

Summary of Actions

Annual Review – February 2022

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This annual review concerns the Pacific Ocean tuna – longline (Sky Vision) Fishery Improvement Project. The fishery targets north and south Pacific albacore (Thunnus alalunga), western and central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) and eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) bigeye (T. obesus), and WCPO yellowfin and EPO (T. albacares) tuna. The longline vessels are flagged to China, Fiji, Tuvalu ,Cook Islands and Vanuatu and fish on the WCPO and EPO high seas and within the Vanuatu, Fiji, Tuvalu and Cook Islands Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs).

Similar to the six-month review in August 2021, due to the Covid-19 situation in Fiji, where the vessels in the FIP majorly land their fish, it has been difficult to address some workplan actions, particularly regarding Principle 2 and skippers training. Likewise, the Covid-19 situation in many of the flag states where many on the ground reviews are needed to address Principle 3 workplan actions has been challenging. The FIP is working with these challenges and working on workplan actions that can be conducted remotely.

Not withstanding the situation outlined above, the FIP has been able to progress on the workplan and produce a stage 4 result via the implementation of an ETP management policy. This policy chiefly outlines best practice for skippers and crew to follow while fishing. Currently, it is being investigated if skipper training can be provided by personnel already based in Fiji, where ISSF skipper training can further provide best practice information to skippers that supplement the ETP management policy.

For Principle 1, the FIP has also worked on stage 3 results via advocated its position via public statements on the IATTC meeting in August and the WCPFC meeting towards the end of 2021. These position statements were sent via email to respective delegations/contacts and letters can be found on the FIP profile.

Further on Principle 1, and what would now be harmonised with many other FIPs, during the year (2021) the FIP was able to update MSC PIs due to in 2020 a benchmark assessment for EPO yellowfin was conducted that served as basis for a risk analysis of stock status relative to recruitment impairment. This benchmark assessment allows EPO yellowfin to meet SG ≥80 for PIs 1.1.1, 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 (updated scores from SG 60-79 to SG ≥80) and was reflected in the August 2021 update with an update to the FIPs pre-assessment.

Lastly, to conform to the new FisheryProgress social requirements, the FIP has also conducted the self-evaluation of risk criteria and uploaded this to the platform.

1.1 – Stock Status and Rebuilding for EPO Bigeye and Yellowfin Tuna

- 1.1a: Lobbying IATTC and flag state to conduct re-building scenarios. Independent scientific assistance to support the IATTC in developing YFT re-building scenarios.
- 1.1b: Lobbying IATTC and flag state for robust, comprehensive YFT rebuilding strategy developed to enable fishing to be at MSY levels.
- 1.1c: Lobbying IATTC and flag state to adopt the above rebuilding strategy.
- 1.1d: Re-evaluation of the re-building plan at end of Yr. 3. Short-term technical assistance to the IATTC. Fishing mortality (F) is <F_{MSY}
- 1. Sla Having a rebuilding timeframe is specified for the EPO bigeye and yellowfin stock that is the shorter of 20 years or 2 times its generation time.

This action has two goals associated with it.

 SIb – There is evidence that the rebuilding strategies are rebuilding the stock, or it is likely based on simulation modelling, exploitation rates or previous performance that they will be able to



1.1e: Review Stock status relative to reference points annually	rebuild the stock within the specified timeframe so that SG80 is met.
	Both require large levels of advocacy to the IATTC and flag state to conduct rebuilding scenarios and build robust, comprehensive rebuilding strategies to enable fishing to be at MSY levels.

Update as of August 2021

IATTC: The FIP sent a position statement to the IATTC ahead of the annual meeting advocating for stock status and rebuilding for EPO bigeye and yellowfin tunas. This position statement was also adapted into a letter and sent via email from the Client fishery to the Vanuatu and Chinese Governments, asking for these flag states to advocate needs at the IATTC meeting.

Along with this, For Principle 1, in 2020 a benchmark assessment for EPO yellowfin was conducted that served as basis for a risk analysis of stock status relative to recruitment impairment. This benchmark assessment allows EPO yellowfin to meet SG \geq 80 for PIs 1.1.1, 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 (updated scores from SG 60-79 to SG \geq 80)

Evidence:

- IATTC position statement and letters
- Pre-assessment update document

Update as of February 2022

As this Workplan action concerns just the IATTC of EPO bigeye and yellowfin, with the position statement to IATTC being provided in the last update, no further action has been taken on this action or its tasks. Of note, the workplan and tasts associated with EPO yellowfin rebuilding has now been complete as stock rebuilding is now scored as N/A for MSC PI 1.1.2 (Stock rebuilding) because it achieves SG80 for 1.1.1 (stock status). So while this action is partially complete (50% complete due to yellowfin advocacy now not required), no tasks can be close-out due to improvements still needed to be made with EPO bigeye stock status and rebuilding.



1.2 - Develop a well-managed harvest strategy for South Pacific albacore, East and Western and Central Pacific bigeye and East and Western and Central Pacific yellowfin.

- 1.2a: Monitor and report on the WCPFC workplan for the adoption of HCRs and monitor and report on, and if appropriate to participate with, existing advocacy activities such as the NGO Tuna Forum.
- 1.2b: Engage with RFMO scientists and CCM delegations to advocate for Management Strategy Options (MSEs) for controlling ALB, YFT and BET tuna harvest developed.
- 1.2c: Hold meetings with delegation members with the following purpose:
 - i. Continuing to emphasise the importance of the harvest strategy process and YFT stock rebuilding to the FIP industry partners and other fisheries in the Eastern Pacific Ocean.
 - ii. Proposing practical ways that the governments could support the process, e.g. via liaison to support capacity-building with Flag state, or other activities. Reporting regularly to the delegations so that the they are kept informed of current ideas and proposals at RFMO and within Flag state where the industry partners have links.

Request that delegates support HS at RFMO meetings.

- 1.2d: RFMO briefing Document on Harvest Strategies (2020). Prior to RFMO plenary 2020 produce a formal briefing document regarding the status of the harvest strategy / stock rebuilding for each stock, the objective of RFMO, the position of key players and likely upcoming proposals, and the outcome preferred by the FIP, to brief the governments and other stakeholders.
- 1.2e: Position paper for a harvest control strategy and HCRs. Prepare a position paper to submit to plenary in support of making significant progress in developing a harvest strategy and control rules for all three species, including rebuilding for the YFT. Work with the governments delegations to obtain their support for the paper, as well as that of other member states as far as possible.
- 1.2f: Promote best practice for harvest strategy and stock rebuilding. Promote through the governments a process of consultation to inform RFMO members about best practice for harvest strategy and stock rebuilding, to build consensus towards support of proposals of management measures prior to RFMO Sessions
- 1.2g: Continue to advocate for progression of harvest strategy development. Intersessional discussions to progress the harvest strategies between like-minded RFMO members and organisations, and formally at the relevant RFMO meetings.

The fishery should detail how the performance of the harvest strategy is currently monitored, reviews and where necessary amended in response to the state of the stock. A harvest strategy can then be developed from this review.

This action has two tasks associated with it

- 1. To address SIa, explicit harvest strategies for tuna are to be designed.
- 2. To address SIb, a formal evaluation procedure for the harvest strategies is to be put in place for tuna.

Update as of August 2021

We have sent IATTC advocacy/position statements to IATTC and Chinese and Vanuatu Authorities on behalf of the FIP detailing our asks and needs of for our fishery to move towards MSC assessment.

Evidence:

Advocacy letter to IATTC and letters to flag states (See Action 1.1)

Update as of February 2022

WCPFC: The FIP sent out position statements to the vessel flag states involved in the FIP ahead of the WCPFC annual meeting advocating the FIPs position on issues including: 1) new tropical tuna CMM, 2) Adopting



workplans for FAD management, 3) Adopting a CMM for EM programme and minimum standards for the use of EM in WCPFC fisheries, and, 4) Accelerate the remaining work to reform the at-sea transshipment CMM and the Compliance Monitoring Scheme. These letters were sent to delegations of China, Fiji, Cook Islands, and Vanuatu.

No position statement was sent to WCPFC because the FIP had been advised from some RFMOs that the correct protocol was to go through flag state delegations.

This work contributed to workplan action 1.2 tasks 1.2b, 1.2e and 1.2f and 1.2g

Evidence.

WCPFC Advocacy letters to flag states (China, Fiji, Cook Islands, Vanuatu).



1.3 - Develop Harvest Control Rules (HCRs) and tools for albacore, bigeye and yellowfin tuna

1.3a: Building regional consensus on the need for robust HCRs. Intersessional discussions on HCRs and tools between like-minded IATTC members and organisations and formally at meetings at each IATTC meeting.

Options for harvest control rules (HCRs) and tools for managing YFT and BET tuna harvest developed.

1.3b: Ensure a holistic implementation HCR development. Monitor work plan development for the implementation of Res. C-17-02 (or other proposal for a harvest strategy) (see action 1.2) to ensure the development, evaluation, and agreement of a HCR for the three species, alongside the development of the tools required for implementation. Options for harvest control rules (HCRs) and tools for managing YFT and BET tuna harvest developed.

1.3c: If necessary, provide an independent paper on the scope and needs of HCRs. Conduct a study to identify candidate HCRs and tools for all three species that meet the objective of action 3 for submission to the IATTC. Will include an evaluation of current (candidate) HCRs and tools for their effectiveness, and the main uncertainties identified and considered.

Options for harvest control rules (HCRs) and tools for managing ALB, YFT and BET tuna harvest developed.

1.3d: On-going engagement with Flag state and IATTC over HCR development. Discussions held regarding the assessment of HCRs and tools for all stocks, including how to address the assessment's findings have occurred through inter-sessional discussions and formally through the IATTC meeting process. To include Intersessional discussions on HCRs and tools between like-minded IATTC members and organisations and formally at meetings at each IATTC meeting.

HCR options considered and discussed inter-sessionally and formally though IATTC meeting processes. IATTC record reflect discussions and progress.

The main uncertainties for different HCR options are identified.

1.3e: Independent evaluation of HCR robustness and effectiveness. Conduct further study to evaluate progress made in developing HCRs, focussing on their potential effectiveness in reducing exploitation levels when required, and their ability to account for uncertainties that might affect their implementation.

HCRs for all three species discussed and agreed within IATTC and formally adopted as part of the harvest strategy implementation approach.

The main uncertainties are considered and discussed inter-sessionally and formally though IATTC meeting processes. IATTC records reflect discussions and progress.

The seasonal closure is likely to be sufficient to control the exploitation rate to ensure that the PRI is not reached, meeting SG60 for SIc. However, it cannot be argued to be likely to achieve the exploitation rates set out in the HCR (i.e. the reference points). If there is a stock recruitment relationship, which is a common assumption in many other tuna stock assessments, then effort would have to be reduced significantly.

The FIP must undertake an initial review of the tools which are used to set the exploitation rate in the fishery as determined by the HCRs. This we will then be used to amend the tools in use to control the exploitation rate as defined by the HCR. These should then be implemented and periodically reviewed.

This action has two tasks associated with it.

- 1. To address SIb, HCRs are determined to be robust to main uncertainties for bigeye.
- 2. To address SIc, HCR tools are determined to be effective in achieving the exploitation levels under the HCRs for bigeye and yellowfin.

Update as of August 2021

We have sent IATTC advocacy letters/position statements on behalf of the FIP Chinese and Vanuatu Authorities and the RFMO detailing our asks and needs of our fishery to move towards MSC assessment (robust HCR's for albacore, bigeye and yellowfin).

Evidence:

• Advocacy letter to IATTC and letters to flag states(See Action 1.1)

Update as of February 2022



As this Workplan action concerns just the IATTC of EPO albacore, bigeye and yellowfin, with the position statement to IATTC being provided in the last update, no further action has been taken on this action or its tasks



2.1 – ETP Species Outcome, Management and Information

2.1a: Collect fishery specific data from fisheries and states and analyse this to better understand the impacts on ETP species and any evidence that the measures are being implemented or reviewed.

Collect and provide catch, discard and interaction data relating to the Fishery UoA. The data should be sufficient to determine performance against all relevant PIs including ETP and others such as P3 catch locations.

- 2.1b: Use this information to build an ETP species management plan, including materials for on board vessels on best practices and buy any equipment needed, go to consultation if necessary.
- 2.1c: Collect evidence from FIP participants that shark finning is not taking place and validate the public shark finning policies.
- 2.1d: Deliver skipper training to teach best practices, safe handling and release, species identification and other elements consistent with ISSF guidance.
- 2.1e: Engage with RFMOs and flag state regarding improving the management of ETP species.
- 2.1f: Enhance scientific observer coverage of FIP participants through engaging with the human observer schemes or Electronic Monitoring. The aim is to ensure a representative sample of catch, discard and species interaction data is collected, reviewed and shared with relevant fishery authorities. The first milestone for this task is completion of an analysis of FIP vessels relating to human and electronic observers. This report should recommend scientifically robust levels of human and electronic observer coverage and review and include associated costs. Subsequent milestones for this task will be defined once the analysis has been carried out. They should include target levels of observer coverage and review across the fleets.
- 2.2g: If necessary, carry out an Ecosystem Risk Assessment to determine if the fishery is making negative direct and indirect impacts and if so how to address them
- 2.2h: Develop monitoring programmes to address any data gaps concerning ETP species.

Due to the uncertainties highlighted in the pre-assessment and the needs of the FIP, one of the initial and immediate tasks is to obtain UoA logbook and observer data. This will be the first step to give an accurate score for ETP PIs. The data will be collected in coordination with the vessel owners and authorities. The data will be used to build a robust picture of the fishing mortality as well as species interactions and on which to base FIP activities related to attaining the MSC Standard. Should any additional data collection needs be identified then solutions to these (for example via EM) will be recommended and also subsequently added to the workplan.

Understanding the species encountered will then enable the FIP to build a ETP management plan to ensure best practices are being used. This plan could include delivering skipper training etc. There will be some quantitative information through some logbook entries but particularly from observer records. Longline fisheries are historically poorly observed compared with the purse seine operations and even more so on the high seas (although it should be noted that some flag state are well-above the minimum 5% observer coverage for longline fleets, for example Fiji with 40% of fleet trips observed and American Samoa with 20% of the same). At best there will be information adequate to support measure to manage ETP species, but no higher score can be awarded, especially without fisheryspecific data for this assessment.

Update as of August 2021

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it has been difficult to be in direct contact with vessels for vessel data collection. The FIP is actively working on this and will update fisheryprogress once we have received and assessed this data.

The twelve vessels in the FIP have signed the Shark Finning and Turtle Policy through their representatives.

Evidence:

Shark Finning and Turtle Policy signature documents.

Update as of February 2022

Similar to the last update in August and mentioned above, the continuation of the Covid-19 pandemic is has been difficult to be in direct, iterative contact with vessels for vessel data collection. This is an on going effort and with borders opening it is hopeful further data specific to the fishery can be obtained soon.

To make progress where progress can be made, the FIP has implemented a stage 4 result by adopting an ETP management policy. The policy outlines best practices for skippers and crew to use. This ETP management policy has been based off ISSF best practice for longline tuna fisheries, and used data from



similar FIPs and MSC certified fisheries. Once fishery specific data can be obtained, then this policy and its guidelines within can be updated to be more comprehensive, for example if there is a specific species interaction that warrants greater attention in management. The FIP is working towards providing skipper training in person to complement the ETP management policy when it is safe and practical to do so. This works on workplan action 2.1 and task 2.1b

Evidence:

ETP management policy



3.1 Legal and/or customary framework for China

- 3.1a: Conduct a review of fishery dispute mechanisms of China with input from relevant stakeholders and produce a report of findings. Any new information found will be used to update this workplan, as necessary.
- 3.1b: Conduct a review of customary fishery rights of China with input from relevant stakeholders and produce a report of findings. Any new information found will be used to update this workplan, as necessary.
- 3.1c: Hold regular stakeholder meetings to develop dispute mechanism where absent. Minutes should be kept of each meeting, topics discussed, outcomes and appropriate timelines for implementation.
- 3.1d: Hold regular stakeholder meetings to develop a mechanism to integrate and observe customary rights into the management system where absent. Minutes should be kept of each meeting, topics discussed, outcomes and appropriate timelines for implementation.
- 3.1e: Ensure appropriate transparent and effective dispute resolution is enshrined in legislation.
- 3.1f: Ensure appropriate dispute resolution and respect for rights is enshrined in legislation.

No evidence could be found on its transparency nor effectiveness (of the legal and/or customary framework) so an initial fact finding is required to understand this, if not, advocacy must take place.

Update as of August 2021

Without being able to travel to China and conduct stakeholder interviews due to Covid-19 it has been a challenge to conduct this review. Thus, we are currently looking into consultants with the relevant experience/on the ground in China to conduct this review so we can formulate next steps in accordance of the workplan.

Update as of February 2022



3.2 Consultation, Rol	les and Responsibilities	for China and Cook Islands

- 3.2a: Review the degree to which all roles and responsibilities within the fishery are clearly defined. Consult with industry and other stakeholders to ascertain how well the functions and responsibilities are understood.
- 3.2b: Identify all relevant stakeholders to the fishery.
- 3.2c: Ensure all agencies within the management framework clearly identify the role publicly.
- 3.1d: Develop a strategy to ensure and encourage wider engagement and representation in consultations.
- 3.1e: Ensure the fishery management plan clearly identifies which departments will undertake which roles in the fishery.
- 3.1f: Periodically review the efficacy of the consultation process.

No evidence could be found on Consultation, Roles and Responsibilities for China and Cook Islands, so an initial fact finding is required to understand this, if not, advocacy must take place.

Update as of August2021

Without being able to travel to China or the Cook Islands and conduct stakeholder interviews due to Covid-19 it has been a challenge to conduct this review. Thus, we are currently looking into consultants with the relevant experience/on the ground in China and the Cook Islands to conduct this review so we can formulate next steps in accordance of the workplan.

Update as of February 2022



3.3 Decision-making processes for China and Cook Islands

- 3.3a: Conduct review of the decision-making processes in China and Cook Islands to fully understand gaps identified in preassessment. The reviews should include:
- 1. Is the process transparent, timely & evidence-based?
- 2. Does the decision-making processes respond to serious and other important issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation?
- 3. Does it include the precautionary approach and use of best science available?
- 4. Input from management authorities and other relevant stakeholders.
- 5. If there are/have been any legal challenges and how these have been addressed by the management system and/or fishery.

A report should be produced for relevant and interested stakeholders and should detail the findings and identify the gaps.

- 3.3b: Define decision-making processes in the management plan. The process shall include, if necessary, how will evidence her
- 1. Included (from research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation).
- 2. Stakeholders be consulted.
- 3. Utilised from best-available information to ensure the precautionary approach
- 4. Outcomes be communicated (information should be made 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).
- 5. Process for addressing legal challenges if necessary.
- 6. Precautionary approach in management plan.
- 3.3c: Hold consultations with relevant stakeholders to incorporate above into decision-making processes. Multiple consultations may need to be held.
- 3.3d: Implement the decision-making process, ensuring stakeholder are consulted and informed (for example via email, website, formal report etc.) best-available information (from RFMOs, research etc.) and the precautionary approach are included.
- 3.3e: Review the efficacy of the decision-making process.

The action potentially covers four scoring issues from PI 3.2.2. This could be a product of the remote pre-assessment that was conducted, which led to precautionary scoring against the MSC Fisheries Standard. Due primarily to limited information on the management process, we are unable to determine if the precautionary approach is to be applied in this fishery.

Update as of August 2021

Without being able to travel to China or the Cook Islands to conduct stakeholder interviews due to Covid-19 it has been a challenge to conduct this review. Thus, we are currently looking into consultants with the relevant experience/on the ground in China and the Cook Islands to conduct this review so we can formulate next steps in accordance of the workplan.



Update as of February 2022

The same as the August 2021 update.

3.4 Compliance and enforcement for China, PNA and Vanuatu

- 3.4a: Review MCS systems in place in the fisheries. This should include:
- 1. MCS plans and strategies.
- 2. Information on MCS mechanisms in place (VMS, logbooks, landed catch documentation etc.).
- 3. Interviews with enforcement personnel.
- 4. Records of previous infringements, penalties, sanctions and/or court proceedings.
- 5. Any previous reviews or evaluations of MCS systems.

A report should be produced for relevant and interested stakeholders and should detail the findings and identify the gaps.

- 3.4b: Develop plan to combat the gaps identified in the national MCS systems based on findings of report in.
- 3.4c: Hold consultations with relevant stakeholders to discuss implementation and potential adjustments to plan. Meeting minutes should be produced after each consultation to allow topics, actions, opinions, difficulties and progress to be recorded and monitored for all affect parties.
- 3.4d: Implement finalised plan where necessary, allocating the necessary resources to ensure successful employment of improved MCS system.
- 3.4e: Review effectiveness of MCS system implemented and adjust where necessary. A report should be produced and supplied to stakeholders and consultations re-opened if necessary (i.e., 9c).

Based on the information available, sanctions to deal with non-compliance exist and there is some evidence that they are applied, SG60 requirements are therefore met. However, there is not sufficient evidence to conclude they are consistently applied and provide an effective deterrence. The FIP will need to provide this evidence and if lacking work with authorities to improve enforcement..

Update as of August 2021

Without being able to travel to China, Cook Islands (PNA or Vanuatu to conduct stakeholder interviews due to Covid-19 it has been a challenge to conduct this review. Thus, we are currently looking into consultants with the relevant experience/on the ground in China, Cook Islands and Vanuatu to conduct this review so we can formulate next steps in accordance of the workplan.

Update as of February 2022



3.5 Monitoring and management performance evaluation for China and Vanuatu

3.5a: Review fishery-specific management processes currently in place. Ascertain whether these systems are subject to internal and/or external review, the format, the areas already reviewed (tuna management plan, performance, decision-making, MCS, compliance to RFMO/international regulations etc.) and the frequency to which these occur.

A report will be produced for relevant and interested stakeholders and should detail the findings and identify the gaps.

- 3.5b: Develop plan to combat the gaps identified in the national fishery-specific systems based on findings of report.
- 3.7c: Hold consultations with relevant stakeholders to discuss implementation and potential adjustments to plan. Meeting minutes should be produced after each consultation to allow topics, actions, opinions, difficulties and progress to be recorded and monitored for all affect parties
- 3.7d: Implement finalised plan with binding commitment and requirements to undertake reviews where necessary, allocating the necessary resources to ensure regular internal and occasional external reviews from relevant bodies.
- 3.7e: Review effectiveness of review system implemented and adjust where necessary. A report should be produced and supplied to stakeholders and consultations re-opened if necessary.

The management system has internal processes to evaluate management performance. These include evaluations of policy, research, operations, compliance and enforcement. These are carried out on a regular basis. SG80 is therefore met for SIa.

There is no evidence of any external reviews, which is not to say that there have not been any. In the absence of information SG80 cannot be met for SIb. The action covers one scoring issue from PI 3.2.4. This could be a product of the remote preassessment that was conducted, which led to precautionary scoring against the MSC Fisheries Standard (SIb).

For Vanuatu, the lack of violations from the fleet reported by the Fisheries Division (only 20 minor infractions with 100% being resolved since 2014) leads to the conclusion that the sanctions are either effective and provide effective deterrence or insufficient to identify offenders. Observer reports from 2014 were the most recent that the Fisheries Division had available. The observer coverage was only 2.7% which is well below the 5% regional requirement. SG80 could not be awarded on this basis for Slc.

Update as of August 2021

Without being able to travel to China or Vanuatu to conduct stakeholder interviews due to Covid-19 it has been a challenge to conduct this review. Thus, we are currently looking into consultants with the relevant experience/on the ground in China and Vanuatu to conduct this review so we can formulate next steps in accordance of the workplan.

Update as of February 2022