

Last Quarter 2009

The last quarter of 2009 was very busy with the TCC5, FAC3 and WCPFC6 meetings. Further, there was the announcement of the departure of the Compliance Manager and later, the announcement of the departure of the Executive Director to take on the Executive Secretary position of the Secretariat of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources in Hobart, Australia, both at the end of February. Mr. Peter Flewwelling was selected and agreed to take on the Compliance Manager position commencing in February 2010.

The 5th Regular Session of the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC5) was held at Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, from 1 to 6 October, 2010. TCC5 recommended 11 CMMs with 4 being updates of earlier CMMs and the remainder being new, and the revised WCPFC IUU Vessel List for the Commission meeting in December. There was considerable work by CCMs in leading several initiatives such as the PNA group for the vessel day scheme, USA for the *Ad hoc* Technical Group on Data Access and Security, Control of Nationals by New Zealand, the development of terms of reference for a Compliance with Conservation and Management Measures by Australia, the European Union taking on the Port State Measures work, and PNG taking the Catch Documentation Scheme. The VMS SSPs and SOPs were amended for consideration at the Commission meeting. Summary Report of TCC5 meeting can be found on the WCPFC website under Meetings / 5th Regular Session of the TCC. An additional brief summary of the key issues can also be found at News site under the WCPFC website (<http://www.wcpfc.int/news/2009/5th-annual-session-wcpfc%E2%80%99s-technical-and-compliance-committee-concludes-micronesia>).

Throughout mid-October to early November, several WPEA project related meetings were held and the Science Manager represented WCPFC: i) a domestic inception workshop for the WPEA project in Hanoi, Vietnam, which introduced the GEF-WPEA project to their domestic stakeholders; ii) a consultation meeting with Indonesian government (Research Centre for Capture Fisheries) for the development and finalization of their WPEA annual work plan and budget; and iii) the 5th GEF International Waters Conference in Cairns, Australia, for the GEF project managers, where the Science Manager represented as the WPEA project manager.

In late November, the Executive Director visited Manila, Philippines, for consultation with the UNDP on the extension of the WPEA project, Phase 2. GEF advised that the concept/PIF for the Phase 2 should be submitted to GEF well before the GEF Council meeting in November 2010. Details for the implementation of the current WPEA project were consulted with the UNDP Philippines and the National Fisheries Research and Development Institute. He also joined a Philippine Tuna Council meeting that was preparing for the Commission meeting in Papeete.

In October, the IWG-ROP3 submitted a meeting report to the TCC5, which includes recommendations on the disbandment of the IWG ROP, introduction of additional data fields for FAD monitoring, and options on location and costs for data entry management. The report and recommendations were approved by WCPFC6, but the data entry issue was to be addressed separately.

The ROP Coordinator attended the Data Consultative Committee Meeting held in Noumea. This meeting resulted in the commitment for inclusion by April 2010 of the Commission adopted minimum data standards as part of the Data Collections Formats for Palau, FSM, Kiribati, RMI, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Nauru, Vanuatu, Fiji, Tuvalu, and the Forum Fisheries Agency for the ROP observers. He also had a meeting with IATTC to work out the cross endorsement data issues between IATTC and WCPFC in La Jolle, California, during October. This offered an opportunity to also attend the US Multilateral Treaty Broader Cooperation Meeting in San Diego where the Coordinator was asked to respond to questions on the ROP, the introduction of 100% observer coverage, and catch retention.

The number of vessels monitored through the Commission VMS continues to grow. In the 4th quarter, a further 310 fishing vessels were activated and added to the Commission VMS bringing the number of vessels being monitored in the 4th quarter to 2,678. The Cook Islands approached the Commission for access to Commission VMS in the waters under their national jurisdiction under Convention Article 24(8) and it was decided that this would be a bilateral matter between the Commission and the Member State.

The Finance and Administration Committee was held the day before the Commission meeting and in the margin of the Commission meeting, and although the expected budget limits were not achieved, there was an overall increase in the total budget. It is noteworthy that for the second year in a row, the Secretariat has not raised staff salaries in line with the CROP levels. The Finance and Administration Officer assisted in logistics and administration at both TCC5 in the Federated States of Micronesia and WCPFC6 in Tahiti.

The Commission meeting in Tahiti during 6-11 December 2010 was lively, with all 25 countries and 7 participating territories attending. Indonesia, El Salvador and Belize attended as Cooperating Non-Members (CNMs), and the following attended as observer countries: Ecuador, Panama, Thailand and Vietnam. Intergovernmental observers included: Inter- American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), International Scientific Committee for Tunas and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC), Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and The World Bank. Summary Report of the Commission meeting can be found on the WCPFC website under Meetings / 6th Regular Session of the Commission, and key issues are briefly published at News site under the WCPFC website (<http://www.wcpfc.int/news/2009/sixth-session-wcpfc-concludes-papeete-tahiti>).

Dr. SungKwon Soh was selected as the Interim Executive Director upon the departure of the current Executive Director Andrew Wright, until the new Executive Director was in place. Selection processes for the new Executive Director were set for July 2, 2010, in Brisbane at a Special Commission Meeting.