

WORKING GROUP II: PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA AND GUIDE TO DISCUSSIONS AT PREPCON VI

Prepared by the Interim Secretariat

1. Based on the provisional agenda described in the revised ‘Information Note’ circulated on 6 February 2004, the following items are proposed for discussion by WG II at PrepCon VI:

I Operation of the Scientific Committee

- *Preliminary consideration of possible terms of reference and operating procedures for the future Scientific Committee of the Commission (and any possible specialist working groups that may be established), as well as the possible transition from existing institutional arrangements in the region, particularly the Standing Committee on Tuna and Billfish. This may include development of a plan or outline for the provision of scientific advice throughout 2005.*

II Scientific Coordinating Group, 2004 agenda

- *The need for and the terms of reference for any meeting of the Scientific Coordinating Group (SCG) in 2004, as well as the timing of and funding for such a meeting. One of the matters that may be taken up by the SCG in 2004 may be the issue of the effects of fishing on bycatch and ecosystems. WG.II and SCG may wish to consider this matter on the basis of the study of approaches to ecosystem and bycatch issues that had been prepared for an earlier session of the Conference (WCPFC/PrepCon/WP.10).*

III Further development of the proposed initiative to enhance data collection in Indonesia and Philippines.

IV The provision of scientific advice in relation to northern stocks as related to the activities of the Northern Committee.

V Further development of the strategies for meeting the special requirements of developing States and territories with respect to data requirements and technical capabilities (referred to in paragraph 10 of WCPFC/PrepCon/32)

2. The present working paper provides background on these topics and identifies where decision-making is required by WG II.

AGENDA ITEM I: OPERATION OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE IN THE INTERIM PERIOD

Background to the item

3. At PrepCon IV, WG.II gave, *inter alia*, recommendations to PrepCon on the matter of the scientific structure and provision of scientific advice during the transitional period. WCPFC/PrepCon/32 outlines key features of the structures required for the scientific functions of the Commission during the transitional period (3 to 5 years). WG.II noted that during this period the structure and functions of the science secretariat must be flexible and adaptable in order to meet changing needs. An independent review of the transitional structure and function should be carried out two years after entry into force of the convention, or earlier if required, to determine the effectiveness of the science structure and recommend changes as appropriate.

4. When the Convention comes into force in June 2004, the Commission's entities (of which the Scientific Committee is one) will begin to start functioning at some level. The following material is provided to assist WG II to discuss the scientific processes and functions required for the Scientific Committee to hold its first meeting, which would probably take place in 2005.

5. The roles and relationships of the Scientific Committee with the Commission, specialist working groups, research providers and the Secretariat are described in WCPFC/PrepCon/32 and Articles 12 and 13 of the Convention. While many of the practices of SCTB are expected to be used in the operation of the Scientific Committee (SC) during the interim period, the following items require discussion:

- (a) the number and timing of SC meetings required annually;
- (b) location of SC meetings;
- (c) process for selection of chairs and vice chairs;
- (d) SC work plan for year 1 (2005);
- (e) role of the Commission's Science Manager and support unit in SC business;
- (f) role of SCTB from 2005 onwards.

6. (a) *the number and timing of SC meetings.* The SCTB processes include one meeting of about seven working days per year. This meeting is held around July- August. Members need to consider whether a meeting of similar duration and timing might be appropriate for the Scientific Committee. Note that the timing of the annual Commission meeting has not been set and this may influence the timing of the Scientific Committee meeting.

7. (b) *location of the meeting.* If the Scientific Committee meetings are to be held in places other than the Commission HQ (this will need to be determined by the Commission), then some method of selecting the locations of meetings will need to be employed. One option could be to hold the meetings in a location nominated by each member in turn; where a turn is determined by the alphabetical order of Member names (acknowledging that Members ought to have the ability to abstain from hosting a meeting when their turn arises).

8. (c) *process for selection of chairs and vice chairs.* In some organizations the Secretariats provide a permanent Chair or vice-chair for technical meetings. In other organizations the Chairs and vice-chairs are drawn from the members. In such cases, some method of selecting Chairs and vice-chairs would need to be employed. As above, selection of these positions might be resolved using an alphabetical system (acknowledging that Members ought to have the ability to abstain from the role when their turn arises).

9. (d) *SC work plan for year 1 (2005).* If the first meeting of the SC is expected to occur in 2005, then the following items will need elaboration, either at PrepCon VI or, at the latest, by PrepCon VII:

- The timing and location of SC I
- The identification of the SC I Chair and vice-chair
- Identification of the special requirements of members relating to SC I
- The need for any meetings of specialist working group in 2005 (also see the need for SWG rules and procedures below)
- A provisional SC agenda, which among other items could include:
 - stock assessments to be covered
 - other scientific matters (e.g. Ecosystem and bycatch issues)
 - research planning (including determining how to prioritize research)
 - Rules and procedures for the Specialist Working Groups.

10. (e) *Role of the Commission's Science Manager and support unit.* WG II has previously described the key features of the scientific functions of the Commission during the transitional period, including the roles and relationships of the Scientific Committee with the Commission, specialist working groups, research providers and the Secretariat (WCPFC/PrepCon/WP.32 - see also Articles 12 and 13 of the Convention). It is assumed that the Science Manager would provide a major support role to the Scientific Committee. WG.II may wish to consider any additional recommendations as to items to be included in the job description of the Science Manager and the work to be carried out by the science support unit.

11. (f) *role of SCTB from 2005 onwards.* Currently the SCTB contributes greatly to the scientific advice provided by the SCG and WG II to PrepCon. SCTB meets in July-August each year for about seven working days. Acknowledging that Scientific Committee meetings in the interim period are expected to follow closely the current practices used for SCTB, WG II needs to discuss the nature and extent of SCTB's contribution to the Commission's science processes in 2005 and onwards, and advise PrepCon on the outcomes of the discussions including any financial or resource implications.

Action required from WG II

12. WG II is expected to identify what actions are necessary to enable the Scientific Committee to hold its first meeting in 2005. To this end it should:

- develop a work plan for the Scientific Committee in 2005;
- make recommendations to PrepCon on the nature and extent of that work plan, including, if possible, on the timing and location of the meeting and the process for selection of Chair and vice-chair;
- highlight to PrepCon the implications with respect to the number, timing and location of science-related meetings in 2005; the possible work required from the Commission's Science Support Unit (if it is established); and any special requirements for Members.

- make recommendations on the nature and extent of SCTB's contribution to the Commission's science processes in 2005 and onwards, and highlight any financial or resource implications.

AGENDA ITEM II: SCIENTIFIC COORDINATING GROUP - 2004 AGENDA

Background to the item

13. In 2003, the Scientific Coordinating Group met in accordance with the terms of reference agreed by the Preparatory Conference in its second session (WCPFC/PrepCon/15, Annex V), in Mooloolaba, Australia from 17 to 19 July 2003, immediately following SCTB16. SCG 2 produced *inter alia* stock status statements for the major target species (bigeye, yellowfin, skipjack and South Pacific albacore) (WCPFC/PrepCon/28). WG II later endorsed these summaries at PrepCon V (WCPFC/PrepCon/32). As a result of sustainability concerns in respect of bigeye and yellowfin, PrepCon V requested the Interim Secretariat to prepare a paper on management options, to be delivered to the next session of the Preparatory Conference (WCPFC/PrepCon/34).

14. A process for the provision of advice on the status of the target stocks for 2004 has not been confirmed. SCTB 17 is scheduled to meeting in Majuro, Marshall Island from 9 to 18 August 2004. Given this, a similar operation to 2003 could be employed whereby SCG 3 could meet for 2-3 days immediately following SCTB. SCG 3 has been tentatively scheduled for 19 – 21 August 2004.

15. If there is support for a third meeting of the Scientific Coordinating Group, the agenda could include:

- (a) review of the updated stock status statements for the major target species (bigeye, yellowfin, skipjack and South Pacific albacore), including implications for sustainability;
- (b) discussion on addressing ecosystem and bycatch issues (using, as a basis for discussion, WCPFC/PrepCon/WP.10);
- (c) discussion on the issue of data verification including consideration of Article 6 of Annex I of the UNFSA.

Action required from WG II

16. WG II is expected to discuss the need for a third meeting of the Scientific Coordinating Group. If there is agreement that SCG 3 should take place in 2004, WGII should:

- propose a work plan for SCG 3 in 2004;
- make recommendations to PrepCon on the nature and extent of that work plan, including, if possible, on the timing and location of the meeting and the process for selection of Chair and vice-chair; and
- highlight to PrepCon any financial or resource implications, and any special requirements for Members.

AGENDA ITEM III: ENHANCING DATA COLLECTION IN INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES

Background to the item

17. At PrepCon V, WG.II (WCPFC/PrepCon/32) confirmed the importance of obtaining catch data from Indonesia and Philippines as highlighted in SCG 2 report (WCPFC/PrepCon/28)

and recommended that, in cooperation with Indonesia and the Philippines, the proposal be further developed, and as a high priority that participants in the PrepCon further consider how they might assist this initiative, through services or financial support. As indicated during the PrepCon V discussions, Chinese Taipei has made an initial contribution of USD 20,000 towards financing this initiative (WCPFC/PrepCon/35).

Action required from WG II

18. A revised proposal will be tabled at PrepCon VI for WG II to review. WG II is expected to provide advice to PrepCon on the technical merits of the proposal.

AGENDA ITEM IV: THE PROVISION OF SCIENTIFIC ADVICE IN RELATION TO NORTHERN STOCKS AS RELATED TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE NORTHERN COMMITTEE

Background to the item

19. WG II has previously described the key features of the structures required for the scientific functions of the Commission during the transitional period (3 to 5 years), including the handling of technical material and the provision of scientific advice based on that material (WCPFC/PrepCon/32). This work illustrated some differences in the approach taken by the Scientific Committee for information derived from research contracted by the Commission and Member initiated research. It did not specifically consider the case of handling technical information from the Northern Committee.

Action required from WG II

20. WG II is expected to review the current scientific structure (WCPFC/PrepCon/32) in relation to the Scientific Committee (a) considering scientific information from the Northern Committee and (b) providing scientific advice based on such information to the Commission. WG II should also verify whether the existing scientific structure is adequate for evaluating inputs on science relating to the Northern Committee and report the outcome of its deliberations on this issue to the PrepCon.

AGENDA ITEM V: FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGIES FOR MEETING THE SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS OF DEVELOPING STATES AND TERRITORIES WITH RESPECT TO DATA REQUIREMENTS AND TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES

Background to the item

21. WG II has previously discussed this issue and in WCPFC/PrepCon/32 recommended that in order to address this issue in the longer term, PrepCon should include the following recommendations in its report to the Commission:

- (a) The development of a long term strategy for building fisheries data collection and analytical capacity in developing states and territories ;
- (b) The development within the Commission science and data programmes of the capacity to provide advice and assistance to FFA members in respect of data and other technical areas; and
- (c) The establishment of a broader process of consultation and a programme of cooperation to build FFA member capabilities in areas related to the Convention, including data and other technical aspects.

Action required from WG II

22. The technical nature of the above recommendations is such that the PrepCon/Commission is, in the future, likely to seek further elaboration and advice on addressing this issue. WG II could discuss how it might further contribute to this topic in the future.

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