riley,

South Pacific Albacore Roadmap and Harvest Strategy

These views are conveyed on behalf of the 17 members of the Forum Fisheries Agency, and are without prejudice to the further development of positions and proposals by FFA members individually or collectively.

FFA members believe that the Commission must ensure that the stock biomass of South Pacific Albacore is restored to the Target Reference Point (TRP) level as soon as is economically possible, so as to promote future profitability of individual vessels operating in SIDS EEZs. In pursuing this objective, Zone Based Management will be a key component in the management of the stock, ensuring that FFA members' sovereign rights are preserved within regionally-compatible limits.

To assist in achieving this outcome for the fishery, this paper outlines FFA members' intention to reinvigorate the South Pacific Albacore Roadmap Intersessional Working Group (IWG) in 2020. FFA members thank New Zealand for previously chairing the IWG and we nominate Fiji as the new Chair.

To recall, the Terms of Reference for the Roadmap IWG are to consider management issues including:

- Elements necessary for implementation of the Harvest Strategy;
- An allocation process;
- Monitoring and reporting priorities, and addressing data gaps for all fisheries taking South Pacific albacore in the WCPO.

Building on the adoption of the TRP at WCPFC15, FFA members will be reinvigorating the Roadmap work in 2020 and recommend that instead of a virtual group, the Roadmap working group meets in person starting in 2020. While documents will still be exchanged by email, FFA members prefer that all decisions on recommendations to WCPFC be agreed face-to-face.

Regarding the work of the Roadmap, the first step will be to revise the draft workplan contained in WCPFC15-2018-SPalroadmap¹, Attachment 3. We propose that the revised workplan initially focus on:

- Limits – Agreement and recommendation on an overall hard limit and a subsequent pathway (annual total catch reductions);
- Allocation – Agreement on the split of the total hard limit, as discussed at WCPFC14;
- CMM - Implementation of the agreed overall hard limit which recognises Zone Based Management, allocated limits, data collection and reporting requirements, via a revised CMM for South Pacific Albacore Tuna, until such time as a finalised harvest strategy is agreed.

Pathway to the TRP

Further to the adoption of the TRP, SPC presented in SC15-MI-WP-02 a range of catch pathways and timeframes to achieve the TRP based on recent years (2014-2016) fishery conditions, and we understand that SPC will present an update of this work to WCPFC16. FFA is interested in achieving the TRP in as short a time as economically possible because the sustainable profitability of this fishery is crucial to SIDS. We assert that agreeing a pathway to achieving the TRP will be an important first step and we will be seeking CCMs engagement early in 2020 on this issue.

Recommendation

That WCPFC16 agree that the Roadmap IWG meet in person in 2020, in conjunction with one of the subsidiary body meetings or WCPFC17.

Through you Chair, we request the WCPFC Executive Director to include this proposal with the Delegation Papers and Proposals to WCPFC16 and invite comments and questions from other CCMs in advance of the meeting. CCMs can direct their feedback to the FFA Secretariat (ffasec.wcpfc@ffa.int). We look forward to constructive and productive dialogue on the South Pacific albacore Roadmap and harvest strategy at WCPFC 16.

Yours sincerely,



Eugene Pangelinan, Chair
Forum Fisheries Committee

¹ <https://www.wcpfc.int/file/222530/download?token=bl3Fo3ci>