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**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
ON THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION DURING 2012**

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**WCPFC9-2012-11  
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**ISSUE: Annual Report of the Secretariat.**

**KEY OUTCOMES**

1. This year for the Commission has been quite unique in that we have had two Annual meetings and this process has led to a reasonably cluttered year of meetings and workloads.
2. Our financial accounts for 2011 have been responsibly managed and this is reflected in the unqualified accounts from the Auditors.
3. The Secretariat continues to work actively with the local community so that they better understand the role and contribution that the Commission makes in Pohnpei and this is beginning to pay dividends in how the Commission and its role is viewed within the community.
4. The first Observer cross endorsement training was conducted recently in Kiribati.
5. The Secretariat has worked closely with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the other Tuna regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) to establish GEF Program for areas beyond national jurisdiction focusing on tuna fisheries.
6. East Asian project activities on data collection, review of policy, legal and institutional arrangements and development of tuna management plan through the GEF-WPEA-OFM Project are continuing to run smoothly.
7. The CMS process has continued to evolve and if continued will have implications for the Secretariat in terms on ongoing work load and proper preparation and analysis of the results.
8. The Secretariat continues to maintain the Commission buildings and surrounds in good condition and has received a number of complimentary comments for civic leaders.
9. 2012 sadly saw the passing of the former Office Manager Layleen Oliver and we have juggled our staff with Lucille Martinez moving up to replace Layleen and Arlene Takesy being recruited to fill the Executive Assistant position. Lara Manarangi Trott was recruited to replace Peter Flewwelling, as Compliance Manager
10. The ED House is nearing completion and within the budget allocated by the Commission and the Secretariat will provide photos and plans at WCPFC9.
11. Housing and staff security remain ongoing issues for staff in Pohnpei. There have been a number of break-ins at professional staff houses over the year and regular break-ins in Kolonia town.
12. With the retirement of Dr Ziro Suzuki, the Secretariat has taken on the role of Administrator for the Japan Trust Fund.
13. An independent Peer Review of the 2011 bigeye tuna stock assessment was conducted with SPC-OFP and recommendations were reported to SC8.

## **1. Introduction**

In response to Rule 13 of the Commission's Rules of Procedure, which requires the Executive Director to make a report to the Commission at its regular session on the work of the Commission, this paper summarises the main activities of the Commission during 2012. During this period the work of the Commission included:

- a) conduct of the Commission delayed Eighth Regular Session and the Eighth Regular Sessions of the Commission's subsidiary bodies, Scientific Committee (SC), Northern Committee (NC), the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC), a Management Objectives Workshop and the sixth session of the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC) to be convened in association with WCPFC9.
- b) continuing engagement and consultation with other organisations including the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), SPC-OFP, the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Living Marine resources (CCAMLR) the Northern Pacific Anadromous Fisheries Commission (NPAFC) and the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT), including through participation in the informal network of secretariats for tuna-focussed RFMOs (t-RFMOs; [www.tuna-org.org](http://www.tuna-org.org)) and the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC). In 2011 the Commission was represented at COFI, Kobe 3 and attended the IATTC Annual meeting and visited IATTC to discuss issues with the overlap area;
- c) continuing efforts to establish logistic and administrative support functions at the office of the Secretariat, securing acceptable housing for staff, the Compliance Manager and advertising for a new Network Administrator position.
- d) ongoing work by the Secretariat to improve the Commission buildings and the general site;
- e) engagement with the other t-RFMOs the GEF and the FAO to establish a GEF program for "areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) focusing on tuna fisheries.

## **2. Work of the Commission's Subsidiary Bodies**

### **Scientific Committee**

The Eighth Regular Session of the Scientific Committee (SC8) took place at Busan, Korea, 7-15 August 2012. Naozumi Miyabe from Japan chaired the meeting.

A full record of the meeting is available on the website and the outcomes and recommendations will be discussed at WCPFC9.

### **Northern Committee**

The Eighth Regular Session of the Northern Committee (NC8) took place at Sapporo, Japan, 3-6 September 2012. Masanori Miyahara (Japan) chaired the meeting.

A full record of the NC8 discussion is available on the Commission website and will be discussed following presentation at WCPFC9.

## **Technical and Compliance Committee**

The Eighth Regular Session of the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC8) was held at Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia from 27 September to 2 October 2012. The meeting was chaired by Ms Rhea Moss-Christian from FSM and over 200 participants representing CCMs and observers attended the meeting.

WCPFC8 established the **ROP-TAG** to report to TCC on technical matters for the Regional Observer Programme. At TCC8 the Chair of the ROP-TAG, Phillip Lens (PNG), reported on the activities of the ROP-TAG to date. The work has been conducted electronically. TCC8 recommended that the ROP-TAG continue its work under the current terms of reference until March 2014. A dedicated page for the ROP-TAG documentation has been established on the secure side of the WCPFC website.

A full report from TCC8 will be available on the secure side of the WCPFC website and the recommendations will be discussed in full at WCPFC9.

## **Finance and Administration Committee**

The Sixth Finance and Administration Committee (FAC6), co-chaired by Charleston Deiye (Nauru) and Xiaobing Liu (China) will meet just prior to, and throughout, WCPFC9, as necessary. In addition to personnel, work programme and budget matters, the FAC considers a range of administrative matters relating to the work of the Commission including issues associated with the headquarters office, the implementation of the Secretariat's Business Plan and progress with the finalisation of a Strategic Plan for the Commission.

### **Ad Hoc Task Group [Data]**

TCC8 noted that the Ad Hoc task group on data does not have a Chair and that this position needs to be filled at WCPFC9 so that the work of this group can progress.

### **VMS-SWG**

The VMS SWG was established in 2012 to advise on the purpose and principles of the Commissions VMS. The final report is available on the WCPFC9 meeting page, and this is to be discussion at WCPFC9. A dedicated page for the VMS-SWG documentation has been established on the secure side of the WCPFC website.

## **3. Secretariat Activities**

### **Secretariat administrative and establishment matters**

#### *Recruitment of Secretariat staff*

The total Secretariat staffing level is 17 staff positions. There are 8 professional staff and 9 support staff. Staff recruited this year includes Lara Manarangi Trott to replace Peter Flewwelling, as Compliance Manager, and Arlene Takesy as Executive Assistant. The Commission is currently advertising to fill the vacant IT position approved at WCPFC7 to support the current ICT Manager and reduce our reliance on small IT companies to provide ongoing IT support.

#### *IT systems*

This year we have instituted two reviews of our IT progresses in order to improve our management and efficiency. The first of these was to review our compliance with the procedures and to ensure

compliance with the CMMs and Rules of procedure for data. The second approach was to engage an IT management professional to look at our system and IT hardware, software and management approach to see if we were current and what we needed to do now and over the next five years to stay current. The IT Security report is available on the website for your information.

The Secretariat also established the IT Security Committee to keep under review the security and performance of the Commission's IT systems in accordance with the Commission's Information Security policy.

Main enhancements to the Commission IMS added Catch Discards and Transshipment modules to capture the increasing volumes of data received at the Secretariat, meet WCPFC's responsibilities to the combined RFMO CLAV facility, direct links between operational applications and CMM reporting requirements. Additional enhancements are being contemplated to improve the integration of MCS data and further support the Secretariats work on Compliance Monitoring Reporting and to better enable the Secretariat to support high seas monitoring activities and member data requests. A prototype for online Annual Reports part 2 was delivered and reviewed by CCMs at TCC8. These and other data management development activities also involved the participation of some CCM officials, and at least for Cook Islands, FSM and Marshall Islands, Commission staff supported their current efforts on developing their national IMS.

The corporate network at Pohnpei logged a full year of operational stability with more than 99 % system availability. The FSM Telecom submarine cable connectivity to the outside world was out of service for approximately 12 hours in April and while that stopped direct access to the RFV by CCMs, WCPFC could still maintain limited Internet and email connectivity using its backup satellite Internet solution. It's a reminder that while Pohnpei has good Internet connectivity to the outside world, it has a non-redundant submarine cable infrastructure and any disruptions could be serious, and the Commission would do well to note and accept that fact. WCPFC maintains a VMS backup site hosted in Guam and planning and development to rationalize and maximize those sites to ensure the Commission is always able to do its work is a continuing priority.

#### *Financial and administrative arrangements*

Financial and administrative arrangements operated satisfactorily during the year with the continued use of QuickBooks Enterprise as the Commission's financial management system. Management of the headquarters building services and grounds continues to be a challenge; however, by implementing a regular maintenance schedule the buildings are now in good repair and the grounds landscaping completed. Future maintenance costs for the Headquarters building will continue to come from the need to replace the original electrical system as replacement parts are not available in Pohnpei, replacing untreated wood throughout the building that is susceptible to termite damage and replacing the building roofing.

#### *Annual Accounts and Contributions*

The 2011 financial statements were completed, audited and made available through Commission's website within the specified time frames, together with the External Auditor's Reports. The Auditor reported that the statements and accounts complied with the required accounting standards as well as the Commission's Financial Regulations, and presented a fair view of the financial position.

Article 18 (3) of the Convention provides that if a member's contributions are in arrears for the preceding two full years it shall not participate in the taking of decisions by the Commission, subject to the Commission permitting such a member to vote. This year no members have membership arrears for the previous two (2) years.

#### *New Bank Accounts*

A new bank account has been opened this year in Manila to support the WCPFC9 meeting. This account will be closed after the meeting is concluded.

#### *Headquarters Agreement*

There have been no issues with the headquarters agreement. Provision of an access road to the Pohnpei Peace Corps has not occurred, however this does not in any way hinder the work of the Commission and understanding local infrastructure and financial issues for the Pohnpei and FSM governments the Secretariat will continue to work with these parties to resolve the issue at some point in the future.

#### *Executive Directors Housing*

WCPFC8 approved funding to upgrade a property to house the Executive Directors of the Commission. I am pleased to advise that we have been able to undertake the upgrade work within the approved budget and the house will be available for occupancy at the end of December 2012.

## **4. Contracts and Consultancies during 2012**

### **Commission's Science Services Provider, the SPC-OFP**

The SPC-OFP continued in the role of conducting data management, statistical analysis, stock assessment and related analytical services, management analyses and CMM performance monitoring, and other advisory and technical services. In 2012, the SPC-OFP engaged fully in a Peer Review of the 2011 bigeye tuna stock assessment; undertook stock assessments for South Pacific Albacore, Southwest Pacific Striped Marlin, Oceanic Whitetip and Silky Sharks; and cleaned swordfish catch and effort data in preparation for a swordfish stock assessment to be completed and presented to SC9. SPC-OFP provided 40 papers, reports and data summaries for the SC8, mostly related with assigned science services; and also provided a broad area of other advice services for the Secretariat's inter-sessional activities, notably including support for the data collection in East Asian countries through WPEA OFM Project and support for the scientific elements of the WCPFC Management Objectives Workshop.

### **Other contracts and consultancies**

#### *Commission-related activities*

- Legal advisory services: International Fisheries and Marine Law (Professor Martin Tsamenyi, University of Wollongong, Australia);
- Rapporteurship: Dr Shelley Clarke;
- The Commission's public website is covered by an SLA with Eighty Options of Tasmania, Australia which provides for technical support and hosting;
- Taz-e of Australia continues to work with the Secretariat to develop the Commission IMS. In addition, an SLA with Taz-e provides specialist technical support to the Compliance IMS and Record of Fishing Vessels (RFV) applications. These are necessary given the mission-critical nature of these systems and their importance to the work of the Commission;
- The Secretariat also has an SLA with BMC of Pohnpei, Micronesia, for the technical support of the corporate network;
- Mark Farrell visited the Secretariat to review the IT systems and provide strategic advice on contingency planning.
- An expert in QuickBooks came to headquarters to provide training to staff and look at ways to streamline the Secretariat's financial system.

- Three experts Andre Punt, Mark Maunder and Jim Ianelli were engaged for the Peer Review of the Big Eye stock assessment and;
- A facilitator Ian Cartwright and two experts Robin Allen and Jim Ianelli were engaged to support the MOW

*SC-related activities*

- Peer review of 2011 bigeye tuna stock assessment conducted in Noumea, 28 April – 2 May 2012. *Andre Punt, chair of the review panel*, presented on the process and recommendations to SC8;
- (Project 14) Continuation of WPEA OFM Project and convening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> WPEA Project Steering Committee meeting during the SC8;
- (Project 35) Refinement of bigeye parameters Pacific-wide: SC8 reviewed the progress of the project and recommended continuation in 2013;
- (Project 39) Final report on regional study of the stock structure and life-history characteristics of South Pacific albacore was provided to SC8.;
- (Project 42) Pacific-wide tagging project: The steering committee met during SC8 and reported at SC8;

(Project 57) Identifying provisional limit reference points, target reference points and introduction to harvest control rules for the key target species in the WCPFC, conducted by SPC-OFP;

- (Project 60) Purse Seine Species Composition: Review of the project report and recommendation of its continuation in 2013.;
- (Project BMIS) Development of Bycatch Mitigation Information System: Report to SC8 on database maintenance and improvements; and
- FAD bycatch and mitigation research, reported to SC8.

*TCC-related activities*

- Finalisation of the by-catch mitigation database (SPC-OFP);
- The Commission has a SLA with the FFA for the provision of VMS services to the Commission through Absolute, and subsequent contracts with Satcom/Vizada, Satcom/Iridium and CLS Argos for air time. VMS (FFA/Absolute)
- The VMS data integrity audit was combined with a security audit of the IMS, RFV procedures (Deloitte).

In addition to the meetings of subsidiary bodies of the Commission, the Secretariat participated in the following meetings and workshops during 2012.

- COFI Rome
- The Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting Rarotonga Cook islands
- FFA MCS Working group meeting, Honiara, Solomon Islands
- FFC Technical meeting
- FFC Ministerial Meeting, Samoa
- VMS planning meetings at TCC8 Pohnpei and follow up at Wollongong, VMS training in the University of Wollongong, FSM Pacific Islands debriefer training meeting FSM.
- Observer training (Philippines, Kiribati FSM and Marshall islands)

- Observer programme Audits in Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Tuvalu New Caledonia and Kiribati

ROP data discussions with SPC (New Caledonia)

- IT discussions with SPC, Noumea, New Caledonia and the Cook Islands
- SLA Agreement Taz-E Pohnpei
- ISC12, Sapporo, Japan
- SPC Tuna Data Workshop, Noumea, New Caledonia
- Peer Review Bigeye Tuna, Noumea, New Caledonia
- WPEA Project related meetings and workshops in Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam
- FFA Observer Debriefing Workshop, Pohnpei.
- General Santos Tuna Conference Philippines.
- World Oceans Forum Busan Korea.

## **5. Relations with other organisations**

Regular dialogue was maintained with the ICCAT, CCAMLR, IOTC and CCSBT to share information and exchange views on areas of common interest. The ED attended the joint RFMO meeting at COFI Chaired by Andrew Wright. The Consolidated List of Authorised Fishing Vessels (CLAV) operates between the five tRFMOs and is being updated monthly. Other organisations with which productive relations were maintained throughout the year included the Western Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Council, the Agreement for the Conservation of Albatross and Petrels (ACAP), FAO, and Birdlife International.

IATTC remains one of our key relationships and the ED and the Observer Manager have worked to build this relationship throughout the year. The first WCPFC/IATTC Cross Endorsed Observer training occurred in August 2012 in Kiribati following the signing of the Observer Cross Endorsement Memorandum of Cooperation in 2011. The WCPFC Chair attended the Special IATTC session in November and there is now a proposal from IATTC for members to consider on the management of the overlap area.

## **6 Future Work of the Commission**

This year's Commission deliberations will consolidate the Secretariat tasks associated with implementing outcomes from SC8, TCC8 and the WCPFC9 meeting, with a focus on the Compliance with Conservation Measures, development of the supporting IMS, follow-up of the WCPFC Performance Review and ongoing improvements to Observer and VMS programs.

In addition to these tasks, the Secretariat has responsibility for the Commission headquarters in Pohnpei and will continue to ensure that the headquarters buildings and grounds are kept in good working order through a regular maintenance schedule for both buildings and grounds.

The Commission has also been active in better integrating the work of the Commission into the local community so that there is better understanding of what we do and the benefits that the Community derives from our presence. This work will be ongoing. The Commission Secretariat will also be active in member countries working with members to develop a better understanding of the Commission's role and responsibilities and to assist as required with reporting requirements and capacity building.

The Commission has benefited greatly from the internship program this year and will continue to accommodate interns from member countries and from Universities as appropriate.