



**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
NINETH REGULAR SESSION**

Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia
6-14 August 2013

INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

WCPFC-SC9-2013/GN-WP-04

I. SC8 Summary Report

1. The Secretariat posted on the SC8 website an SC8-adopted version of the Summary Report of the Eighth Regular Session of Scientific Committee on 21 August 2012, and a professionally edited version on 21 November 2012.

II. Science Services from SPC-OFP

2. The Commission signed an MOU with the Commission's Scientific Services Provider (SPC-OFP) to provide science and data management services in 2006 and has updated Annex I of the MOU each year since to accommodate changing services as requested by the Commission for each calendar year. In 2009, the Commission and the SPC agreed to revise the MOU to provide for a three-year arrangement as directed by the Commission. The three-year MOU applied through 2012 was terminated and a revised three-year MOU was signed in March 2013 which included implementation of the Shark Research Plan adopted by the Commission. The components for 2013 services in Annex I include:

- Data management, statistical analyses and related services
 - Data management
 - Compilation of catch and effort estimates
 - Data dissemination
 - Technical / policy advice
 - Support of other data-related projects of the Commission
- Stock assessment and related analytical services
 - Target species stock assessments and auxiliary analyses
 - Implementation of the Shark Research Plan
 - Model development and refinement
- Management analyses and CMM performance monitoring
 - Conservation and management measure performance monitoring
 - Analyses to support development of conservation and management measures
- Other advisory and technical services

3. SPC-OFP produced 33 papers and reports for SC9 and provided *ad hoc* advice and support throughout the year. In addition, SPC-OFP assisted the following activities:

- Participated in TCC8 and WCPFC9, and the first Management Objectives (MO) Workshop, producing several key papers and presentations for each meeting; an SPC representative also attended the MO experts preparatory meeting in May 2013.
- Participated in the West Pacific East Asia Oceanic Fisheries Management Project for the maintenance and refinement of data collection programme – assisting various workshops for the audit of port sampling, estimation of annual total tuna catch by gear and species, and training of local database managers in Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam;
- Conducted the Pacific Tuna Tagging Program (PTTP) and coordinated PTTP Steering Committee Meeting; and
- Chaired the Kobe Ecosystem and Bycatch Technical Working Group.

III. Progress of SC Work Programme Activities

4. SC work programmes conducted in 2012-2013 include:

- *(Project 15) West Pacific East Asia Oceanic Fisheries Management Project*
WPEA OFM Project was officially completed in March 2013 and an independent terminal evaluation report was posted on SC9 website. The Fifth Project Steering Committee will be held during SC9. The second phase of WPEA project is in process.
- *(Project 35) Refinement of bigeye parameters Pacific-wide (A comprehensive review and study of bigeye tuna reproductive biology)*
SPC-OFP will present a progress report on the Pacific-wide sampling and preliminary analysis.
- *(Project 42) Pacific-wide tagging project*
A PTTP Steering Committee meeting will be convened during SC9 and SPC-OFP will present a progress report on 2012 tagging activities and the status of tag recovery.
- *(Project 57) Limit Reference Points*
SPC-OFP will present an analysis on the appropriate period for estimating the average recruitment for each species in the LRP $20\%SB_{recent, F=0}$, and the appropriate values of X for each species in the LRP $F_{x\%SPR_0}$.
- *(Project 60) Purse Seine Species Composition*
SPC-OFP will provide the outputs of the extended project activity and a response to three peer reviews.
- *(Project 69) Improvement of MultiFan Catch at Length (in line with recommendations from the report of the Peer Review for the 2011 Bigeye Tuna Stock Assessment)*
This is the first year of a 2-year project and SPC will provide a progress report to SC9.
- *(Project 70) Improvement of stock assessments in line with recommendations from the report of the Peer Review for the 2011 Bigeye Tuna Stock Assessment*
This project is funded \$160,000 per year for three years for SPC to hire an additional staff member to focus on this work. A progress report will be presented at SC9.

IV. Cooperation with other organizations

5. The Secretariat was represented at the following science-related meetings during the last 12 months:

- SPC pre-stock assessment workshop – 8-12 April, 2013, Noumea, New Caledonia
- Management Objectives expert preparatory meeting (initial draft of MO strawman document), 8-12 May, 2013, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA.
- The 13th ISC and its Working Group meetings, 6-22 July, 2013, Busan, South Korea.
- WPEA OFM Project related workshops and meetings in Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam

V. Research Projects

Western Pacific East Asia Oceanic Fisheries Management Project

6. After the last Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting in August 2012, several fishery monitoring and capacity building programmes were implemented as usual in the second half of 2012, and key activities in the three countries include:

- a) Collection of size, logbook and landing data by the hired enumerators in Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam;
- b) A review workshop for the audit of port sampling and verification of size and catch data in Indonesia;
- c) A workshop for the estimation of annual total tuna catches for oceanic tuna species (bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack tunas) by species and gear in Vietnam; and
- d) Attendance of country representatives in the first Regional TUFMAN Training Workshop held at SPC.

7. Policy-related review workshops were convened in the three countries to finalize consultancy reports on i) national tuna fisheries profiles, ii) national tuna management plans, iii) review of tuna association activities and iv) review and reform of policy, legal and institutional arrangements. Other important activities include developing handbook guides on WCPFC requirements such as CMMs for fishermen and researches on municipal tuna landing sites for further investigation on data collection procedure for accurate estimation of annual total tuna catch.

8. All three-year outputs from various project activities were compiled and provided to the selected independent terminal evaluator, Mr Robert Gillett, in November 2012. During WCPFC9, the evaluator interviewed in total 26 people from the relevant project stakeholders and experts participated in the meeting (Philippines 5, Indonesia 4, Vietnam 1, Vietnam's legal advisor from Netherlands 1, UNDP 2, UNOPS 1, WCPFC 4, CCAMLR 1 (former ED), Japan 1, international experts 1, SPC 1, FFA 1, USA 1, ISSF 1, SC Chair 1). The evaluator reviewed 69 documents out of 146 reports produced by the project and noted 75 meetings, workshops, conferences and training courses convened or participated in during project period, where over 1,400 people participated in such meetings and shared information from the project. The terminal evaluation report was submitted to UNDP in January 2013, and is posted as SC9-GN-IP-03. The WPEA OFM Project was officially closed in March 2013 and the last 2013 Annual Project Report was submitted to UNDP at the end of July 2013.

9. The Secretariat, in cooperation with the UNDP has been preparing the second phase of the WPEA project and the Project Identification Form was officially approved by the GEF Secretariat in June 2013. Drs Antony Lewis and Anna Tengberg will develop the second phase of WPEA Project Document using the GEF Project Preparation Grant, aiming to submit it to the GEF in early 2014.

10. Though the WPEA OFM Project is closed, core activities of the project will continue until the second phase project starts. In 2013, data collection from port sampling continued in the existing tuna landing sites and review workshops for port sampling and workshops for estimation of annual total tuna catch by species and gear were and will be convened in the three countries. Recently, the project hosted a three-country workshop in Philippines to review lessons and problems from the WPEA OFM Project and to consider key components in the second phase project document. Details of project activities since the last PSC meeting and during the first half of 2013 are provided in the Country Progress Report.

Japanese Trust Fund Project

11. This is the second year of the second 5 year phase of the Japan Trust Fund. JTF support is USD 403,380 in 2013. Seven proposals competed for the funds; however two of those (Vietnamese) projects had access to alternative funds. Following minor modifications recommended by the steering committee, all the remaining proposed projects could be fully funded, and a small outstanding balance of just over USD 3,046, could partially support one of the rejected Vietnamese projects.

12. A Philippines proposal approved under the 1st Phase for funding in 2011 did not proceed due to a lack of co-funding; co-funding was subsequently secured. The project (Training Program for the Operationalization and Implementation of the Vessel Monitoring System) has commenced and is expected to be completed this year (2013) supported by the previously allocated but unspent funding (USD 31,809). Additional non-JTF funds have been sourced to mitigate the increased cost of their project.

13. Projects approved for funding support were for Republic of the Marshall Islands/Federated States of Micronesia, SPC in support of developing states (x2), Tonga (x2) and partial support for a Vietnamese project.