



**COMMISSION
SIXTEENTH REGULAR SESSION**
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HIGH SEAS LIMITS AND ALLOCATION IN THE TROPICAL TUNA CMM

**WCPFC16-2019-DP06
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,

Views of FFA members on High Seas limits and Allocation in the Tropical Tuna CMM

I write on behalf of the 17 members of the Forum Fisheries Agency in my capacity as the Chair of the Forum Fisheries Committee. We look forward to working with you in your new role as Chair of the WCPFC and wish to outline recent considerations by FFA Members in relation to aspects of tropical tuna management. The views expressed in this letter are without prejudice to the further development of positions and proposals by FFA members individually or collectively.

Specifically, I write to advise you of the FFA position on the provisions of CMM 2018-01 that commit to limits and an allocation framework for the purse seine and longline fisheries on the high seas by 2020.

FFA Members expect any high seas limits to be consistent with achieving agreed Target Reference Points (TRPs) and to maintain or reduce current levels of catch and/or effort accordingly. We also expect a sound allocation framework associated with these high seas limits that recognises the rights of small island developing States (SIDS) to develop fisheries in the high seas. As agreed, following in-depth discussion on this matter in 2017 that gave rise to the text now in paragraph 28 of CMM2018-01, we do not expect any high seas allocation framework for purse seine fisheries to include any consideration of current limits that apply within the EEZs of FFA members.

FFA members consider that the primary principles for any high seas allocation framework should include:

- The principle of compatibility with zone based limits.
- The principle of economic dependency.
- The rights and interests of adjacent coastal States.
- The special circumstances of Small Island Developing States as outlined in Article 30 of the Convention.
- The allocation principles set out in Article 10(3) of the Convention text.

Further, any high seas limit and associated allocations must:

- Be underpinned by a high integrity, fit-for-purpose, monitoring system that is capable of independently verifying catch and/or effort against allocations;
- Apply to all CCMs;
- Provide allocations to FFA countries;
- Allow for fishing opportunities by FFA fleets.

FFA Members consider that agreeing a high seas limit and allocations for the tropical purse seine fishery is a priority.

However, we consider that work should also begin on determination of high seas longline bigeye allocations. This will require changes to the current flag based big eye catch limits which should be re-engineered so as not to apply to catches taken inside EEZs.

In relation to high seas limits for purse seine, FFA members believe that the initial allocation framework should commence with setting an overall limit for the high seas which is then divided to create a share of the limit that specifically recognises the special circumstances of Small Island Developing States, as outlined in Article 30 of the Convention, and the aspirations of SIDS to participate in high seas fisheries.

In order to facilitate development of limits and an allocation framework, FFA Members propose that WCPFC holds a two-day workshop in conjunction with one of the meetings of its subsidiary bodies and/or the Annual Meeting in 2020 with a view to the WCPFC reaching decisions at WCPFC 17. Sufficient budget should be allocated for the additional days to ensure SIDS are able to attend. In order to progress the workshop proposal, we draw members' attention to the draft Terms of Reference for such a workshop that were developed by you, in your role as WCPFC Vice-Chair, during last year's Commission meeting (attached).

We remain committed to working proactively with you Chair and with other CCMs to develop effective limits and allocations for high seas fisheries that will contribute to the objective of maintaining tropical tuna stocks. Through you, we request the WCPFC Executive Director to include this proposal with the Delegation Papers and Proposals to WCPFC16 and we invite comments and questions from other CCMs in advance of the meeting. CCMs can direct their feedback to me (eugene.pangelinan@norma.fm) or to 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 in Port Moresby.

Yours sincerely,



Eugene Pangelinan, Chair
Forum Fisheries Committee

ATTACHMENT

Draft Terms of Reference for a Workshop on Framework for the Allocation of Purse Seine High Seas Effort or Catch Limits in the WCPFC Convention Area

Objectives

The objective of the workshop will be to undertake preparatory work for the purposes of implementing paragraph [28] of CMM [2018-01] which requires the Commission to agree on purse seine hard effort or catch limits in the high seas of the Convention Area and a framework for the allocation of those limits in the high seas amongst all Members and Participating Territories (CCMs) that adequately take into account Articles 8, 10(3) and 30 of the Convention.

Tasks

1. At the Workshop, CCMs will

- i. Discuss data provided by the Science Services Provider and the Secretariat in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3 and identify data needs for setting high seas purse seine effort or catch limits;
- ii. Consider approaches to allocation framework in other tuna regional fishery management organizations;
- iii. Discuss proposals on purse seine high seas hard effort or catch limits allocation framework submitted by Members by XX;
- iv. Based on (iii), narrow down options for consideration of WCPFC 16;
- v. Discuss steps to take towards reaching an agreement on hard effort or catch limits if such agreement cannot be reached by 2019; and
- vi. If necessary, consider the need for establishing a technical working group on allocation framework.

Data input

2. In order to facilitate discussions at the Workshop, the Science Services Provider is asked to provide full complement of high seas catch and effort data by [XX].

3. CCMs may request the Secretariat to provide any other data or information they deem necessary relevant to discussions at the Workshop.

Meeting

4. To efficiently facilitate the development of purse seine high seas hard effort or catch limits allocation framework, a physical meeting will be convened for 2 days in early 2019.

5. This workshop will be chaired by [XX] [Chair of the Commission]