



Pacific Longline Tuna FIP Position Statement for the 2020 WCPFC Commission Meeting

Drafted with agreement from all Pacific Longline Tuna FIP Participants
November 2020

The submission of this position statement is regarding the [Fishery Improvement Project](#) (FIP) currently being undertaken by Pacific Ocean Tuna Longline (Tunago) fishery. The fishery targets albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) and catches bigeye (*T. obesus*) and yellowfin (*T. albacares*). The pelagic longline vessels are flagged to China and Vanuatu and fish on the high seas in the Pacific. To find more information on the present FIP, please view the public Fishery Progress profile here: <https://fisheryprogress.org/fip-profile/pacific-tuna-longline>.

This FIP aims to meet the rising global demand for tuna in a sustainable manner by assuring catches do not exceed sustainable levels, promoting the ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management and strengthening policy and governance systems in the region. The end goal is to achieve certification under the [Marine Stewardship Council](#) Fisheries Standard by 2022.

As part of this FIP reaching MSC certification there are various actions which need to be undertaken which involve a range of different stakeholders. To ensure the FIP meets these objectives we need the support of the WCPFC and urge action at the WCPFC annual meeting this year on multiple topics laid out in this position statement.

Harvest Strategies

Firstly, we urge action at the WCPFC this year on the development of precautionary harvest strategies, including the adoption of harvest control rules, as the timeframes in the original agreed Harvest Strategy Work Plan have lapsed, this needs to be urgently addressed. The adoption of harvest control rules and harvest strategies are key Principle 1 conditions for MSC certified tuna fisheries. Addressing P1 elements are critically important to FIPs, as we look forward to seeking MSC certification.

- **Ask 1:** To endeavor to stick to the prescribed timetable for the development of management procedures (i.e. harvest control rules) for tropical tuna stocks that will ensure that they fluctuate around the Target Reference Points.

Monitoring, Control and Surveillance

Comprehensive observer coverage is critical to effective fisheries management, compliance monitoring, and independent verification of catch, effort, and species interactions (e.g., sharks, sea turtles and whale sharks). Although there is a 100% observer coverage requirement for purse seine vessels between 20N and 20S, information presented at SC15 revealed the actual coverage is about 85%. The FIP urges the WCPFC to:

- **Ask 2:** Require 100% observer coverage (human and/or electronic) for longline vessels, and all vessels engaged in at-sea transshipment, within four years to ensure effective enforcement.
- **Ask 3:** Adopt best practice e-monitoring and e-reporting standards, including for logbooks for purse seine vessels.
- **Ask 4:** Identify and sanction non-compliance with the existing minimum 100% purse seine vessel observer coverage requirements.
- **Ask 5:** Update the commission on the progress/results of CMM 2009-06 review and what amendments can be made presented to the Commission in 2020, and subsequently adopted.



Compliance

A strong compliance process improves fisheries management by holding members accountable for their implementation of agreed measures. The WCPFC has a work plan for strengthening the Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS), including the development of audit points, a risk-based framework and a scheme of responses to non-compliance. However, CCMs assessing their own compliance behind closed doors with little to no transparency is not consistent with best practice. The WCPFC is the only tuna RFMO that has a compliance assessment process that is closed to accredited observers. The WCPFC needs to accelerate the completion of the outstanding items in the work plan in CMM 2019-06 (replaced 2018-07), including enabling accredited observers to participate in the CMS process and developing of a scheme of responses to non-compliance. The FIP urges the WCPFC does the following:

- **Ask 6:** Set a specific timeframe for the adoption of audit points to clarify the Commission obligations assessed under the CMS, as well as the development of a checklist to be used by the proponents of any proposal to include a list of potential audit points for the consideration of the Commission.
- **Ask 7:** Progress, as a matter of urgency, the remaining items identified in the CMM 2018-07 and subsequently CMM 2019-06 work plan through the Intersessional CMS Working Group, including allowing accredited observers to attend CMS working group meetings.
- **Ask 8:** Disclose CCM's plans to address identified areas of non-compliance.
- **Ask 9:** Make public all non-sensitive elements of the Part II Report to ensure transparency of how CCMs' are implementing their obligations.

For any further information, please contact the FIP manager Tom Evans at t.evans@keytraceability.com.

Signed the Pacific Longline Tuna FIP – September 2020