



WCPFC10

Tenth Regular Session

2nd December – 6th December 2013

Cairns, AUSTRALIA

WWF POSITION STATEMENT TO THE 10TH REGULAR SESSION OF THE WCPFC

WCPFC10-2013-OP04

27 November 2013



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10th Regular Session of the Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC): Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia – December 2-6, 2013

Introduction and Summary

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) would like to thank the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) for the opportunity to attend the 10th Regular Session as an observer and to address the critically important role that it plays in the proper management of the (Western Central Pacific Ocean) WCPO fisheries. The regulatory measures proposed and implemented by the WCPFC represent one of the legs of the three-legged stool of successful sustainable and responsible fisheries management, the other legs consisting of the science provided by the Scientific Committee (SC) and the compliance measures provided by the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC). Without firm support on each one of those three components, the stool falls over and fisheries management fails.

WWF once again calls on members of the WCPFC to address the issues and recommendations raised at SC9, TCC9, and WCPFC9 as well as observe the experience of other RFMOs in their own efforts to achieve and maintain improved measures for monitoring and surveillance. WWF wishes to reiterate its position offered in Manila in December 2012 (WCPFC9) and, taking into account the WCPFC-related meetings held since, the recommendations listed in bullets below. For more detail and background on each position, please reference the associated Appendix for this document.

Reference Points, Harvest Control Rules, and Harvest Strategies

WWF recommends that the WCPFC:

- Designate of Limit and Target Reference Points as a priority for proper management of stocks under WCPFC authority;
- Establish precautionary B-based Limit Reference Points (preferably based on Spawning Biomass) for all WCPO fish stocks under its authority;
- Adopt supplementary and precautionary F-based Limit Reference Points to attempt to control the exploitation rate for all WCPO fish stocks under its authority;
- Implement/adopt interim precautionary Target Reference Points as a benchmark for further consideration by the MOW and WCPFC in 2013; and
- Ensure the probability of breaching the Limit Reference Points and limiting this to a risk level of 10% or less as a precautionary measure.

Tropical Tunas

WWF recommends that the WCPFC:

- Support and endorse further research and monitoring of FADs.
- Engage in an open and transparent deliberative process based on the best available scientific information to determine the level of reductions in BET catch necessary to achieve meaningful BET conservation.

Pacific Bluefin Tuna

WWF recommends that the WCPFC:

- Adopt a long-term Pacific bluefin recovery plan, candidate limit and target reference points, and harvest control rules that are well-defined, pre-agreed and contain mandatory actions for a determined course of management action in response to changes in indicators of stock status with respect to reference points.
- Remove all exemptions under the current CMM for Pacific Bluefin tuna through a revised CMM-2012-06.

Sharks

WWF recommends the WCPFC:

- Develop, endorse, and adopt a Comprehensive Shark CMM that includes efforts to:
 - Mandate bycatch best practices consistent with those found in the Compendium of Best Practice of Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) for the of Species Bycatch in Tuna RFMOs ;
 - Implement the recommendations for Bycatch that were endorsed at Kobe III and adopt an annually updated report card system against these recommendations for all of the WCPFC fisheries;
 - Require, through data collected from observer programs and other means, estimation of the number of captures and releases of all sharks and rays, including the status upon release (dead or alive), and reporting of this information to the WCPFC;
 - Require, through observers programs, recording what gear is used in longline activities including the use of wire traces and any multi- monofilament traces in order to avoid bite-off by sharks;
 - Introduce a scheme to document the capture and trade of sharks whereby it allows for traceability through to the final market state; and
 - Ensure the implementation requirements for CITES listed sharks are fully understood and planned for in preparation for CITES Parties and Non-Parties trading with CITES Parties needing to make Non-detriment (Sustainability) and legal findings in order to issue Export permits for trade in these species by September 2014.
- Encourage the development of reference points and management for non-target species, including blue sharks, as envisaged under Articles 5 and 10 of the WCPF Convention.[¶]

Silky Sharks

With respect to silky sharks WWF recommends the WCPFC :

- Consistent with measures established for oceanic whitetip shark, impose additional mitigation measures and maintain existing measures in an effort to improve the status of the WCPO silky shark stock including:
 - mandate bycatch best practices consistent with those found in the Compendium of Best Practice of Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) for the of Species Bycatch in Tuna RFMOs;

- prohibit the retention, transshipment, storage, on-board sale, and landing of silky sharks in all fisheries managed by the WCPFC;
- mandate the prompt and careful release of any captured silky sharks; and
- require, through data collected from observer programs and other means, estimation of the number of releases of silky sharks, including the status upon release (dead or alive), and reporting of this information to the WCPFC.
- Encourage the development of reference points and management for non-target species, including silky sharks, as envisaged under Articles 5 and 10 of the WCPF Convention.¶

Regional Observer Program

With respect to the ROP, WWF recommends the WCPFC:

- Further implementation of a binding, consistent, and consolidated set of standards for the ROP;
- Develop an analysis of the observer programme in the context of proper management, including an analysis of different funding models;
- Review and consider for endorsement or adoption the recommendations of the Association for Professional Observers contained in the International Observer Bill of Rights and associated documents.

Catch Documentation Scheme

With respect to the development of a comprehensive CDS, WWF recommends the WCPFC:

- Consider the following elements of a robust CDS system, including:
 - A requirement for documentation to accompany all catch harvested, landed, transhipped, traded domestically, exported, processed, imported and re-exported and which relies on electronic documentation.
 - Complementary measures to maximize the effectiveness of the CDS through:
 - ensuring that transshipment at sea does not compromise the effectiveness of the CDS;
 - adopting Port State Measures implemented simultaneously with the CDS; and
 - adopting trade restriction measures against flag States with vessels on the IUU list.
 - Parameters that include all species of tunas, billfish, and sharks managed by the WCPFC;
- Consider additional elements to support the integrity, reliability and sustainability of a CDS system, including:
 - A commitment to continuous improvement of the CDS by investigating the benefits and feasibility of verification systems such as electronic tagging and the use of biotechnology;
 - Establishment of a capacity development fund to provide a cost-sharing mechanism that enables progressive cost sharing among member states; and
 - Maximizing retailer and public access to data through modern electronic tools.

Conclusion

WWF once again calls on the WCPFC to look carefully at our collective conduct as nations with a responsibility for managing fishery resources in the WCPFC CA. With respect to each of the agenda items addressed at the WCPFC10 Regular Meeting, the commission delegates must genuinely consider whether previous actions have been responsible and commendable in achieving the overarching goal of fisheries sustainability in the WCPO.

The WCPFC shares the distinction as the youngest RFMO, but is also regarded as arguably the most effective. However, we all must constantly guard against the complacency and greed that leads to poor decision-making resulting in the collapsing fish stocks in other regions. Unfortunately, with some stocks in the WCPO, such as bigeye tuna, oceanic whitetip sharks, and silky sharks, we are treading dangerously down a path leading to trouble.

The WCPFC possesses the ability and opportunity to chart the course towards sustainable fishery resources, especially tuna, in the WCPO. The WCPFC and its subsidiary bodies must continually promote and adopt strong and effective conservation and management action to maintain and rebuild tuna stocks, implement appropriate monitoring and enforcement measures, promote a viable tuna industry, and support vibrant coastal communities throughout the South Pacific.

Our Smart Fishing Vision and Goals:

Vision: The world's oceans are healthy, well-managed and full of life, providing valuable resources for the welfare of humanity.

2020 Goals: The responsible management and trade of four key fishery populations results in recovering and resilient marine eco-systems, improved livelihoods for coastal communities and strengthened food security for the Planet.



Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

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Appendix: WWF Position Discussion

10th Regular Session of the Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC): Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia – December 2-6, 2013

Reference Points, Harvest Control Rules, and Harvest Strategies

WWF remains supportive of the work of the WCPFC and subsidiary bodies in pursuing the implementation of Reference Points (RP), Harvest Control Rules (HCR), and Harvest Strategies (HS). WWF encourages WCPFC10 to endorse and support the adoption of explicit Limit and Target Reference Points (LRP/TRP) for all WCPO fishery stocks under WCPFC authority developed through the subsidiary bodies as well as the Management Objectives Workshop.

Reference points provide management decision-makers an objective tool to determine whether a fish stock size is becoming too small or fishing pressure is becoming too great. WWF notes that the WCPFC has discussed and considered RP's since 2006 and that, while the SC and TCC have made several recommendations to the WCPFC on appropriate RP's, the WCPFC has failed to adopt formal explicit RP's. Furthermore, while stock assessments conducted by SPC use B_{MSY} and F_{MSY} as implicit LRP's and provide advice to the WCPFC, these proxies do not represent limits consistent with the recommendations of the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA) and more refined RP's are justified based on the available scientific information.¹

The WCPFC must implement RP's and HCR's as a priority for the sustainable management of the fishery resources in the WCPO. Existing science supports the implementation of well-defined and precautionary biologically-based LRP's and WWF generally supports the previous recommendations of the SC. Therefore, WWF supports the recommendations of SC8 and SC9 that LRP's for bigeye tuna (BET), yellowfin tuna (YFT) and South Pacific albacore (ALB) be set at Level 2 with regard to the biomass-based LRP of $20\%SB_{recent, F=0}$, with the application of a sufficiently precautionary value of X% in the Level 2 fishing mortality-based LRP of $F_x\%SPR$.² Furthermore, WWF suggests that the WCPFC should acknowledge that LRP's are predominantly scientific in nature and may be set completely independently of and without relationship to TRP's.

At the SC9 meeting in Pohnpei, most Members, Cooperating Non-members, and Participating Territories (CCMs) reiterated a preference for establishing biomass (B-based) LRP's. While the assumptions, uncertainties, and substantial amounts of information associated with biomass (B-based) LRP's make them a less attractive option to some stakeholders, they constitute a critical tool to ensure that stock sustainability is maintained. F-based LRP's are important and useful, but not as critical as a B-based limit because a B-based limit ensures a biological floor that the fishery cannot go

below. Reference points that specify a minimum biomass level for the stock, below which the fishery is curtailed or, in the extreme case, closed, have the advantages that:

1. Biomass is more directly linked to recruitment than is the fishing mortality rate;
2. Minimum biomass levels provide a guide for management of stocks that are already depleted by setting a standard for rebuilding; and
3. During periods of adverse environmental conditions, a minimum biomass level provides a seed stock for eventual recovery when conditions are more favourable.

In 2012, WCPFC9 requested the SC9 develop appropriate time-windows for analyzing and calculating unfished biomass levels. WWF supports the recommendation of SC9 that the time-window to be used in the LRP $20\%SB_{F=0, t1-t2}$ satisfies the following criteria:

1. have a length of 10 years,
2. be based on the years $t1=y_{last}-10$ to $t2=y_{last}-1$ where y_{last} is the last year used in the assessment, and
3. the approach used for calculating the unfished biomass levels be based on scaled estimates of recruitment according to the stock recruitment relationship.

WWF generally supports the implementation of any Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) measures that serve to improve the understanding of the impacts of particular management measures. Thus, consistent with SC9 advice, WWF endorses the recommendation that this time-window be subject to periodic review to ensure this approach is appropriately representing future conditions for the individual stocks.

While WWF continues to hold that the establishment of B-based limits are more important because they ensure a biological floor that the fishery cannot go below, we nonetheless believe that F-based LRPs also represent useful tools to control fishing capacity or, in other words, the rate at which the harvest influences the stock size. WWF supports some CCMs recommendation of the 'matching' approach to determining F-based limit reference points that are equivalent to the spawning biomass limit reference points. Consequently, WWF supports the recommendation of SC9 that the identification of the appropriate values of X for each species in the LRP $F_{X\%SPR0}$ be based on an iterative search to 'match' the $F_{X\%SPR0}$ with $20\%SB_{F=0, t1-t2}$ as described by SPC.

This methodology, in part, relies on the ability of managers to identify what level of acceptable risk should be applied to breaching a LRP. WWF recommends that an acceptable precautionary risk level of exceeding a LRP is represented by a value of 10% or less. Once this level of risk has been identified, WWF supports the SC9 recommendation that the appropriate values of X for each species in the LRP $F_{X\%SPR0}$ be calculated using updated assessments.

WWF acknowledges the complexity of establishing TRPs, given the multiple factors that go into their consideration. However, while TRPs require additional consideration of socio-economic considerations, current understanding of the biological and socio-economic conditions does not prevent the implementation of sufficiently precautionary interim TRP at this time. WWF encourages the WCPFC to consider and recommend a precautionary interim TRP. The interim TRP would serve as an advisory benchmark under which a more refined TRP could be established. Most significantly, all the necessary information to implement such a benchmark TRP currently exists.

Lastly, WWF supports the SC9 recommendation that the WCPFC consider associated early warning or 'trigger' reference points (TrRP) which would alert the WCPFC that a stock could be approaching a LRP and that appropriate management action may be required.

WWF continues to strongly urge the WCPFC and subsidiary bodies to formally endorse and adopt LRP, TRP, and TrRPs. The adoption of explicitly determined LRP and TRP for at least the four key tuna species, namely SKJ, ALB, YFT, and BET, must be considered an absolute priority for the sustainable management of these important resources in the WCPO.

WWF recommends that the WCPFC:

- Designate of Limit and Target Reference Points as a priority for proper management of stocks under WCPFC authority;
- Establish precautionary B-based Limit Reference Points³ (preferably based on Spawning Biomass)⁴ for all WCPO fish stocks under its authority;
- Adopt supplementary and precautionary F-based Limit Reference Points to attempt to control the exploitation rate for all WCPO fish stocks under its authority;⁵
- Implement/adopt interim precautionary Target Reference Points as a benchmark for further consideration by the MOW and WCPFC in 2013; and
- Ensure the probability of breaching the Limit Reference Points and limiting this to a risk level of 10% or less as a precautionary measure.⁶

Tropical Tunas

In December 2012, WCPFC9 adopted CMM 2012-01 in an attempt to address continuing conservation challenges involving bigeye tuna (BET).⁷ The WCP-CA bigeye catch for 2012 (161,679 mt) represents the highest since 2004. The high bigeye catch in 2012 coincides with the second highest number of associated sets, albeit a 15-20% reduction on the record high in 2011. Furthermore, the number of purse seine vessels in the tropical fishery reached an all-time high (294 vessels) and effort (both in terms of days fishing and number of sets) was the second highest. Even the most optimistic interpretation of these results may be characterised by the word “failure.” Therefore, a significant reduction in fishing mortality on BET remains elusive and requires additional measures to reduce the fishing mortality on BET.

While WWF maintains that the policy choices made by WCPFC9 fail to achieve meaningful conservation of BET, we believe that there could be substantial improvements to the understanding of the impact of Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) if the SC recommends the aggressive pursuit of improved monitoring, surveillance, and general research involving FADs. While there are ongoing efforts within the SPC and PNA to pursue greater understanding of FAD dynamics, we believe that the WCPFC should impose measures in support of FAD research aided by monitoring and surveillance mechanisms which could, for instance, improve the understanding of the impacts on species composition resulting from:

- FAD type/size
- Geographic location
- Drift patterns and prevailing currents
- Ocean depth and depth of FAD materials
- Proximity to benthic relief/hydrogeographic features

While WWF supports precautionary measures to protect vulnerable stocks like BET, WWF also believes that a better understanding of FAD dynamics would help inform the “additional and alternative targeted measures” that the FFA seeks to implement.

Lastly, WWF strongly supports the efforts of the SPC to analyse the impacts of different levels of reductions in the various fishing sectors. WWF encourages all CCMs to carefully review the information and analysis provided by the SPC, particularly that contained in Tables 2 and 3 of MI-WP-01,⁸ as they engage in an open and transparent deliberative process to determine where reductions in BET catch must be made. The WCPFC absolutely must make effective and enforceable reductions of the catch in all sectors to achieve a meaningful conservation impact for BET. Most importantly, whatever measures the WCPFC selects absolutely must be subject to strong monitoring, control, and surveillance measures

WWF recommends that the WCPFC:

- Establish and support further research and monitoring of FADs.

- Engage in an open and transparent deliberative process based on the best available scientific information to determine the level of reductions in BET catch necessary to achieve meaningful BET conservation.
- Revise the current Tropical Tunas CMM to achieve substantial reductions in BET mortality.

Pacific Bluefin Tuna

This year the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) reported that the stock of North Pacific Bluefin is in extremely poor condition. The ISC confirmed that overfishing is occurring, the stock is heavily overfished, and its spawning stock biomass has declined by as much as 96%.

WWF maintains strong concerns on rebuilding this ecologically, sociologically, and economically important fishery resource. The WCPFC must recommend that fishing mortality on Pacific bluefin be urgently reduced, especially on juveniles, in order to reduce the risk of recruitment collapse and allow spawning stock to rebuild. If sufficient management measures are not adopted, fishing should not be allowed to continue on such a depleted stock.

WWF recommends that the WCPFC:

- Adopt a long-term Pacific bluefin recovery plan, candidate limit and target reference points, and harvest control rules that are well-defined, pre-agreed and contain mandatory actions for a determined course of management action in response to changes in indicators of stock status with respect to reference points.
- Remove all exemptions under the current CMM for Pacific Bluefin tuna through a revised CMM-2012-06.

Sharks

Many shark species in the WCPO, including blue sharks, remain subject to high levels of fishing mortality that current stock assessment trends suggest could be unsustainable.⁹ Sharks play a critical role in the WCPO marine ecosystem as apex predators and indicators of ecosystem health.¹⁰ WWF is concerned with shark conservation and sustainability in the WCPFC region as a whole and considers responsible management, trade, and consumption where shark mortality occurs in all fishing activities, not just in circumstances where tuna fishing is occurring. Therefore, WCPFC must also recognise the needs of coastal States in the WCPFC region to manage their shark populations.

WWF recommends the WCPFC impose additional measures proposed during SC9 to ensure that sharks generally are not being adversely impacted in the region, but also ensuring that some key shark species are not being substantially depleted. Therefore, we encourage the WCPFC to recommend precautionary measures to reduce fishing mortality consistent with recommendations made at SC9 drawn from the discussion regarding a proposed integrated shark CMM.¹¹ By way of reference, we endorse the recommendations contained in sections 4.1 and 4.2 of the paper presented by Dr. Shelley Clarke at SC9 and TCC9 in addition to measures recommended below.¹²

WWF recommends the WCPFC:

- Develop, endorse, and adopt a Comprehensive Shark CMM that includes efforts to:
 - Mandate bycatch best practices consistent with those found in the Compendium of Best Practice of Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) for the of Species Bycatch in Tuna RFMOs ;
 - Implement the recommendations for Bycatch that were endorsed at Kobe III and adopt an annually updated report card system against these recommendations for all of the WCPFC fisheries;

- Require, through data collected from observer programs and other means, estimation of the number of captures and releases of all sharks and rays, including the status upon release (dead or alive), and reporting of this information to the WCPFC;
- Require, through observers programs, recording what gear is used in longline activities including the use of wire traces and any multi-monofilament traces in order to avoid bite-off by sharks.
- Introduce a scheme to document the capture and trade of sharks whereby it allows for traceability through to the final market state; and
- Ensure the implementation requirements for CITES listed sharks are fully understood and planned for in preparation for CITES Parties and Non-Parties trading with CITES Parties needing to make Non-detriment (Sustainability) and legal findings in order to issue Export permits for trade in these species by September 2014.¹³
- Encourage the development of reference points and management for non-target species, including blue sharks, as envisaged under Articles 5 and 10 of the WCPF Convention.[¶]

Silky Sharks

At SC8 in Busan, Korea, the Scientific Services Provider offered strong scientific evidence that silky sharks are currently overfished and subject to overfishing.¹⁴ Based on a previous SC recommendation, the WCPFC subsequently executed efforts to rebuild spawning biomass of oceanic whitetip sharks by adopting CMM 2011-04. However, SC8 recommended additional analysis for silky sharks due to concerns over data conflict and potential biases in the stock assessment despite basic fishery indicators indicating substantial declines in recent years. An updated assessment of silky sharks presented to the SC9 strongly confirmed the previous conclusion that *overfishing* is occurring and the stock is *overfished*.¹⁵ Thus, the current science strongly suggests that additional mitigation measures to avoid capture and mortality of silky sharks is warranted.¹⁶ The WCPFC must take supplementary measures to specifically address the continued adverse impacts on silky sharks in addition to general call for improvements in shark management overall.

With respect to silky sharks WWF recommends the WCPFC:

- Impose additional mitigation measures and maintain existing measures in an effort to improve the status of the WCPO silky shark stock including:
 - mandate bycatch best practices consistent with those found in the Compendium of Best Practice of Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) for the of Species Bycatch in Tuna RFMOs;
 - prohibit the retention, transshipment, storage, on-board sale, and landing of silky sharks in all fisheries managed by the WCPFC;
 - mandate the prompt and careful release of any captured silky sharks; and
 - require, through data collected from observer programs and other means, estimation of the number of releases of silky sharks, including the status upon release (dead or alive), and reporting of this information to the WCPFC.
- Encourage the development of reference points and management for non-target species, including silky sharks, as envisaged under Articles 5 and 10 of the WCPF Convention.[¶]

Regional Observer Program

Information collected as part of an appropriate observer programme is critically important to the proper management of a fishery. Data collected by observers plays a central role in informing fisheries scientists on everything ranging from stock assessments to non-target species impacts. Furthermore, observers play an indispensable role in monitoring and enforcing very important conservation and management measures in the WCPO. Indeed, observers represent the vanguard of fisheries management through the science and service that they provide. Consequently, observer coverage must be considered a top priority and greater support must be provided to the relevant authority to see that the capacity of the ROP is strengthened.

The WCPFC must ensure, through appropriate guidance, that national observer programmes administered under the ROP are fully resourced in terms of human and financial capital as well as governed under appropriate administrative and management structures. Within that consideration, the WCPFC should endorse an analysis that considers and presents not only a cost-benefit analysis of the observer programme in the context of proper management, but also different funding models that CCMs could consider for ensuring proper administration and management of the observer program at a national level. In any event, more attention must be given to the development and full funding of minimum standards that ensure a national programme can perform to ROP standards, including such efforts as annual reviews of the national programs under pre-agreed performance standards.

Additionally, WWF continues to maintain significant concerns regarding the independence of onboard observers from the perspective of data integrity. The independence and the security of the observer must be paramount to ensure data integrity. Therefore, WWF recommends that any observer funding model considered must avoid even the perception of conflict of interest. This means establishing a 3rd party payment system that insulates the observer from direct payment by the vessel owner or operator, which constitutes an unequivocal financial conflict of interest. Specifically, WWF believes that a "Pre-payment Model" that would require funding observer placement through an independent 3rd party agent (like an escrow account) could potentially provide the necessary insulation from undue influence by the vessel owner or operator while also ensuring that the observer is properly paid and transported to their home of record at the conclusion of their service. Thus, WWF recommends that the WCPFC research funding models that ensure that observer providers can provide timely and secure payments to observers without having those payments made directly to the observer by the vessel owner or operator.

WWF generally supports current efforts throughout the WCPO in pursuit of Electronic Monitoring (EM). Other fisheries around the world have demonstrated varying levels of success using EM in limited circumstances, depending on the goal of the observation and data collection program. Therefore, each application of EM is contextual and must be subject to thorough analysis, comprehensive testing, and careful monitoring to ensure the technology and program is functioning as designed. WWF would like to acknowledge the important role that EM could potentially play in ensuring observer coverage throughout the WCPFC CA, possibly even at a reduced cost, but noting that there will always be a need for human observers to perform certain analytical tasks that a camera, sensor, or computer simply cannot accomplish. WWF recommends that the WCPFC establish a peer review process for the various EM programs in progress or currently planned for implementation in the WCPO.

Lastly, WWF acknowledges and supports the establishment of the Regional Observer Programme Independent Working Group (ROPIWG) and the continued work toward improving the ROP, including consideration of observer health, safety, and welfare as well as technical data collection issues.

With respect to the ROP, WWF recommends the WCPFC:

- Further implementation of a binding, consistent, and consolidated set of standards for the ROP;
- Develop an analysis of the observer programme in the context of proper management, including an analysis of different funding models;

- Review and consider for endorsement or adoption the recommendations of the Association for Professional Observers contained in the International Observer Bill of Rights and associated documents.¹⁷

Catch Documentation Scheme

WWF maintains that an efficient and comprehensive catch documentation scheme (CDS) is a necessary part of a well-managed fishery. Good catch documentation is essential to proper fisheries management, providing the data necessary for analyses as basic as stock assessments to the product traceability that seafood markets are increasingly demanding. WWF supports the development and implementation of a comprehensive CDS and supports the establishment of the Catch Documentation Scheme Working Group (CDSWG) and their efforts toward improving catch documentation and traceability in the WCPFC-managed fisheries.

WWF recommends that any CDS considered by the WCPFC must be fully comprehensive to be effective, including documentation of all catches, landings, transfers, and trade. Other RFMOs provide relevant examples of CDS schemes that were not robust enough to provide adequate documentation. For instance, the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) switched from a purely trade-based scheme to a more comprehensive CDS because the initial program allowed for substantial overharvest by one of its members resulting from the trade-based scheme not being inclusive of all catches, landings and trade. Thus, any CDS considered by the WCPFC must include all catches, landings, transfers, or trade as part of the framework for the schemes, not just the trade-based information.

With respect to the development of a comprehensive CDS, WWF recommends the WCPFC:

- Consider the following elements of a robust CDS system, including:
 - A requirement for documentation to accompany all catch harvested, landed, transhipped, traded domestically, exported, processed, imported and re-exported and which relies on electronic documentation.
 - Complementary measures to maximize the effectiveness of the CDS through:
 - ensuring that transshipment at sea does not compromise the effectiveness of the CDS;
 - adopting Port State Measures implemented simultaneously with the CDS; and
 - adopting trade restriction measures against flag States with vessels on the IUU list.
 - Parameters that include all species of tunas, billfish, and sharks managed by the WCPFC;
- Consider additional elements to support the integrity, reliability and sustainability of a CDS system, including:
 - A commitment to continuous improvement of the CDS by investigating the benefits and feasibility of verification systems such as electronic tagging and the use of biotechnology;
 - Establishment of a capacity development fund to provide a cost-sharing mechanism that enables progressive cost sharing among member states; and
 - Maximizing retailer and public access to data through modern electronic tools.

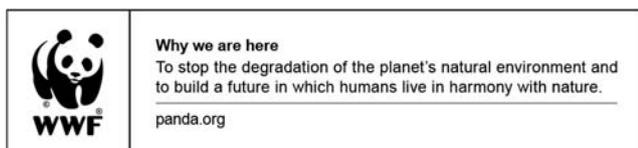
References

- ¹ United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement, 34 ILM 1542 (1995); 2167 UNTS 88. (The fishing mortality rate which generates maximum sustainable yield should be regarded as a minimum standard for limit reference points. (Annex II UNFSA 1995)).
- ² WCPFC Scientific Committee. (2013). Summary Report of the Ninth Regular Session of the Scientific Committee (Adopted version) – 14 August 2013, WCPFC-SC, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, 7-14 August 2013. p.99.
- ³ Norris, W. (2009). The Application of Reference Point Management in WCPO Tuna Fisheries: An Introduction to Theory and Concepts. WCPFC-SC5-2005/ME-WP-01. (Biomass (B) represents the weight of all fish in the water.)
- ⁴ *Id.* (Spawning biomass (SB or SSB) is the weight of all mature [reproductive and generally female] fish in the water, or [preferably] the reproductive potential of the population. Gives a better indication than B of the reproductive capacity of the stock, and tends to be more stable.)
- ⁵ *Id.* (Fishing Mortality (F) relates to the proportional impact of fishing on the total deaths in a stock during a given period.)
- ⁶ United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement, 34 ILM 1542 (1995); 2167 UNTS 88. (Fishery management strategies shall ensure that the risk of exceeding limit reference points is very low. If a stock falls below a limit reference point or is at risk of falling below such a reference point, conservation and management action should be initiated to facilitate stock recovery. Fishery management strategies shall ensure that target reference points are not exceeded on average. (Annex II UNFSA 1995)).
- ⁷ WCPFC (2012) Summary Report of the Ninth Regular Session of the Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (Adopted version) – 04 March 2013, WCPFC, Manila, Philippines, 2-6 December 2012. Attachment E. pp. 35.
- ⁸ Pilling, Graham, *et al.* (2013). Analysis of the implementation and effectiveness of key management measures for tropical tunas. WCPFC-SC9-2013/MI-WP-01. WCPFC-SC, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, 6-14 August 2013.
- ⁹ Shelley C. Clarke, Shelton J. Harley, Simon D. Hoyle, Joel S. Rice. 2013. Population Trends in Pacific Oceanic Sharks and the Utility of Regulations on Shark Finning. *Conservation Biology*, Volume 27, Issue , pages 197–209, February.
- ¹⁰ See Stevenson, C., Katz, L.S., Micheli, F., Block, B., Heiman, K.W., Perle, C., Weng, K., Dunbar, R., and Witting, J. (2007). High apex predator biomass on remote Pacific islands. *Coral Reefs* 26: 47-51; See also Friedlander, A.M. and DeMartini, E.E. (2002). Contrasts on density, size, and biomass of reef fishes between the northwestern and the main Hawaiian islands: the effects of fishing down apex predators. *Marine Ecology Progress Series* 230: 253-264.
- ¹¹ Clarke, Shelley C. (2013). Towards an Integrated Shark Conservation and Management Measure for the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. WCPFC-SC9-2013/EB-WP-08. WCPFC-SC, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, 6-14 August 2013.
- ¹² *Id.* at 24-27.
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Our Smart Fishing Vision and Goals:

Vision: The world's oceans are healthy, well-managed and full of life, providing valuable resources for the welfare of humanity.

2020 Goals: The responsible management and trade of four key fishery populations results in recovering and resilient marine eco-systems, improved livelihoods for coastal communities and strengthened food security for the Planet.



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