

WCPFC Online Heads of Delegation Meeting to Consider and Provide Guidance on Meeting Arrangements for Online Commission-related Meetings in 2020.

[On the 15 July 2020 from 11.00am to 1.00pm Pohnpei Time]

Reference Paper by the Secretariat

[Dated 10th July 2020]

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide a reference document to facilitate the discussions at the online Heads of Delegation (HOD) meeting sanctioned by an intersessional decision of the Commission under Circular 2020/64 of 6 July 2020. The objective of the HOD meeting is to consider and provide guidance on the meeting arrangements to be used for all the online Commission-related meetings in 2020.

Background

2. Due to the disruptive impacts of the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic on international travels and border closures, the member countries which offered to host the WCPFC-related meetings in 2020 have all withdrawn their offers. Without any offer to host the WCPFC-related meetings in 2020 and the fact that the pandemic is still continuing in many parts of the world, the prospect for any physical meeting for the Commission in 2020 is practically nil.
3. At the date of this paper, the Commission has taken an intersessional decision not to convene a physical meeting for the 16th Regular Session of the Scientific Committee (SC16) scheduled to be held in Apia, Samoa from 11 to 20 August 2020 as well as the two working groups that were scheduled to meet alongside the SC16 in 2020 (the FAD Management Option Intersessional Working Group and the South Pacific Albacore Roadmap Working Group). The Commission also tasked the Secretariat and the Scientific Services Provider, in consultation with the SC Chair and the Theme Conveners, to explore options to convene an electronic SC16 meeting with an abbreviated agenda consisting of essential items necessary to progress the scientific work of the Commission in 2020 and to provide the scientific advice necessary to inform key decisions of the annual WCPFC17 meeting in December 2020 (Circular 2020/47). In response, the Secretariat and the Scientific Services Provider, in consultation with the SC Chair and the Theme Conveners, have proceeded to make necessary arrangements for an electronic SC16 meeting. At the date of this paper, the Meeting Notice and the Provisional Agenda for the SC16 meeting have been posted on the WCPFC website.
4. For the other Commission-related meetings, there had not yet been any formal Commission decisions to convene them electronically, but it is very much a foregone conclusion. The current situation has caused Members, Cooperating non-Members and Participating Territories (CCMs) to be concerned as to how the Commission will sustain its business in 2020 and to ensure the maintenance of the Commission's functions in 2021 and beyond.

5. Against this backdrop, and reflecting on the expressed concerns of some CCMs, the Commission Chair proposed to the CCMs in Circular 2020/58 of 25 June 2020 for the convening of an online HOD meeting to provide guidance on the appropriate meeting arrangements for all the online Commission-related meetings in 2020 on the premise that no physical meeting will be possible.
6. In response to Circular 2020/58, the Commission decided, as conveyed in Circular 2020/64 of 6 July 2020, as follow:

1. The Commission agreed to convene an online Heads of Delegation meeting of no longer than 2 to 3 hours to consider the following matters:
 - a. provide guidance for the scope of the agendas for the online meetings of the SC16, NC16, TCC16 and WCPFC17;
 - b. provide guidance for the format and structure (meeting times, online discussion forum and / or video teleconference) for the online meetings in 1.a. above;
 - c. provide guidelines for the development of meeting protocols for the online meetings in 1.a. above; and
 - d. hold preliminary discussion on the status of the three interim Commissions decisions as responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. The Commission tasked the Secretariat to organise the online Heads of Delegation meeting decided in 1. above as guided by the Commission Chair.

7. As the Chair clarified in Circular 2020/58, the HOD meeting is not a decision-making meeting of the Commission, rather a forum to assist in organising arrangements for a formal meeting. Any substantive decisions emanating from the Heads of Delegation meeting, which warrant a formal decision of the Commission, will need to be put through the usual process for taking decisions of the Commission. So, it is important to note that the key objective of the HOD meeting is to assist in coordinating and organising the work of the Commission-related meetings in 2020 in light of the new norm of doing business caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic and it is not intended to usurp the proper authorities of the Executive Director and the Chair of each meeting to confirm and formalise their own meeting arrangements as stipulated by the WCPFC Rules of Procedure.

Agenda for the Online Heads of Delegation Meeting

8. Consistent with the Commission's intersessional decision in Circular 2020/64 of 6 July 2020, the agenda for the HOD meeting is set out in *Attachment 1*.

Guidance on the Content of Meeting Agendas (agenda 2)

Background

9. Under this agenda item, the HOD meeting is expected to discuss and provide guidance as to the scope of the meeting agenda for the annual WCPFC17 meeting which in turn will inform the development of the agendas for the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission.
10. Rule 2 of the Rules of Procedure (RoP) sets out clearly the procedures on the drawing up of the provisional agenda for a regular session and vests that responsibility in the Executive Director and the Chair of the meeting. The same rule also provides guidance as to what should be included in the provisional agenda. In the absence of specific rules of procedure for the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission, the RoP apply mutatis mutandis to the proceedings of subsidiary bodies.
11. So, why is the HOD meeting required to provide guidance in the setting of the meeting agenda and its content when the RoP are abundantly clear in its guidance as to the process of drawing up the agenda and the content of the agenda?
12. The prevailing working environment caused by the disruptive impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic has created a new norm for doing business which has necessitated the convening of online meetings instead of physical meetings. With online meetings, like this HOD meeting, there are obvious inherent challenges and limitations associated with convening them. In particular, in the context of Commission-related meetings those challenges are magnified because of the number of meeting participants, the multi-time zones involved as a result of the geographical spread of the locations of the CCMs, the different preferences expressed by the CCMs for what virtual platform to use, the varying internet capacities and connectivity of the CCMs, and the reliability of the power supplies in the small island developing CCMs. Therefore, setting the agenda for an online meeting, one surely has to be mindful of those challenges and limitations and it is not as straight forward a process as may be envisaged under the RoP which was primarily designed with physical meetings in mind.
13. However, it must be restated that having the HOD meeting discuss the matter of providing guidance on the drawing up of online meeting agenda for each of the Commission-related meeting is not intended to circumvent or depart from the clear requirements of the RoP. Rather, it is intended simply to assist in coordinating and synchronising the work and efforts of the different Commission-related meetings in response to the common challenges and limitations inherent in convening online meetings. Ultimately, the responsibility of drawing up meeting agendas remains the responsibility of the Executive Director and the respective Chair of the meeting concerned.

Approaches to setting the meeting agendas

14. In the course of progressing meeting arrangements for the online SC16 meeting, some CCMs have expressed strong preferences on considering first how the Commission should organise its business in 2020 in light of the constraints on doing business caused by the disruptive impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

15. The FFA-CCMs in their letter of 19 June 2020 to the Commission Chair (circulated as an attachment to Circular 2020/58 of 25 June 2020) expressed the view that the ‘WCPFC membership needs to focus attention on those matters that require decisions to be taken in order to ensure there are no gaps in the management framework arising from the expiry of CMMs in 2020 and that the Secretariat and the Scientific Services Provider can continue to operate effectively to support the Commission’s work’. They also added that they do not support substantive negotiations of CMMs in 2020 and will consider rolling over existing measures, including the tropical tuna measure CMM 2018-01 which is due to expire after the 10 February 2021. They provided a list of what they consider as critical issues that the Commission must make decisions in 2020 that include the annual work plan and budget, IUU Vessel List, Cooperating non-Members status, and the Compliance Monitoring report.
16. The USA in a letter of 24 June 2020 to the Commission Chair (circulated under Circular 2020/57 of 25 June 2020) shared the example of the process adopted by the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO) to organise the arrangements for its recent online annual meeting. The USA also shared their views in a more recent letter of 1 July 2020 (enclosed as *Attachment 2*) in response to Circular 2020/58 in which they provided a list of what they considered as important agenda items for the annual regular session. The USA list as may be seen in *Attachment 2* is much broader than the issues identified by the FFA-CCMs.
17. The above two approaches may be contrasted by the extent of the scope of the issues they target as the focus for the annual WCPFC17 meeting. The FFA-CCMs approach may be characterised as the ‘minimalist approach’ where the Commission should focus simply on what decisions the Commission is required to make in 2020 in order to sustain its work in 2021 and to ensure there is no gaps in the WCPFC conservation and management regime arising as a result of the expiry of the CMMs in 2020. The USA approach is broader in the sense that it covers the essential decisions as in the FFA-CCMs minimalist approach plus other issues where decision-making would be difficult, but their further discussion would place the Commission in a better position to debate and decide in-person when that opportunity present itself.
18. In light of the two approaches, the Secretariat has sought to assess what are the core issues that the Commission is expected to consider in 2020. In that pursuit, the Secretariat has developed two lists. The first list (attached as *Attachment 3*) includes decisions that are assessed to be absolutely essential and necessary for the Commission to take in 2020 in order to enable the Commission to sustain its work in 2021 and beyond, and to avoid any gaps in the existing WCPFC conservation and management regime resulting from the expiry of CMMs at end of 2020 or thereby. The second list (attached as *Attachment 4*) includes matters that are required to be reported annually to the Commission and matters that the Commission is required to review in 2020, but aside from non-compliance with a Commission mandate, their non-consideration would not directly affect the sustainability of the work of the Commission in 2021.
19. The rationale for the two Secretariat lists is two folds as follow:
 - a) if the HOD meeting determines that the FFA-CCMs minimalist approach is the preferred approach then the guidance from the HOD meeting is for only the issues included in the list in *Attachment 3* to form the basis of the agenda for the annual WCPFC17 meeting which in turn will guide the development of the agenda for the meetings of the subsidiary bodies.

- b) However, if the HOD meeting determines that the USA's broader approach is the preferred approach then the guidance from the HOD meeting would be that the agenda for the annual WCPPC17 meeting will comprise of those issues in *Attachment 3*, plus some of the issues in the list in *Attachment 4*, which in turn will guide the development of the agenda for the meetings of the subsidiary bodies. The HOD meeting will discuss and recommend those additional issues from the list in *Attachment 4*.
20. Subject to the CCMs views, the Secretariat will respectfully suggest that the HOD meeting consider and provide guidance in relation to the Secretariat's approach as explained in paragraph 19 above.

Guidance on the Format and Structure of Online Meetings (agenda 3)

21. Under this agenda item, the HOD meeting is expected to provide some guidance as to the choice of an online platform to support the online meetings, the timings (hours) of the online meetings, and the use of an online discussion forum that will precede the online meetings.

Choice of the online platform to support the online (video conference) meetings

22. As noted earlier, there are inherent limitations on what can be done at online meetings compared to physical meetings. Most, if not all, of the limitations are technical constraints associated with the choice of the online platform that is available and supportable to support the online meeting. As known, there are several online platform products that are available on the market with varying range of functionalities. CCMs have had access and exposure to different online platforms and with those experiences some CCMs have expressed their preferences for some of the online platforms like zoom, webex and so forth.

23. From the perspective of the Secretariat, the choice of the online platform is central to developing the format and structure of the online meeting. Securing agreement on the choice of the online platform, unfortunately, has not been an easy exercise, due to some regulatory constraints or government policy against the use of some of the online platform products. More importantly, the main constraint has been the lack of capacity of some CCMs especially the small island developing CCMs to access and use some of those products. The lack of internet connectivity and low bandwidth were identified as the main constraints for the small island developing CCMs.

24. In Circular 2020/52 the Secretariat provided a list of factors it considered relevant to the assessment of a viable and supportable online platform to support the SC16 meeting:

- a. Maximum number of participants - recent experience has shown that the number of delegates increase when meetings are held online. As a result, the platform should be capable of supporting at least 500 participants;
- b. Low bandwidth support - with many of the small island states of the WCPFC are at the end of a very small internet pipeline, the platform should be capable to maintain audio quality while gradually degrade the video signal to compensate;
- c. User-friendly - how easy a product is to use can be quite subjective but a simple clean user interface with easy to access meeting controls (mute, interrupt etc) will allow users that are not so familiar with the technology to navigate the system; and
- d. In-meeting functionality - features expected here include the ability to: allow participants to be vetted through a check-in process (waiting room); renamed on entry allowing delegations to be grouped together visually; assigned delegates to breakout meetings temporarily; and a range of other host controls to ensure effective coordination of the meeting while it is in progress.

25. The Secretariat continues to maintain that the above factors are important considerations in the choice of a viable and supportable online platform for WCPFC meetings.

26. Over recent months the Secretariat has continued to undertake tests and assessments of online platforms and has determined that there are presently two workable options for a viable and supportable online platform for WCPFC meetings as follow:

Platform	Assessment
Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoom has been widely used in the Pacific region this year to support online meetings of the FFA and SPC. CCMs that participated in those meetings are very familiar with Zoom. • Zoom can support up to 1000 participants and seems to handle low bandwidth situations well. • It is easy to use and supports most, if not all, of the necessary meeting functionalities. • There have been some expressed concerns in respect to the security risks of Zoom. The latest release (Version 5) appears to address those security concerns. • It is known that some CCMs have policies prohibiting the use of Zoom.
Cisco Webex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This platform has had limited usage in the Pacific due in part to the technical difficulties experienced establishing a Webex connection plus the poor experience in low bandwidth situations. • Webex can support up to 1000 participants and is easy to use. • The meeting control functionalities are not as extensive as those available in Zoom.

27. Therefore, it is respectfully suggested that the HOD meeting consider and provide guidance as to the choice of the online platform to support all the Commission-related meetings in 2020. In providing that guidance, the HOD meeting may consider these factors:
- a. Government policies and regulations against the use of certain products.
 - b. Maximum number of participants;
 - c. Low bandwidth support;
 - d. User-friendly; and
 - e. In-meeting functionality.

The timings (hours) and length of the online meeting

28. Assuming that there is agreement on the choice of the online platform, this will make it possible to include a video teleconferencing segment for the online meeting. The next challenge in sorting out the format and structure of the online meeting is the scheduling of the timing (hours) and number of days of the meeting in light of the multi-time zones involved given the geographical spread of the locations of the CCMs. This is not an easy choice to make by anyone, in particular the Secretariat, so the HOD meeting will be expected to provide some guidance on these important meeting logistical issues. For the meeting’s reference, a time zone sheet is provided in Attachment 5 to indicate the times in other major cities of some CCMs compared to the time (hour) in Pohnpei as indicated in the first column under the heading Palikir, the seat of the FSM national government in Pohnpei.

Use of an online discussion forum that will precede the online meeting

29. As is being planned for the online SC16 meeting next month, there has been developed at the Secretariat website a 'WCPFC online discussion forum' platform to provide an electronic platform forum for intersessional discussions among meeting participants to take place prior to the commencement of the online meeting. For the SC16 meeting the provisional agenda proposes that the online discussion forum might be used to discuss topics that may not necessarily be required to be substantively discussed at the online video conference meeting. The WCPFC online discussion forum could also be used by registered meeting participants to share and exchange views and comments on agenda items in advance of the online meeting.
30. Although, this arrangement has not been tried yet at a Commission-related meeting, the Secretariat took the initiative to develop the 'WCPFC online discussion forum' tool noting the issues of multiple time-zones across CCM participants will limit the hours for online meetings per day, and with an expectation that some electronic correspondence exchanges amongst meeting participants could be usefully supported through the WCPFC website in advance of the formal meetings. The Secretariat will respectfully suggest that the HOD meeting supports and recommends the use of the 'WCPFC online discussion forum' as part of the online meeting arrangements.
31. Therefore, for this agenda items, the HOD meeting will be respectfully asked to provide guidance on the following:
 - a. the choice of the online platform or, in the absence of such a choice, guidance on the criteria for the choice of the online platform;
 - b. the timing (hours) and days for the online meetings; and
 - c. whether there is support for the use of the 'WCPFC online discussion forum' as part of the WCPFC online meeting arrangements.

Guidance on Meeting Protocols for the Online Meetings (agenda 4)

32. Under this agenda item, the HOD meeting will be required to provide guidance on the content of the Meeting Protocols that must be observed by the meeting participants.
33. The discussion of Meeting Protocols is subject to the choice of the online platform, as most the protocols are online platform specific. Depending on which online platform is preferred, the Meeting Protocols will include rules and procedures on:
 - a. How to register for the meeting;
 - b. What hardware works best for an online meeting;
 - c. How to join the online meeting;
 - d. The roles of the Chair and other meeting officials;
 - e. How to request to speak;
 - f. How will documents and power point presentations be managed;
 - g. How side discussions may be managed;
 - h. How to use the WCPFC online discussion forum;
 - i. How to access technical help prior to or during the meeting; and
 - j. How the recording of the meeting recordings will be used.
34. Assuming there is support for the use of the WCPFC online discussion forum, the HOD meeting could provide guidance on sort of issues for online meetings should be conducted through the 'WCPFC online discussion forum'. For example, should the online discussion forum be used solely to discuss topics that may not necessarily be required to be substantively discussed at the online video conference meeting? Or should it be used as a tool to support intersessional consultation and coordination on all topics in advance of the online video conference meeting, with a view to limit video conference time to further discussion of items requiring a decision and adoption of the outcomes? A related matter is what outputs, if any, would flow from the 'WCPFC online discussion forum' into a meeting.
35. In the absence of a decision on the preferred online platform, the HOD meeting may indicate what other matters that should be included in the Meeting Protocols.

Preliminary Discussions on the status of the three interim Commission's Decisions as Responses to the COVID-19 pandemic (agenda 5)

36. Under this agenda item, the HOD meeting is expected to have a preliminary conversation on what will happen to the three intersessional decisions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic when they lapse after the 31 July 2020.
37. The Commission has taken three intersessional decisions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These relate to purse seine observer coverage, at-sea transshipment for purse seine vessels, and at-sea transshipment observers. All three decisions were extended from their initial expiry date of 31 May 2020 until 31 July 2020. Unless the Commission decides to temporally extend this decision for a further period, it will expire on 31 July 2020.
38. In Circular 2020/46 of 28 May 2020, the Chair requested that flag and port State CCMs, observer providers and fishing industry representatives provide to the Secretariat information they have on COVID-19 restrictions as well as on measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on fishing vessels. The purpose of this request was to improve the information on which future decisions could be taken, as well as work on developing the necessary health related safety protocols, standards and procedures to enable observers to be swiftly and safely placed on fishing vessels and carrier vessels when travel and port entry restrictions are lifted in the region.
39. The Secretariat has established a webpage for the purposes of sharing such information. The Secretariat has received some information on COVID-19 requirements in CCMs, but little information on measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on fishing vessels, nor on the lifting of travel and port entry restrictions. The Secretariat is aware that some CCMs are loosening some of their travel and port entry restrictions, but the bulk of restrictions in most CCMs remain in place. In these circumstances there does not appear to be a significant change from the situation existing in late May when the decisions were first extended.
40. The Commission may therefore consider extending the decision for a further period. This must take into consideration Article 30 of the Convention and the safety and livelihoods of ROP observers, in particular those from small island developing CCMs.
41. It would be opportune for the HOD meeting to have an initial discussion over a decision to extend and the period for any extension. The Secretariat suggests that the temporary extension continue until 31 October 2020. The justification for a three month, rather than a twomonth, extension is to allow space for CCMs to participate in the TCC meeting which is expected to be a virtual meeting and which usually occurs at the end of September. This would also provide additional time to share information on COVID-19 restrictions and work on developing appropriate protocols and standards so that observers may safely be placed on vessels. A draft decision for consideration of the HOD meeting is attached at Attachment 6. If HODs meeting agree to taking such a decision, it would be put through the expedited COVID-19 decision-making process that the Commission has used to date.

42. The HOD is respectfully asked to initiate a preliminary conversation on what should happen to the three intersessional decisions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic when they lapse after the 31 July 2020.

WCPFC Online Heads of Delegation Meeting to Consider and Provide Guidance on Meeting Arrangements for Online Commission-related Meetings in 2020.

[Held online on 15 July 2020]

Agenda

1. Opening of Meeting
2. Guidance for the Scope of the Agenda for the Online Commission-related meetings in 2020.
3. Guidance for the Format and Structure for the Online Commission-related meetings in 2020.
4. Guidance for the Meeting Protocols for the Online Commission-related meetings in 2020.
5. Preliminary discussion on the status of the three interim Commissions as responses to the COVID-19 pandemic
6. Close of Meeting

USA Letter of 1 July 2020 to Commission Chair in Response to Circular 2020/58



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Fisheries

Washington, D.C. 20230

July 1, 2020

Ms. Jung-re Riley Kim, Chair
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
PO Box 2356
Kolonia, Pohnpei State, 96941
Federated States of Micronesia

Dear Chair Kim:

I would like to respond on behalf of the United States to Circular 2020-58.

We appreciate the FFA members' suggestion to convene a brief meeting of heads of delegation to discuss meeting arrangements for this year's annual sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, and we support your proposal to do so. We would like to offer comments on: (1) participation and agenda for the heads of delegation meeting; (2) the process used to set the agendas for the annual sessions of the Commission and its committees; and (3) agenda items for the annual sessions that we believe are important to include.

1. Heads of delegation meeting participants

The proposed meeting would be for "heads of delegation". However, because the subject of the meeting will include the process and agendas for annual sessions of the Commission's subsidiary bodies as well as the annual session of the Commission, it will be important to clarify who should attend. The United States suggests that each CCM be permitted to have as many as three representatives, as many delegations have different heads for each of the committees and Commission plenary session. It would also be important that the chairs and vice chairs of each of the four committees participate, as these individuals are responsible to set and execute the format and agendas of their respective committees.

2. Process for setting agendas of the annual sessions

Regardless of whether an annual session is held in person or on an electronic platform, the responsibility for drawing up the provisional agenda remains with the Executive Director and chair of the Commission, or the respective committee, per Rule 2 of the Rules of Procedure. We expect this practice to continue for this year's sessions, and we understand that the main purpose of the proposed heads of delegation meeting will be to guide the Executive Director and chairs in their task of drawing up provisional agendas. Exchanging views through the proposed heads of delegation meeting should serve to coordinate and ensure consistency in the agendas of the committees and the Commission

3. Important agenda items for the annual sessions

First, we note that Rule 2 of the Rules of Procedure requires that we consider certain agenda items in the annual sessions. Beyond those, we agree with the inclusion of the issues identified by FFA members in their letter of June 19, 2020, as essential. We also agree that the Commission and its committees should endeavor to streamline their agendas given the challenges in having productive discussions when meeting electronically and the potential technical difficulties raised by FFA members, which will need to be considered carefully as we discuss meeting options. However, we believe the Commission and committees do not need to pare their agendas down to only “essential” items. For example, there might be straightforward, non-contentious items that might require little deliberation to reach consensus. There also may be agenda items for which decision-making would be difficult, but for which discussions are nevertheless worthwhile such that we are farther along next year when the Commission is in a better position to debate and decide in-person. With these thoughts in mind, and understanding that this will be a topic for the proposed heads of delegation meeting, we tentatively offer the following issues as worthy of inclusion on the agendas of the Commission and/or its committees:

- SC advice on status, trends, and management advice and implications where new or updated assessments are available
- SC recommendations and outputs on evaluations and analyses related to tropical tunas measure
- SC advice in response to Commission requests related to target reference points for skipjack, yellowfin, and bigeye
- Tropical tunas measure (SC, TCC, and Commission)
- Updated TCC work plan
- Updated NC work plan
- Annual budget and any other essential business related to finance and administration (FAC and Commission)
- IUU Vessel List (TCC and Commission)
- Cooperating Non-members for 2021 (TCC and Commission)
- Compliance Monitoring Report for 2019 (TCC and Commission)
- Work plan for CMS CMM future work (TCC and Commission)
- List of obligations to be assessed in 2021 (TCC and Commission)
- US proposal on high seas boarding pennant (TCC and Commission)
- Cetacean handling guidelines (Commission)
- Flow of observer reports for investigations (TCC and Commission)
- Decisions related to COVID-19 (SC, TCC, and Commission)
- Pacific bluefin tuna rebuilding (NC and Commission)
- North Pacific striped marlin rebuilding (Commission)
- Continuation of the transshipment WG in 2021 (TCC and Commission)
- Continuation of the VMS WG in 2021 (TCC and Commission)

Finally, it should not be assumed by any members that any measure that is due to expire should be automatically rolled over without discussion on such and consensus to do so.

We appreciate your consideration of these views, and we look forward to participating in the heads of delegation meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Lawler', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andrew Lawler

Deputy Assistant Secretary for International
Fisheries

Attachments

cc: Michael Brakke, U.S. Department of State

Henry Seseapasara, American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources

Anthony Benavente, CNMI Department of Land and Natural Resources

Chelsa Muna-Brecht, Guam Department of Agriculture

Secretariat List of Essential and Necessary Decisions for the WCPFC to Take in 2020

This List compiles Decisions that are absolutely essential and necessary for the Commission to take in 2020 in order to sustain the work of the Commission in 2021 and beyond, and to avoid any gaps in the existing WCPFC conservation and management regime resulting from the expiry of CMMs at end of 2020 or thereby.

Operational Decisions

1. Annual Budget for 2021
 - Required by rule 3.3 of Financial Regulation (FRs).
 - Will require budgetary submissions for SC and TCC related work.
2. Appointment of Auditors
 - Required by rule 12.1 of FRs as the current appointment lapses at end of 2020.
3. Election of Commission Officers and Decision on 2021 Meetings
 - Some officers' terms lapse at end of 2020 and new elections are required.
 - Commission to decide on schedule and venue for its meeting in 2021.

Decisions in relation to CMMs

4. The tropical tuna measure (CMM 2018-01) will expire after 10th February 2021 and a successor measure is required.
 - The measure also includes various timelines for decisions on:
 - non-entangling FADs;
 - purse seine high seas hard limits and allocation; and
 - longline hard limits for bigeye and allocation.
5. Renewal of cooperating non-members (CNM) status.
 - Pursuant to CMM 2019-01 the CNM status is an annual process and decision.
6. Adoption of an IUU Vessels List for 2021
 - Pursuant to CMM 2019-07 the WCPFC IUU Vessels List is reviewed and adopted annually.
7. List of priority obligations to be assessed in the Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS) in 2021
 - Pursuant to CMM 2019-06 paragraph 6 the Commission shall decide on the list of obligations to be assessed through the Compliance Monitoring Scheme in the following year.

Secretariat List of Annual Reports and Reviews for the WCPFC in 2020

This List compiles matters that are required to be reported annually to the Commission and matters the Commission is required to review in 2020. Aside from non-compliance with a Commission mandate, their non-consideration would not directly affect the sustainability of the work of the Commission in 2021.

Operational matters

1. Submission of audited financial statements.
 - Required by rule 13.1 of the Financial Regulations (FRs).
 - The Commission shall signify its acceptance of the audited financial statements or take such other action as it may consider appropriate.
2. Annual Report on General Account Fund revenues
 - Required by rule 5.7 of the FRs for an annual report on revenues received and any advances from the working capital fund.
3. Annual Report on Status of Other Funds
 - Required by rule 7.7 of the FRs for an annual report on status of special funds.
4. ED Annual Report
 - Required by rule 13 of the Rules of Procedures of the Commission

Reports and reviews under CMMs

5. Annual review of progress of implementation of the Special Requirement Fund (CMM 2013-07).
6. Annual review of the South Pacific Albacore measure on the basis of the Scientific Committee advice (CMM 2015-02).
7. Review of the Pacific bluefin tuna measure (CMM 2019-02) using the outcomes of an expected ISC stock assessment in 2020.
8. Review and enhancement of the Compliance and Monitoring Scheme measure (CMM 2019-06).
9. Annual Reports of the various Compliance/MCS tools CMMs
10. Assessment of compliance by CCMs during the previous calendar year (2019) with priority obligations (CMM 2019-06)

Stock Assessments

11. SPC is expected to report on the outcomes of the stock assessment for the bigeye and yellowfin which are relevant to the review of the CMM 2018-01 on tropical tuna, consideration of a successor measure and harvest strategy related work.

12. Linked to 7. Above, the ISC is to undertake a stock assessment of the Pacific bluefin tuna, the outcomes of which will be relevant to the review of the CMM 2019-02.

Harvest Strategy Indicative Work Plan

13. The Indicative Work Plan for the Adoption of Harvest Strategies includes specific work for consideration and progression in 2020, including TRPs for bigeye, skipjack and yellowfin.

Reports of Intersessional Working Groups

14. The various Intersessional Working Group were expected to report progress of their work to the WCPFC17.

Attachment 5

Time Zones Sheet

UTC-time	Palikir	Seoul	Washington DC	Brussels	Honolulu	Tokyo	Beijing	Wellington	Canberra	Jakarta
Tuesday, 14 July 2020, 18:00:00	Wed 05:00	Wed 03:00	Tue 14:00 *	Tue 20:00 *	Tue 08:00	Wed 03:00	Wed 02:00	Wed 06:00	Wed 04:00	Wed 01:00
Tuesday, 14 July 2020, 19:00:00	Wed 06:00	Wed 04:00	Tue 15:00 *	Tue 21:00 *	Tue 09:00	Wed 04:00	Wed 03:00	Wed 07:00	Wed 05:00	Wed 02:00
Tuesday, 14 July 2020, 20:00:00	Wed 07:00	Wed 05:00	Tue 16:00 *	Tue 22:00 *	Tue 10:00	Wed 05:00	Wed 04:00	Wed 08:00	Wed 06:00	Wed 03:00
Tuesday, 14 July 2020, 21:00:00	Wed 08:00	Wed 06:00	Tue 17:00 *	Tue 23:00 *	Tue 11:00	Wed 06:00	Wed 05:00	Wed 09:00	Wed 07:00	Wed 04:00
Tuesday, 14 July 2020, 22:00:00	Wed 09:00	Wed 07:00	Tue 18:00 *	Wed 00:00 *	Tue 12:00	Wed 07:00	Wed 06:00	Wed 10:00	Wed 08:00	Wed 05:00
Tuesday, 14 July 2020, 23:00:00	Wed 10:00	Wed 08:00	Tue 19:00 *	Wed 01:00 *	Tue 13:00	Wed 08:00	Wed 07:00	Wed 11:00	Wed 09:00	Wed 06:00
Wednesday, 15 July 2020, 00:00:00	Wed 11:00	Wed 09:00	Tue 20:00 *	Wed 02:00 *	Tue 14:00	Wed 09:00	Wed 08:00	Wed 12:00	Wed 10:00	Wed 07:00
Wednesday, 15 July 2020, 01:00:00	Wed 12:00	Wed 10:00	Tue 21:00 *	Wed 03:00 *	Tue 15:00	Wed 10:00	Wed 09:00	Wed 13:00	Wed 11:00	Wed 08:00
Wednesday, 15 July 2020, 02:00:00	Wed 13:00	Wed 11:00	Tue 22:00 *	Wed 04:00 *	Tue 16:00	Wed 11:00	Wed 10:00	Wed 14:00	Wed 12:00	Wed 09:00
Wednesday, 15 July 2020, 03:00:00	Wed 14:00	Wed 12:00	Tue 23:00 *	Wed 05:00 *	Tue 17:00	Wed 12:00	Wed 11:00	Wed 15:00	Wed 13:00	Wed 10:00
Wednesday, 15 July 2020, 04:00:00	Wed 15:00	Wed 13:00	Wed 00:00 *	Wed 06:00 *	Tue 18:00	Wed 13:00	Wed 12:00	Wed 16:00	Wed 14:00	Wed 11:00
Wednesday, 15 July 2020, 05:00:00	Wed 16:00	Wed 14:00	Wed 01:00 *	Wed 07:00 *	Tue 19:00	Wed 14:00	Wed 13:00	Wed 17:00	Wed 15:00	Wed 12:00
Wednesday, 15 July 2020, 06:00:00	Wed 17:00	Wed 15:00	Wed 02:00 *	Wed 08:00 *	Tue 20:00	Wed 15:00	Wed 14:00	Wed 18:00	Wed 16:00	Wed 13:00
Wednesday, 15 July 2020, 07:00:00	Wed 18:00	Wed 16:00	Wed 03:00 *	Wed 09:00 *	Tue 21:00	Wed 16:00	Wed 15:00	Wed 19:00	Wed 17:00	Wed 14:00
Wednesday, 15 July 2020, 08:00:00	Wed 19:00	Wed 17:00	Wed 04:00 *	Wed 10:00 *	Tue 22:00	Wed 17:00	Wed 16:00	Wed 20:00	Wed 18:00	Wed 15:00
Wednesday, 15 July 2020, 09:00:00	Wed 20:00	Wed 18:00	Wed 05:00 *	Wed 11:00 *	Tue 23:00	Wed 18:00	Wed 17:00	Wed 21:00	Wed 19:00	Wed 16:00
Wednesday, 15 July 2020, 10:00:00	Wed 21:00	Wed 19:00	Wed 06:00 *	Wed 12:00 *	Wed 00:00	Wed 19:00	Wed 18:00	Wed 22:00	Wed 20:00	Wed 17:00
Wednesday, 15 July 2020, 11:00:00	Wed 22:00	Wed 20:00	Wed 07:00 *	Wed 13:00 *	Wed 01:00	Wed 20:00	Wed 19:00	Wed 23:00	Wed 21:00	Wed 18:00
Wednesday, 15 July 2020, 12:00:00	Wed 23:00	Wed 21:00	Wed 08:00 *	Wed 14:00 *	Wed 02:00	Wed 21:00	Wed 20:00	Thu 00:00	Wed 22:00	Wed 19:00

**Draft Decision to Extend the Three Intersessional Decisions
In Response to the COVID-19 pandemic**

DECISION

The Commission endorses that:

A. Purse Seine Observer Coverage

1. The Commission agrees to suspend the requirements for observer coverage on purse seine vessels set out in paragraphs 34 and 35 of CMM 2018-01 and CMM 2018-05 until 31 October 2020.
2. The temporary suspension will apply to new trips after a vessel operator has met any requirement for repatriation of observers currently on board a vessel. Repatriation, in this context, means returning the observer to his/her home port, in consultation with the observer provider.
3. Repatriation is to be expedited by the vessel operator and the relevant flag State, in close consultation with the relevant national Observer Provider. The observer's costs will continue to be met by the vessel operator until such time as the observer is returned to his/her home port.
4. During the period of suspension, the VMS requirements and procedures of paragraphs 33 and 37 of CMM 2018-01 that apply to purse seine vessels during FAD closure periods will also apply to purse seine vessels which are not carrying observers.

B. At-sea Transhipment for Purse Seine Vessels

1. Until October 31, 2020, and without prejudice to the provision that "transhipment at sea by purse seine vessels shall be prohibited" as stipulated by paragraph 25 of CMM 2009-06, if it is not feasible for a purse seine vessel to tranship in port despite its best effort due to port closures and relevant access restrictions related to the prevention of COVID-19, that particular vessel may tranship at sea in an area under the jurisdiction of a Port State on the following conditions:

(1) Subject to any temporary measures that Port States may take regarding transhipment within a designated area of their national jurisdiction in relation to COVID-19, purse seine vessels may tranship at sea in areas under national jurisdiction of a port state in the area between 20°N and 20°S in accordance with the domestic laws and regulations of the port State.

(2) CCMs shall ensure that their purse seine vessels comply with all other binding requirements established under the Convention and Commission decisions using all MCS tools available, including but not limited to verification of catch and effort and logbook data, VMS and AIS (when available) monitoring and examination of other relevant information such as landing and transhipment data.

(3) The flag State CCM of any such authorized purse seine vessel that is required to be on the WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels shall notify the Executive Director that the vessel is authorized to engage in transshipment outside of port.

2. CCMs whose vessels are subject to these temporary arrangements are encouraged, to the extent practicable and in accordance with their domestic rules and regulations, to implement additional MCS measures and to follow-up these transshipments through inspection or observation or monitor these transshipments electronically if available during the application of the arrangements. In doing so, the requirements of the port State or coastal State are to be adhered to by all vessels within that State's jurisdiction.

C. At-sea Transshipment Observers

1. The requirements in paragraph 13 of CMM 2009-06 are temporarily suspended until October 31, 2020. Paragraphs 14, 15 and 16 of CMM 2009-06 will be also suspended during the same period when a vessel is not carrying an observer. The temporary suspension will apply to new trips after disembarkation of the observers currently on board the vessels participating in the at-sea transshipments indicated in the aforementioned paragraph of CMM 2009-06 on the following conditions:

(1) Concerned flag CCMs shall indicate, when they send the Transshipment Declaration referred to in paragraph 35(iv) of CMM 2009-06 to the Executive Director, whether the particular at-sea transshipment had occurred under this temporary suspension. The Secretariat shall provide a summary of at-sea transshipments without observers that occurred under this temporary suspension, based on Transshipment Declarations submitted to the Executive Director in accordance with paragraph 35(iv) of CMM 2009-06, in the Annual Report on Transshipment to and for consideration of TCC16 and TCC17.

(2) CCMs shall ensure that their vessels comply with all other binding requirements established under the Convention and Commission decisions using all MCS tools available, including but not limited to verification of catch and effort and logbook data, VMS and AIS (when available) monitoring and examination of other relevant information such as landing and transshipment data.

(3) If the at-sea transshipment takes place in areas under national jurisdiction of a coastal State, the vessels shall tranship in accordance with the domestic laws and regulations of the coastal State.

2. CCMs whose vessels are subject to this temporary arrangement are encouraged, to the extent practicable and in accordance with their domestic rules and regulations, to implement additional MCS measures and to follow-up these transshipments through inspection or observation or monitor these transshipments electronically if available during the application of the arrangements. In doing so, the requirements of a coastal State are to be adhered to by all vessels within that coastal State's jurisdiction.

D. Review

This decision takes effect immediately once the Commission has endorsed it. The Commission will review its decision by October 31, 2020. In undertaking such review, the Commission should take into consideration Article 30 of the Convention and the safety and livelihoods of ROP observers, in particular SIDS observers.