



**TO ALL COMMISSION MEMBERS, COOPERATING NON-MEMBERS,
PARTICIPATING TERRITORIES, AND OBSERVERS**

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Commission Chair's WCPFC16 Priorities

Dear All,

As requested, I circulate for your information and consideration a self-explanatory letter dated 21 November 2019 by the Commission Chair Ms Jung-re Riley Kim laying out what she considers the key priorities for WCPFC16.

Yours sincerely,

**Feleti Penitala Teo, OBE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

November 21, 2019

Dear Colleagues,

As the 16th Regular Session of the WCPFC is two weeks away, I would like to layout some key priorities for your consideration. Please note that the order in which each priority appears is randomly arranged, and does not indicate the hierarchy of importance.

Harvest Strategies

WCPFC 15 in Honolulu agreed on a 6-day annual meeting for WCPFC16 to provide sufficient time for the Commission to move forward with discussions and development of harvest strategies in accordance with CMM 2014-06.

Building on what the Commission has achieved over the past few years through rounds of the Management Options Workshops and small working groups, including the interim TRP for skipjack tuna whose performance is to be reviewed this year and the adoption of the interim TRP for South Pacific albacore last year, I expect that WCPFC 16 will make meaningful progress in considering TRP for bigeye and yellowfin and clarifying the management objectives for these species , and HCR and MSE for skipjack, to just name a few, to keep abreast with the work plan.

In this regard, I am very grateful to the Scientific Committee and the SPC-OFP for their significant contribution to providing science and data inputs into this very important work, and I look very much forward to informative sessions dedicated to harvest strategies under Agenda 6 that will include the demonstration of an interesting tool developed by SPC-OFP.

Another element in harvest strategies is a science-management dialogue, which I believe is very important for progressing our work on harvest strategies. One-day longer meeting this year is part of the effort of the Commission to promote a science-management dialogue which we could not agree on the timing at WCPFC 15, and I hope we can discuss how to move forward with this arrangement going forward.

Since Agenda 7 (WCPO tuna and billfish stocks) also addresses harvest strategies issues on individual species in a more detailed manner, consideration and discussions on Agenda 6 and 7 are expected to feed each other, and we will arrange the order of sub items under these two accordingly, as needed.

Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS)

WCPFC 15 adopted a revised one-year measure for the CMS, and the Commission is tasked with improving the Scheme as CMM 2018-07 on CMS is set to expire at the end of 2019. Important aspects of the improvement work include the development of Audit Points, which is currently being undertaken by a small working group led by the FSM. I expect that the SWG will continue its discussions into WCPFC 16 to facilitate the Commission's discussions. Also, noting the work plan under paragraph 45 of the CMM, I look very much forward to our constructive discussions on the elements related to the enhancement of the CMS.

CMM 2018-01, including Limits and Allocation Framework

CMM2018-01 on Tropical Tuna provides that by 2020 the Commission shall agree on (i) purse seine hard effort or catch limits on the high seas and (ii) longline hard limits for bigeye tuna, and a framework for the allocation of those limits amongst all Members and Participating Territories taking into special requirements of small island developing states. As agreeing on these limits and relevant allocation frameworks is expected to require significant negotiations and compromises, I would like to invite CCMs to come to WCPFC 16 prepared to explore some options how to progress this process effectively and efficiently from now until 2020.

As the current CMM is set to expire in February 2021, other elements of CMM 2018-01 will also need to be reviewed and negotiated between now and 2020, so that WCPFC 17 can agree on a new measure that will replace or amend the current CMM.

Special Requirements of Small Island Developing States

The consideration of special requirements of Small Island Developing States (SIDSs) is deeply embedded in our Convention, and has served as one of the guiding principles in the work of the Commission over the years. WCPFC 16 will remain committed to addressing this issue, including through our review of the strategic investment plan for the special requirement funds (SRF) and discussions on the implementation of CMM 2013-06, to name a few.

Stock Rebuilding

Scientific advice indicates that several WCPO fish stocks are assessed to be prone to overfishing or in an overfished state. In light of this advice, the Commission will need to explore ways to rebuild these stocks, including through discussions on the US proposal on a rebuilding plan for North Pacific striped marlin.

Bycatch Mitigation

At WCPFC 15, significant progress was made regarding a comprehensive measure for sharks and rays, thanks to the intersessional working group led by Japan that had worked throughout 2018 and during WCPFC 15. This measure is going to be put forward for the consideration and decision of WCPFC 16.

The Commission will also review CMM 2018-03 on Seabirds, along with a relevant proposal from New Zealand.

Transshipment

The intersessional working group led by the RMI and USA on the review of the transshipment measure agreed to its terms of reference, and will continue their work on the margins of WCPFC 16 and keep the Commission updated with their progresses. It is expected that some inputs will be made on this issue under the relevant Agenda item, which will subsequently be fed into the work of the IWG in 2020.

Electronic Reporting and Electronic Monitoring (ER/EM)

Recognizing the long-standing effort of the intersessional working group on ER/EM led by Australia, the Commission will be updated with the current progress of the group, which is working to expedite the development of an ER/EM system.

Having said all this, I fully recognize there are other equally important issues that warrant serious discussions and negotiations at WCPFC 16, and the items I have outlined here should never be interpreted as taking precedence over other issues.

I sincerely appreciate all those who have maintained close communication intersessionally to contribute to the work of the Commission, and all the proponents of the proposals submitted to WCPFC 16, SC 15, TCC 15 and NC 15, and all those who worked very hard intersessionally to whom the success of WCPFC 16 will be attributed.

I also thank the government of Papua New Guinea for hosting our 16th Session in Port Moresby.

Colleagues, I look forward to seeing you in a couple of weeks' time and to working with you to making progress on our important work. My communication channel is always open, so please reach me at riley1126@korea.kr and rileykim1126@gmail.com whenever you have anything you would like to discuss with me.

Best Regards,



Jung-re Riley Kim
Chair

cc: Feleti.P.Teo, OBE, WCPFC Executive Director
Josie Tamate, WCPFC Vice Chair