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**COVID-19 RELATED INTERSESSIONAL DECISIONS**

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**WCPFC17-2020-08**  
**19 November 2020**

**Paper by the Secretariat**

**Purpose**

1. This paper updates Secretariat paper **WCPFC-TCC16-2020-14** on the measures taken to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 on fishing vessels and on travel and port entry restrictions in CCMs, in light of the discussion at TCC16 and new information.
2. The paper is divided into four sections. The first discusses the WCPFC COVID-19 Decisions and their consideration by TCC16. The second provides a snapshot as of 10 November 2020 of the travel and other restrictions that CCMs have been imposed in order to address the COVID-19 pandemic. The third section provides a synthesis of relevant information on the implementation of the WCPFC COVID-19 Decisions. The final section provides some suggestions for how the issues might be taken forward at WCPFC17.

**The COVID-19 Intersessional Decisions**

3. COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on March 11, 2020. Due to the potential vulnerability of Pacific Island populations to COVID-19, some of the most strict travel and other restrictions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 have been implemented in Pacific Island countries. CCMs are unlikely to significantly ease their restrictions until a vaccine is widely available. Travel restrictions and concerns over the potential impact of COVID-19 on the health and safety of observers were the catalyst for the intersessional decisions of the Commission relating to observers on purse seine vessels, at-sea transshipment for purse seine vessels and at-sea transshipment observers. The Intersessional Decisions were reviewed at TCC16, prior to their extension until 15 February 2021 through a Commission's intersessional decision. This decision was conveyed in Circular No. 2020-125 of 22 October 2020.
4. The COVID-19 related Intersessional Decisions were discussed at TCC16, which recognised the difficulty with deploying observers and recommended that the Commission consider extending the Decisions. An issue was raised regarding the different ways in which flag

CCMs have implemented the authorisation of at-sea transshipment for purse seine vessels. TCC16 recommended that this be clarified to ensure the consistent application of the Decision.

5. TCC16 acknowledged the importance of placing observers safely back on vessels, and the need for establishing guidelines that could inform ROP providers' decisions on deploying observers on vessels with appropriate protection for observers and crew, and flexibility for national laws. FFA Members tabled FFA COVID-19 Operating Protocols (**Circular No. 2020/97**) and encouraged their possible use as guidelines to minimize the risk of transmitting COVID-19 in the fisheries sector at sea or in ports in the Pacific. These Protocols are drawn from guidance provided by international organisations, including recommendations from the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), The Pacific Community (SPC) and the Pacific Islands Forum. They set out general COVID-19 risk mitigation protocols for all those involved in vessel operations as well as activity-specific COVID-19 risk mitigation and control protocols for activities such as entering port, transshipping catch, unloading catch, boarding or disembarking a vessel, bunkering, provisioning and managing COVID cases on board.

### **COVID Cases and Restrictions in CCMs**

6. Annex 1 provides a list of the total number of COVID-19 cases and deaths relating to COVID-19 which have been notified to the WHO as at 10 November 2020. At that date there were 12 CCMs with no COVID-19 cases: American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Samoa, and Vanuatu.

7. Many countries in the Western Pacific region of the WHO, which covers much of the WCPFC area, experienced a resurgence of COVID-19 in July and August 2020, followed by subsequent decline in cases. However other countries are currently experiencing increases in cases. Experience has shown that the coronavirus often comes in waves with relaxation of restrictions followed by subsequent outbreaks.

8. All CCMs have travel and other restrictions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The Secretariat has sought to take a snapshot of COVID-19 restrictions in place in WCPFC Members and Participating Territories as at 10 November 2020. The information is based on publicly available sources and has been summarised for convenience. While all attempts have been made to ensure the information provided is accurate, the summary does not purport to be an authoritative statement of COVID-19 restrictions. Further detailed information can be sought from official government sources in CCMs. Where possible links have been provided to official sources for this purpose.

9. CCMs which have imposed COVID-19 travel restrictions can generally be categorised into the following three categories:

- Countries which have suspended scheduled airline traffic and closed borders.
- Countries which have essentially closed their borders, except for certain exemptions and subject to conditions. Some of these countries are gradually opening their borders to persons from countries which do not have community transmission of COVID-19.
- Countries which allow limited inward travel.

10. Annex 2 contains detailed information on the travel restrictions in place as at 10 November 2020. The travel restrictions are categorised for convenience into the three categories as follows:

- The following CCMs have very tight restrictions in place on their borders: American Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Wallis and Futuna. These countries have suspended scheduled inbound airline services. Some of these countries allow citizens and residents to be repatriated on chartered flights, subject to conditions. Outbound travel is either prohibited or strongly discouraged because of restrictions on return. All but two of these CCMs are free of COVID-19.
- A second group of CCMs have tight controls on travel to their countries: Australia, Canada, China, Cook Islands, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Chinese Taipei, and the USA. Some of these CCMs also have no cases of COVID-19, namely Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, and Niue. In the main in-bound travel is limited to nationals and permanent residents, although in some cases there has been a gradual reopening of borders and exemptions may be granted for essential workers. In the majority of these countries, a 14-day mandatory quarantine is in place and must be undertaken in government-managed designated facilities. Testing for COVID-19 is also required by most of these CCMs, typically after arrival, but also prior to arrival in some countries. Advisories are in place to strongly discourage out-bound travel.
- A third (and much smaller) group of CCMs allow limited inward travel from certain countries, including by non-residents, which may also be for tourism purposes: Commonwealth of Northern Marianas, European Union, French Polynesia and Guam.

11. The travel restrictions of most countries apply whether a person is arriving by air or by sea. A number of CCMs have also imposed special requirements at their ports in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Restrictions on the access of fishing vessels to port are sometimes detailed in the State's emergency COVID-19 regulations. However, they also appear to be adopted as part of administrative arrangements consistent with and within the framework of the State's overall COVID-19 response plan. Some CCMs have specific measures applicable to fishing vessels.

12. Annex 2 contains available information on the restrictions imposed on fishing vessels entering ports. A few CCMs have closed their ports to fishing vessels wishing to unload or tranship catch. At least one CCM has designated areas outside their ports where transhipments may take place. Some CCMs allow fishing vessels to enter ports, but subject to approval and strict conditions, including prohibition of shore visits. Many CCMs prohibit crew replacement.

### **Implementation of COVID-19 Decisions**

13. This section provides a synthesis of the relevant information on the impact and implementation of the three COVID-19 Decisions.

## Observers Stranded and Returned

14. The Decision of the Commission temporarily suspends the requirement for all purse seine vessels to carry observers. The suspension applies to new trips after a vessel operator has met any requirement for repatriation of observers currently on board a vessel.

15. The table set out in Annex 3 provides an update of the ROP Annual Report of 1<sup>st</sup> September presented to TCC16 ([WCPFC-TCC16-2020-RP02](#)) on the countries which have reported observers stranded in foreign ports or at sea observers. Since 1 September 2020, 53 observers have returned to their home port. All except one was repatriated by vessel pick up and drop offs, with some carriers and purse seine vessels picking up multiple observers before dropping them off in home ports. (For example, one carrier reported picking up and dropping off seven observers). The one observer not repatriated by vessel returned by a special flight from New Zealand where he was staying after going to New Zealand from American Samoa.

16. As of the 4th November there were still 16 observers stranded in different foreign ports trying to find a way home. There are another 23 observers still at sea, some of these persons are on vessels and are on the way back to home ports. However, those stranded in foreign ports, currently have no way to return unless flights resume, or emergency flights are arranged. A couple of programmes are looking at how vessels may be used to return some of these stranded observers.

## Implementation of at-sea Transshipment for Purse Seine Vessels

17. The Decision on at-sea transshipment for purse seine vessels, provides that “without prejudice to the provision that ‘transshipment 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 transship in port despite its best efforts due to port closures and relevant access restrictions related to the prevention of COVID-19, that particular vessel may transship at sea in an area under the jurisdiction of a Port State”. It also provides that the flag State CCM of any such authorised purse seine vessel is to notify the Executive Director that the vessel is authorised to engage in transshipment outside of port.

18. It appears that for the most part transshipments are taking place in an area designated by the port State as within its jurisdiction for transshipment purposes, either at the wharf or at a designated area within the general area of the port, even if not at the wharf. One port State has designated an area beyond 3 nautical miles for this purpose, but most port States have not adopted this approach.

19. As was noted at TCC16, the notification provision has been implemented differently by different CMMs, with some notifying all purse seine vessels authorised to transship at sea, and another notifying the particular transshipments which have been authorised under this special COVID-related exemption. One CCM has imposed additional requirements for any such transshipments including specific vessel approval and additional verification through transshipment and landing data. The fact that few CCMs have notified the Executive Director of transshipments that are authorised to take place outside ports but within areas under the jurisdiction of the port State may suggest that most CCMs are not relying on this exemption.

## Implementation of at-sea Transshipment Observers

20. The requirement to have an observer on board either the carrier vessel or the fishing vessel to observe transshipments has been temporarily suspended as a result of the COVID-19 related decisions.

21. The updated information contained in the Annual Report on WCPFC Transshipment Reporting ([WCPFC-TCC16-2020-RP03](#)) indicates that between 1 April and 23 October 2020, 57 of 606 transshipment events on the high seas (approximately 9%) did not carry a ROP observer on either the carrier or fishing vessel. This is compared with around 3% of the transshipments that took place between 1 April and 18 August 2020 not having observers on any of the vessels engaged in the transshipment. There are still a number of carrier vessels with ROP observers on board. However, this number will reduce if the observers due for repatriation are not replaced, which will result in fewer observed transshipments into 2021.

### **The Way Ahead**

22. COVID-19 has proven to be a difficult coronavirus to contain. As restrictions ease, cases often increase. While a vaccine is in prospect, it is difficult to predict if and when travel restrictions will be lifted over the coming year. This makes it difficult to identify the precise impact of COVID-19 on fishing activities in the WCPO in 2021 and the potential and timing of any relaxation of travel restrictions which will allow a return to normalcy.

23. Several things are, however, clear. The Scientific Services Provider has noted that a prolonged suspension of observer programs in 2020 could potentially compromise future estimates of purse seine catch composition, and the impact would be more influential if the suspension of the observer programs were to continue into 2021 (**SC16 Summary Report, Attachment F: Summary of the SC16 Online Discussion Forum, Topic 3, para. 9**). TCC16 has noted the importance of placing observers safely back on vessels and the possible use of the FFA COVID-19 Operating Protocols as guidelines to minimise the risk of transmitting COVID-19 in the fisheries sector. To date the COVID-19 decisions have been temporary and in effect for a limited period.

24. The information in this paper suggests that WCPFC17 might wish to decide on a **framework** which could set out a way forward for the COVID-19 decisions. As has been the case with all the COVID-19 Decisions, this framework could address the need for the health and safety of observers and the need for appropriate monitoring, control and surveillance of the WCPO fisheries. In addition to a possible framework, WCPFC17 might wish to decide on a **process** for taking forward COVID-19 Decisions into 2021. Each of these is considered in turn below.

### Framework

25. WCPFC17 might wish first to consider the general framework for addressing the COVID-19 decisions which distinguishes between the three decisions. If WCPFC17 considers it appropriate, the following elements could be considered for each of the three decisions:

- a. **At-sea transshipment observers:** As members of the Commission have expressed concern over at-sea transshipments in the past, priority could be given to ensuring that transshipment

events are observed and to safely redeploying ROP observers on carrier vessels. The suspension of the at-sea transshipment observer provisions could continue for a limited period (for example 3 months) to enable observers currently on carrier vessels to be replaced and observers to be safely redeployed on carrier vessels. Flag CCMs and observer providers could cooperate to achieve this objective and to the extent possible the FFA Protocols or other similar Protocols developed by appropriate authorities could be used to ensure the safe deployment of observers.

- b. **At-sea transshipment for purse seine vessels:** Given the importance that Commission members have attached in the past to the prohibition of transshipment at sea for purse seine vessels, set out Article 29(5) of the WCPF Convention, any dispensation due to COVID-19 from Article 29(5) of the WCPF Convention could be clarified to make it clear that Article 29(5) prevails, except in the limited situation where a port State has designated a particular area of the sea outside its internal waters and within its territorial sea to be used for transshipment purposes. In that limited circumstance transshipments at sea by purse seine vessels could take place, provided they are authorised by the flag CCM, and the Executive Director is notified by the flag CCM of the authorisations.
- c. **Observers on purse seine vessels:** At this stage it is difficult to assess when it will be feasible to progressively and safely deploy observers on purse seine vessels so that the requirement for 100% observer coverage on purse seine vessels can once again be fully operational. A staged approach to the redeployment of observers on purse seine vessels might be appropriate with phased-in implementation by flag CCMs of 100% observer coverage for purse seine vessels over a fleet during 2021. If an effective vaccine is available and disbursed within the Pacific and to observer providers, this might trigger a step towards implementation of the staged approach. To avoid the suspension of the 100% observer coverage obligation becoming the norm, there could be a periodic review of the suspension, which could take place through an expedited inter-sessional decision-making process.
- d. **COVID-19 Protocols:** Irrespective of a vaccine, it is likely that COVID-19 will be with us for a while yet. This suggests that the FFA Protocols, or other appropriate COVID-19 Protocols could be recognised as an appropriate mechanism to protect the ongoing health and safety of observers and others in the fishing sector.

26. The framework and elements for consideration of the COVID-19 decision could be considered initially in the WCPFC17 Online Discussion Forum (ODF) and to continue at the plenary. The following discussion points could assist the ODF in considering these issues:

- a. **At-sea transshipment observers**
  - i. Should priority be given to redeploying observers on carrier vessels?
  - ii. When is it reasonable to expect that observers could be placed on carrier vessels?
  - iii. What are the necessary conditions for this to occur?
  - iv. How will redeploying observers on carrier vessels be managed and by whom?

**b. At-sea transhipment for purse seine vessels**

- i. Is it reasonable to clarify that in implementing the prohibition of transhipment at sea by purse seine vessels, “port” includes areas within the internal waters of a port State (ie harbours, areas inside reefs etc)?
- ii. Are there any circumstances in which a port State (or flag State) may authorise transhipments to take place outside either its internal waters or territorial sea?
- iii. Should authorisation by the flag State be on a vessel-by-vessel basis or for a group of vessels?
- iv. When should authorisation by the flag State be notified: prior to a transhipment event, in advance or otherwise?

**c. Observers on purse seine vessels**

- i. Is it feasible for observers to be redeployed on purse seine vessels through 2021?
- ii. What are the trigger points for moving towards redeploying observers on purse seine vessels?
- iii. Is it reasonable to have a staged approach to progressively redeploying observers?
- iv. What might this staged approach look like?
- v. What review period would be appropriate to include in any continued suspension, in whole or in part, of the 100% observer coverage requirement on purse seine vessels?
- v. What are the necessary conditions for redeploying observers on purse seine vessels?
- vi. How will redeploying observers on purse seine vessels be managed and by whom?

Process

27. In the virtual environment of WCPFC17 it will be very difficult for the Commission to progress decision-making on this important issue. It would therefore be appropriate to consider how to progress these issues intersessionally. As the current COVID-19 Intersessional Decisions expire on 15 February 2021, the Commission could consider whether a draft Decision could be prepared after WCPFC17, based on the discussion at WCPFC17, and circulated to Commission members. The Commission could consider whether it should be subject to the expedited 7-day approval process for COVID-related intersessional decisions. As with the current Intersessional Decision, such a decision would not impose binding obligations, but would clarify and progressively lift the suspension of the operative CMMs. It would be useful for WCPFC17 to consider the process for taking forward the COVID- 19 decisions.

Recommendation

28. WCPFC17 is invited to note and discuss this paper.
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**Annex 1: Reported Cases and Deaths Related to COVID-19 Sourced from [WHO](#)**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>Deaths as at 10 Nov 2020</b>
United States	9,868,389	236,042
Indonesia	440,569	14,689
Philippines	398,449	7,647
Canada	264,113	10,522
Japan	108,983	1,829
China	92,271	4,748
Australia	27,668	907
Korea (Republic of)	27,653	485
French Polynesia	10,680	49
Guam	5,375	90
New Zealand	1,631	25
Papua New Guinea	599	7
Chinese Taipei	580	7
Northern Mariana Islands	100	2
Fiji	34	2
New Caledonia	29	0
Solomon Islands	16	0
Wallis and Futuna	1	0
Marshall Islands	1	0

## **Annex 2: Categories of CCMs According to Travel Restrictions**

### **A. Borders are closed to scheduled airline traffic**

**American Samoa:** American Samoa has suspended international flights to Honolulu until at least 31 December 2020. Other scheduled flights to Samoa are suspended but subject to review depending on COVID-19 status in both countries. Only nationals and residents will be permitted entry. Any arriving passengers must undergo 14 days of quarantine and have a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours prior to arrival. Cargo and fishing vessels are permitted entry subject to conditions including notification and the requirement that personnel wear full protective gear when unloading. Crew members are not permitted to disembark. See <https://www.americansamoa.gov/>

**Federated States of Micronesia:** FSM prohibits any travellers from any COVID-19 affected country, territory or area from entering FSM for as long as the COVID-19 pandemic persists. Work is underway on plans to repatriate FSM citizens. This would be accompanied by a 14 day pre-quarantine in Guam with two tests, followed by quarantine on arrival at designated facilities for an additional 14 days and COVID-19 testing done at the end of the quarantine before being discharged. For fishing vessels, all transshipment from purse seine vessels is to take place at designated areas in the territorial sea beyond 3 miles from the baselines. Longline vessels are permitted to enter ports to tranship subject to restrictions. In the case of fresh longline vessels, this includes no contact prior to transshipping. In the case of frozen longline vessel, this includes 14 days of quarantine at sea prior to arrival, and no crew members disembarking. Subject to certain exemptions, FSM citizens are not permitted to travel to a COVID-affected country. See <https://gov.fm/index.php/fsm-publicinfo> and <https://www.wcpfc.int/covid19>

**Palau:** All commercial air travel to Palau is temporarily suspended. All travellers to the country must undergo 10 days pre-arrival self-quarantine and two negative COVID-19 PCR tests before departure, one of which must be taken at least 72 hours prior to departure. Passengers arriving from international jurisdictions must undergo 14-day mandatory quarantine in a designated government facility, and an additional 7-day self-quarantine after mandatory quarantine. Crew members disembarking from vessels are subject to these quarantine requirements. Health screening at Malakal seaport takes place for incoming vessels. See <https://www.palau.gov.pw/covid-19-advisory/>

**Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI):** There is a total suspension of all international travellers coming into RMI by air. Domestic air travel between Kwajalein and Majuro on international airlines is suspended. Any person entering RMI without approval will be removed or placed under quarantine in a government approved facility for at least 21 days. All fishing vessels that have transited through or departed from COVID-infected areas are suspended from entering RMI ports. To ensure continuity of transshipment, a limited number of carrier vessels are exempt, but must comply with conditions including spending 14 days at sea prior to arrival and fishing companies must have policies implementing the travel advice and maritime policies such as no human-to-human contact. Non-essential departures by RMI citizens are suspended. Citizens are required to obtain a waiver for essential travel. See <https://ndmo.gov.mh/resource-library/>

**Samoa:** From 26 March, all international travel to and from Samoa has been suspended. A schedule of repatriation flights has been approved by Cabinet. Restrictions are in place on the entry of all vessels and any permitted entry is subject to conditions. Fishing boats may be approved for offloading, refuelling and the restock of necessary supplies only. Approval is subject to conditions including: notice of arrival date must be provided 5 days in advance; no crew member is to leave the boat; the date of departure from the last port, or the exchange of any crew members whilst at sea, must not be less than 28 days, before arrival at the Apia wharf; and there is to be no exchange of crew members whilst at sea. See <https://www.samoagovt.ws/category/novel-coronavirus-covid-19/>

**Solomon Islands:** Scheduled international flights are suspended. Repatriation flights may be scheduled. All persons entering Solomon Islands will undergo mandatory quarantine at a Government identified quarantine station for a specified period (typically 14 days). Persons entering the country from COVID-19 affected areas must provide two negative test results from their country of origin 14 days before departure. Persons entering the country from very high risk COVID-19 affected countries are subject to additional requirements. See <http://www.mfaet.gov.sb/media-center/press-releases.html>

**Tokelau:** Tokelau has closed its border, with the exception of essential supplies, specialist medical personnel and services. A repatriation service for those that have remained in Samoa since April 2020 was scheduled for 30 October. See <https://www.tokelau.org.nz/Bulletin>

**Tonga:** The entry of all scheduled passenger aircraft is suspended. Returning Tongans and persons holding valid working visas may enter with approval on repatriation flights. All travellers are required to have undertaken a COVID-19 test and a Medical Report done within three (3) days before arrival in Tonga and undergo 14 days of quarantine in Tongatapu. International cruise ships and yachts are banned from entering. The entry of other vessels is subject to certain restrictions, including no shore leave. Ten foreign fishing vessels fishing in Tonga water are not allowed to conduct a crew replacement until further notice. See <http://www.gov.to/>

**Tuvalu:** Tuvalu has restrictions prohibiting entry to Tuvalu of anyone who has been in China within 30 days of arrival in Tuvalu. This restriction includes entry to seafarers from foreign vessels that have been in China or “a high-risk country” (understood to be countries where coronavirus is present) in the last 30 days. Travellers who have been in a “high-risk country” must obtain a medical clearance three days prior to entering Tuvalu and must remain in a country other than those listed as “high-risk” for at least five days before re-entering Tuvalu. Health screening will be conducted at Funafuti airport and seaport, and may also be conducted at Nausori (Fiji) Airport and Tarawa (Kiribati) Airport. See <https://fj.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/covid-19-information/>

**Vanuatu:** All Vanuatu ports of entry are closed. Special considerations are provided for diplomats and medical personnel, as well as some repatriation flights for Vanuatu nationals. Only general cargo boats, oil, gas and fuel tankers are allowed to enter the country but under special conditions for crews not to come ashore. All private, naval and scientific research vessels are suspended from entering Vanuatu waters with the exception for vessels with missions related to

COVID-19. Vanuatu nationals arriving on repatriation flights are subject to medical screening and quarantine for 14 days in government designated facilities. See <https://covid19.gov.vu/>

**Wallis and Futuna:** Incoming flights to Wallis and Futuna have been curtailed, except for those delivering essential supplies. Wallis and Futuna is repatriating its residents, subject to approval and restrictions. See <http://www.wallis-et-futuna.gouv.fr/>

### **Some opening of borders with exemptions and conditions**

**Australia:** Australia's borders are closed except for Australian citizens, residents, immediate family members, and travellers who have been in New Zealand for the past 14 days. Except for those from a "green zone" (from 16 October 2020 persons who have been in New Zealand for 14 days prior to travel), travellers arriving in Australia by air or sea must go into government approved mandatory quarantine for 14 days from arrival. COVID-19 testing may also be required. Individual states have their own restrictions in place for domestic travel. See <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/covid19-restriction-checker> for up to date information of restrictions by State. There is a ban on all overseas travel, unless granted an exemption. See <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/coronavirus-covid-19-restrictions>

**Canada:** Most foreign nationals are prohibited from entering Canada except with an exemption. Exemptions include Canadian citizens, permanent residents, or their immediate families, and certain essential workers. Persons with COVID-19 symptoms may not enter Canada. Arrivals must provide contact information, undergo screening by a border official, and quarantine or self-isolate for 14 days. Canadian citizens and permanent residents are advised to avoid non-essential travel outside Canada. See <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/latest-travel-health-advice.html>

**China:** From 5 November 2020 foreign nationals holding valid visas may be permitted to enter Mainland China. Foreign nationals from certain European and Asian countries may apply for a visa to enter, provided they meet certain criteria. This includes those persons going to Mainland China for necessary economic, trade, scientific, technological reasons or for emergency humanitarian needs. From 6 November 2020 all travellers to China must have proof of dual COVID-19 negative tests performed no more than 48 hours prior to departure, with results submitted to the local Embassy or Consulate in order to obtain a "green code" to present to airlines. Travelers are subject to a 14-day mandatory quarantine in the first entry point city at a designated facility and must test negative for the virus. China has signed "fast-track" agreements with a few countries to allow nationals of those countries (eg Singapore and Korea) to travel without the mandated 14-day quarantine. See <https://www.iatatravelcentre.com/world.php> and <https://www.trip.com/travel-restrictions-covid-19/>

**Cook Islands:** Cook Islanders, permanent residents, and work and residence permit holders, who have obtained an exemption, may enter the country provided they have a negative COVID-19 test within 96 hours of departure, and spent 14 days in New Zealand prior to arrival. From 29 October, there is no mandatory 14 day quarantine on arrival. See <https://cookislands.travel/news/novel-coronavirus-information-travellers-arriving-cook-islands>.

**Fiji:** Only citizens and residents are permitted to enter, unless the person obtains an exemption. Returning residents and citizens must provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test result taken no more than 72 hours of departure to Fiji. Upon arrival, they must spend 14 days in a government-designated quarantine facility and undergo a negative COVID-19 test before leaving quarantine. Fiji has established safe “blue lanes”, open to those yachts and pleasure craft sailing to Fiji. See <https://www.fiji.travel/covid-19>

**Indonesia:** As of 6 November 2020 certain persons are permitted to enter Indonesia, including nationals, persons with temporary visas, visits visas, and APEC Business Travel Card. A person meeting the criteria for entry must present a negative COVID-19 PCR test result that is no older than 7 days and be subject to medical screening and 14 day quarantine on arrival. See <https://www.iatatravelcentre.com/world.php>

**Japan:** Non-Japanese nationals who have stayed in certain countries (including China, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, US, and Belgium) within the 14 days prior to landing will be denied entry, except in exceptional circumstances. All nationals arriving from these countries are subject to a COVID-19 PCR test. All arrivals from all regions must self-isolate for 14 days at a location designated by the quarantine station chief. See <https://www.japan.travel/en/coronavirus/>

**Kiribati:** The Republic of Kiribati denies entry to any travellers who have been in or transited countries with confirmed local transmission within 14 days immediately prior to entering Kiribati. All travellers from countries with local transmission of COVID-19 must spend 14 days in a country free of the COVID-2019, and to provide a medical clearance to confirm they are coronavirus free. All incoming international travellers are subjected to temperature check upon arrival to the international airports and seaports in Kiribati. Citizens and residents are advised to avoid non-essential travel. See <https://mhms.gov.ki/>

**Republic of Korea:** Passengers arriving in South Korea, regardless of where they are from or the length of stay, will undergo quarantine for 14 days. Some travellers may be tested for COVID-19 within 3 days of arrival depending on the country of origin (eg Europe, US), others will be tested within 14 days. Visa exemptions for citizens from a number of countries including countries in the Pacific have been suspended. See [http://ncov.mohw.go.kr/en/baroView.do?brdId=11&brdGubun=111&dataGubun=&ncvContSeq=&contSeq=&board\\_id=&gubun=](http://ncov.mohw.go.kr/en/baroView.do?brdId=11&brdGubun=111&dataGubun=&ncvContSeq=&contSeq=&board_id=&gubun=)

**Nauru:** The government has suspended all but one fortnightly passenger flight to the country. Arrivals are accepted from countries considered “safe” and must undergo a 14-day quarantine at government designated facilities and COVID-19 testing before going home. See <http://www.naurugov.nr/>

**New Caledonia:** Foreign nationals who are not residents of New Caledonia are not permitted to enter, with some exceptions including for pressing needs on application. Arriving passengers must undergo 14 days of mandatory quarantine in a government designated facility and COVID-19 testing before leaving the facility. See <https://gouv.nc/info-coronavirus-covid-19/infos-arrivees-se-rendre-en-nouvelle-caledonie>

**New Zealand:** New Zealand citizens and residents, Australian citizens normally resident in New Zealand and others with a critical purpose approved by Immigration New Zealand may travel to New Zealand. Specific exemptions are listed in full by [New Zealand Immigration](#). All arrivals will be tested for COVID-19, and are subject to 14 days of government-supervised quarantine. Before entering the community, everyone must test negative for COVID-19. New Zealand citizens and residents are advised not to travel overseas at this time. See <https://covid19.govt.nz/travel-and-the-border/>

**Niue:** Arrival is restricted to repatriating residents of Niue and essential services people who have received advance approval from the Niue Government for travel. There is a limit on the number of people permitted to enter Niue every fortnight. All arriving travellers will undergo supervised quarantine for 14 days at government-appointed accommodation in Niue.

**Papua New Guinea:** No person may enter PNG except by aircraft. International visitors must have written approval. All arrivals must have a negative COVID-19 test within a 7 day period prior to boarding the aircraft. All arrivals are subject to 14 days of quarantine at a government designated facility or designated hotel and may be subject to testing. Vessels may enter four (4) designated ports of entry. A person on a vessel in port does not enter PNG unless they leave the vessel. Crew changes in PNG are suspended. All PNG flagged and locally based vessels which have fished exclusively in PNG waters and have not visited a foreign port for 4 months may continue to offload and tranship in their home ports. PNG vessels fishing in the waters of other countries are suspended from entering ports for landing or transhipment. Foreign flagged vessels are suspended from port calls in PNG. See <https://covid19.info.gov.pg/> and <https://www.wcpfc.int/covid19>

**Philippines:** Borders are closed to most foreign travellers. Filipino nationals, spouses or children of nationals, and residents may be subject to quarantine for a maximum of 14 days upon arrival or required to undergo COVID-19 testing. From 1 November, foreign nationals with certain visas are allowed to enter the Philippines, subject to conditions including a pre-booked accredited quarantine facility. . See <https://philippines.travel/safeph> and <https://www.doh.gov.ph>

**Chinese Taipei:** Foreign nationals are permitted to enter provided they are not visiting for tourism, study or to visit friends. Entry permits are required except for those with existing resident permits. Approved travellers must produce a negative COVID-19 RT-PCR test result that is no older than 72 hours prior to arrival, and fill out a health declaration form detailing travel history for the previous 14 days, and comply with conditions including 14 days self-isolation. From 9 November all passengers must declare if they have had COVID-19 symptoms in the last 14 days and, if symptoms are reported, be tested on arrival.

**United States:** There are restrictions on who can enter or transit the US. With specific exceptions, foreign nationals who have been in certain countries during the past 14 days (including China, Europe (Schengen area, and UK) may not enter the United States. Anyone permitted to enter will be screened upon arrival, and asked to self-quarantine for 14 days. See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/from-other-countries.html>

### **Partially Open Borders**

**Commonwealth of Northern Marianas (CNMI):** CNMI has point of entry screening processes in place. Any person entering the CNMI may be exempted from the CNMI Government approved quarantine facility provide they comply with certain requirements including COVID-19 testing prior to and after arrival. Non-residents must arrive with proof of a valid PCR test from a specimen collected at a minimum of three (3) days to a maximum of six (6) days prior to the individual's arrival on Saipan. Non-residents who are not approved for entry as an essential worker, will be subject to the minimum 5-day quarantine at the CNMI Government designated site and will be tested on day five (5) of their arrival. See <https://governor.gov.mp/>

**European Union:** From 1 July, entry to the EU by non-EU citizens is permitted for countries that are deemed safe by the EU Council. The list is reviewed and updated every 15 days. As of 10 November, the list included Australia, Japan, New Zealand and Republic of Korea. It is up to EU Member States to make the decision for their own borders. See <https://reopen.europa.eu/en>

**French Polynesia:** From 15 July, French Polynesia borders have reopened to international tourism. Travelers must show proof of a negative COVID-19 test result no older than 72 hours (3 days) before departure, and complete a health registration form. Visitors must obtain proper travel insurance, and self-test 4 days after arrival. <https://www.service-public.pf/dsp/>

**Guam:** All persons entering Guam must undergo 14 days of quarantine at a government qualified facility. See <http://dphss.guam.gov/covid-19-dphss-mandatory-quarantine-procedures/>

## Annex 3:

**Observer Status as of 4th November 2020**

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Observers Stranded In Foreign Ports</b>	<b>Observers still Onboard Vessels</b>	<b>Observer Rehabilitated since 1<sup>st</sup> September Report.</b>
<i>FFA UST</i>	0	0	1 <i>SI</i> - by special flights 1 <i>KI</i> – by vessel (observer numbers included in country figures)
FSM	4 - (2 – PNAOB & 2 on National Trips) in Guam awaiting flights to reopen too FSM	0	10 - returned by vessels
Cook Islands	1 Cook Island Observer - Lima Peru Unknown return until Peruvian boarder is open.	1 (Fijian) working for CI Programme onboard Southern Indian Ocean (trawl trip). The vessel will unload in Mauritius. He will fly him home after this current trip. Flight already booked arrive Fiji 3 December  1 (Vanuatu observer) working for CI Programme onboard a Spanish flagged vessel heading to the Western Pacific to fish and will drop the observer off when possible in Vanuatu.  1 (PNG observer) working for CI Programme onboard a Spanish flagged vessel. Vessel will drop him off Pago	0
Kiribati	6 -Ki Observers - In Fiji waiting for flights	8 - Plans to repatriate the observers of vessels when possible are in place.	17 - returned by Carriers and PS Vessels
Korea	0	2 - Observers are currently returning home by carrier vessels.	1 – returned by Vessel
Nauru	0	0	5 - All returned by Vessels
<i>PNAOB</i>	2 in Guam from FSM	0	15 - from various countries, all returned by Vessels

			<i>(observer numbers included in country figures)</i>
Solomon Islands	1 - Observer is currently in Kaohsiung. Has been on an IATTC trip on Transshipment Carrier vessel. Vessel company is planning to send Observer on board Carrier heading for Solomon Islands or neighbouring countries – drop off and go. Expected by the end of November.	0	2- one observer returned on special rescue flight, one by vessel.
Taiwan	0	4 - Observers still at sea on board fishing vessels awaiting repatriation.  2 observers are expected to be repatriated via a carrier; 2 observers will return to home port by their observation vessels respectively in November 2020 and January 2021.	13 - all returned by vessels
Tuvalu	0	0	3 returned by vessel
Vanuatu	4 - Apia, Samoa awaiting flights to re commence.	6 - Still on Fish Carriers	2 returned by vessel
<b>Total 4<sup>th</sup> Nov</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>53</b>