

Solomon Islands Skipjack and Yellowfin Tuna Purse Seine and Pole-and-line Fishery

2nd Year Surveillance Audit Report

Certification Code: MSC-F-30002

Conformity Assessment Body (CAB)	SCS Global Services
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Fishery client	Tri Marine International (PTE.) Ltd
Assessment type	<i>Annual Surveillance Audit</i>
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2 Glossary

AW	Archipelagic Waters
BMP	Baitfish Management Plan
CAB	Conformity Assessment Body
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CMM	Conservation and Management Measure
DOS.	Digital Observer Services
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
ETP	Endangered, Threatened or Protected species
FAC	Fisheries Advisory Council
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCM	Fisheries Certification Methodology
FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
FSMA	Federated States of Micronesia Agreement
HCR	Harvest Control Rule
HS	Harvest Strategy
ITQ	Individual Transferable Quota
Kg	Kilogram
Lb.	Pound, equivalent to roughly 2.2 kg
LOA	Length Over-All
MFMR	Ministry for Fisheries and Marine Resources
MGA	Main group archipelago
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
MSE	Management Strategy Evaluation
MSY	Maximum Sustainable Yield
NFD	National Fisheries Development (the client)
nm	nautical mile
OFL	Over-Fishing Level
PAE	Party Allowed Effort
PI	Performance Indicator
PNA	Parties to the Nauru Agreement
SC	Scientific Committee
SCS	SCS Global Services
SI	Scoring Issue
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPC	Secretariat to the Pacific Community

SSB	Spawning Stock Biomass
t and mt	metric ton
TAC	Total Allowable Catch
TMDP	Tuna Management Development Plan
UoA	Unit of Assessment
UoC	Unit of Certification
VDS	Vessel Day Scheme
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
WCPO	Western and Central Pacific Ocean
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

3 Executive Summary & Conclusion

This report summarizes the findings from the 2023 second year surveillance audit of the Solomon Islands purse seine and pole-and-line fishery. The fishery was first certified to the MSC requirements in 2021 using the default assessment tree (MSC Fisheries Standard and Guidance v2.0). Following the MSC guidelines for implementation timeframes, the team conducted a surveillance audit in accordance with the process requirements in the MSC Fisheries Certification Process (FCP) v2.3.

The 2023 second year surveillance audit focused on any changes since the first surveillance audit in 2022, monitoring continued compliance with the MSC Principles and Criteria. An expedited audit was also launched concurrent with the first surveillance audit and information and findings from that audit are included in this report.

Progress on Principle 1:

The MSC Fisheries Standard version 3.0, published on October 2022, sets new requirements for harvest control rules (PI 1.2.1 SI a and SI b) and harvest strategies (PI 1.2.2 all scoring issues) for RFMO-managed fisheries (MSC FS v3. SE1.1.1). Tool D, contained in the MSC Fisheries Standard Toolbox v1.1, permits fisheries that are currently certified or under assessment to undertake the early application of Section SE, contingent upon the majority (>50%) of UoCs of certified fisheries targeting the stock agreeing to apply Section SE (MSC Toolbox v1.1 D1.1.1). Under the early application of Section SE, the CABs of overlapping UoAs will collaborate to conduct a one-off meeting and produce a joint single assessment report for each target stock. The majority of overlapping UoCs agreed to the early application of Section SE for the following four stocks: (1) Western Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), (2) WCPO skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*), (3) WCPO bigeye tuna (*T. obesus*) and (4) South Pacific albacore tuna (*T. alalunga*). The UoAs/UoCs for the fishery in this report which includes any of the aforementioned target stocks are included in the early application of Section SE. For a complete list of all UoAs/UoCs included, please refer to the 'MSC Section SE Announcement' webpage for this fishery on the MSC database published on April 13th, 2023. The announcement was uploaded to the MSC database for publication at least 30 days before the one-off meeting was held. As outlined in the 'MSC Section SE Announcement,' stakeholders were invited to attend the information collection part of the one-off meeting, and the assessment teams met with stakeholders. Stakeholder input was limited to PI 1.2.1 scoring issues a and b and PI 1.2.2. Only stakeholders that participated in the one-off meeting or that submitted written information to the teams on Section SE Public Comment Draft Report are eligible to object to the Section SE Final Report findings (when available) via the MSC Disputes Process (MSC Toolbox v1.1 D1.2.7).

Progress on Principle 2:

The fishery has two conditions for Principle 2 related to shark finning and ETP management, particularly intentional sets on cetaceans. The Solomon Islands Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) provided recent observer data for the purse seine fleet showing no shark finning recorded incidents. Observer data showed 12 '6. Live Whale' set codes recorded by observers from 2021-2023. MFMR noted that the observer will record a '6. Live Whale' set code when a whale is seen, regardless of whether it is in the net, outside the net, or at what point in the fishing operations the whale is observed. Given this confusion, the WCPFC's TCC issued advice on improvements to ROP minimum standard data fields for whale sharks and cetaceans.

The team requested that MFMR demonstrate that it performs purse seine observer debriefings by asking the agency to provide us with evidence that officials debriefed an observer who recorded a '6. Live Whale' set code. In response, MFMR submitted evidence of an observer debriefing for a trip when the observer recorded a live whale set. In the debriefing paperwork, MFMR stated that no infractions occurred during the trip. For this reason, the team concluded that Condition 5 progress is on target. For Condition 6 the fishery provided the team with observer data regarding interactions with whales and the WCPFC-TCC led process to improve observer reporting of whale sets is evidence that more accurate information will be available to the assessment team in the future. This evidence supports our conclusion that the fishery's progress towards closing this condition is on target.

Progress on Principle 3:

The fishery has Conditions for Principle 3 that relate to PI 3.1.2 Management system, consultation and roles and responsibilities; PI 3.2.2 Management system decision-making processes; and PI 3.2.3 in relation to effectiveness of the MCS system. All three conditions were opened prior to March 2021 and received a 12-month extension granted under 6: MSC COVID Derogation.

For PIs 3.1.2 and 3.2.2 there has been rapid progress against the condition milestones. MFMR has provided evidence of the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC) meeting and addressing management issues of significance to the UoAs. Meeting agendas and minutes were provided as evidence. As such conditions for PI 3.1.2 and 3.2.2 are now closed.

For PI 3.2.3, MFMR have initiated a range of measures to improve MCS outcomes, noting that several shortcomings in MCS processes and performance were identified in previous audits and were also a driver for the Expedited Audit. The measures initiated include a comprehensive national MCS Plan and associated Strategies; and a commitment to support an independent consultant review of MCS capabilities with a view to improving domestic and international MCS

performance in key areas, including reducing the risks of shark finning. MFMR conducted an internal review of observer de-briefing processes and issued corrective actions.

The expedited audit led to amended milestones for condition 3.2.3 in years 2 and 3 that address the need for evidence to demonstrate that the domestic observer program has the operational independence to ensure the integrity of information gathered for MCS purposes for domestic tuna vessels fishing in archipelagic waters. An external review of the observer program and related MCS function was commissioned by MFMR in 2022 and draft presented to MFMR in June 2023. This draft is under review by MFMR. The condition for 3.2.3 remains open and on-target.

It is SCS' view that the Solomon Islands Skipjack and Yellowfin Tuna Purse Seine and Pole and Line Fishery continues to meet the standards of the MSC and complies with the 'Requirements for Continued Certification.' SCS recommends the continued use of the MSC certificate through to the end of this certificate cycle when conditions are expected to close.

The surveillance audit was carried out in accordance with the default assessment tree under which the fishery was originally certified. Following the MSC guidelines for implementation timeframes, the surveillance was conducted in accordance with the process requirements in FCP v2.3.

4 Report details

4.1 Surveillance Information

Table 1 . Summary of Surveillance Information

1	Fishery name									
	Solomon Islands purse seine and pole and line fishery									
2	Unit(s) of Assessment (UoA)									
	<table border="1"> <tr> <th colspan="2">Unit of Certification/ Unit of Assessment for the purse seine and pole-and-line fisheries</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Stock: WCPO Skipjack, WCPO Yellowfin</td> <td>Geography: Solomon Islands EEZ and Main Group Archipelagic Waters</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Method of Capture: Purse seine (all sets) and pole and line</td> <td>Management: Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR), in addition to the WCPFC and PNA (purse seine VDS).</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Clients: National Fisheries Developments Ltd and Tri Marine Pte Ltd</td> </tr> </table>		Unit of Certification/ Unit of Assessment for the purse seine and pole-and-line fisheries		Stock: WCPO Skipjack, WCPO Yellowfin	Geography: Solomon Islands EEZ and Main Group Archipelagic Waters	Method of Capture: Purse seine (all sets) and pole and line	Management: Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR), in addition to the WCPFC and PNA (purse seine VDS).		Clients: National Fisheries Developments Ltd and Tri Marine Pte Ltd
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Method of Capture: Purse seine (all sets) and pole and line	Management: Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR), in addition to the WCPFC and PNA (purse seine VDS).									
	Clients: National Fisheries Developments Ltd and Tri Marine Pte Ltd									
3	Date certified	Date of expiry								
	June 9, 2021	June 8, 2026								
4	Surveillance level and type									
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicate surveillance level and type, e.g. surveillance audit, expedited audit, surveillance audit with early application of Section SE, etc. - Indicate surveillance level as per FCP v2.3 7.29.2 (e.g. surveillance level 4). - If surveillance activity has changed from what was indicated in the surveillance program in the PCDR or a previous surveillance report, also note that this is the case. 									
	Default Level 6 – Onsite									
5	Surveillance number									
	1st Surveillance									
	2nd Surveillance	X								
	3rd Surveillance									
	4th Surveillance									
	Other (Expedited, etc.)									

6	Proposed team leader
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide name of team leader and areas that they are responsible for. Explain how they meet the competency criteria (FCP v2.3 7.29.14.1-4). If relevant, indicate whether team leader was on-site or off-site.
	<p>Alexander (Sandy) Morison, Principle 1</p> <p>Mr. Morison is a consultant specializing in fisheries and aquatic sciences. He has over 30 years' experience in fishery science and assessment at state, national and international levels and has held senior research positions for state and national organizations in Australia. He is currently chair of the Ecologically Related Species Working Group of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) and has been engaged in the Kobe process for harmonisation of measures across the tuna RFMOs. Mr. Morison has considerable experience with issues of tuna and other pelagic species through various positions in addition to his current role with CCSBT. He was Australia's representative on the Science Working Group during the establishment of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation and was the inaugural chair of the Jack Mackerel Working Group during that time. He has particular expertise with fish age and growth and has been involved in the development and implementation of harvest strategies for several fisheries. Mr. Morison has participated as part of a team undertaking MSC pre-assessments for several fisheries and is also trained as a lead auditor for MSC assessments.</p> <p>Alexander (Sandy) Morison's experience satisfies the MSC requirements for a Team Member as described in PC2 (FCP v2.3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ With relevant degree (Honours Degree in Zoology) and over 5 years of research experience in management or research experience in a marine conservation biology, fisheries, natural resources or environmental management position. ✓ Has passed the MSC compulsory training modules for Team Members within the last 5 years (2019). ✓ Has passed new online training modules on modifications to the MSC Fisheries Standard before undertaking assessments using these modifications such as enhanced bivalves, salmon and other modifications that may be developed in the future (2019). ✓ Affirms they have no conflict of interest in conducting this assessment. <p>Attend the site visit in person</p>
7	Proposed team members <i>[remove if not applicable]</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If more than one auditor, also list additional auditors and explain how they meet competency criteria (FCP v2.3 7.29.14.1-4). If relevant, indicate which auditors were on-site and which are off-site.

Andrew Bystrom, Principle 2

Mr. Bystrom has 16 years of industrial and small-scale fisheries management and sustainable development experience throughout the Americas and portions of Asia. He is a lead MSC and Fair Trade Capture Fisheries Standard auditor. His 10 Mexican fishery assessments include various lobster, shrimp, and small pelagic fisheries. In addition to this work, he has experience with high seas tuna longline and purse seine assessments and technical oversight. He is also involved with Fishery Improvement Projects and sits on the Technical Oversight Committee for FisheryProgress.org. His private consultations, prior to working with SCS, include evaluating the Walton Family Foundation's grant making impacts on 20 Mexican fisheries, as well as work with the Costa Rican government's Fisheries and Aquaculture Institute, the Costa Rican Environmental Ministry, the Environmental Ministry of Ecuador, the University of Costa Rica, and the United National Development Program on artisanal, long-line, and trawl fisheries and their impacts in Pacific and Caribbean territorial waters and on the high seas. He has also consulted for the High Seas Alliance and its work to design a new implementing agreement for high seas management strategies in the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Mr. Bystrom's experience satisfies the MSC requirements for a Team Leader as described in PC2 (FCP v2.3):

- ✓ Completed training meeting requirements in Table 1 of GCRV2.4, as evidenced by the certificate of passing auditor training for the ISO course 19011
- ✓ Holds a Masters in natural resource management) and has over 10 years of experience in the fisheries sector related to research, development, and stakeholder management and facilitation
- ✓ Completed the latest MSC training modules applicable to this assessment within the past five years (V2.3 Team Leader MSC modules in February 2020)
- ✓ Has undertaken several MSC fishery assessment and surveillance audits as a team leader and principle 2 expert: Surveillance for the southern Gulf of California Thread Herring Fishery in Sinaloa & Nayarit Mexico, the Small Pelagics fishery in Sonora, Gulf of California, the Baja Mexico Red Rock Lobster fishery, the Mexican Pacific coast Industrial Shrimp fishery, the Ocean Family tuna longline fishery, the Tri Marine Pacific Ocean tuna longline fishery
- ✓ Has demonstrated experience in applying different types of interviewing and facilitation techniques, as verified by SCS audit witness records and previous audit reports
- ✓ Is competent in the MSC Standard and current Certification Requirements, auditing techniques, and communication and stakeholder facilitation techniques, as verified by the completion of ISO 19011 auditor training

- ✓ Attended the site visit in person

Dr. Michael Harte, Principle 3

Dr Michael Harte is a Professor in the College of Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences at Oregon State University in the USA, having trained in physical geography and economics in New Zealand and Canada. He is recognized internationally as a fisheries and marine policy adviser, researcher, educator and program leader. He has held senior positions in the private, public, academic and NGO sectors in Australia, the US, the Falkland Islands, Canada and New Zealand.

Dr Harte has extensive policy and economic analysis experience working with commercial and small-scale fisheries, ecosystem-based fisheries management, bio-economic analysis of fisheries, climate impacts on fisheries, eco-labelling, cost recovery and resource rents in fisheries, and the development of policies and regulations associated with the monitoring, control and surveillance of fisheries, as well as work on seafood markets and traceability. His work spans both academic and practical fishery management domains.

Dr. Harte has served as Principle 3 Team member on tuna MSC fishery tuna assessments managed under WCPFC and IATTC RFMOs. He offers extensive experience assessing tuna fisheries and the complex management and governance of high-seas fisheries in accordance with the MSC Standard and Fishery Certification Process.

Dr. Michael Harte's experience satisfies the MSC requirements for a Team Member as described in PC2 (FCP v2.3):

- ✓ With relevant degree a PhD in Geography from University of Victoria, and over 5 years of research experience in management or research experience in a marine conservation biology, fisheries, and natural resources.
- ✓ Has passed the MSC compulsory training modules for Team Members (FCP v2.3 within the last 5 years (September 2020).
- ✓ Affirms he has no conflict of interest in conducting this assessment.
- ✓ Attended the site visit remotely

The team collectively meets at least three of the MSC Table PC3 team qualification and competency criteria:

- ✓ Mr. Morison has over 25 years' experience with a wide variety of fishery assessment models including the types of integrated assessments that are used for the key tuna species in the WCPFC. This experience has been gained by being a member of and chairing the scientific

	<p>groups responsible for selecting assessment methods, critically reviewing the outputs of such models and providing management advice based on those outputs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mr. Morison has decades of experience working with the biology and population dynamics of tuna species and other species with similar biology: In his career as a fisheries scientist, including as a senior scientist on State, National and International scientific groups, Mr. Morison has gained experience with a broad range of fisheries including invertebrate, chondrichthyan and teleost fisheries; commercial and recreational fisheries; freshwater, estuarine and marine fisheries; and fisheries operating in tropical, temperate and polar environments. The includes tuna and other pelagic fisheries. ✓ Andy Bystrom meets the qualifications for ‘Fishing impacts on aquatic ecosystems’ with over 6 years of experience in indicator based fisheries research, catch data collection and analysis, and impact assessment of fisheries on aquatic ecosystems including: i. Bycatch. ii. Endangered, threatened, or protected (ETP) species. iii. Gear types. iv. Ecosystem interactions, as evidenced by the following peer reviewed publications: ✓ Dr. Harte meets the qualifications for ‘Fishery management and operations ‘with 3 years’ or more experience as a practising fishery manager and/or fishery/policy analyst/consultant. As evidenced by Prof. Harte’s efforts on the Science and Statistical Committee of the US Pacific Fisheries Management Council since 2016. He serves on the Social and Economics, Highly Migratory Species, Ecosystem, am Salmon subcommittee where he reviews a wide range of technical analysis that is provided to the US Pacific Fisheries Management Council. He has provided Fisheries Advise since 1998 working for Industry, Govt and academia. ✓ Dr. Harte has current knowledge of the tuna fishery context as evidenced by several years of experience working on MSC pre-assessments in the region, and other past projects in the WCPO on fisheries improvement projects.
8	Audit/review time and location
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Time and dates of surveillance activities. Location activities will be carried out (if off site or review of new information, this could be from CAB/auditor office), including if remote.</i>
	The site visit took place in Honiara, Solomon Islands on 31 July and 1 August 2023.
9	Assessment and review activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>What was assessed/reviewed during the audit. (FCP v2.3 7.29.15-18)</i> - <i>If a decision was made to proceed with the early application of Section SE for Principle 1 target stocks that are part of the UoA, the CAB shall specify so here.</i> - Refer to activities related to evaluating progress against conditions (Not applicable for expedited audits). - Identify if PISG rescoring is due to take place to close a condition whose deadline is the upcoming surveillance audit (Not applicable for expedited audits).

The surveillance audit will be conducted in accordance with MSC FCP v2.3 v2.3 7.29.15-18 and included a review of updated documentation on the fishery and interviews with key management and stakeholders, focusing on:

- i. *Changes to the fishery and its management; including:*
- ii. *Any potential or actual changes in management systems.*
- iii. *Any changes or additions/deletions to regulations.*
- iv. *Any personnel changes in science, management or industry and their impact on the management of the fishery.*
- v. *Any potential changes to the scientific base of information, including stock assessments.*
- vi. *Any changes affecting traceability*
- vii. *Performance in relation to any relevant conditions of certification;*
- viii. *Any developments or changes within the fishery which impact traceability and the ability to segregate MSC from non-MSC products; and*
- ix. *d. Any other significant changes in the fishery.*

4.2 Version details

Table 2. Document/Assessment Tree	Version number/Type
MSC Fisheries Certification Process	Version 2.3
MSC Fisheries Standard	Version 2.01
Assessment tree	Modified version of the default assessment tree
MSC General Certification Requirements	Version 2.5
MSC Surveillance Reporting Template	Version 2.2

4.3 Update on the fishery

4.3.1 UoA and UoC vessel list

The following vessels are in the purse seine UoA/UoC: Solomon Opal, Solomon Emerald, Solomon Jade, Solomon Ruby, Solomon Pearl.

The following vessels are in the pole and line UoA/UoC: Solomon Fisher, Solomon Hunter, Soltai 101, Soltai 105.

4.3.1.1 Updates to the scientific base of information, including stock assessments

Skipjack tuna

Following the announcement of the early application of Section SE of the new standard to all certified WCPFC tuna stocks, the requirements for the evaluation of progress against conditions milestones (FCP v3.0/v2.3 7.29.15 and 7.29.16/FCP v2.2 7.28.15 and 7.28.16) are no longer applicable for skipjack tuna and have been superseded by the requirements detailed in Section SE. There is therefore no requirement the CAB to seek the views of the client on performance in relation to relevant conditions, to evaluate progress and performance against conditions, or to apply a suspension if any condition is behind target or is not closed by its deadline.

Yellowfin tuna

Following the announcement of the early application of Section SE of the new standard to all certified WCPFC tuna stocks, the requirements for the evaluation of progress against conditions milestones (FCP v3.0/v2.3 7.29.15 and 7.29.16/FCP v2.2 7.28.15 and 7.28.16) are no longer applicable for yellowfin tuna and have been superseded by the requirements detailed in Section SE. There is therefore no requirement the CAB to seek the views of the client on performance in relation to relevant conditions, to evaluate progress and performance against conditions, or to apply a suspension if any condition is behind target or is not closed by its deadline.

4.3.2 Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and Catch Data

Table 3. Catch data in metric tons for yellowfin

UoC Catch Yellowfin – Purse Seine	Year	2022	Amount	6,894
UoC Catch Yellowfin – Pole & Line	Year	2022	Amount	54

Table 4. Catch data in metric tons for skipjack

UoC Catch Skipjack – Purse Seine	Year	2022	Amount	15,267
UoC Catch Skipjack – Pole & Line	Year	2022	Amount	1,473

4.3.3 Updates relating to Principle 2

On-board Observer Program, Port Program, Logbooks: Coverage & Sampling

The purse seine observer program produced catch information for 2021-2023. This information was submitted by MFMR to SPC. SPC, in turn, prepared it for the assessment team.

All offloadings occur in Noro and are witnessed by compliance officers. Prior to in-port offloadings MFMR receives Discharge Declarations containing a breakdown of the catch. When the vessel is in port officers review the captain's logsheet records and compare them to the Discharge Declaration. Exact weights at offloading are checked and compared to the documented amounts. VMS records are also reviewed by officers. Violations are recorded and if needed the vessel is immediately detained and a detention letter is issued by MFMR to the captain. MFMR officers commented to the assessment team that purse seine vessel observer placements and inspections continued without interruption throughout the pandemic.

Observer and Best Practices Training

Evidence was given to the team of UoC use of National Fisheries Developments' (NFD) net setting shark discard checklist for deck and wet deck during each set as part of NFD's Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for shark management onboard purse seine vessels. The team also reviewed how the SOPs are incorporated into a fishing vessel compliance checklist that NFD completes before vessel departure. Shark finning educational material includes a fact sheet that crew have access to and clearly displayed no shark finning signs on the vessels.

MFMR confirmed to the assessment team that the agency continues to apply the observer debriefing process corrective actions identified during its 2022 internal review. MFMR commented to the assessment team that the agency conducts a general briefing for UoC observers before their deployment. When an observer returns to port MFMR conducts a pre-debriefing or initial debriefing. This involves an initial check of the observer's data by the debriefer at headquarters in Honiara. After this the observer has 7-14 days to submit their full report. Two to three days later MFMR conducts a full debriefing at which time the agency reviews the observer's complete data set.

To improve the accuracy of the information observers record regarding whale shark and cetacean sets, the TCC is reviewing the minimum data fields associated with observer reports (Observer Trip Monitoring Summary) and making updates to those data fields so that violations or non-violations can be more clearly recorded and therefore identified. The proposed improvements are a result of the ambiguity that the current observer reporting guidelines create as it is not

clear if a '6. Live Whale' set code recorded by an observer constitutes an intentional interaction with a cetacean or whale shark by the fishing vessel.

More specific to the improvement process, the WCPFC's TCC issued advice on improvements to ROP minimum standard data fields (section 5.5 a of the TCC's 18th regular session September 2022), the committee recommended the following:

38. TCC18 recommended that the IWG-ROP, once it is reactivated, prioritize work on issues such as a solution to identifying interactions with whale sharks and cetaceans, and on the inclusion of ROP data fields that were identified in the TCC Workplan 2022-2024 project specific task (j), and to identify any CMM that should also be prioritized in this work [TCC, 2022].

The TCC also produced a supporting paper for the potential improvements to the ROP minimum standard data fields for impacts of fishing on whale sharks and cetaceans (WCPFC-TCC18-2022-17).

Bycatch Management Program

Digital Observer Services, an independent EM service provider that specializes in the processing and analysis of fishing activity video recordings (according to the Company), reviewed EM data from 86 UoC purse seine sets (Solomon Jade, Solomon Opal, Solomon Ruby, Solomon Pearl) resulting in 544 interactions with sharks and mantas species being detected. No instances of shark finning were detected by the company and no species interactions were in violation of the vessels' fishing permit conditions.

4.3.4 Changes to Management Systems

The WCPFC is the RFMO responsible for tuna management in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. The WCPFC was established in 2004 by the Convention for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. The Solomon Islands is one of 26 member nations of the Commission and supports its obligations via domestic legislation implemented by the Fisheries Management Act 2015 and the Tuna Management and Development Plan 2015.

This overarching management structure remains unchanged from the full assessment. There are some updates and changes that have occurred within each of these management components, which are summarized in this background.

Table 5. Updates to CMMs Implemented in the WCPFC in 2019, 202 and 20231. (From WCPFC website, to date July 2023).

CMM 2018-03	Conservation and Management Measure to mitigate the impact of fishing for highly migratory fish stocks on seabirds
CMM 2018-04	Conservation and Management Measure of Sea Turtles
CMM 2018-05	Conservation and Management Measure for the Regional Observer Programme
CMM 2019-01	Conservation and Management Measure for Cooperating Non-Members
CMM 2019-04	Conservation and Management Measure for Sharks
CMM 2019-07	Conservation and Management Measure to Establish a List of Vessels Presumed to have carried out Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing activities in the WCPO
CMM 2021-01	Conservation and Management Measure for bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack tuna in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean
CMM 2021-02	Conservation and Management Measure for Pacific Bluefin Tuna
CMM 2021-03	Conservation and Management Measure on the Compliance Monitoring Scheme
CMM 2021-04	Conservation and Management Measure for Charter Notification Scheme
CMM 2022-01	Conservation and Management Measure on a Management Procedure for WCPO Skipjack Tuna
CMM 2022-02	Conservation and Management Measure for North Pacific Swordfish
CMM 2022-03	Conservation and Management Measure on Establishing a Harvest Strategy for key fisheries and stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean
CMM 2023-04	Conservation and Management Measure for Sharks

4.3.5 WCPFC

New Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) implemented since 2021 by the WCPFC are listed in Table 5. The focus for this review are CMM 2022-01, CMM 2022-03 and CMM 2022-04, CMM 2022-02 does not relate to purse seine or pole and line fishing and is not significant in relation to the area of operation of the UoA.

CMM 2022-01 Conservation and Management Measure on a Management Procedure for WCPO Skipjack Tuna

CMM 2022-01 replaces CMM 2015-06 (2016 – 2023) and establishes an interim Skipjack tuna management procedure to ensure that:

- the spawning potential depletion¹ ratio of skipjack tuna is maintained on average at a level consistent with the target reference point; and

- the spawning potential depletion ratio of skipjack tuna is maintained above the limit reference point with a risk of the limit reference point being breached no greater than 20 percent.

It sets two Reference Points: (1) A target reference point and (2) limit reference point. A

It also set out in the CMM is a Management Plan that includes:

- A Harvest Control Rule.
- The Estimation Model.
- Data Requirements and the Monitoring Strategy.
- A procedure for Exceptional Circumstances.
- Provisions for Special Circumstances.

CMM 2022-03 Conservation and Management Measure on Establishing a Harvest Strategy for key fisheries and stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean

CMM 2022-03 replaces CMM 2014-06 and commits the Commission to implement a harvest strategy approach for each of the key fisheries or stocks under the purview of the Commission and sets out a process for doing this. Each harvest strategy will: have the following elements:

- Defined operational objectives, including timeframes, for the fishery or stock ('management objectives').
- Target and limit reference points for each stock ('reference points').
- Acceptable levels of risk of not breaching limit reference points ('acceptable levels of risk').
- A monitoring strategy using best available information to assess performance against reference points ('monitoring strategy').
- Decision rules that aim to achieve the target reference point and aim to avoid the limit reference point ('harvest control rules'), and
- An evaluation of the performance of the proposed harvest control rules against management objectives, including risk assessment ('management strategy evaluation').

CMM 2022-04 Conservation and Management Measure for Sharks

CMM 2022-04 updates and replaces CMM 2019-04 and requires the application of the precautionary approach and an ecosystem approach to fisheries management, to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of sharks. Among its provision it:

- Requires the full utilization of sharks with fins naturally attached and prohibits finning. It prohibits CCM flagged vessels from retaining or landing oceanic whitetip or silky sharks.
- Prohibits the setting of purse seine on a school of tuna associated with a whale shark.
- Requires comprehensive and record keeping demonstrating compliance with the CMM.

4.3.6 PNA

PNA manages fishing in the waters of its Members via an effort-based system using Total Allowable Effort (TAE), implemented through its Vessel Day Scheme (VDS). The VDS is unchanged from the previous audit, so this an update of the days allocated and used. This TAE is distributed among its members as a Party Allowable Effort (PAE). A summary of the total allocated and used fishing days for 2019-2021 (Table 6) shows that, although purse seine fishing effort has been increasing in recent years, it has remained less than the TAE days available and relatively constant. The effort has also remained less than the effort levels in 2010 which have been selected as the upper limit on the TAE.

Table 6. Purse seine effort (log sheet days) in PNA EEZ and the allocated TAE (including Tokelau) in 2019-2021 (source: Blyth-Skryme and McLoughlin, 2022, data from PNAO, July 2022, MFMR pers comm).

Metric	2019	2020	2021	2022
Effort days (EEZ)	38,291	39,412	40,552	32,591
TAE days (EEZ)	45,034	45,035	45,035	45,033
% TAE used	85%	88%	90%	NA72%

4.3.7 National Management

Fishing in PNA Party waters is governed by PNA management measures and subject to the measures outlined above. Arrangements for the MGA are set by the Solomon Islands Government.

Domestic management arrangements are set consistent with the Fisheries Management Act 2015, the Fisheries Management Regulations 2017, the Tuna Management and Development Plan 2015 and license conditions. There have been no changes to the legislation, the Tuna Management and Development Plan or license conditions since the previous audit. A new Tuna

Management and Development Plan (2020-2023) was released in 2020 which outlines the framework for management and future developments of Solomon Islands fisheries (MFMR, 2020).

The Tuna Management and Development Plan sets the management arrangements for fishing in the MGA. It provides 1000 PS days per annum for purse seine fishing. These are large scale PS days, that is vessels 50-70m in length. For vessels <50m this equates to 0.5 of a large-scale vessel day. The Plan also establishes a limit for pole and line vessel days. The P&L VDS established for the MGA provides a 400 PS day limit with a pole and line day equal to 0.25 of a large scale PS day. There is no link between PS fishing days and pole and line days and no transferability between the sectors.

These arrangements were developed with input from SPC and established in the Tuna Management and Development Plan. They have not changed since the last audit. Information supplied by Tri Marine using catch and effort data supplied to SPC for NFD's small PS and P&L vessels indicates that fishing effort in recent years is well below the effort limits established in the Plan.

As part of the review of management arrangements, additional information on consultation and decision making was examined. This identified a number of deficiencies that were detected in the third-year surveillance audit of initial assessment.

Consultation:

The Solomon Islands management system has consultative processes built into the formulation of fisheries management plans and interaction with stakeholders via the Fisheries Advisory Council and the Tuna Industry Association of the Solomon Islands (TIASI). The requirements for fisheries management plans are spelled out in sections 17 and 18 of the Act and in the Second Schedule to the Act which provides guidance on content and processes.

In relation to consultation and the processes to seek and accept relevant information, the Second Schedule requires that: "The Director in the preparation of national, provincial and community fisheries management plans shall ensure consultation with relevant stakeholders in the development of each Plan."

The Tuna Management and Development Plan 2015 (TMDP) states:

"It is recognized that all tuna resource stakeholders have a legitimate interest in the Plan. The formulation of the Plan includes consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including fishing companies, fishermen, other national government ministries and NGOs. The process should have

the effect of making stakeholders more aware of how the management of the nation's fish resources is conducted and so more readily comply with management provisions."

This TMDP also maintains a strong focus on stakeholder consultation to support decision making. The Solomon Islands MFMR has also recently developed their formal Plan for Improving National Consultation and Decision-Making Processes. This describes agreed processes by which stakeholder information relevant to management decision making is obtained, considered and used by decision makers. This includes their responsibilities in relation to informing stakeholders of subsequent decisions, or reasons for not accepting stakeholder advice. The Plan covers activities and processes for the FAC, the TMDP, and the operation of the Tuna Industry Association of the Solomon Islands (TIASI) as the peak tuna industry body.

The Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC) is the key higher level consultative body established under the SI Fisheries Act and includes a range of stakeholders: coastal and offshore fishing industry, fishing communities, Provincial Governments, NGO with an interest in fisheries, the FFA, and ex officio representatives from the Attorney-General's Chambers, the Ministry for the Environment, the Ministry for Finance, the Ministry for Mines, Minerals and Energy and the Ministry for Police and Maritime Enforcement.

The arrangements spelled out in the Fisheries Management Act 2015, the Tuna Management and Development Plans and the recently introduced consultation plan all provide the opportunity for stakeholder input to regional (PNA and WCPFC) management decisions, and also provide a system which enables relevant local knowledge to be introduced into the management system. Whilst there has been a lengthy delay to finalization of the recently revised FAC, the MFMR Plan for improving national consultation and decision making processes previously noted that the new FAC is to be functional by 31 December 2020. In the first-year surveillance audit, the FAC had not yet met. This delay can be attributed to COVID restrictions preventing members from meeting in person and limited internet connectivity in remote regions of the Solomon Islands. The FAC has since convened and met twice prior to the second year surveillance audit.

The TIASI continues to engage with MFMR, and there have also been more recent consultations with TIASI in relation to development and implementation of the revised MFMR Tuna Management and Development Plan.

Decision making

At the Solomon Islands level, the Fisheries Management Act 2015 in addition to requiring the implementation of WCPFC CMMs, specifically requires under Section 5 (c) that

“[...] management measures shall be based on the best scientific evidence available to maintain or restore stocks at levels capable of producing sustainable yield, as qualified by relevant environmental and economic factors including fishing patterns, the interdependence of stocks and relevant international standards;”

and in 5 (h)

“[...] complete and accurate data and information concerning fishing activities and fisheries resources shall be collected and, as appropriate, shared in a timely manner;”

This combined with consultative arrangements with stakeholders, in particular before PNA and WCPFC meetings, provides the basis for effective decision-making processes that respond to serious and other important issues in a timely and adaptive manner while taking account of the wider implications of these decisions.

Arrangements at the domestic level are managed via the re-convened FAC. It has met twice and available records demonstrate a breadth of issues to be considered, yet it is too soon to determine the influence of the FAC on domestic fisheries management decisions

Regular bilateral meetings occur between MFMR and the five companies operating in the Solomon Islands (they meet annually to discuss management arrangements and their annual MoU's and license conditions), and also between MFMR and the TIASI. There is evidence to demonstrate that these meetings do address relevant research, monitoring, evaluation, some evidence that and consultation occurs in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner.

Accountability

At the Solomon Islands level, the Fisheries Management Act 2015 and the Tuna Management and Development Plan both provide information on objectives, management strategies and performance measures for the fishery. The Act sets the broad framework and overarching objectives and management structure. The Plan provides detailed information on the fishery and the goals and strategies to achieve the objectives set for the life of the Plan. The Plan defines these activities and the means to measure performance via objectively verifiable indicators. The

Plan also encourages a stable and logical policy environment. The Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC), established under the Act, has overarching responsibility for reviewing and monitoring elements of the Plan. Monitoring and reporting on the operations of the TMDP is to be done via MFMR's corporate reporting process, including as part of the implementation of the agencies annual operational plan.

The TMDP states that "Information on fishery performance and management action is available on request, and explanations are provided to the Tuna Industry Association of the Solomon Islands (TIASI) for any actions or lack of action associated with findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring evaluation and review activity". The companies operating in the UoA meet annually with MFMR to discuss and agree on license conditions, and they also meet frequently to discuss general fishery matters and update MFMR on the operations of fishing companies. In addition, the TIASI meets with MFMR as an industry body. Limited information is available on the discussions and outcomes from these meetings. The information available suggests there may be some discussion on the performance of the fishery at these meetings although the extent to which this information is available is unclear.

National Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS) Systems:

The Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS) Systems are crucial to ensure that regulations in the fishery are implemented effectively and that the system can demonstrate an ability to enforce relevant management measures, strategies and/or rules. Observer data is a primary information source of scientific data and may assist in detecting potential infractions. MFMR has established an investigation process for MCS related incidences detected by observers or other information sources. Following the conclusion of a fishing trip there is a de-briefing process to review the data collected by observers. If incidents are raised in observer reports, the mechanisms in place are expected to trigger further investigation to judge the validity of this information and whether compliance actions are needed.

In response to an earlier MCS related Condition, MFMR has developed and implemented a new (March 2022) MCS Strategy. This strategy is comprehensive and includes specific initiatives to improve performance against a range of MSC Performance Indicators and measures, including for MCS performance. As part of the condition for 3.2.3, MFMR conducted an internal review of observer de-briefing processes. MFMR identified and issued corrective actions to reduce delays in debriefings and ensure timely notification of possible infringements raised by observers/confirmed in debriefings to the Compliance Division. In 2022- 2023 MFMR commissioned an external review of its MCS systems. This was undertaken by MRAG Asia-Pacific. At the time of the second surveillance audit, MFMR had received a draft report from the

consultant, yet the draft report has not been made available by MFMR. This is anticipated to occur before the third surveillance audit.

Changes to Personnel

No changes to personnel were reported that were significant for the certification.

4.3.8 Changes Affecting Traceability

No changes were detected during this audit.

5 Surveillance Results

5.1 Summary overview

5.1.1 Summary of conditions update

Table 7. Summary of conditions (Select Conditions extended by MSC Covid Derogation)

Co nd. #	Condition	PI	Deadline	Status	PI orig. score	PI rev. score
1	By the first re-assessment surveillance audit (Extended to June 2023), the fishery client shall demonstrate that harvest strategy is responsive to the state of the stock and the elements of the harvest strategy work together towards achieving management objectives reflected in the target and limit reference points.	1.2.1 Skipjack	1 st surv. (Extended to June 2023)	On hold covered under Section SE	70	-
2	By the first re-assessment surveillance audit (Extended to June 2023), the fishery client shall demonstrate that well defined harvest control rules are in place that are consistent with the harvest strategy and ensure that the exploitation rate is reduced as limit reference points are approached; that the selection of the harvest control rules takes into account the main uncertainties; and that available evidence indicates that the tools in use are appropriate and effective in achieving the exploitation levels required under the harvest control rules.	1.2.2 Skipjack	1 st surv. (Extended to June 2023)	On hold covered under Section SE	60	-
3	By the first re-assessment surveillance audit (Extended to June 2023), the fishery client shall demonstrate that harvest strategy is responsive to the state of the stock and the elements of the harvest strategy work together towards achieving management objectives reflected in the target and limit reference points.	1.2.1 Yellowfin	1 st surv. (Extended to June 2023)	On hold covered under Section SE	70	-
4	By the first re-assessment surveillance audit (Extended to June 2023), the fishery client shall demonstrate that well defined harvest control rules are in place that are consistent with the harvest strategy and ensure that the exploitation rate is reduced as limit reference points are approached; that the selection of the harvest control rules takes into account the main uncertainties; and that available evidence indicates that the tools in use are	1.2.2 Yellowfin	1 st surv. (Extended to June 2023)	On hold covered under Section SE	60	-

	appropriate and effective in achieving the exploitation levels required under the harvest control rules.					
5	By the fourth surveillance audit, the fishery must demonstrate that it is highly likely shark finning is not taking place.	PI 2.2.2d Shark finning	4th surv. (2025)	On target	75	-
6	By the fourth surveillance audit, the fishery must demonstrate there is some evidence that the measures/strategy is being implemented successfully for cetaceans.	PI 2.3.2 d ETP Management	4th surv. (2025)	On target	75	-
7	By the third second audit of the reassessment, provide evidence that the management system includes consultation processes that regularly seek and accept relevant information from a range of sources, including local knowledge. Additionally, the national management system demonstrates consideration of the information obtained.	PI 3.1.2 Management system	Second surv. (2023)	Closed	75	90
8	SI b) By the third second surveillance audit of the reassessment, provide evidence that decision- making processes respond to serious and other important issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions. SI d) By the third second surveillance audit of the reassessment, provide evidence that Information on the fishery's performance and management action is available on request, and explanations are provided for any actions or lack of action associated with findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring, evaluation and review activity.	PI 3.2.2 Decision making	Second surv. (2023)	Closed	70	80
9	By the fourth third surveillance audit, the fishery client shall provide evidence that the monitoring, control and surveillance system implemented in the fishery has demonstrated an ability to enforce relevant management measures, strategies and/or rules.	PI 3.2.3a Monitoring, Control, Surveillance	3 rd Surv. (2024)	On target	75	-

5.2 Conditions

All rationales in the condition tables from previous years, including references to sections and tables, are found in the Public Certification Report or previous surveillance reports available on the assessment's MSC Track a Fishery webpage:

<https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/solomon-islands-skipjack-and-yellowfin-tuna-purse-seine-and-pole-and-line/@@assessments>

5.2.1 Progress against conditions

Condition 5 PI 2.2.2 Shark finning

Performance Indicator	PI 2.2.2 d. It is highly likely that shark finning is not taking place.	
Score	75	
Justification	Given the high level of coverage by both the observer program and dockside monitoring, the comprehensive procedures established by the ROP, the regulations in place in the Solomon Islands and the lack of any verified incident of shark finning, the assessment team concluded that it is likely that shark finning is not taking place, meeting the SG60. However, a timely debriefing process is an important aspect of the existing arrangements to prompt further investigation into any potential shark finning incidences flagged in observer reports. On account of the evidence of a few cases where there was a delay in debriefing process/investigation, it cannot be concluded that it is highly likely that shark finning is not taking place. The SG80 is not met.	
Condition	By the fourth surveillance audit, the fishery must demonstrate that it is highly likely sharkfinning is not taking place.	
Condition start	Re-assessment	
Condition deadline	4 th surveillance audit	
Verification with other entities	MFMR will be needed to close this condition. Evidence is provided via 'Letter of Support' at the end of this section	
Milestone Year 1	<p>1st Surveillance (2022): By the first-year surveillance audit, support MFMR in initial steps to conduct a review of the debriefing processes for the purse seine observer program. The review should focus specifically on the current coverage rate and timeliness of debriefing processes. This review may be linked to actions undertaken in Condition #8. Obtain and provide recent observer data to the assessment team.</p> <p>The fishery may provide the assessment team with plans/results of any other form of external validation from the fishery which can be used to demonstrate that it is highly likely shark finning is not taking place.</p> <p>Expected score: 75</p>	
Client Action Plan	Activities:	Refer to Condition # 9 (3.2.3a)
	Expected outcome:	
	Responsible Party/ies: MFMR, with support as required from TMI/NFD	
Milestone Year 2	<p>2nd Surveillance (2023): By the second surveillance audit, provide results on the review of the status of the observer debriefing process and develop a plan (if necessary) to improve the coverage/timeliness of the debriefing process. This milestone may be linked to efforts undertaken in Condition #8. Obtain/provide recent observer data to the assessment team. Provide results of additional forms of external validation, if available.</p>	
	Expected score: 75	
Client Action Plan	Activities:	Refer to Condition # 9 (3.2.3a)
	Expected outcome:	
	Responsible Party/ies: MFMR, with support as required from TMI/NFD	
	<p>3rd Surveillance (2024): By the third surveillance audit, if gaps or issues were identified in the</p>	

Milestone Year 3	second surveillance audit, determined necessary, provide evidence of improved coverage/timeliness of the observer debriefing process. This milestone may be linked to efforts undertaken in Condition #8. Obtain/provide recent observer data to the assessment team. Provide results of additional forms of external validation, if available. Expected score: 75	
Client Action Plan	Activities:	Refer to Condition # 9 (3.2.3a) Responsible Party/ies: MFMR, with support as required from TMI/NFD
	Expected outcome:	
Milestone Year 4	4th Surveillance (2025): By the fourth surveillance audit, provide evidence that demonstrates that it is highly likely shark finning is not taking place. Expected score: 80	
Client Action Plan	Activities:	Refer to Condition # 9 (3.2.3a) Responsible Party/ies: MFMR, with support as required from TMI/NFD
	Expected outcome:	
Progress on Condition (year 1)	<p>MFMR provided observer data for UoC vessels from 2020 to 2022. The Solomon Islands continued to deploy observers at 100% coverage levels on domestic purse seine vessels since April 2020, despite the WCPFC suspension of 100% observer coverage requirements for purse-seine vessels. There were no incidents of shark finning (i.e., DFR codes) reported in the observer data. The 100% coverage of vessel inspections at ports in the Solomon Islands remained in effect during this period.</p> <p>Tri Marine have implemented a shark discard checklist where vessels record the point of discard of sharks (e.g., brailing) and the number discarded. The checklist also details the safe handling procedures required at each stage. All crew members across UoA vessels have reviewed and signed the Tri Marine’s policy against shark finning and prohibition of shark finning under international and national laws. Any new vessel member would be required to undergo the same training and documentation review regarding shark finning. Tri Marine has also installed CCTV cameras on all domestic purse seine vessels covered under the UoC to monitor onboard activity, including ETP interactions. This is not being used by MFMR for any management needs at the moment but will be made available upon request.</p> <p>This issue was a subject of the expedited audit. Information gained from the site visit and conversations with agencies yielded more insight into the processes in place in the fishery to detect shark finning. This includes a pre-notification process, a review mechanism for observers and debriefers across ROP national programs, and annual training requirements. MFMR provided the report of the re-certification audit conducted by the WCPFC ROP in 2019. The report notes that the Solomon Islands National Observer Program uses the FFA/SPC PIRFO debriefing format during debriefers. Debriefers go through the workbook and made sure the trip ID, vessel information were properly filled. Daily logs are checked to make sure they correspond to set details and other related information. The Solomon Islands currently has 18 debriefers for approximately 86 observers which is an increase of 16 debriefers since the last audit. Current debriefing forms are filed independently and given to the fisheries compliance unit and also scanned to SPC. All aspects of the WCPFC ROP re-authorization audit were deemed satisfactory.</p> <p>Given that no shark finning incidents have been recorded from vessels in the UoC, and based on recent observer data confirming this, this condition is considered open and on-target.</p>	
Progress on Condition	The assessment team reviewed evidence of various measures that NFD has in-place in the UoC to prevent shark finning. Vessel trips begin with a pre-departure shark finning briefing conducted by	

<p>(year 2)</p>	<p>the NFD operations team for the purse seiner crew, observer, fishing master, mates, and engineers. The topics that are discussed relating to this condition are shark finning policies, issues, and obligations. Evidence of this are attendance lists and pictures.</p> <p>Digital Observer Services (DOS), an independent EM service provider that specializes in the processing and analysis of fishing activity video recordings (according to the Company), reviewed EM data from 86 UoC purse seine sets (Solomon Jade, Solomon Opal, Solomon Ruby, Solomon Pearl) resulting in 544 interactions with sharks and mantas species. No instances of shark finning were detected by the company.</p> <p>Evidence was given to the team of UoC use of NFD's <i>net setting shark discard checklist for deck and wet deck during each set</i> as part of NFD's SOPs for shark management onboard purse seine vessels. The team also reviewed how the SOPs are incorporated into a fishing vessel compliance checklist that NFD completes before vessel departure. Shark finning educational material includes a fact sheet that crew have access to and clearly displayed no shark finning signs on the vessels.</p> <p>Specific to the year 2 milestone for this condition, MFMR confirmed to the assessment team that the agency continues to apply the observer debriefing process corrective actions identified during its 2022 internal review. MFMR commented to the assessment team that the agency conducts a general briefing for UoC observers before their deployment. When an observer returns to port MFMR conducts a pre-debriefing. This involves an initial check of the observer's data by the debriefer who is based at headquarters in Honiara. Observers typically work for up to three consecutive fishing trips before being debriefed. The pre-debriefing lasts for 30-45 minutes. After this the observer has 7-14 days to submit their full report. Two to three days later MFMR conducts a full debriefing at which time the agency reviews the observer's complete data set. Debriefers fill out a form and note any compliance issues. Any potential infractions are turned over to MFMR's compliance department where in two-days' time it opens a case file and officers investigate. An investigation involves captain, crew, and observer interviews and an administrative process overseen by the Director of Prosecution. MFMR stated that it has 17 debriefers.</p> <p>MFMR provided the team with one debriefing summary report (one page) and submitted a spreadsheet with a list of 2022 and 2023 pre-debriefing and debriefing dates. The list included the dates of 67 pre-debriefings and debriefings representing observed trips for five UoC purse seine vessels.</p> <p>According to this information, pre-debriefs and debriefs may be performed when the observer is at sea and not physically present at the meeting, in instances when electronic reporting has been used and the observer is on consecutive fishing trips. This was noted by the team when MFMR provided evidence of an observer debriefing for the observer aboard the Solomon Emerald during a trip from 11/7/22 – 2/8/22 (the observer noted a whale set during this trip that the team addresses in Condition 6). MFMR noted to the team that on 14/8/22 the debriefer concluded "Observer did not report on any serious incidents for this trip." On this date, the observer was on a subsequent trip and he was not present at the meeting. Despite this, the team did not find evidence that the debriefing procedures do not achieve their intended results of identifying possible fishing violations. Because of this, the team determined that the fishery's progress towards closing the condition is on target. In the following year, the team recommends that auditors continue to review debriefing dates and observer trips to determine the frequency of debriefings that are done without the observer attending. We also suggest that the team gathers additional information regarding the procedures MFMR uses to ensure it can detect violations via debriefings that do not directly involve the observer.</p>
<p>Status of</p>	<p>On target</p>

Condition	
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Condition 6 PI 2.3.2 ETP Management

Performance Indicator	PI 2.3.2d. There is some evidence that the measures/strategy is being implemented successfully
Score	75
Justification	<p>The WCPFC ROP observer program have set classifications that denote an intentional setting on cetaceans (i.e. ‘live whale/marine mammal’ sets, #6).</p> <p>There are two key aspects in interpreting set types classified as #6. One is determining whether observers change their set designations at any point during the set when it becomes clear a marine mammal was captured. For example, the observer may have initially recorded it as an unassociated set, but in the hauling/brailing process, a whale was caught and the set designation to a 6. Thus, it is critical to understand instructions for designating set types and whether observers may make changes.</p> <p>All observers operating with the Solomon Islands National observer program undergo Pacific Islands Regional Fisheries Observers (PIRFO) trainings to ensure consistency across observer programs operating in the WCPO. For purse seine operations, observers are trained to make the set designation upon first sighting. They are instructed to not make changes in the set designation but will write and note down in the observer report any additional observations that they sight. Essentially, observers will record a set type as 6 if they spot a marine mammal prior to the set being made.</p> <p>The second critical component is understanding the investigation process regarding sets that have been designated as 6. An overview of the investigation process is provided in Principle 3, National MCS Programs and Records. Following completion of a trip, a debriefing process occurs in which all data is examined on a field by field basis to verify the completeness and assess the quality of the data collected by the observer. The PIRFO debriefer policy’s goal is that every trip is debriefed, and ideally in person. The debriefing process can last up to several days. An ROCW survey found that 86% of purse seine trips were debriefed in 2019 (SPC, pers comm., 2020). The observer is often provided with the summary of their reports to review and sign. Potential compliance issues detected during the observer trips will be flagged in the debriefing process and a compliance officer would be notified. Data from the trips themselves and debriefing information is logged into the TUFMAN 2 system. The TUFMAN 2 system has a number of data quality control checks which provide a further mechanism to ensuring completeness and accuracy of the data (SPC, pers comm, 2020).</p> <p>The direct effects of the UoA are highly unlikely to hinder recovery of cetacean species. However, approximately 1.7% of the fisheries catch comes from sets designated as ‘live whale’ sets. Any set designated as such by the observer is deemed an intentional set and should be flagged to the compliance department for further investigation.</p> <p>MFMR provided the assessment team with a summary of investigation efforts into two trips that were identified in the observer records as a ‘live whale’ set. In one trip, MFMR determined that there were six intentional sets made on a cetacean. While observer reports indicate all cetaceans were released unharmed from all sets, intentional sets violate compatible measures against CMM-2011-03 that are required to be adopted in archipelagic waters. MFMR informed the assessment team that sets made around anchored FADs are</p>

	<p>conducted early in the morning just before daybreak, making it difficult for vessel crew to see if any species of special interest (SSI) have also been pursued in the net. MFMR also advised that sets designated as whale sets that were made in the early morning are often reclassified as another set type by MFMR as it is difficult for the crew to see any cetaceans.</p> <p>Given the information that some sets are recorded by observers as intentional sets, we conclude that it cannot be said that some evidence exists to demonstrate that the measures/strategy is being implemented successfully. Therefore, the SG 80 requirements are not considered to be met.</p>	
Condition	By the fourth surveillance audit, the fishery must demonstrate there is some evidence that the measures/strategy is being implemented successfully for cetaceans.	
Condition start	Re-assessment	
Milestone Year 1	<p>1st Surveillance (2022): Develop and provide a plan to demonstrate the effective implementation of measures to avoid setting on cetaceans in the fishery. This plan should include an evaluation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the fishing operational aspects that results in factors that contribute to intentional interactions of cetaceans and ensure no intentional sets on cetaceans occurs - the observer processes to record intentional sets on live whales, and any factors or gaps that may contribute to the mis-classification/incorrect reporting of the set type <p>Expected score: 75</p>	
Client Action Plan	Activities:	<p>NFD to develop and implement a plan to avoid intentional setting on cetaceans in the fishery, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refresher compliance training for purse seine vessels in WCPFC and national-level management measures relating to cetaceans. ▪ Development of standard operating procedures for purse seine vessels reflecting best-practice handling techniques for safe-release of cetaceans; refresher training of vessels. ▪ Installation of surveillance cameras on board all NFD vessels to complement human observer monitoring. ▪ MFMR to conduct refresher briefings with observers on purse seine set designation to ensure consistency and accuracy in reporting of intentional vs. unintentional sets resulting in SSI interactions.
	Expected outcome:	SOP developed; trainings delivered to vessels and observers resulting in no intentional setting on cetaceans by fishing vessels and accurate set designation by observers.
		Responsible Party/ies: TMI/NFD, MFMR
Milestone Year 2	<p>2nd Surveillance (2023): Provide evidence of progress to ensure no intentional setting of purse seines on cetaceans in the fishery occurs. Provide updated and detailed observer data regarding interactions with whales.</p> <p>Expected score: 75</p>	

Client ActionPlan	Activities:	MFMR to provide CAB with updated and detailed observer data regarding interactions with whales demonstrating no intentional setting on cetaceans and safe release of cetaceans caught in unintentional sets.
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	Expected outcome:	No intentional setting on cetaceans by fishing vessels; accurate set designation by observers.
		Responsible Party/ies: MFMR, TMI/NFD

Milestone Year 3	3rd Surveillance (2024): Provide evidence of progress to ensure no intentional setting of purse seines on cetaceans in the fishery occurs. Provide updated and detailed observer data regarding interactions with whales. Expected score: 75	
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Client ActionPlan	Activities:	MFMR to provide CAB with updated and detailed observer data regarding interactions with whales demonstrating no intentional setting on cetaceans and safe release of cetaceans caught in unintentional sets.
	Expected outcome:	No intentional setting on cetaceans by fishing vessels; accurate set designation by observers. Responsible Party/ies: MFMR, TMI/NFD

Milestone Year 4	4th Surveillance (2025): Provide some evidence that the measures/strategies for cetaceans are being implemented successfully for the fishery. Expected score: 80	
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Client ActionPlan	Activities:	MFMR to provide CAB with updated and detailed observer data regarding interactions with whales demonstrating no intentional setting on cetaceans and safe release of cetaceans caught in unintentional sets.
	Expected outcome:	No intentional setting on cetaceans by fishing vessels; accurate set designation by observers. Responsible Party/ies: MFMR, TMI/NFD

Consultation condition	The client will consult with fishing vessels' senior officers, MFMR, by-catch mitigation specialists.	
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Progress on condition (Year 1)	<p>The milestone required development of a plan to demonstrate the effective implementation of measures to avoid setting on cetaceans in the fishery. The plan was supposed to include: 1) an evaluation of fishing operations that contribute to intentional interactions of cetaceans and 2) the observer processes to record intentional sets on live whales.</p> <p>The client and MFMR provided the following evidence to meet the first year milestone requirements. Evidence included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MFMR conducted annual observer refresher trainings. This covers a range of topics related to observer duties, which does cover the set designation and whether sets should be classified as intentional or non-intentional if cetaceans interact with the vessel. Regardless, it is unclear whether any particular/special emphasis was provided related to whale set designation 	
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than is given in typical years.

- MFMR provided incidents of ongoing investigations into issues of whale sets
- NFD has developed a SOP for procedures around cetacean interactions & safe handling procedures. This includes processes the captain should follow should a whale be observed.
- NFD vessels were successful in their ISSF audit, which includes best handling practices for cetaceans
- NFD vessels have whale cradles which are used to lift the head portion of the whale over the cork of the purse-seine and the whale will go free as it moves forward.
- NFD has installed electronic monitoring systems on all purse-seine vessels (it is unclear whether/how this information will be used to assess crew member implementation of best handling practices and ensuring no intentional sets on whales)

MFMR provided a list of ongoing investigations related to potential CMM infractions, including intentional whale sets. None of these investigations for intentional whale sets were for NFD (i.e. client).

Observer data from 2020-2021 was provided for the purse seine vessels in the UoA. There were a total of 7 'live whale' sets reported (Table 1).

Table 1. SPC observer data (2020-2021) for NFD vessels.

Year	Number of vessels	Total sets recorded as 'live whale'
2020	3	5
2021	2	2

No evidence of follow-up actions from MFMR regarding these incidents were provided to the assessment team. We note that interventions from MFMR or Tri Marine may not have occurred at the time of these incidents, given most were in 2020 and two in 2021 (when the fishery was recertified).

This issue of whale sets recorded by observers is not unique to this fishery. The assessment team notes there has been development at the WCPFC related to this issue. In particular, the 2021 Technical Compliance Committee (TCC) Chair raised this issue of lack of clarity for whale shark/whale sets, stating that the *'central issue with ROP pre-notifications and whale shark and cetacean interactions and/or infringements (comprising observer data related to interactions that had not been through a verification process) was the need to determine whether there were actual underlying issues, and that it was clear that there is a need to determine, prior to TCC18, how to address these.'* As a result, TCC passed a priority project specific task for 2022 to " Review and provide advice on improvements to the ROP minimum standard data fields for whale sharks and cetaceans – to allow for a distinction between an interaction and a possible infraction in the compliance case file system."

The TCC 2022-2024 workplan stated actions and timeline for this issue are:

Priority	2022	2023	2024	Updates/Progress:
<p><i>j) Review and provide advice improvements to the ROP data fields, including those in ROP pre-notifications, to allow for more useful consideration in the compliance case file system and compliance review process [TCC task with assistance from Secretariat]</i></p>	<p>Review and provide advice on improvements to the ROP minimum standard data fields for whale sharks and cetaceans – to allow for a distinction between an interaction and a possible infraction in the compliance case file system</p>	<p>Consider improvements to the Observer Trip Monitoring Summary data fields, which trigger pre-notifications, to better align with the Commission's priorities in terms of compliance</p> <p>Review and provide advice on improvements to the ROP minimum standard data fields for sea turtles and seabirds to allow for use of ROP data in the compliance case file system, taking into account overall workloads of observers</p>		
<p><i>Article 14(1)(c) Priority tasks with respects to implementation of cooperative MCS & E</i></p>				
<p>The Solomon Islands National Observer Program is a member of the ROP. Though these fisheries are purely domestic (i.e. not ROP trips), the observers are trained to and adhere to the same SOPs and data collection sheets that has been approved/implemented by the WCPFC ROP during these domestic trips. Thus, the assessment team consider the review that the WCPFC TCC will undertake of the ROP minimum standard data fields to be sufficient to also address issues of distinguishing intentional vs. non-intentional cetacean interactions. The outcome of the TCC actions in 2022 will be first publicly reported on in the summary report released Nov 2022.</p> <p>The actions of MFMR, Tri Marine, and the WCPFC TCC are considered sufficient to meet requirements of year 1 milestone.</p>				
<p>Progress on condition (Year 2)</p>	<p>To improve the accuracy of the whale shark and cetacean set information that on-board observers record, the TCC is reviewing the minimum data fields associated with observer reports (Observer Trip Monitoring Summary) and making updates to those data fields so that violations or non-violations can be more clearly recorded and therefor identified. The proposed improvements are a result of the ambiguity that the current observer reporting guidelines create as it is not clear if a '6. Live Whale' set code recorded by an observer constitutes an intentional interaction with a cetacean or whale shark by the fishing vessel.</p> <p>More specific to the improvement process, the WCPFC's TCC issued advice on improvements to ROP minimum standard data fields (section 5.5 a of the TCC's 18th regular session September 2022), the committee recommended the following:</p> <p>38. TCC18 recommended that the IWG-ROP, once it is reactivated, prioritize work on issues such as a solution to identifying interactions with whale sharks and cetaceans, and on the inclusion of ROP data fields that were identified in the TCC Workplan 2022-2024 project specific task (j), and to identify any CMM that should also be prioritized in this work [TCC, 2022].</p> <p>The TCC also produced a supporting paper for the potential improvements to the ROP minimum standard data fields for impacts of fishing on whale sharks and cetaceans</p>			

	<p>(WCPFC-TCC18-2022-17). The above recommendation was included in the WCPFC's 19th Regular Session's Provisional Outcomes Document (WCPFC19-2022).</p> <p>Observer data was provided by SPC to the assessment team for the five UoC vessels for 2021-2023. In the data set there were 12 whale sets with the '6. Live Whale' set code recorded by observers for three of the vessels. MFMR confirmed that none of these sets was an intentional whale set. The team requested evidence from MFMR of the observer debriefing process for one of these sets that it randomly selected.</p> <p>Aside for the debriefing explanation given to the team by MFMR, officials also explained to us the rationale behind improving the way observers record set types including whale sets. The team understands that this confusion has led to the WCPFC undertaking a process to revise the criteria observers use to determine if a whale set occurs.</p> <p>Regarding the Year 2 milestones, the fishery provided the team with observer data regarding interactions with whales and the process to improve observer reporting of whale sets is evidence that more accurate information will be available to the assessment team in the future. This evidence supports our conclusion that the fishery's progress towards closing this condition is on target.</p>
Status of condition	On target

Condition 7 PI 3.1.2 Both Skipjack and Yellowfin

Performance Indicator	PI 3.1.2 Management system, consultation and roles and responsibilities	
Score	75	
Justification	The arrangements spelled out in the Fisheries Management Act 2015, the Tuna Management and Development Plan and the opportunity for stakeholder input to regional (PNA and WCPFC) management decisions provide a system which should enable relevant local knowledge to be introduced into the management system. However, the FAC has not met since October 2014 with the MFMR advising that it is currently in process of appointing new members. The TIASI has met more regularly with the MFMR however it is unclear the extent to which bilateral discussions provide input to the management system. As such SG60 requirements are met, however, SG80 and SG 100 are not.	
Condition	By the third <u>second</u> surveillance audit of the re-assessment, provide evidence that the management system includes consultation processes that regularly seek and accept relevant information from a range of sources, including local knowledge. Additionally, the national management system demonstrates consideration of the information obtained.	
Milestone Year 4	<p>1. Surveillance 4: By the fourth surveillance audit, work with MFMR to develop a basic proposal/plan for improvement of the consultation processes, to ensure the condition is closed by the 4th year of certification. The Plan should identify consultation mechanisms, which sources/parties will be involved in the consultation processes and the frequency with which the consultation processes will seek and accept information.</p> <p>Expected score: 75</p>	
Client Action Plan	Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tri Marine/NFD will advocate and support MFMR in the development of a plan to improve current consultation processes, such that consultation mechanisms laid out in the Fisheries Management Act 2015 and National Tuna Management Plan 2015 (or later revisions) are adequately applied. ▪ Tri Marine/NFD's support and advocacy will be through direct liaison and cooperation with MFMR, participation as an active member of the Tuna Industry Association of Solomon Islands (TIASI), and in turn, through TIASI's representation on the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC).
	Expected outcome:	Consultation plan developed by MFMR.

Milestone Year 1 Reassessment	<p>1. Surveillance 1: <u>By the first surveillance audit of the reassessment, work with MFMR to develop a basic proposal/plan for improvement of the consultation processes, to ensure the condition is closed by the 4th year of certification. The Plan should identify consultation mechanisms, which sources/parties will be involved in the consultation processes and the frequency with which the consultation processes will seek and accept information.</u></p> <p>By the first surveillance audit of the re-assessment, demonstrate the implementation of consultation processes from a range of sources and that this information is being considered by the management system at both the national and regional levels.</p> <p>Expected score: 75</p>	
Client Action Plan	Activities :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tri Marine/NFD will advocate and support MFMR in the development of a plan to improve current consultation processes, such that consultation mechanisms laid out in the Fisheries Management Act 2015 and National Tuna Management Plan 2015 (or later revisions) are adequately applied. ▪ Tri Marine/NFD's support and advocacy will be through direct liaison and cooperation with MFMR, participation as an active member of the Tuna Industry Association of Solomon Islands (TIASI), and in turn, through TIASI's representation on the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC).
	Expected outcome:	Consultation plan developed by MFMR.
Milestone Year 2 Reassessment	<p>Surveillance 2: <u>By the second surveillance audit of the re-assessment, demonstrate the implementation of consultation processes from a range of sources and that this information is being considered by the management system at both the national and regional levels.</u></p> <p>By the second surveillance audit of the re-assessment, be able to demonstrate ongoing consultation through the implementation of consultation processes from a range of stakeholders and that this information is being considered by the management system at both the national and regional levels.</p> <p>Expected score: 75</p>	
Client Action Plan	Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tri Marine/NFD will advocate and support MFMR in efforts to improve current consultation processes, such that consultation mechanisms laid out in the Fisheries Management Act 2015 and National Tuna Management Plan 2015 (or later revisions) are adequately applied. ▪ Tri Marine/NFD will advocate and support continued MFMR engagement in regional management forums (i.e., PNA/FFA/WCPFC). ▪ Tri Marine/NFD's support and advocacy will be through direct liaison and cooperation with MFMR, participation as an active member of the Tuna Industry Association of Solomon Islands (TIASI), and in turn, through TIASI's representation on the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC).
	Expected outcome:	Regular consultations being held, producing information from a range of sources which is being considered by the management system at the national/regional levels.

<p>Milestone Year 3 Reassessment</p>	<p>4. Surveillance 2: <u>By the third surveillance audit of the re-assessment, be able to demonstrate ongoing consultation through the implementation of consultation processes from a range of stakeholders and that this information is being considered by the management system at both the national and regional levels.</u></p> <p>Expected score: 80</p>	
<p>Client Action Plan</p>	<p>Activities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tri Marine/NFD will advocate and support MFMR in efforts to improve current consultation processes, such that consultation mechanisms laid out in the Fisheries Management Act 2015 and National Tuna Management Plan 2015 (or later revisions) are adequately applied. ▪ Tri Marine/NFD will advocate and support continued MFMR engagement in regional management forums (i.e., PNA/FFA/WCPFC) ▪ Tri Marine/NFD’s support and advocacy will be through direct liaison and cooperation with MFMR, participation as an active member of the Tuna Industry Association of Solomon Islands (TIASI), and in turn, through TIASI’s representation on the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC).
	<p>Expected outcome:</p>	<p>Regular consultations being held, producing information from a range of sources which is being considered by the management system at the national/regional levels.</p> <hr/> <p>Responsible Parties: Tri Marine and MFMR</p>
<p>Consultation condition</p>	<p>The client will consult with MFMR and TIASI.</p>	
<p>Progress Update (Year 4)</p>	<p>In response to this Condition, Tri Marine have worked with MFMR to develop a Plan for Improving National Consultation and Decision Making Processes (Decision making and consultation plan, Table 40). The plan is focused on the key consultative processes including the revised FAC, the national Tuna Management and Development Plan, and the principal fishing industry stakeholder advisory group, TIASI. It describes the current status and scope of these groups and processes, the specific stakeholders/parties involved, and the planned frequency of consultations and/or meetings.</p> <p>In addition, MFMR’s Tuna Management and Development Plan (currently under review) includes a key outcome area (Outcome 1.3) titled National, PNA and WCPFC measures formulated and implemented. A copy of the new (draft) Tuna Management and Development Plan has been made available , and includes equivalent consultation and decision making provisions, along with indicators, and the means to assess progress against these indicators. This Draft Plan has not yet been formally implemented. Together with other</p>	
<p>Progress Update (Year 1)</p>	<p>Progress recorded here is for revised Milestones that reflect the recently applied MSC Covid-19 Derogation.</p> <p>In addition to the new Decision Making and Consultation Plan described above, MFMR continue to develop and finalise their revised national Tuna Management and Development Plan (TMDP). A copy of the new (draft) Tuna Management and Development Plan has been made available to the assessment team, and includes updated consultation and decision-making provisions, along with indicators, and the means to assess progress against these indicators. This Draft Plan has been designed to integrate with MFMR’s broader strategic policy framework and is also consistent with requirements in the new Consultation and Decision-Making Plan. MFMR have advised that the new TMDP is now complete however is not yet formally implemented.</p>	

	<p>Progress has been sufficient to meet the revised milestone requirements for this condition.</p> <p>The condition remains open and on-target.</p>
<p>Progress Update (Year 2)</p>	<p>Progress recorded here is for revised Milestones that reflect the recently applied MSC Covid-19 Derogation.</p> <p>Evidence was provided showing that the Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC) is now constituted and meeting regularly. The FAC is established by the Fisheries Act (2015) and is mandated to provide advice to the Minister to guide decision making. Its processes are designed to both seek and accept information with clear and transparent operating guidelines established in fisheries regulation. Members are appointed by the Minister and include representatives from other government agencies, NFD (Industry), the Forum Fisheries Agency and WorldFish (WorldFish is an international, non-profit fisheries and aquaculture research and innovation organization). Copies of FAC agendas and meeting notes were provided as evidence that consultation is occurring and there is an opportunity for all interested parties to be involved.</p> <p>Evidence was also presented of regular consultation with the TISAI and of invitations to stakeholders to attend and participate in bilateral and multilateral discussions at the national and regional level (PNA and WCPFC meetings and its subsidiary bodies). Collectively the consultations processes of MFMR and the FAC provides opportunity and encouragement for all interested and affected parties to be involved and facilitates their effective engagement.</p>
<p>Status</p>	<p>Closed, Score 90</p>

Condition 8 PI 3.2.2 Both Skipjack and Yellowfin

Performance Indicator	3.2.2 Management system decision making processes aimed at achieving objectives
Score	75
Rationale	<p>Responsiveness of decision-making processes</p> <p>While settled regional and sub-regional arrangements exist for this SI, it is less clear how effective these arrangements are at the domestic level. MFMR staff are required to manage the fishery in accordance with the provisions of the Act. however, the level of broader stakeholder consultation and the timeliness of input to local and regional serious and other important issues is unclear. This is partly due to the fact that a significant consultative mechanism, the FAC has not met since October 2014. There have been bilateral meetings between MFMR and the four companies operating in the UoA (they meet annually to discuss management arrangements and their annual MoUs and license conditions) and also between MFMR and the TIASI. However, no evidence was provided that these meetings deal specifically with relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner. As such, SG 60 requirements are met, however, SG 80 and SG 100 requirements are not met.</p> <p>Accountability and transparency of management and decision-making process.</p> <p>Overall, SG 60 and SG 80 requirements are met for the WCPFC however, not all information is publicly available (National Part 2 Reports) and information is not comprehensive for all elements of the management system or available to all interested stakeholders, therefore SG100 is not met. For the Solomon Islands, due to a lack of evidence, it is unclear whether the arrangements set out in the TMDP are in fact being implemented. The Plan states that “Information on fishery performance and management action is available on request, and explanations are provided to the Tuna Industry Association of the Solomon Islands (TIASI) for any actions or lack of action associated with findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring evaluation and review activity”. Evidence was not provided to the extent to which this information has either been sought by the TIASI or provided to them.</p>
Condition	<p>SI b) By the third second surveillance audit of the re-assessment, provide evidence that decision-making processes respond to serious and other important issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation, and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions.</p> <p>SI d) By the third second surveillance audit of the re-assessment, provide evidence that information on the fishery’s performance and management action is available on request, and explanations are provided for any actions or lack of action associated with findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring, evaluation, and review activity.</p>
Milestone Year 4	<p>1. Surveillance 4: By the fourth surveillance audit, work with MFMR to develop a proposal to improve decision making processes such that they respond to important issues in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions. Ensure the plan improves the flow of information on the fishery’s performance and management actions. The plans should identify who will assess fishery performance, how frequently this will occur, how this information will be transmitted and to whom and</p>

	<p>what actions will be taken to address deficiencies. Overall, the plan should identify ways to improve input from all sources and how best to assess the wider implications of decisions.</p> <p>Expected score: 75</p>	
Client Action Plan	<p>Activities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Tri Marine/NFD will advocate and support MFMR in the development of a plan to improve national-level decision making processes.</i> ▪ <i>Tri Marine/NFD's support and advocacy will be through direct liaison and cooperation with MFMR, participation as an active member of the Tuna Industry Association of Solomon Islands (TIASI), and in turn, through TIASI's representation on the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC).</i>
	<p>Expected outcome:</p>	<p>MFMR has developed a plan to improve national-level decision making processes.</p>
	<p>Expected score:</p>	<p>75</p>
	<p>REVISED MILESTONE Surveillance 1: Refine proposal with MFMR to improve decision making processes such that they respond to important issues in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions. Ensure the plan improves the flow of information on the fishery's performance and management actions. Score 75</p>	
	<p>3. Surveillance 1: By the first surveillance audit of the re-assessment, demonstrate implementation of revised decision-making processes with input from a range of sources and that the wider implications of decisions are being considered. Also, demonstrate the plan has been implemented and information on the fishery's performance and management action is available on request.</p>	
	<p>Activities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Tri Marine/NFD will advocate and support MFMR in the development of a plan to improve national-level decision making processes.</i> ▪ <i>Tri Marine/NFD's support and advocacy will be through direct liaison and cooperation with MFMR, participation as an active member of the Tuna Industry Association of Solomon Islands (TIASI), and in turn, through TIASI's representation on the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC).</i>
	<p>Expected outcome:</p>	<p>MFMR has developed a plan to improve national-level decision making processes.</p>
	<p>Expected score:</p>	<p>75</p>
	<p>REVISED MILESTONE Surveillance 2: Demonstrate implementation of revised decision-making processes with input from a range of sources and that the wider implications of decisions are being considered. Also, demonstrate the plan has been implemented and information on the fishery's performance and management action is available on request. Score 75</p>	
	<p>Surveillance 2: By the second surveillance audit of the re-assessment, be able to demonstrate decision-making processes are responding to serious and other important issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions. Also, provide evidence that information on the fishery's performance and</p>	

management action are available on request and that explanations are provided for any actions or lack of action associated with findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring, evaluation and review activity.	
Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tri Marine/NFD will advocate and support MFMR in the ongoing implementation of the plan to improve national-level decisionmaking processes. ▪ <i>Tri Marine/NFD's support and advocacy will be through direct liaison and cooperation with MFMR, participation as an active member of the Tuna Industry Association of Solomon Islands (TIASI), and in turn, through TIASI's representation on the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC).</i>
Expected outcome:	MFMR has implemented revised decision-making processes with input from range of sources and wider implications of decisions also being considered, with information on the fishery's performance and management action available on request.
Expected score:	Responsible Parties: Tri Marine and MFMR
<p>REVISED MILESTONE Surveillance 3: <u>By the third surveillance audit, be able to demonstrate decision-making processes are responding to serious and other important issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions. Also, provide evidence that information on the fishery's performance and management action are available on request and that explanations are provided for any actions or lack of action associated with findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring, evaluation and review activity.</u></p>	
Expected score: 80	
Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Tri Marine/NFD will advocate and support MFMR in the ongoing implementation of the plan to improve national-level decision making processes.</i> ▪ <i>Tri Marine/NFD's support and advocacy will be through direct liaison and cooperation with MFMR, participation as an active member of the Tuna Industry Association of Solomon Islands (TIASI), and in turn, through TIASI's representation on the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC).</i>
Expected outcome:	MFMR is implementing decision-making processes that respond to serious and other important issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions. Information on the fishery's performance and management action are available on request and explanations are provided for any actions or lack of action associated with findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring, evaluation and review activity.
Expected score:	80

<p>Progress Update (Year 4)</p>	<p>The MFMR Tuna Management and Development Plan is also in the final stages of re-development. Substantial stakeholder consultation, at a range of levels, has been completed as part of this TMDP re-development process. This has included provincial level representatives, as well as key fishing industry stakeholders through TIASI.</p> <p>The new MFMR Plan for Improving National Consultation and Decision Making Processes describes the agreed processes by which stakeholder information relevant to management decision making is obtained, considered and used by decision makers. This includes their responsibilities in relation to informing stakeholders of subsequent decisions, or reasons for not accepting stakeholder advice. The Plan covers activities and processes for the FAC, the TMDP, and the operation of TIASI.</p> <p>Progress on condition has been sufficient to address milestones.</p>
<p>Progress Update (Year 1)</p>	<p>Progress recorded here is for revised Milestones that reflect the recently applied MSC Covid-19 Derogation.</p> <p>MFMR's new Plan for Improving National Consultation and Decision Making Processes prescribes processes by which stakeholder information relevant to management decision making is obtained, considered, and how it should be used by decision makers. This includes their responsibilities in relation to informing stakeholders of subsequent decisions, or reasons for not accepting stakeholder advice. The Plan covers activities and processes for the FAC, the TMDP, and the operation of TIASI.</p> <p>Most recently, MFMR have also provided evidence detailing a May 2022 Ministerial appointment to the higher level Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC), however the FAC has still not yet formally convened. MFMR have advised that a meeting will be held prior to December 2022. There have been bilateral meetings between MFMR and the fishing companies operating in the UoA; and also between MFMR and the TIASI.</p> <p>Progress has been sufficient to meet the revised milestone requirements for this condition.</p> <p>The condition remains open and on-target.</p>
<p>Progress Update (Year 2)</p>	<p>This condition has two components and progress is reported separately for each component.</p> <p>Si 3.2.2(b) Responsiveness of decision-making processes</p> <p>Evidence was presented of domestic Solomon Island decision making processes taking into account and responding to serious and other important issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions. Specifically, the major objectives of MFMR's Plan for Improving National Consultation and Decision Making Processes have been achieved. The Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC) is now constituted and meeting regularly. The FAC is established by the Fisheries Act (2015) and is mandated to provide advice to the Minister to guide decision making. Recent agenda items included discussions about the status and proposed updates to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ MFMR Compliance system. ■ Vessel Monitoring System. ■ Observer program. ■ Tuna fisheries management, compliance and development. <p>Evidence was also presented of MFMR engaging with stakeholders in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner to develop its response to draft documents produced by the WCPFCs FAD</p>

	<p>Management Options Intersessional Working Group addressing the stepwise introduction of biodegradable FADs.</p> <p>With respect to SI 3.2.2(b) there is evidence to conclude that domestic decision making processes respond to serious and other important issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions meeting SG 80</p> <p>Si 3.2.2(d) Accountability and transparency of management and decision-making process Evidence was presented demonstrating that the Solomons MFMR makes information available during development of policies, management plans and subordinate legislation and during the development of input to regional level positions associated with meetings of the PNA, FFA and WCPFC and its subsidiary bodies. There are established stakeholder consultation processes and evidence that inputs from these processes are used in the development of policies and positions taken to regional and sub-regional meetings. At the higher level this is a key role of the Fishery Advisory Council, The FAC advises the Minister and make recommendations at the request of the Permanent Secretary on matters relating to fisheries conservation, management, development, and sustainable use. Detailed minutes of FAC meetings are recorded by Secretary and provide rationales for FAC recommendations and are available to interested parties, on request. The minister’s response to FAC recommendations is provided to FAC Chair in writing when not adopted and responses are available to interested parties, on request. The FAC has been reconvened and minutes of 2023 FAC meetings, providing details (to varying degrees) and the rationale for recommendations, were made available.</p> <p>With respect to SI 3.2.2(d) there is evidence to conclude that information on the fishery’s performance and management action is available on request, and explanations are provided for any actions or lack of action associated with findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring evaluation and review activity meeting SG 80</p>
Status	<p>Closed. Scores: SI 3.2.2.(b) 80. SI 3.2.2(d) 80</p>

Condition 9 PI 3.2.3 Purse seine UoA only

Updates to the milestone text and client action plan stemming from the expedited audit in the 1st year surveillance audit are underlined in the condition table text below. The condition has been extended and some milestones revised per Derogation 6: Covid-19 Fishery Conditions Extension in addition to the expedited audit modifications.

Performance Indicator	PI 3.2.3 (a) A monitoring, control and surveillance system has been implemented in the fishery and has demonstrated an ability to enforce relevant management measures, strategies and/or rules	
Score	75	
Justification	See rationale for Scoring Indicator a. for PI 3.2.3 (MCS mechanisms) for more information.	
Condition	By the third <u>fourth</u> surveillance audit of the re-assessment, the fishery client shall provide evidence that the monitoring, control and surveillance system has been implemented in the fishery and has demonstrated an ability to enforce relevant management measures, strategies and/or rules.	
Condition start	4 th surveillance audit in initial certificate	
Condition deadline	3rd 4 th surveillance audit of the reassessment	
Milestone Year 1	Surveillance 1: By the first surveillance audit of the reassessment, <u>demonstrate progress to</u> support MFMR in conducting a review of the national onboard observer monitoring system and integration of observer data into compliance monitoring and report on the degree to which these key elements of the existing MCS system provide an effective deterrent to non-compliance with both national and regional (WCPFC, PNA) management measures, including compliance with relevant WCPFC CMM's, and compatible measures adopted in Solomon Islands' archipelagic waters. Expected score: 75	
Client Action Plan	Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support MFMR to conduct an internal review of Solomon Islands' tuna fishery MCS system, in particular onboard observers and the integration of observer data into compliance monitoring, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of existing MCS processes relating to onboard observers and compliance monitoring against regional best practices (i.e. plans, policies, standard operating procedures etc.). - Review of effectiveness of implementation for the previous two years. - Identification of any gaps in MCS processes and/or implementation relating to onboard observers and/or integration of observer data into compliance monitoring. ▪ TMI/NFD to install surveillance cameras on all NFD fishing vessels to complement human observer monitoring.
	Expected outcome:	MCS system review conducted to identify any gaps in processes and/or implementation relating to observer monitoring and integration of observer data into compliance monitoring.
		Responsible Party/ies: MFMR, with support as required from TMI/NFD.
Milestone Year 2	Surveillance 2: By the second surveillance audit of the re-assessment, MFMR, with support from the client, develops an action plan to address the gaps identified from the review presented in the year 1 surveillance. With emphasis on any systemic weaknesses in the	

	<p>national MCS system and addressing significant risks of deficient practices relating to onboard observers and compliance monitoring.</p> <p><u>Investigate and provide evidence to demonstrate whether the domestic observer program has the operational independence to ensure the integrity of the information gathered for MCS processes for SB domestic tuna vessels fishing in SB archipelagic waters and EEZ. Operational independence refers to having systems in place that minimize the potential for adverse influence on, or the creation of unintended biases in, observer reporting from either the vessel operator and/or regulatory authorities.</u></p> <p>Expected score: 75.</p>	
<p>Client Action Plan</p>	<p>Activities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Support MFMR to commission an external review of Solomon Islands' tuna fishery MCS system, in particular onboard observers and the integration of observer data into compliance monitoring, which includes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Review of existing MCS processes relating to onboard observers and compliance monitoring against regional best practices (i.e. plans, policies, standard operating procedures etc.).</u> - <u>Review of effectiveness of implementation for the previous two years.</u> - <u>Review of operational independence of the domestic observer program</u> - <u>Identification of any gaps in MCS processes and/or implementation relating to onboard observers and/or integration of observer data into compliance monitoring.</u> ▪ <u>Develop an action plan addressing any gaps in processes and/or implementation identified in the MCS review which details the action required, persons/entities responsible, milestones/timeframes and resources required.</u>
	<p>Expected outcome:</p>	<p>MCS Action plan developed; commence implementation.</p> <p>Responsible Party/ies: MFMR, with support as required from TMI/NFD.</p>
<p>Milestone Year 3</p>	<p>Surveillance 3: By the third surveillance audit of the reassessment, provide evidence that the national onboard observer monitoring system and integration of observer data into compliance monitoring is effectively implemented in the fishery to ensure the MCS system demonstrates an overall ability to enforce national (e.g. SI TMDP, Vessel Permit/License Conditions), and regional (e.g. WCPFC CMM's) management measures, strategies and/or rules.</p> <p><u>Demonstrate that mechanisms are being put in place to ensure that the domestic observer program has the operational independence necessary to ensure the integrity of information gathered for MCS purposes for SB domestic tuna vessels fishing in SB archipelagic waters and EEZ. Operational independence refers to having systems in place that minimize the potential for adverse influence on, or the creation of unintended biases in, observer reporting from either the vessel operator and/or regulatory authorities.</u></p> <p>Expected score: 80 75</p>	
<p>Client Action Plan</p>	<p>Activities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Implement the MCS action plan relating to onboard observers and integration of observer data into compliance monitoring.</u>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an internal review of completion of the action plan, including the collation of any available evidence of implementation <u>and operational independence of the domestic observer program.</u>
	Expected outcome:	<p>MFMR’s observer and compliance monitoring is effective, resulting in the MCS system being effective overall in enforcing national and regional management measures.</p> <p>Responsible Party/ies: MFMR, with support as required from TMI/NFD.</p>
Milestone Year 4		<p>Surveillance 4: By the fourth surveillance audit of the reassessment, provide evidence that the national onboard observer monitoring system and integration of observer data into compliance monitoring is effectively implemented in the fishery to ensure the MCS system demonstrates an overall ability to enforce national (e.g. SI TMDP, Vessel Permit/License Conditions), and regional (e.g. WCPFC CMM’s) management measures, strategies and/or rules.</p> <p><u>Demonstrate that mechanisms are in place to ensure that the domestic observer program has the operational independence necessary to ensure the integrity of information gathered for MCS purposes for SB domestic tuna vessels fishing in SB archipelagic waters and EEZ. Operational independence refers to having systems in place that minimize the potential for adverse influence on, or the creation of unintended biases in, observer reporting from either the vessel operator and/or regulatory authorities.</u></p>
Client Action Plan	Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Implement the MCS action plan relating to onboard observers and integration of observer data into compliance monitoring.</u>
	Expected outcome:	<p>MFMR’s observer and compliance monitoring is effective, resulting in the MCS system being effective overall in enforcing national and regional management measures.</p> <p>Responsible Party/ies: MFMR, with support as required from TMI/NFD.</p>
Progress on Condition (Year 1 reassessment)	<p>Progress recorded here is for revised Milestones that reflect the MSC Covid-19 Derogation extending the timeline established to achieved milestones and fulfil conditions.</p> <p>MFMR conducted an internal review of fisheries observer debriefings. The report provided a summary of an MFMR internal review and corrective actions. In particular, the report identified issues with 1) delays in debriefings of observer trips and 2) delays in debriefers notifying the Compliance Division on possible infringements reported by observers requiring investigation. The review summarized the Solomon Islands debriefing procedures, which are outlined in the Solomon Islands Observer Standard Operating Procedure (2017) and FFA/SPC PIRFO Debriefing Policy (2010).</p> <p>The report provided the status of observed and debriefed trips on NFD vessels from 2020 to 2021, noting 100% observer coverage and debriefing of observers across this period (Table 1).</p> <p>Table 1. Purse Seine Observer Placements & Debriefing – NFD PS vessels (MFMR, 2022).</p>	

Year	No. of PS Fishing Trips	No. of PS trips observed	% PS observer coverage	No. of PS observer trips debriefed	% PS trips debriefed
2020	65	65	100	65	100
2021	73	73	100	73	100

The report identified reasons why delays in briefings of observers may occur. These included delays that impact observers' ability to complete observer workbooks (requiring daily entries) on time, which include conducting consecutive trips with quick turn-arounds not permitting debriefing in between trips, privacy for observers not guaranteed, and illness and family emergencies arising during/shortly after trips.

Delays in notifying the Compliance Section on possible infringements reported by observers do occur mainly due to:

- Debriefers not notifying the Observer Coordinator that debriefing has been completed; and
- Debriefed Observers could not be reached after debriefing when more information is needed by the Debriefers (many observers live in remote villages with very limited connectivity).

MFMR have implemented several corrective actions. MFMR has changed their observer data review and payment process. During the audit, the assessment team was informed that the Solomon Islands National Observer Program observer payment requests are not approved by the Permanent Secretary unless they have: 1) a summary of the de-briefing report and 2) a short summary report indicating all compliance issues have been identified and addressed or identified for further investigation. MFMR also continue to increase e-reporting via IFIMS so that observer reports are submitted in real time on a daily basis. To address delays in notifications of potential infringements to the Compliance Section, the Observer Coordinator cross-checks with debriefers that files have been established for potential infringement cases and submitted to the Compliance Section.

The report on debriefing issues produced by MFMR addressed deficiencies in the debriefing process, however, the milestone required a broader analysis "[...] on the degree to which these key elements of the existing MCS system provide an effective deterrent to non-compliance with both national and regional (WCPFC, PNA) management measures, including compliance with relevant WCPFC CMM's, and compatible measures adopted in Solomon Islands' archipelagic waters." This condition has received a 12-month extension and the milestones were revised accordingly.

We note MFMR has undertaken additional work related to MCS since the re-assessment audit. MFMR published a draft update of the national MCS strategy for the period 2022-2027 that is comprehensive and includes reference to MSC requirements specifically and the need for effective MCS processes generally. The Solomon Islands have also commissioned a World Bank funded MCS project intended to improve observer and related MCS coverage, accuracy, transparency, and reporting within the sector. Specific terms of reference for the MCS contract were not made available to the assessment team, however, the workplan with stated objectives was provided.

MFMR, in conjunction with funding and technical assistance provided with World Bank PROPER Work Program, MFMR is engaging an external consultant to conduct a thorough third-party

	<p>review of the Solomon Islands National Observer Program (SBOB). Terms of reference are currently being developed for this review, which is tentatively scheduled to commence in August 2022 and be completed by end December 2022. The review will identify gaps/shortcomings in the SBOB compared with the PIRFO standard and provide recommendations to address these. This contracted work should fulfil the broader MCS review milestone.</p> <p>We also note that cameras have been installed on all UoC vessels by Tri Marine though electronic monitoring is not yet required by MFMR and these systems are for internal use by vessel operators.</p> <p><u>Expedited audit</u></p> <p>The expedited audit resulted in modifications to the milestones. As a domestic fleet (i.e. vessels fish exclusively in the archipelagic waters and/or EEZ of SB), the vessels do not undertake ROP trips. While the observer data goes to SPC and PNA, any potential non-compliance issues reported in observer data are not part of the WCPFC/FFA Compliance Monitoring System. Thus, there is an absence of transparency into the existence of potential infractions., which would be summarized in publicly available WCPFC TCC summary reports (e.g. TCC, 2021) or brought to the attention of WCPFC members. This reduces transparency and requires additional scrutiny of the verification of the operational independence of observer data for the SB domestic fleet.</p> <p>During the audit the SCS assessment team interviewed the MFMR observer coordinator and other MFMR officials, and directly addressed concerns raised by the SG report regarding claims of pressure to observers to retract shark finning observations. MFMR officials responded that they conducted their investigation in a thorough manner and that the allegations of coercion towards observers were unfounded. SCS requested MFMR’s approval and assistance to conduct an online anonymous survey of Solomon Islands observers and debriefers. MFMR expressed concerns over the assessment teams request due to confidentiality concerns to provide contact details of observers to an outside third party and the reliability of the proposed methodology given the sensitivity of the topic. As a result, SCS assessment team revised the milestones, requiring MFMR to conduct an independent evaluation to determine the 'operational independence' of the SB National Observer Program and data collected therein as it relates to SB flagged tuna vessels fishing exclusively in SB EEZ or MGA. Tri Marine revised their CAP and provided an additional letter of support from MFMR to meet these revised milestones.</p> <p>The condition is considered open and on-target.</p>
<p>Progress on Condition (Year 2 reassessment)</p>	<p>Progress recorded here is for revised Milestones that reflect the MSC Covid-19 Derogation extending the timeline established to achieved milestones and fulfil conditions.</p> <p>The year 1 surveillance was presented with evidence that meets year 1 and the first part of the year 2 milestone. Namely: <i>With support from the client, develop an action plan to address the gaps identified from the review presented in the year 1 surveillance. With emphasis on any systemic weaknesses in the national MCS system and addressing significant risks of deficient practices relating to onboard observers and compliance monitoring.</i></p> <p>The year 2 surveillance audit focuses on the amended milestone that arose from the expedited audit. MFMR are tasked to independent evaluation to determine the 'operational independence' of the SB National Observer Program and data collected therein. MFMR engaged an external consultant to conduct a thorough third-party review of the Solomon Islands National Observer Program (SBOB). This review has been conducted by MRAG Asia</p>

	<p>Pacific. A draft report has been presented to MFMR and this is currently being reviewed. It will identify any gaps/shortcomings in the SBOB compared with the PIRFO standard and provide recommendations to address these. This contracted work should fulfil the broader MCS review milestone. We have evidence in the form of correspondence from the consultant that the review has been undertaken and that industry stakeholders were interviewed as part of the review. We have not seen the review itself and MFMR has yet to sign off on the review's findings and recommendations. Consequently, it is premature to expect a response from MFMR and any associated actions that build on the actions already taken as part of the internal review of the SBOB. However, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that an independent review to demonstrate whether the domestic observer program has the operational independence to ensure the integrity of the information gathered for MCS processes for SB domestic tuna vessels fishing in SB archipelagic waters and EEZ has been undertaken and findings and recommendations are now being considered by MFMR. We anticipate that a review of MFMRs response and actions as a result of the report's findings will be an important element of the year 3 surveillance audit.</p>
<p>Status of Condition</p>	<p>Open and on-target.</p>

5.3 Re-scoring Performance Indicators

All original rationales in the scoring tables below, including references to sections and tables, are from the Public Certification Report available on the assessment's MSC Track a Fishery webpage: <https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/solomon-islands-skipjack-and-yellowfin-tuna-purse-seine-and-pole-and-line/@@assessments>

PI 3.1.2		The management system has effective consultation processes that are open to interested and affected parties The roles and responsibilities of organisations and individuals who are involved in the management process are clear and understood by all relevant parties		
Scoring Issue		SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
a	Roles and responsibilities			
	Guide post	Organisations and individuals involved in the management process have been identified. Functions, roles and responsibilities are generally understood.	Organisations and individuals involved in the management process have been identified. Functions, roles and responsibilities are explicitly defined and well understood for key areas of responsibility and interaction.	Organisations and individuals involved in the management process have been identified. Functions, roles and responsibilities are explicitly defined and well understood for all areas of responsibility and interaction.
	Met?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rationale				
<p>The WCPF Convention (Article 23 - Obligations of members of the Commission) details functions, roles and responsibilities of member states and the principal functional committees formed under the Commission (e.g. Scientific Committee, Technical and Compliance Committee). Commission Conservation and Management Measures also explain requirements for sharing information, meeting obligations, conservation measures, and applying appropriate levels of surveillance and enforcement.</p> <p>At the sub-regional level, there are extensive, regular formal and informal consultation processes at the PNA, and FFA levels, including consultation with bilateral partners and domestic stakeholders. At the PNA and national levels, organisations and individuals involved in the management process have been identified, with functions, roles and responsibilities explicitly defined and well understood. This also applies for both the FFA, and for scientific processes via the SPC.</p> <p>At the domestic level, the Solomon Islands MFMR has set up legislated arrangements to consult with stakeholders through its Fishery Advisory Council (FAC), which provides advice to the Minister to guide decision making. These processes have been designed to both seek and accept information. Despite the fisheries act making provision for the FAC, there was no evidence that the FAC has met in recent years. However, in the fourth surveillance audit, MFMR informed the assessment team that the FAC was reconstituted in May 2020 with nominations for membership being reviewed prior to the Group being re-formed.</p> <p>The Solomon Islands' peak Tuna industry consultative group, TIASI, also acts as an important conduit for information flow to industry from government and the regional management agencies, and also for fishing industry advice back to government and related agencies. TIASI representatives also attend WCPFC and other key regional meetings. The social and cultural importance of tuna to local people is well recognized in the Convention, is the essence of arrangements under the PNA, and is also a key area of focus within Solomon Islands fisheries legislation, including the Solomons Tuna Management Plan.</p>				

Evidence was provided showing that the Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC) is now constituted and meeting regularly. The FAC is established by the Fisheries Act (2015) and is mandated to provide advice to the Minister to guide decision making. Its processes are designed to both seek and accept information with clear and transparent operating guidelines established in fisheries regulation. Members are appointed by the Minister and include representatives from other government agencies, NFD (Industry), the Forum Fisheries Agency and WorldFish (WorldFish is an international, non-profit fisheries and aquaculture research and innovation organization). Functions, roles, and responsibilities are explicitly defined and well understood for all areas of responsibility.

There is ongoing use of local knowledge via contributions of WCPFC members to the range of commission processes, including plenary and subordinate committees and working groups. The WCPFC management system demonstrates consideration of this information, including explanations of the use of member scientific information in preparation of stock assessments and other scientific processes and reports.

In summary:

- Organisations and individuals involved in the management process have been identified. Functions, roles and responsibilities are generally understood meeting SG 60.
- Organisations and individuals involved in the management process have been identified. Functions, roles and responsibilities are explicitly defined and well understood for key areas of responsibility and interaction meeting SG 80.
- Organisations and individuals involved in the management process have been identified. Functions, roles and responsibilities are explicitly defined and well understood for all areas of responsibility and interaction meeting SG 100.

b	Consultation processes			
	Guide post	The management system includes consultation processes that obtain relevant information from the main affected parties, including local knowledge, to inform the management system.	The management system includes consultation processes that regularly seek and accept relevant information, including local knowledge. The management system demonstrates consideration of the information obtained.	The management system includes consultation processes that regularly seek and accept relevant information, including local knowledge. The management system demonstrates consideration of the information and explains how it is used or not used.
Met?	Yes	Yes	No	

Rationale

The WCPFC formal annual meeting follows annual meetings of the formal sub-committees (SC, the TCC and the Northern Committee). There are also extensive, regular formal and informal consultation processes through the PNA, FFA and other regional & international fora and at national levels. Other organisations have access to all the main management bodies as formal observers or informally. These processes seek and accept information and demonstrate consideration of the information. Scientific reports are generally very transparent with respect to the information being used, and how and why it is used, or not used. In general, information provided for other management processes such as MCS information and how this is used to inform management decision making, is less transparent.

This also appears to be the case for some aspects of PNA recommendations and decision making; for example

the PNA's VDS system has been criticized for lack of transparency about how effort limits are determined and applied. This should also be considered in the operating context of such decisions. They are often part and parcel of efforts to ensure national interests – or sub-regional interests – are met in the context of WCPFC and Flag State negotiations on fishing access conditions.

For consultation processes, the overarching regional and sub-regional management system regularly seeks, accepts, and considers information, including local knowledge. Solomon Islands domestic consultation processes regularly seek and accept relevant information, including local knowledge and the management system demonstrates consideration of the information obtained.

in summary:

- The management system includes consultation processes that obtain relevant information from the main affected parties, including local knowledge, to inform the management system meeting SG 60.
- The management system includes consultation processes that regularly seek and accept relevant information, including local knowledge. The management system demonstrates consideration of the information obtained meeting SG 80.
- The management system includes consultation processes that regularly seek and accept relevant information, including local knowledge. The management system demonstrates consideration of the information however there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the management system explains how it is used or not used. SG 100 is not met.

c	Participation			
	Guide post		The consultation process provides opportunity for all interested and affected parties to be involved.	The consultation process provides opportunity and encouragement for all interested and affected parties to be involved, and facilitates their effective engagement.
	Met?		Yes	Yes

Rationale
<p>This Scoring Issue considers the extent to which consultation processes ensure interested parties can participate in decision making. It is considered at the regional level (WCPFC), and sub regional and domestic levels.</p> <p>The WCPFC has a comprehensive governance structure that provides for Members, Participating Territories and Cooperating Non-members. It also allows observers (intergovernmental and non-government) to participate in meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, including the SC, the TCC and the Finance and Administration Committee (although they are restricted from some sections of some of these meetings). All relevant Small Island Developing States are members or participating territories and additional access and support is provided through the participation of the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency. Attendance at Commission and related meetings is comprehensive, and logistic and financial support is provided to ensure attendance, meaningful involvement and interaction in the cooperative management.</p> <p>Participation in PNA meetings is open to Nauru agreement parties, to FFA members and observers, including industry partners and NGOs, on application to the PNA Secretariat.</p> <p>Solomon Islands fisheries legislation and subordinate policy include arrangements to give effect to management</p>

priorities and initiatives needed as a result of WCPFC deliberations and processes, including development of new compliance and management measures. There is also active participation in Forum Fisheries Agency and PNA meetings and other processes. These opportunities are also generally available to other stakeholders including TIASI, and local and international environment NGO's.

Evidence was provided showing that the Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC) is now constituted and meeting regularly. The FAC is established by the Fisheries Act (2015) and is mandated to provide advice to the Minister to guide decision making. Its processes are designed to both seek and accept information with clear and transparent operating guidelines established in fisheries regulation. Members are appointed by the Minister and include representatives from other government agencies, NFD (Industry), the Forum Fisheries Agency and WorldFish (WorldFish is an international, non-profit fisheries and aquaculture research and innovation organization). Copies of FAC agendas and meeting notes were provided as evidence that consultation is occurring and there is an opportunity for all interested parties to be involved.

Evidence was also presented of regular consultation with the TISAI and of invitations to stakeholders to attend and participate in bilateral and multilateral discussions at the national and regional level (PNA and WCPFC meetings and its subsidiary bodies). Collectively the consultations processes of MFMR and the FAC provides opportunity and encouragement for all interested and affected parties to be involved and facilitates their effective engagement.

In summary:

- The consultation process provides opportunity for all interested and affected parties to be involved meeting SG 80.
- The consultation process provides opportunity and encouragement for all interested and affected parties to be involved, and facilitates their effective engagement meeting SG 100.

References

WCPFC, SC and TCC meeting records; WCPFC Rules of Procedure; Banks et al. 2011; Medley and Powers 2015; MFMR FAC Minutes, Morison and McLoughlin 2015, Morgan et al 2018

Draft scoring range and information gap indicator added at Announcement Comment Draft Report

Draft scoring range	≥80
Information gap indicator	Information sufficient to score PI

Overall Performance Indicator scores added from Client and Peer Review Draft Report

Overall Performance Indicator score	90
Condition number (if relevant)	

PI 3.2.2	The fishery-specific management system includes effective decision-making processes that result in measures and strategies to achieve the objectives, and has an appropriate approach to actual disputes in the fishery		
Scoring Issue	SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
a	Decision-making processes		

Guide post	There are some decision-making processes in place that result in measures and strategies to achieve the fishery-specific objectives.	There are established decision-making processes that result in measures and strategies to achieve the fishery-specific objectives.	
Met?	Yes	Yes	

Rationale

At the WCPFC level, decision-making processes are open, seek to apply the precautionary approach and use the best available information and are well documented. Consensus is the general rule for decision-making by Commission Members during the annual meetings. If consensus cannot be reached; voting, grounds for appealing decisions, conciliation, and review, are all part of the established decision-making process, as described in Article 20 of the Convention. The decision-making processes, including development of CMM's, are operationalised through the processes of the Scientific Committee, the Technical and Compliance Committee and the Commission itself.

As an operational level example, WCPFC's 2018 Annual Summary Report for the Technical and Compliance Committee provides an update on working group (FAD IWG) progress to develop Draft Guidelines for Biodegradable and Non-entangling FADs. Draft guidelines from SC14 (2018) were presented to the FAD-IWG along with additional information from SPC. A report and further recommendations are expected to be tabled at WCPFC15 (WCPFC TCC Annual Summary Report, 2018). Most recently ISSF, working collaboratively with WCPFC and its sub-committees, have released a *Guide to Non-entangling and [Biodegradable FADs](#)*⁴¹, providing detailed guidance on constructing biodegradable FAD rafts and tails. The ISSF note that the FAD related research projects associated with these initiatives have initiated [large-scale deployments of more than 2,000 biodegradable FADs](#) in the Indian and Eastern Pacific Oceans to test different materials and constructions.

More generally, information used to inform decision making is published via WCPFC and related processes, although some details are not readily available. Conservation and Management Measures are binding, but WCPFC Resolutions are non-binding, with all management measures applying equally inside EEZ's and on the high seas.

PNA also has well-established decision-making processes which have resulted in measures and strategies contributing to, and in important respects, underpinning effective management of the WCPO purse seine fisheries. PASAI (2013) reports that for most PIP jurisdictions examined, decision making is aided through the use of SPC/WCPFC reports.

Domestically, The Solomon Islands Tuna Management and Development Plan provides clear policy guidance and consistent direction across the range of Solomon Islands' tuna fisheries. It covers waters from 3 nautical miles (NM) out to the 200NM Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), including archipelagic waters. The TMDP does not apply directly to waters inside 3NM as these are managed by villages and provincial level officials (through customary ownership rights).

Development of management measures and strategies to achieve fishery-specific objectives are established, as are those related to data collection and review, including stock assessment processes.

In summary:

- There are some decision-making processes in place that result in measures and strategies to achieve the fishery-specific objective meeting SG 60.
- There are established decision-making processes that result in measures and strategies to achieve the fishery-specific objectives meeting SG 80.

b Responsiveness of decision-making processes

Guide post	Decision-making processes respond to serious issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take some account of the wider implications of decisions.	Decision-making processes respond to serious and other important issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions.	Decision-making processes respond to all issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions.
Met?	Yes	Yes	No

Rationale

As outlined above, WCPFC decision-making processes allow consideration of serious and important issues through inter-sessional scientific and MCS working groups and committees (e.g. the SC and TCC) and annually at the Commission meeting. A recent example is CMM 2018-01 providing for a transitional management regime (pending development of a formal harvest strategy) that ensures the sustainability of bigeye, skipjack, and yellowfin tuna stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.

Deliberations and advice/decisions from the working groups and Commission are relatively transparent with the rationales explained in working group reports tabled to the annual meeting. Summary details are generally provided in annual MCS summary reports, and in summary level country reports for members.

Specific details about timeliness of decision-making are less obvious, however the WCPFC decision-making framework has generally delivered targeted CMMs and strategies to address sustainability issues and specific objectives in the purse seine fishery relatively promptly in an RFMO context.

The PNA has established effective decision-making processes which respond to issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation. All PNA members have tuna management plans that are applied at the national level. The PNA management system is underpinned by a fishery information system, the Fisheries Information Management System (FIMS) which provides ready access to timely data. PNA members make use of the services provided by both SPC and FFA to identify and respond to important issues.

At the domestic level, the Solomon Islands Fisheries Management Act 2015, in addition to requiring the implementation of WCPFC CMMs, specifically requires under Section 5 (c) that “management measures shall be based on the best scientific evidence available to maintain or restore stocks at levels capable of producing sustainable yield, as qualified by relevant environmental and economic factors including fishing patterns, the interdependence of stocks and relevant international standards; “and in section 5 (h) that, “complete and accurate data and information concerning fishing activities and fisheries resources shall be collected and, as appropriate, shared in a timely manner.”

Evidence was presented of domestic Solomon Island decision making processes taking into account and responding to serious and other important issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions. . The Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC) is now constituted and meeting regularly. The FAC is established by the Fisheries Act (2015) and is mandated to provide advice to the Minister to guide decision making. Recent agenda items included discussions about the status and proposed updates to:

- MFMR Compliance system.
- Vessel Monitoring System.
- Observer program.
- Tuna fisheries management, compliance and development.

Evidence was also presented of MFMR engaging with stakeholders in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner to develop its response to draft documents produced by the WCPFCs FAD Management Options Intersessional Working Group addressing the stepwise introduction of biodegradable FADs.

In summary:

- Decision-making processes respond to serious issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take some account of the wider implications of decisions meeting SG 60.
- Decision-making processes respond to serious and other important issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions meeting SG 80.
- There is insufficient evidence to conclude that decision-making processes respond to all issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions therefore SG 100 is not met.

c	Use of precautionary approach			
	Guide post		Decision-making processes use the precautionary approach and are based on best available information.	
	Met?		Yes	
Rationale				
<p>Assessment of this Scoring Issue is focused on management decisions and the management approach both at the WCPFC and sub regional level; and domestically. WCPFC processes result in development and implementation of CMM's and the PNA and Flag States give effect to implementation and manage this.</p> <p>The WCPFC Convention, in recognition of UNFSA requirements, requires that Members, Participating Territories and Cooperating Non-members of the Commission, directly and through the Commission, apply the precautionary approach. WCPFC decisions are also required to be based on the best scientific information available per the WCPF Convention text. The Commission through its annual meetings and inter-sessional processes, supports this objective.</p> <p>For the PNA, Banks et al. (2011) concluded in the initial MSC assessment that the best available information is used for decision- making, albeit with a lack of clarity in the links between decisions on the VDS and WCPFC scientific and stock assessment processes. An MSC assessment condition was then set in relation to this issue. The 2nd surveillance audit for the PNA fishery (Scott & Stokes, 2013) examined progress against this condition and concluded that the Client Action Plan had sufficiently addressed this shortcoming and that SG 80 requirements are met for that fishery (Blyth-Skyrme et al. 2017). Blyth-Skyrme et al. (2017) indicate that the PNA process, both within their own systems as well as the conditions set by the previous MSC certification, has been responsive to these opportunities and has evolved positively. Analysis of the inter-play between PNA and WCPFC processes and decisions also supports this conclusion (Miller et al. 2014).</p> <p>While the precautionary approach has not been explicitly adopted by the PNA, member commitments to the WCPFC demonstrate an implicit commitment to the precautionary approach in management of the purse seine fishery. Recognition of the need for a precautionary approach is made explicit as part of the Solomon Islands overarching National Fisheries Policy 2019-2029 (strategic policy objective 2. for offshore fisheries). Adoption of the precautionary approach is also explicit in both the TMDP, and the related Baitfish Management Plan.</p> <p>At the regional, sub-regional and domestic level, there is evidence that decision making uses the precautionary approach and the best available information, meeting SG80.</p>				

d	Accountability and transparency of management system and decision-making process			
	Guide post	Some information on the fishery's performance and management action is generally available on request to stakeholders.	Information on the fishery's performance and management action is available on request, and explanations are provided for	Formal reporting to all interested stakeholders provides comprehensive information on the fishery's performance and

			any actions or lack of action associated with findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring, evaluation and review activity.	management actions and describes how the management system responded to findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring, evaluation and review activity.
	Met?	Yes	Yes	No

Rationale

Regionally, the WCPFC is responsible for effective management and acts as the primary fisheries management “decision making” entity on behalf of members and co-operating non-members. Papers and reports from WCPFC plenary sessions, the SC and the TCC are also published formally, and are publicly available on the Commission’s website. These papers and reports provide a generally high level of transparency, demonstrating the development of positions on conservation and management issues; and showing how stakeholder contributions including scientific and other information are used to inform management actions. For example, these processes contribute to the development of various Commission CMM’s, which are implemented at the national level and monitored for effectiveness via WCPFC processes. Members’ progress, and major issues in relation to these measures, are evaluated and reported annually via the Part 1 Annual Country Reports to the Commission.

These Part 1 country reports provide information on fisheries, research and statistics during the preceding calendar year. Part 2 reports are also provided each year summarizing management and compliance issues and performance since the previous report; although these are not publicly available. It is not clear if these reports represent all of the relevant information used to inform decision-making. There is also no formal, detailed explanation linking the information provided to any decisions that results.

In an international context it is recognized that it is very difficult to give full explanations for all decisions, since this might undermine matters of national interest for members, and/or multi-lateral co-operation. Decisions are very often negotiated outcomes with the trade-offs not always apparent.

At the domestic level, evidence was presented demonstrating that the Solomons MFMR makes information available during development of policies, management plans and subordinate legislation and during the development of input to regional level positions associated with meetings of the PNA, FFA and WCPFC and its subsidiary bodies. There are established stakeholder consultation processes and evidence that inputs from these processes are used in the development of policies and positions taken to regional and sub-regional meetings. At the higher level this is a key role of the Fishery Advisory Council, The FAC advises the Minister and make recommendations at the request of the Permanent Secretary on matters relating to fisheries conservation, management, development, and sustainable use. Detailed minutes of FAC meetings are recorded by Secretary and provide rationales for FAC recommendations and are available to interested parties, on request. The minister’s response to FAC recommendations is provided to FAC Chair in writing when not adopted and responses are available to interested parties, on request. The FAC has been reconvened and minutes of 2023 FAC meetings, providing details and rationale for recommendations, were made available.

In summary:

- Some information on the fishery’s performance and management action is generally available on request to stakeholders meeting SG 60.
- Information on the fishery’s performance and management action is available on request, and explanations are provided for any actions or lack of action associated with findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring, evaluation and review activity meeting SG 80.
- There is insufficient evidence to conclude that formal reporting to all interested stakeholders provides comprehensive information on the fishery’s performance and management actions and describes how the management system responded to findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring, evaluation and review activity, therefore SG 100 is not met.

e	Approach to disputes			
	Guide post	Although the management authority or fishery may be subject to continuing court challenges, it is not indicating a disrespect or defiance of the law by repeatedly	The management system or fishery is attempting to comply in a timely fashion with judicial decisions arising from any legal challenges.	The management system or fishery acts proactively to avoid legal disputes or rapidly implements judicial decisions arising from legal challenges.

		violating the same law or regulation necessary for the sustainability for the fishery.		
	Met?	Yes	Yes	No

Rationale

The WCPFC management and decision-making process is collaborative, serving to develop and implement management arrangements, and monitor member compliance. WCPFC Members, Participating Territories and Cooperating Non-members are party to all decisions at the WCPFC through ongoing participation in the SC, the TCC, and WCPFC annual meetings. Disputes/disagreements are typically resolved either during the iterative development of new management measures, including CMM’s, or for more formal matters via negotiation at WCPFC annual meetings.

The Commission has a consensus-based decision-making process, with provision for a two-chambered voting process requiring a 75% majority in both chambers if all efforts to reach a decision by consensus have been exhausted. As established in 3.1.1 b. the WCPFC dispute resolution mechanism is set out in Article 31 of the Convention. Essentially, this Article implements the dispute settlement arrangements established in the UNFSA/UNCLOS and binds all WCPFC Members to those arrangements whether or not they are Parties to the UNFSA.

At the national level the Solomon Islands government has established a Fisheries Appeals Committee through the Fisheries Management Act 2015. The appeals committee is established to review decisions on licensing and any substantive decision of the MFMR Director taken in the performance or exercise of his or her functions, powers and duties under the Act.

There no evidence readily available about current circumstances or cases to illustrate the extent to which the fishery and/or management systems could or would respond, in a timely way, to outcomes of a legal dispute.

In summary:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Although the management authority or fishery may be subject to continuing court challenges, it is not indicating a disrespect or defiance of the law by repeatedly violating the same law or regulation necessary for the sustainability for the fishery therefore SG 60 is met. ■ The management system or fishery is attempting to comply in a timely fashion with judicial decisions arising from any legal challenges meeting SG 80. ■ There is insufficient evidence to conclude that the management system or fishery acts proactively to avoid legal disputes or rapidly implements judicial decisions arising from legal challenges, therefore SG 100 is not met. 	
References	
Banks et al. 2011, Blyth-Skyrme et al. 2017, Medley & Powers 2015, Miller et al. 2014, Scott & Stokes 2013, WCPF Convention, MFMR FAC Minutes, Morison and McLoughlin 2015; Morgan et al. 2018	
Draft scoring range and information gap indicator added at Announcement Comment Draft Report	
Draft scoring range	60-79
Information gap indicator	Information sufficient to score PI
Overall Performance Indicator scores added from Client and Peer Review Draft Report	
Overall Performance Indicator score	80
Condition number (if relevant)	

6 Appendices

6.1 Evaluation Processes and Techniques

6.1.1 Site Visit

Monday 31 July (Sunday 30 July, USA)	Participants (remote meeting)
<p><u>Remote opening meeting with Tri Marine</u> <i>9:00am-10:00am Honiara (3:00pm-4:00pm US Pacific)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Audit plan: Review and confirm meetings ▪ Conditions: Brief overview of conditions and progress for both fisheries ▪ Logistics: Discussion of on-site Solomon Islands details 	<p>Tri Marine</p> <p>SCS assessment team</p>
Monday 31 July (Sunday 30 July, USA)	Participants
<p><u>Meeting with MFMR (Principle 3)</u> <i>10:00am-12:30pm Honiara (4:00pm-6:30pm US Pacific)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ P3 longline fishery conditions: Condition 10 (consultation and roles and responsibilities) Condition 11 (decision making processes) ▪ P3 purse seine and pole and line fishery conditions: Condition 7 (consultation and roles and responsibilities) Condition 8 (decision making processes) Condition 9 (monitoring, control, surveillance) ▪ Pacific longline assessment: Discussion topics specific to Taiwanese flagged vessels chartered to fish in SI EEZ (see list of topics below) 	<p>Solomon Islands Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources</p> <p>SCS assessment team</p>
Lunch	
<p><u>Meeting with MFMR (Principle 2)</u> <i>1:30pm-4:00pm Honiara (7:30pm-10:00pm US Pacific)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ P2 longline fishery conditions: Conditions 5 through 7 (bait) Conditions 8 and 9 (ETP species) ▪ P2 purse seine and pole and line fishery conditions: Condition 5 (shark finning) Condition 6 (ETP species) 	<p>Solomon Islands Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources</p> <p>SCS Assessment Team</p>

Tuesday 1 August (Monday 31 July, USA)	Participants
<p>Meeting with Tri Marine/NFD (Principle 2 and 3) <i>9:00am-12:00pm Honiara (3:00pm-6:00pm US Pacific)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ P3 longline fishery conditions ▪ P3 purse seine and pole and line fishery conditions ▪ P2 longline fishery conditions ▪ P2 purse seine and pole and line fishery conditions 	National Fisheries Development Limited SCS assessment team
Lunch	
Tuesday 1 August (Monday 31 July, USA)	Participants
<p>Closing meeting with Tri Marine <i>1:00pm-2:00pm Honiara (7:00pm-9:00pm US Pacific)</i></p>	Tri Marine SCS assessment team

6.2 Stakeholder input

Table 8. ISSF stakeholder general comments

<p>HS Advocacy (WCPFC) At its December 2022 meeting, the WCPFC adopted a skipjack management procedure (harvest strategy), which will significantly improve their management efforts. This development will enable Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified fisheries to meet the 2023 deadline for implementing harvest strategy conditions. However, the WCPFC has prioritized the Harvest Strategy Work Plan for bigeye and yellowfin stocks, as outlined in their Harvest Strategy Work Plan document available at (https://meetings.wcpfc.int/node/18527). During the December 2022 meeting, the WCPFC postponed the decisions specified in the Work Plan for bigeye and yellowfin Tuna until 2024 (to adopt Target Reference Points - TRPs) and 2025 (to adopt a management procedure). ISSF urges the CAB to share the following specific actions with the client, as they are expected to contribute to meeting the existing conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Publicly support the high-level appeals for RFMOs developed by global NGOs that are participants in the NGO Tuna Forum (https://ngotunaforum.org/wcpfc-western-and-central-pacific-fisheries-commission/). In 2023, companies will have the opportunity to engage in other direct RFMO advocacy tactics to demonstrate market support for specific tuna sustainability asks. In 2023, NGO participants in the NGO Tuna Forum reached out to market partners with these opportunities. 2) Advocate for accelerated progress on the adoption and implementation of Harvest Strategies and Harvest Control Rules for yellowfin and bigeye stocks in the WCPFC, such as through continued direct engagement with national delegations. Once the WCPO MSC Alignment Group is reactivated, ISSF encourages the client fishery to participate in the Group. 3) The Client should advocate to the flag state delegations of the fishery and all other parties associated with the fishery at WCPFC to adopt in 2023 management measures for skipjack that are consistent with the Management Procedure adopted by WCPFC in 2022 and to accelerate the development and adoption of an updated skipjack management procedure that automatically implements the outcome of the harvest control rule included in the management procedure 4) The Client should advocate to the flag state delegations of the fishery and all other parties associated with the fishery at WCPFC to take a strong public position on advancing harvest strategies, including developing management procedures for yellowfin, bigeye and South Pacific Albacore, as part of the deliberations WCPFC will 	<p>References included into the main comments</p>	<p>The assessment team thanks the stakeholder for these detailed comments. The stakeholder requests that the team passes along its comments to the client/fishery. We have included the comments in the surveillance year 3 report, the client has read them as part of the report review process and acknowledged receipt of them.</p>	<p>Accepted (condition on target)</p>
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<p>undertake that year, including making proposals for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advancing the MSE work and developing management procedures for bigeye and yellowfin. • Adopting Target Reference Points and continue to develop management procedures for bigeye and yellowfin • Accelerating development of a harvest strategy for South Pacific albacore that considers entire South Pacific in operating models <p>5) Have meetings, calls or other direct contact with all other relevant WCPFC delegations where the client fishery has business interests to advocate for the adoption of Harvest Strategies including HCR and monitoring strategies for yellowfin, bigeye and South Pacific albacore.</p> <p>6) Publicly support ISSF Position Statements that contain detailed asks to the WCPFC on Harvest Strategies and Harvest Control Rules for yellowfin, bigeye and South Pacific Albacore in 2023 as well as future meetings, and document that support (e.g. by submitting a letter or some other communication citing the Position Statement).</p> <p>7) Support technical work of the WCPFC as well as capacity workshops on Management Strategy Evaluation in the region so as to increase the leverage of WCPFC members for the discussion and adoption of robust Harvest Strategies and HCRs.</p> <p>8)The Client should advocate to the flag state delegations of the fishery and all other parties associated with the fishery at WCPFC to adopt a new, stronger measure for tuna conservation that includes improved FAD management provisions, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and implement science-based limits on FAD deployments and/or FAD sets • Adopting a timeline for transitioning to 100% biodegradable FADs • Requiring the provision of near real-time FAD position and acoustic biomass records data for scientific use • Developing and adopting a fully transparent FAD-recovery policy • Developing and adopting a FAD marking scheme, including requiring the marking of the buoy and the FAD structure • Developing and adopting clear rules for FAD ownership and stronger rules for FAD buoy activation and deactivation. <p>9) Additionally, advocate and urge the WCPFC on the following points towards the adoption on Electronic Monitoring:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In 2023, adopt minimum standards for an EMS program and a timeline for implementation by 2025. 2. Require 100% observer coverage (human and/or electronic) in industrial tuna fisheries, including all those engaged in at sea transshipment, by 2024. 			
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10) Advocate for and urge the WCPFC to:

- In 2023, accelerate the work of the Transshipment Working Group and amend its current at-sea transshipment measure in line with best practices (ISSF 2023-06: Transshipment: Strengthening Tuna RFMO Transshipment Regulations)
- Develop electronic reporting standards for transshipment observers or providers through the EM/ER Working Group

The fishery should elect to transition to the new MSC standard 3.0 immediately. Transitioning to the new standard will also entail the adoption of other sustainability practices of key importance that ISSF is currently advocating for in Purse Seine tuna fisheries, such as:

- Requirements for preventing and reducing the impact of lost FADs
- Higher levels of monitoring and surveillance.
- Management of ETP impacts.

For more information about the new standard:

<https://www.msc.org/species/tuna/what-msc-fisheries-standard-version-3-means-for-tuna>

<p>ETP management</p> <p>ISSF has previously addressed this matter during the prior surveillance audit (SA) and wishes to emphasize once again its significance. At the PCDR stage, ISSF highlighted the alarming mortality rate of silky sharks occurring at the point of discard for the purse seine UoA. The report, unfortunately, lacks any mention of safe handling and release techniques being effectively implemented by the fishery.</p> <p>Although the CAB's recommendation is appreciated, ISSF advocates for this matter to be incorporated as a binding condition and requests that future reports should include details on how these techniques are being implemented and their effectiveness in reducing shark mortality. As suggested in earlier comments, the causes for the high rates of shark mortality should also be investigated.</p> <p>ISSF urges the fishery under assessment to adopt of measures to reduce shark bycatch (e.g. developing and implementing a Code of Good Practices for bycatch) and suggests the fishery further develops measures to ensure that silky shark mortality is reduced.</p> <p>ISSF also encourages the purse seine fisheries to further test and develop shark and rays release techniques from the deck (with a special focus on big individuals) and to identify the tools/tactics used to the safe release of sharks (hoppers, stretchers, release ramps, etc.).</p> <p>We urge the fishery to place extra effort in reducing post-release mortality rates for all non-retained species, which are ultimately keys elements to determine that the strategy is working and that the fishery does not hinder their rebuilding or recovery of these species. The success of the partial strategy in improving survival rates of accidentally caught non target and ETP species is dependent on well designed and implemented handling and release techniques.</p> <p>Recent research on silky shark handling and release techniques, as well as post-release mortality, has been conducted by an MSC-certified tuna fishery in the Indian Ocean. The study demonstrated that when safe handling and release best practices are employed, post-release survivorship can increase by up to 40%. Similar work could be undertaken by the UoC.</p> <p>Maitane Grande, Iñigo Onandia, José Maria Galaz, Jon Uranga, Nerea Lezama-Ochoa, Jefferson Murua, Jon Ruiz, Igor Arregui, Hilario Murua, Josu Santiago. Assessment on accidentally captured silky shark post-release survival in the Indian Ocean tuna purse seine fishery. IOTC-2022-WGFAD03-09. https://iotc.org/documents/WGFAD/03/09</p>	<p>References included into the main comments</p>	<p>The team agrees with the stakeholder, and we are investigating the high rates of shark mortality. We provide more information below on this.</p>	<p>Accepted (condition on target)</p>
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<p>Clarifications on ISSF's PVR</p> <p>In the stakeholder section replies, the report states: "We note no conditions were raised for management measures for silky sharks in this fishery because all vessels are on ISSF's Proactive Vessel Register (PVR) and therefore undergo training (and are audited) regarding best handling practices of ETP species." However, this statement may be misleading as the PVR only confirms that vessels have received training on best practices but does not verify effective implementation during fishing operations. The fishery must ensure the actual application of these best practices and consider raising a condition to address this matter accordingly.</p> <p>The report indicates the client has installed CCTV cameras on board the vessels. These systems could potentially be used to verify implementation of some best practices. It would be useful if more information on the system could be collected during the surveillance audit.</p>	<p>References included into the main comments</p>	<p>The team discussed silky shark management strategies with the fishery. Reported rates of silky mortality are caused by a number of factors independent of whether individuals are released in a timely manner. At times release is impossible because of the position of the net, at other times released animals tend to re-enter the net due to a number of fishing activity specific factors. The client drew a picture for the team detailing some of these issues. While we feel that management measures are implemented by the UoC, these activities may need to be re-developed given actual fishing scenarios. This is something that the team will continue to investigate in this and other purse seine fisheries.</p>	<p>Accepted (condition on target)</p>
<p>Shark finning</p> <p>A condition has been raised in relation to this topic. Based on the following statement "the assessment team concluded that given the inconsistent information regarding ETP interactions (shark finning) MFMR had not demonstrated an ability to enforce relevant management measures" ISSF is concerned on the effectiveness of the action plan which is limited on improving the current observer debriefing process. In addition to the action plan, ISSF urges the fishery to adopt the following recommendations included in ISSF Technical Report 2022-02:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a binding, public shark-finning policy requiring MSC participant fleets to land 		<p>We have passed these comments onto the fishery and client. The assessment team shares the stakeholder's concern regarding this issue. In the surveillance year 2 rationale for Condition 5 we focus on EM data</p>	<p>Accepted (condition on target)</p>

retained sharks with their fins naturally attached. This is required by ISSF Conservation Measure 3.1(c) on Sharks since 31 December 2022.		analysis, the existence of shark finning educational material, and crew briefings, along with the debriefing process.	
<p>Vessel list Please include the most recent list of vessels in the UoC at the time of the audit.</p>		We have included an up-to-date UoC vessel list in the report. The 5 UoC purse seine vessels are: Solomon Opal, Solomon Emerald, Solomon Jade, Solomon Ruby, Solomon Pearl	Accepted (condition on target)
<p>Vessels in Other Sustainability Initiatives (VOSI) audited actions. ISSF suggests the fishery adds its various FAD management strategies among the initiatives being audited so they can be verified before the corresponding ISSF measure enters into force. Report also states: "Tri Marine has also installed CCTV cameras on all domestic purse seine vessels covered under the UoC to monitor onboard activity, including ETP interactions. This is not being used by MFMR for any management needs at the moment but will be made available upon request." The ISSF Vessels in Other Sustainability Initiatives (VOSI) list now contains a column that verifies if a vessel has installed and are using electronic monitoring systems (EMS). If the vessels in the Client UoA are participating in any of these initiatives, they are encouraged to apply to be listed on the VOSI to have these initiatives verified and recognized. Electronic monitoring systems (EMS) must meet the minimum system specifications and standards outlined in ISSF Technical Report 2022-09. ISSF prepared electronic monitoring (EM) vendors list. This list is available online: https://www.iss-foundation.org/download-monitor-demo/download-info/electronic-monitoring-vendors-and-data-submission-information/ The VOSI Audit Manual is also available at the above link. It details what information is required to have your vessel listed and to have these practices verified. For UoA vessels already listed on the VOSI, they can submit information on its vessel(s)'s participation in EM outlined above to auditor MRAG-Americas via e-mail to Oleg Martens (oleg.martens@mragamericas.com).</p>	References included into the main comments	Thank you for this information. We have passed it along to the client/fishery.	Accepted (condition on target)

<p>AFAD management</p> <p>ISSF recommends that the report includes a description of the fishery's aFAD management strategy. A comprehensive aFAD management plan would comprise data collection and analysis to address aFAD impacts on habitat and P2 species, including cumulative effects with other tuna fisheries. Such aFAD management plan could be informed by, and developed to comply with all best practices identified in, ISSF's Technical Report 2023-10 on Recommended Best Practices for FAD Management In Tropical Tuna Purse Seine Fisheries. Moreover, the fishery's aFAD management plan could be further informed by ISSF Technical Report 2018-19A Workshop for the Reduction of the Impact of Fish Aggregating Devices' Structure on the Ecosystem.</p> <p>Please see below the 5 elements of aFAD management that ISSF considers to be of utmost importance, as well as some practical examples the fishery could adopt to implement them. For further examples and recommendations, please see ISSF Technical reports 2023-10 and 2020-11.</p> <p>Moreover, ISSF recommends that the client fishery develops a public aFAD Management Plan in the line of what is required by ISSF Conservation Measure 3.7 Transactions with Vessels or Companies with Vessel-Based FAD Management Policies (entered into force June 2021).</p> <p>(1) Comply with flag state and RFMO reporting requirements for fisheries statistics by set type.</p> <p>Provision of WCPFC of routine FAD fishery statistics (e.g. activity on aFADs, number of active aFADs, etc.) as per WCPFC CMMs (e.g. 2018-01, 2013-05) requirements is essential to assess and manage the impacts of FAD fisheries. ISSF suggests that information on aFAD fishery statistics as well as information on observer data for vessels operating with aFADs achieve RFMO observer coverage requirement. If electronic monitoring is used, follow best-practice minimum standards (Murua et al., 2022).</p> <p>(2) Support science-based limits on the overall number of aFADs used per vessel and/or aFAD sets made by:</p> <p>Commit to limiting the deployment of aFADs per vessel, the permissible number of aFADs used per vessel, and manage the deployment distance between aFADs.</p> <p>Support the development of aFAD marking and ownership rules so that the responsibility and accountability for aFADs is clearly established, including rules for aFAD sharing. Supporting the adoption of meaningful FAD closures that will mitigate impacts of FAD fishing on target tuna stocks.</p> <p>(3) Use only non-entangling aFADs to reduce ghost fishing</p> <p>A new ISSF non- entangling and biodegradable FADs guide was published in August</p>	<p>References included into the main comments</p>	<p>The assessment team appreciates these comments and the information they contain. We have passed them along to the fishery/client. We will use this information when assessing aFAD management during the fishery's reassessment.</p>	<p>Accepted (condition on target)</p>
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<p>2019 and, thus, ISSF encourages fisheries to commit to the new definition of fully non-entangling aFAD (without any netting). This will allow following the best practice of Technical Paper 2023-10 to commit to using only non-entangling aFADs. Additionally, ISSF has updated CM 3.7 requiring the use of non-entangling FADs (with no netting) entering into force in April 2024.</p> <p>The mass of the submerged component should be reduced as much as possible; which is particularly important for the aFAD anchoring system.</p> <p>(4) Mitigate other environmental impacts due to aFAD loss including through the use of biodegradable aFADs and aFAD recovery policies.</p> <p>ISSF recommends the FAD management plan incorporates data collection on the position of aFADs and be accessible to scientists or RFMOs in order to quantify their impacts on coastal environments, develop models of risk deployment areas, and measure the effectiveness of the initiatives taken to mitigate the loss and abandonment of aFADs</p> <p>ISSF suggests the fishery under assessment works towards an early adoption of biodegradable aFADs in the Pacific Ocean and the construction and deployment of simpler, smaller biodegradable aFADs.</p> <p>(5) For silky sharks and elasmobranchs in general implement further mitigation efforts</p> <p>ISSF urges the fishery under assessment to adopt of measures to reduce shark bycatch (e.g. developing and implementing a Code of Good Practices for bycatch) and suggests the fishery further develops measures to ensure that silky shark mortality is reduced (e.g. directing more effort to school sets and decrease aFAD sets, avoiding small sets or with high bycatch/tuna ratio, releasing sharks from the net when safe and practical, implementing live and safe release of sharks (and rays) from the deck). ISSF also encourages FAD fisheries to further test and develop shark and rays release techniques from the deck (with a special focus on big individuals) and to identify the tools/tactics used to the safe release of sharks (hoppers, stretchers, release ramps, etc.).</p> <p>We urge the fishery to place extra effort in reducing post-release mortality rates for all non-retained species, which are ultimately keys elements to determine that the strategy is working and that the fishery does not hinder their rebuilding or recovery of these species. The success of the partial strategy in improving survival rates of accidentally caught non target and ETP species is dependent on well designed and implemented handling and release techniques.</p> <p>Recent research on silky shark handling and release techniques and post release mortality has been carried out by an MSC certified tuna fishery in the Indian Ocean and similar work could be undertaken by the UoC.</p>			
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<p> https://www.iss-foundation.org/research-advocacy-recommendations/our-scientific-program/scientific-reports/download-info/issf-2023-10-recommended-best-practices-for-fad-management-in-tropical-tuna-purse-seine-fisheries/ https://www.iss-foundation.org/issf-downloads/download-info/issf-2020-11-recommended-best-practices-for-tropical-tuna-purse-seine-fisheries-in-transition-to-msc-certification-with-an-emphasis-on-fads/ Maitane Grande, Iñigo Onandia, José Maria Galaz, Jon Uranga, Nerea Lezama-Ochoa, Jefferson Murua, Jon Ruiz, Igor Arregui, Hilario Murua, Josu Santiago. Assessment on accidentally captured silky shark post-release survival in the Indian Ocean tuna purse seine fishery. IOTC-2022-WGFAD03-09. https://iotc.org/documents/WGFAD/03/09 </p>			
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8 Template information and copyright

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Table 9: Template version control

Version	Date of publication	Description of amendment
1.0	08 October 2014	Date of issue
2.0	17 December 2018	Release alongside Fisheries Certification Process v2.1
2.01	28 March 2019	Minor document change for usability
2.1	25 March 2020	Minor document change for usability
2.2	26 October 2022	Release alongside Fisheries Certification Process v2.3

A controlled document list of MSC program documents is available on the MSC website (<https://www.msc.org/for-business/certification-bodies/supporting-documents>).

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