



TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE
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**REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SC11 ON CHANGES TO LONGLINE
ROP MINIMUM STANDARD DATA FIELDS**

WCPFC-TCC11-2015-19_rev1¹
15 September 2015

Purpose

1. This paper presents for the review of TCC11 the “Changes to longline observer data collection standards for bycatch” as recommended by SC11.
2. To assist TCC’s review, the Secretariat has provided some discussion points on the proposed changes and some suggestions around their incorporation into the ROP Minimum Standard Data Fields document.
3. TCC11 is invited to consider the Secretariat’s notes and suggested changes to the SC11 proposed changes to the ROP Minimum Standard Data Fields contained in Attachment 1 of this document.

Background

4. The Commission has previously agreed to ROP Minimum Standard Data Fields – the latest version was updated based on WCPFC11 decisions and can be accessed from the WCPFC website: <http://www.wcpfc.int/regional-observer-programme>.
5. The Commission expects that the ROP observer programmes will ensure certain types of data are collected by observers when operating on longliners and purse seiners including FAD information. The format of collection of these data fields is up to the observer providers, however a useful guide for a format is the SPC/FFA harmonised format, which is used by a number of programmes; this is available on the SPC Website: <http://www.spc.int/oceanfish/en/data-collection/241-data-collection-forms>
6. SC11 received paper SC11-EB-IP-05, which discussed the work plan of the Joint Tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organizations’ Technical Working Group-Bycatch, noting that it prioritized adopting minimum data fields and standardized collection protocols to enable interoperability of the t-RFMOs’ observer-collected bycatch datasets.
7. A January 2015 meeting of experts on tuna longline observer datasets held in Keelung, Chinese Taipei, identified a need for a systematic review of existing

¹ Includes a small editorial correction

information collected by the t-RFMOs' longline observer programmes in order to identify priority gaps in bycatch data.

8. The group recommended developing a comprehensive list of variables that have documented significant effects on catch and mortality rates of taxa susceptible to capture in pelagic longline fisheries. It was intended that this comprehensive list would then facilitate identifying gaps in priority fields collected by each of the tuna RFMOs' longline observer programmes. WCPFC, with funding provided by the ABNJ Tuna Project, commissioned a study to implement this recommendation, which resulted in the report, 'Potentially Significant Variables Explaining Bycatch and Survival Rates and Alternative Data Collection Protocols to Harmonize Tuna RFMOs' Pelagic Longline Observer Programmes' by Eric Gilman and Martin Hall. Using the comprehensive list of 28 fields identified in the report, a summary document was prepared to identify a minimum suite of priority longline bycatch fields and standardized data collection protocols which, if not already implemented, should be included in the WCPFC's longline observer programmes as soon as possible. Of the eleven fields in the minimum suite, seven are related to gear characteristics and fishing methods, whereas four are related to individual bycatch organisms.

9. During SC11 a small working group reviewed the recommendations from SC11-EB-IP-05 and provided a draft recommendation to SC11. The outcome from SC11, as described in the SC11 Executive Summary August 24 issue, was "*SC11 endorses the "Changes to longline observer data collection standards for bycatch" as in Attachment I, and forwards them to TCC11 for technical consideration.*"

Discussion

10. The SC11 recommended changes to the ROP Minimum Standard ROP Data Fields are intended to achieve two objectives:

1. To bring WCPFC observer data collection protocols in line with some of the more recent WCPFC bycatch mitigation CMMs, eg CMM 2014-05, including paragraph 1 which requires the use of at least one of two prescribed mitigation measures in longline fisheries that are targeting tunas and billfishes: either prohibit use or carrying of wire trace as branch lines or leaders; or prohibit use of branch lines running directly off the longline floats or drop lines, known as shark lines (diagram provided in CMM).; and
2. To reflect lessons learned from recent experience in analyzing observer data in mitigation studies, such as those done by SPC for sharks, which have been reviewed by the Scientific Committee.

11. Since SC11, the Secretariat has undertaken an internal review of the SC11 recommended changes with a view to considering and providing some recommendations on how the data might be collected by observers. To this end the Secretariat has also consulted with colleagues at the FFA Secretariat and SPC.

12. Attachment 1 includes the exact text as recommended in SC11 Executive Summary Attachment I as per the SC11 Executive Summary report issued 24 August 2015. It also includes two columns which have been introduced alongside the SC11 recommendation i) a commentary on the proposed changes and ii) a few proposed edits to the SC11 recommendations.

13. The key changes that the Secretariat has proposed are:

- A modification to the “hook type and hook size notes”;
- An edit to clarify the field “Leader (trace) material”;
- An addition to the field “Shark Lines” to ask observers where possible to record the length of the line for each set (voluntary);
- Edits to clarify the “seabird mitigation measure” fields, specifically for “Tori poles and number of lines” and “Blue dyed bait”.

Recommendation

14. TCC11 is invited to consider the Secretariat’s notes and suggested changes to the SC11 proposed changes to the ROP Minimum Standard Data Fields contained in Attachment 1 of this document.

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE WCPFC MINIMUM DATA STANDARDS AND FIELDS FOR BYCATCH DATA
COLLECTED BY LONGLINE OBSERVER PROGRAMMES**

Table 1. Proposed amendments to the WCPFC Minimum Data Standards and Fields for bycatch data collected by longline observer programmes.

Suggestion if SC add priority to the research items of minimum standard. It will be useful for the observer training.

Notes:

1. For fields requiring recording at the set level, observer programmes can choose between requiring their observers to record gear fields for each set or instead allow observers to record gear information as a default/basic practice for the first set, and then record any deviations from that default/basic practice. .
2. Observer programmes should ensure that there is a clear distinction between situations in which gear are not used and situations in which fields are left blank.
3. Observer programmes should include the following information in coded fields rather than text-based comment fields as much as possible.

Field		Current WCPFC Minimum Data Standards and Fields Text	SC11 Proposed WCPFC Minimum Data Standards and Fields Text (new text in bold)	<i>Secretariat notes on Changes and Status of the WCPFC Minimum Standard Data Fields (MSDF)</i>	Secretariat proposed changes to SC11 proposed WCPFC Minimum Data Standards and Fields Text (new text <u>underlined in bold or strikeout</u>)
1	Hook Type	<p>Hook type: What type of hook or hooks is used? Examples are J hooks-Circle hooks-offset circle etc, the vessel usually uses one type, but may use a couple of types.</p> <p>Hook size: Size of the hooks used, if not sure ask the Bosun.</p>	<p>Hook type: Record at the set level what type of hook or hooks is used? Examples are J hooks-Circle hooks-offset circle etc, the vessel usually uses one type, but may use a couple of types.</p> <p>Hook size: Size of the hooks used, if not sure ask the Bosun or refer to a hook catalogue.</p>	<p>Hook type Field- MSDF not changed currently being collected but maybe not to set level</p> <p><i>Change data field instruction to record this at Set level rather than at trip level. As is prefaced in Note 1 above, consideration may need to be given by observer programme to an approach that provides scope for observers to get adequate rest on a trip. One approach may be to consider if the hook type and hook size varies within a trip, for observers to record the gear information as a default/basic practice for the first set, and then record any deviations from that default/basic practice by set.</i></p>	<p>Hook type: Record at the set level what type of hook or hooks is used? Examples are J hooks-Circle hooks-offset circle etc, the vessel usually uses one type, but may use a couple of types.</p> <p>Hook size: Size of the hooks used, if not sure ask the Bosun or refer to a hook catalogue. <u>Note that the SPC/FFA observer programme uses an excellent SPC-produced, “Terminal Gear Identification Guide”: which clearly identifies the most common hook types and sizes.</u></p>

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	Name the bait species used Pilchards, Sardine, Squid, etc.	<p>At the set level, name the bait species used Pilchards, Sardine, Squid, artificial bait, etc.</p> <p>Record the estimated weight of each; e.g. using package weight of boxed set.</p>	<p>Bait Species</p> <p>Field - MSDF not changed currently being collected</p> <p><i>Change to record at the set level and add artificial baits to list.</i></p> <p><i>Instructions – Observer should record at the set level, all bait species including any artificial baits.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Weight of bait used</p> <p>New Field – “Weight of Bait Used” to be added to the MSDF.</p> <p><i>Instructions - observers are to record species and total weight of each bait species used at a set level.</i></p> <p><i>This field is already collected by SPC/FFA observers but is not a Commission MSDF.</i></p>	As proposed by SC11

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3	Leader (trace) material	Indicate Y or N -if the vessel uses wire traces on all their lines or only on certain lines i.e. lines close to the buoys etc if no traces are used at all then record N.	indicate Y or N -if the vessel uses wire traces on all their lines (Y) or if no wire traces are used then record N. If only used on certain lines i.e. lines close to the buoys etc. record which lines. . If the proportion of leaders that are wire varies within a trip, record the average based on a sample of ten baskets in different sets.	<p>Leader (Wire trace)</p> <p>Field - MSDF not changed currently being collected</p>	<p>Indicate Y or N -if the vessel uses wire traces on some or all their lines (Y) or if no wire traces are used then record N.</p> <p><u>If wire traces used on all lines then record "ALL LINES"</u></p>
				<p>Wire Trace Position</p> <p>New Field- Wire Trace Position to be added to the MSDF</p> <p><i>Instructions: If the vessel uses wire traces, observers are to note if the vessel uses wire traces on all their lines or if wire traces are only used on certain lines, then the observer is to choose 10 baskets in different sets (not all sets) and record the average of which lines, et close to the buoys etc</i></p>	<p>If only used on certain lines i.e. lines close to the buoys etc. record which lines. . If the proportion of leaders that are wire varies within a trip, record the average based on a sample of ten baskets in different sets.</p>

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4	Branchline Weighting	Do the branch lines have weighted attachments usually lead on the hook, or near the end of the leader of the branch lines? Record the mass of the weight attached to the branch line.	Do the branch lines have weighted attachments usually lead on the hook, or near the end of the leader of the branch lines? Record the mass of the weight attached to the branch line. If more than one type of weighting is used during a trip, describe each type and indicate the proportion based on a sample of ten baskets in different sets.	Weighted Branch Lines Field - MSDF not changed currently being collected	As proposed by SC11
				Mass of Weights Used Field - MSDF not changed currently being collected <u>Instructions:</u> Observer is to choose 10 baskets in different sets (not all sets) and note which lines have weighted branch lines, and mass of weights used	

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5	Shark Lines	NA	At the set level, record the number of shark lines (branch lines running directly off the longline floats or drop lines) observed.	<p>Shark Lines New Field – Shark Lines to be added to the MSDF</p> <p><i>This field is already being collected by FFA/SPC observers. These observers are asked where possible to record the length of the line for each set.</i></p> <p><i>Diagram is provided in CMM 2014-07 CMM on Sharks</i></p>	At the set level, record the number of shark lines (branch lines running directly off the longline floats or drop lines) observed. <u>Where possible, record the length of this line for each set.</u>
6	Number of Lightsticks	Does the vessel use light sticks on its line, record the number it may use, and where along the mainline they attach them to the branch lines.	At the set level indicate whether the vessel uses light sticks on its line, record the number it may use, and where along the mainline they attach them to the branch lines.	<p>Light Sticks and placement Field - MSDF not changed <i>Now to be collected at set level</i></p> <p><i>Two separate data fields may be required on forms to record both number of light sticks and which branch line they are attached to</i></p>	As proposed by SC11

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7	Seabird mitigation measures	<p><i>Tori pole</i> Indicate Y or No - whether the vessel uses a Tori pole when setting, this is mandatory in some areas. A Tori pole can have a number of different designs but is basically a pole with lines ribbons and other attachments to scare birds away from the branch line baits.</p> <p><i>Blue dyed bait</i> Bait that has been dyed especially to look blue. This has shown to reduce bird strikes in some trials.</p>	<p><i>Tori lines</i> Indicate Yes or No at the set level - whether the vessel uses a single or double Tori lines when setting, this is mandatory in some areas. A Tori line can have a number of different designs but is basically a pole with a line with ribbons and other attachments to scare birds away from the branch line baits.</p> <p><i>Blue dyed bait</i> Indicate Yes or No at the set level- whether the vessel used bait that has been dyed especially to look blue and whether</p>	<p>Number of Tori Lines Modify current MSDF Tori pole field to indicate whether single or double tori line is used</p> <p>Blue dyed bait Field - MSDF to be modified to include collection of information about the whether the bait was thawed before it was dyed. Thawed bait tends to hold the dye better. Two separate data fields may be required on forms: one for whether blue-dyed bait is used and another for whether it is thawed or not when bait is dyed.</p> <p>Tori poles and number of lines Indicate Yes or No at the set level - whether the vessel uses a single or double Tori lines when setting (0 = none, 1 = single tori line and 2= double tori line), this is mandatory in some areas. A Tori line can have a number of different designs but is basically a pole with a line with ribbons and other attachments to scare birds away from the branch line baits. <i>Blue dyed bait</i> Indicate Yes or No at the set level- whether the vessel used bait that has been dyed especially to look blue. And indicate Yes or No at the set level - whether this bait was thawed before the bait was dyedyeing.</p>

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	<p><i>Underwater setting shoot</i> Some vessels may have special shutes or arms that protect the bait and take the line down to a depth before releasing the branch-line this makes it harder for birds to attack the bait.</p> <p><i>Disposal method for offal management</i> Most vessels discard their offal from processed fish by different methods, describe what the vessel does- example the vessel may just throw it over the side as they process the fish, they may accumulate offal in baskets and throw it over in one go, they</p>	<p>this bait was thawed before dyeing.</p> <p><i>Underwater or side setting</i> Indicate Yes or No at the set level– whether the vessel used i) special chutes or arms that protect the bait and take the line down to a depth before releasing the branch-line, or ii) side-setting.</p> <p><i>Disposal method for offal management</i> Describe what the vessel does at the set level- for example the vessel may just throw it over the side as they process the fish, they may accumulate offal in baskets and throw it over in one go, they may have machines that blend the offal and it is sprayed over the side. Bis- Record</p>	<p><i>Underwater or side Setting Shooter</i> Field – MSDF to be modified to include collection of information about side setting practices, as well an underwater setting.</p> <p><i>Two separate data fields may be required on forms for separately recording details of underwater chute and side-setting</i></p> <p><i>Disposal method for offal management</i> Field – MSDF to be modified to include collection of data on offal disposal into a data field format. <i>Field codes need to be developed for various scenarios of offal disposal, to replace general comments by observers.</i></p>	<p><i>Underwater or side setting</i> As proposed by SC11</p> <p><i>Disposal method for offal management</i> As proposed by SC11</p>

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	<p>may have machines that blends the offal and it is sprayed over the side.</p>	<p>if strategic offal disposal (dumping offal to attract seabirds away from hooks, or not dumping offal) is used.</p>	<p><i>Disposal Method for Offal Management</i> <i>Field – MSDF to be modified to be observations made at set level and to include collection of information about whether offal disposal is strategic to keep birds away from the hooks i.e. do they keep offal and then dump it during setting to distract birds.</i></p>	

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8	Hooking Location and Entanglement	NA	For the each observed silky and oceanic white tip shark, sea turtle, seabird or marine mammal , add three new codes to the existing ‘condition when caught’ fields: ‘hooked in mouth’, hooked deeply (throat/stomach)’, and for ‘condition when released’ fields: ‘hook and/or line removed’.	<p><i>Hooking Location and Entanglement</i> <i>New Field to be added to MSDF.</i></p> <p><i>Field codes need to be developed for various scenarios of hooking of species listed. Observers already collect the condition of all species when released/discarded.</i></p> <p><i>Suggested Codes</i> <i>Hooked in mouth - HM</i> <i>Hooked deeply (throat/stomach) -HD</i> <i>Hooked externally - HE</i> <i>Hook and/or line removed? Y or N</i></p>	As proposed by SC11

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9	Branchline characteristics	NA	Notes on rational for deletion - In this proposal, these data (hook type, bait type, leader material, line weighting, and light-stick) will be required to collect at SET LEVEL, not "LINE LEVEL". Thus there are some difficulty to estimate the branchline characteristics by "cross referencing".	<i>These are notes from SC11's discussions based on consideration of the EB-IP05 recommendations—therefore no specific change is proposed to the MDSF.</i>	N/A
