
Progress Report

Fishery Improvement Project for the Republic of the Marshall Islands Locally-based Pelagic Longline Bigeye and Yellowfin Tuna Fishery

Available online at: <https://sites.google.com/site/wcpobetfip/> - Section 9 - Downloads

June 2018

The participants of the Fishery Improvement Project for the Republic of the Marshall Islands pelagic longline yellowfin and bigeye tuna fishery periodically produce reports to document progress in implementing activities and milestones identified in the project workplan. The progress report is presented in four sections. Section 1 presents a summary of all improvement project activities since the project's inception. Section 2 summarizes in-progress and planned future activities. Section 3 assesses project progress against the current workplan activities and milestones. And section 4 presents contemporary scores against each Marine Stewardship Council performance indicator, scores from the most previous progress report, and baseline scores from a 2013 MSC pre-assessment.

Please review the project website at <https://sites.google.com/site/wcpobetfip/home> as well as the FisheryProgress.org record for this FIP for the most current information, including background on the fishery, improvement project participants, reports from pre-assessments conducted against the Marine Stewardship Council standard, results of other public evaluations (SFP FishSource, MBAq Seafood Watch, various WWF program ratings, Safina Center), results from an ecological risk assessment, previous and current workplans, and materials from stakeholder consultations.

The FIP was launched in 2011 and started "stage 2" (a categorization of activities by the Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions, including when the FIP workplan was finalized and made public) in 2012. The project is designed to meet all elements of a 'comprehensive' FIP as defined by CASS, and has an overarching aim of addressing all deficiencies so that the fishery is able to pass an assessment against the MSC standard with a unit of assessment of western and central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) stocks of bigeye and yellowfin tunas, at which time the FIP will conclude and stakeholders will then focus on addressing all conditions of MSC certification.

The fishery is tentatively planned to enter full assessment against the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) fisheries standard in the second half of 2018. If the fishery is certified, then the FIP will either be concluded or amended to focus on units of assessment not covered by the MSC unit of certification.

1. Chronology of Project Activities

The following is a description of project activities since inception of the FIP in 2011.

- 2011 – FIP is launched by Sustainable Fisheries Partnership and Norpac Fisheries Export (The FIP originally included both the Federated States of Micronesia and Marshall Islands longline bigeye/yellowfin tuna fisheries; in 2013 the FIP scope was amended to include only the Marshall Islands fishery due to fleet redistribution).
- 2011 – Scoping is conducted to identify key stakeholders
- 2011 – FIP website is launched (<https://sites.google.com/site/wcpobetfip/>)

- 2011 – 2010 MSC pre-assessment report is made public via posting on the FIP website
- 2011 – A draft 2-year FIP Workplan is distributed to key stakeholders
- 2012 – A stakeholder consultation meeting is convened by SFP and Norpac
- 2012 – Initial 2-year workplan is adopted
- 2012 – FIP lead transitions from SFP to Norpac – the FIP is now industry-led
- 2012 – The regional fisheries management organization Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission adopts a formal limit reference point for bigeye and yellowfin tuna stocks. (This is documented in the meeting report for the WCPFC 9th commission meeting available at <http://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/WCPFC9-Summary-Report-final.pdf>, see paragraph 269, where WCPFC9 adopted SC8 para 298 recommendation, which was to adopt 20%unfishedSB for the 4 WCPO tropical tuna stocks) (this constitutes an SFP Stage 4 result – delivering improvement in policies and practices)
- 2013 – Informal alliance participating in the FIP expands to include Luen Thai Fishing Venture, Marshall Islands Fishing Venture, Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority, Costco, New England Aquarium, the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry Authority, Tampa Bay Fisheries, Save-on-Seafood, and the two founding organizations, Norpac and the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership.
- 2012/2013 – An ecological risk assessment was conducted in 2012, and published in 2013 (Gilman et al., 2013, available online <http://goo.gl/PKnLPr>), which established a benchmark for the fishery, identified opportunities for gear technology bycatch mitigation methods to address identified bycatch problems, and flagged data deficiencies. The findings from the ecological risk assessment were used in a second MSC pre-assessment (see below).
- 2013 – Based on the recommendations of the risk assessment study findings, the vessel owner Luen Thai Fishing Venture voluntarily removed all narrow J-shaped tuna hooks and replaced these with wider circle hooks. This result is improving the fishery by now using only best practice gear to reduce sea turtle bycatch (this constitutes an SFP Stage 4 result - fishing practice change to improve the fishery).
- 2013 –Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority trains observers with intent to resume onboard observer coverage of the domestically-based pelagic longline fishery in order to achieve or exceed the regional tuna RFMO requirement of 5% onboard coverage rate.
- 2013 – Norpac and SFP contract an MSC conformity assessment body (CAB) to conduct an updated and higher quality MSC pre-assessment; CAB finalizes the report in early December.
- 2013 – Norpac prepares a revised FIP scoping report and workplan for the period 2014-2018 with actions defined to address deficiencies in the fishery to achieve a level of sustainability consistent with an unconditional pass of the MSC standard based on findings of the MSC pre-assessment , actions to implement FIP processes as defined by the Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions (CASS) guidance, actions to provide for independent auditing of the FIP credibility, status and progress, and assess the traceability system (see Gilman, 2012– available online <http://goo.gl/c85Sw6>), measureable milestones and an associated budget.
- March 2013 - the catch sector Luen Thai Fishing Venture adopts a company policy banning the retention of sharks or fishing gear and methods to target sharks ([DOWNLOAD - https://sites.google.com/site/wcpobetfip/home/LTFV_shark_policy_Bilingual_R2.pdf?attredirects=0&d=1](https://sites.google.com/site/wcpobetfip/home/LTFV_shark_policy_Bilingual_R2.pdf?attredirects=0&d=1)). Thus, fishing practices were changed to improve the fishery.
- Dec. 2013 - Norpac distributed a draft FIP workplan, covering the period 2014-2018, to stakeholders.

- Feb. 2014 - Workplan for 2014-2018 is adopted
- March 2014 - Stakeholder consultation, Boston (side event to the seafood show)
- April – August 2014 Prepared materials for capacity-building ‘train-the-trainer’ program to enable Marshall Islands Ministry of Marine Affairs and Marshall Islands Fishing Venture staff to conduct longline fisher training, including in: (i) RMI longline rules, (ii) proper completion of Secretariat of the Pacific Community logbook forms, (iii) species identification training, to improve the quality of logbook data, and (iv) handling-and-release best practices for sea turtles, elasmobranchs (sharks and their relatives), cetaceans and seabirds. Training materials are posted at: <https://sites.google.com/site/seafoodcompaniestunamanagement/home/training-materials-for-longline-fishers>.
- October 2014: initial train-the-trainer workshop convened – See <https://sites.google.com/site/wcpobefip/home/october-2014-capacity-building-workshop> to access the workshop report and materials
- 2 Dec. 2014: Norpac participated in the 2nd in-person meeting of the western and central Pacific Ocean tuna MSC alignment group (see https://sites.google.com/site/seafoodcompaniestunamanagement/home/wcpo_tuna-p1_alignment)
- 20 Dec. 2014: second longline captain training workshop held in Majuro.
- Feb. 2015 – Trial of high definition video cameras are initiated on one Majuro-based longline vessel – to pursue formation of an electronic monitoring system for the fishery.
- March 2015 – The Nature Conservancy becomes a FIP participant.
- March 2015 – Planning begins to conduct a pilot project of an electronic monitoring system
- August 2015 – A report from an independent supply chain traceability audit and IUU risk assessment is completed (available from the downloads section of the FIP website)
- September 2015 – Marshall Islands government Part 1 report to WCPFC, published on the WCPFC website under the Scientific Committee 2015 meeting pages, documents catch sector compliance with binding conservation and management measures, including no retention of silky and oceanic white tip sharks, no use of shark lines, no use of wire leaders, and no shark finning (retaining fins and discarding the remaining carcass).
- October 2015 - FIP Participants signed a joint letter organized by the WCPO Tuna MSC Alignment Group sent to WCPFC CCMs – see Joint letter of 8 October 2015 submitted to WCPFC Members [DOWNLOAD](#)
- October 2015 – Fishery improves precautionary approach by planning implementation in 2016 of the PNA longline vessel day scheme, providing a new input control mechanism.
- December 2015 – SFP longline best practice guidance report, and other sources of information on best practices for pelagic longline tuna fisheries are posted to the FIP website (see downloads section, below) and distributed to FIP participants. Best practices were also distributed to captains and crew through capacity building training workshops (see downloads section, below).
- January 2016 - Participants prepare updated training materials for train-the-trainer workshops, and plan for a refresher workshop to be held in April 2016.
- April 2016: A train-the-trainer workshop was convened - the purpose of the workshop was to train Luen Thai Fishing Venture (LTFV) staff who in turn will train fishing base managers to instruct longline captains in methods to handle and release at-risk species, government longline rules, LTFV policy banning the use of gear designs and methods to target sharks

and banning the retention of sharks including shark fins, proper use of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community/Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency logbook form for pelagic longline fishers, and training in species identification to improve logbook entries. See the FIP website DOWNLOADS section for more information.

- May 2016: FIP participants contribute to development of a WCPO Tuna MSC Alignment Group workplan and development of a 2016 annual short-term position statement to push for improvements with sub-regional (PNA, FFA) and regional (WCPFC) management systems.
- Oct. 2016: All captains and crew of vessels participating in the FIP have completed training for calendar year 2016 (see Section 9 of the FIP website to download the 2016 training log).
- Oct. 2016: FIP participants contribute to the WCPO Tuna MSC Alignment Group's development of a list of highest priority achievements at the thirteenth regular session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC13) related to addressing deficits in harvest strategies – which individual participants of the Alignment Group are to raise to the attention of delegations to WCPFC (see Alignment Group website https://sites.google.com/site/seafoodcompaniestunamanagement/home/WCPO_Tuna_Alignment_Group for the harvest strategy priority actions).
- Dec. 2016: FIP participants attend meetings with coordinators of the WCPO Tuna MSC Alignment Group to discuss 2016 activities and plan 2017 activities, focusing on addressing harvest strategy deficits for WCPO tuna stocks. See https://sites.google.com/site/seafoodcompaniestunamanagement/home/WCPO_Tuna_Alignment_Group/links/21-may-2014-meeting-FIP-MSC-Aligning-P1 for the 2017 Alignment Group action plan.
- Dec. 2016 - During the 2016 annual session convened in December, WCPFC13 made some progress in implementing elements of the initial WCPFC harvest strategy workplan, and adopted a revised workplan. The WCPFC13 summary report is available at https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/draft%20summary%20report%20WCPFC13_clean%20circulated%20for%20CCMs%20and%20observers%20comments_complete%20V2_0.pdf and the updated WCPFC harvest strategy workplan is available at <https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/supplcmm-2015-04/updated-workplan-harvest-strategies-2016-2019-and-record-outcomes-wcpfc13>
- Jan. 2017 – The domestic management authority (MIMRA), TNC and LTFV begin an electronic monitoring (EM) pilot project. Satlink EM systems are installed on 6 LTFV vessels, and MIMRA staff are trained and begin to analyze EM data and enter the data into the national longline observer program database.
- Feb. 2017 – FIP participants contributed to developing an Alignment Group 2017 position statement, and co-signed the statement, which the WCPFC secretariat distributed to WCPFC parties on 14 Feb. – see <http://tinyurl.com/Align-group-2017>.
- May 2017 - All captains and crew of vessels participating in the FIP completed training for calendar year 2017 (see Section 9 of the FIP website to download the 2017 training log).
- July 2017 Electronic monitoring project is underway. See progress report on electronic monitoring project: https://sites.google.com/site/wcpobetfip/home/RMI_July2017_EM_prog_report.pdf?attredirects=0&d=1
- July 2017 - A revised workplan was developed and adopted in July 2017, and covers the 5-year period of 2017-2021. The workplan milestones and schedule under MSC principle 1 were updated to address changes in the status of stocks of the units of assessment, and were also updated so that they are based on the WCPFC conservation and management

measure (CMM) 14-06, *Conservation and Management Measure on Establishing a Harvest Strategy for Key Fisheries and Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean*, and suppl_CMM 2014-05, *Agreed Workplan for the Adoption of Harvest Strategies under CMM 2014-06* as updated in 2016 (see

https://sites.google.com/site/wcpobetfip/home/WCPFC_2016_updated_harvest_strategy_workplan.pdf?attredirects=0&d=1 for the current WCPFC harvest strategy workplan).

- Aug. 2017 - New stock assessment report for WCPO bigeye tuna is published (see <https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/SC13-SA-WP-05%20%5Bbet-assessment%5D%20REV1.pdf>) indicating that, based on new understanding on the stock structure, life history parameters, and recent recruitment, the stock is determined to not be overfished and overfishing not occurring.
- August 2017 - The 13th meeting of the WCPFC scientific committee met all milestones set out in the current WCPFC harvest strategy workplan (updated at WCPFC13, Dec. 2016). See <https://sites.google.com/site/wcpobetfip/home/Harvest%20strategy%202017%20SC%20milestone.pdf?attredirects=0&d=1> for a summary of how each harvest strategy workplan milestone for bigeye and yellowfin tuna have been met at SC13, and see https://sites.google.com/site/wcpobetfip/home/WCPFC_2016_updated_harvest_strategy_workplan.pdf?attredirects=0&d=1 for the current WCPFC harvest strategy workplan
- Dec. 2017 – WCPFC at their 14th regular session adopted a new tropical tuna measure, which increased bigeye tuna catch limits, established an intersessional working group to develop a unified shark measure for adoption in 2018, directed their Scientific Committee to consider options for expanding the sea turtle measure to include all pelagic longline fisheries, adopted a replacement seabird bycatch measure, adopted a measure on marine pollution basically emphasizing existing prohibitions under MARPOL Annex V, and other measures. See <https://tinyurl.com/WCPFC14-outcomes> and download at https://sites.google.com/site/wcpobetfip/home/WCPFC-press-release_Dec2017.png?attredirects=0&d=1 for a press release issued by the WCPFC secretariat's Executive Director and the WCPFC Chair summarizing the key outcomes of WCPFC14. And see the WCPFC14 meeting report at <https://www.wcpfc.int/meetings/wcpfc14>. And see <https://www.wcpfc.int/conservation-and-management-measures> for the new measures adopted in 2017 at WCPFC14.
- May 2018: A 27 May 2018 workshop co-hosted by The Nature Conservancy and the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership included (a) a presentation providing a case study bycatch assessment and management activities in the FSM FIP, including the skipper training program, compliance with a ban on shark retention and the use of shark lines and wire leaders, use of circle hooks and the electronic monitoring program; and (b) a presentation on moving from unintended cross-taxa conflicts to intentional tradeoffs by moving from piecemeal to integrated fisheries bycatch management. See the workshop agenda at <https://www.dropbox.com/s/bp7htb47v3r27x0/Workshop%20Program%20longline%20bycatch%20assmt%20mgmt%2027May2018.pdf?dl=0>.

2. In-Progress and Planned Future Activities

Captain training: Captains receive annual training in protected species handling/release and logbook reporting.

Electronic monitoring: The Nature Conservancy and MIMRA are conducting an electronic monitoring (EM) pilot project in the Marshall Islands. The pilot project aims to develop the institutional capacity of MIMRA, the domestic management authority, to manage an EM system. Satlink EM systems were installed on 6 LTFV vessels in early 2016 and Marshall Islands government office-based staff was trained, began analyzing the EM data, and began to have EM data contribute to the national observer program.

Independent FIP audit: An independent, in-person audit of FIP progress and status against the MSC standard will be conducted. This is required to be completed no later than September 2019, which is within 3 years of posting a record for the FIP on the FisheryProgress.org website (pers. comm., Albert Arthur, Reviewer, FisheryProgress.org, 20 Sept 2016).

3. Assessment against Workplan Activities and Milestones

Table 1 identifies the FIP workplan activities to address deficiencies and information gaps for MSC PIs found to not achieve a score of 80 or higher through an MSC pre-assessment, planned schedule for completion, milestones (expected outcomes) for each activity, and progress to date in implementing each activity and achieving milestones.

Table 1. Planned actions and milestones, and progress to date in implementing these activities and achieving expected outcomes, for the FIP for the Marshall Islands domestically-based longline tuna fishery.

Activity	MSC PIs	Milestones	Schedule	Progress
1. Harvest Strategies: Engage with WCPFC delegations and other relevant stakeholders in order to pursue having WCPFC adopt, implement and comply with robust WCPO bigeye and yellowfin tuna harvest strategies according to the schedule stipulated in WCPFC's Harvest Strategy Workplan	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 2.1.1, 2.1.2	a. WCPFC Scientific Committee (SC) provides advice on a range of performance indicators to evaluate performance of harvest control rules (HCRs) for WCPO bigeye and yellowfin tuna stocks b. SC reports on BET status following updated assessment and confirms that rebuilding is no longer required c. WCPFC agrees interim performance indicators to evaluate HCRs for WCPO bigeye and yellowfin tuna stocks d. SC provides advice on a range of target reference points (TRPs) for WCPO yellowfin tuna e. WCPFC adopts TRP for WCPO yellowfin tuna f. SC provides advice on a range of TRPs for WCPO bigeye tuna g. WCPFC adopts TRP for WCPO bigeye tuna h. SC provides advice on a monitoring strategy to assess performance against reference points for WCPO bigeye and yellowfin tuna stocks i. WCPFC agrees on a monitoring strategy to evaluate indicators of performance of HCRs against target and limit reference points for WCPO bigeye and yellowfin tuna stocks j. SC provide advice on a range of performance indicators to evaluate	a, b = Aug. 2016 c = Dec. 2017 d = Aug. 2018 e = Dec. 2018 f = Aug. 2019 g = Dec. 2019 h = Aug. 2019 i = Dec. 2019 j = Aug. 2019 k = Dec. 2019 l, m = Dec. 2020 n = Aug. 2021 o = Dec. 2021 p = Annually prior to WCPFC annual session	a = completed in 2017. See document MI-WP-03 of WCPFC SC13. Scott R., G. Pilling and J. Hampton. Performance indicators and monitoring strategies for Bigeye and Yellowfin Tuna compatible with candidate management objectives for the Tropical Longline Fishery - https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/MI-WP-03%20BET%20YFT%20Objectives%20indicators%20and%20monitoring%20strategies.pdf . And see the SC13 meeting report - https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/SC13%20Summary%20Report%20%5BDRAFT%5D-Distributed%20to%20Representatives%20%2813Sep2017%29.pdf . SC13 agenda item 5.1.2 – performance indicators and monitoring strategies - As requested by the Harvest Strategies Workplan, SC13 provided advice on a range of performance indicators to evaluate performance of harvest control rules for bigeye and yellowfin tuna fisheries. See the SC13 meeting report – url above.

		<p>performance of harvest control rules for WCPO bigeye tuna</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> k. WCPFC agree performance indicators to evaluate HCRs for WCPO bigeye tuna l. WCPFC develops a suite of candidate HCRs for both stocks m. WCPFC (i) agrees on a monitoring strategy to assess performance of candidate HCRs against reference points and management objectives and describe uncertainties (including with stock assessments and available data), and (ii) mandates SC to evaluate the performance of candidate HCRs based on the agreed management strategy evaluation method n. SC provide advice on performance of candidate HCRs against agreed MSE method for WCPO bigeye and yellowfin tuna stocks o. WCPFC considers advice on progress towards HCRs and tools for WCPO bigeye and yellowfin tuna stocks p. FIP leads contribute to preparation of annual position statement to WCPFC CCMs and signs and distributes the statement to the Marshall Islands government delegation to WCPFC 	<p>Following discussions in the small working group on management objectives at WCPFC13, and commensurate with the candidate performance indicators for the relevant fisheries, SC13 provided advice on the corresponding monitoring strategy to assess performance of harvest strategies. See the SC13 meeting report – url above.</p> <p>b = completed. See WCPFC SC13 document SA-WP-05: 2017. McKechnie S, G. Pilling, and J. Hampton. Stock assessment of bigeye tuna in the western and central Pacific Ocean. Rev 1. https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/SC13-SA-WP-05%20%5Bbet-assessment%5D%20REV1.pdf.</p> <p>SC13 agenda item 4.1.1.1.c. Reviewed the 2017 bigeye tuna stock assessment. See SC13 meeting report – url above.</p> <p>c = completed Dec. 2017. Documented in the summary report of WCPFC14 (available at https://www.wcpfc.int/meetings/wcpfc14, held in Dec. 2017). The commission “noted the SC13 advice that in the short-term it was seen as best practice to support a broad range of performance indicators”, and “noted the candidate performance indicators and monitoring strategies for bigeye and yellowfin tuna commensurate with</p>
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			<p>candidate management objectives for the Tropical Longline Fishery to be considered in the development of harvest strategies under CMM 2014-06," (WCPFC14 summary report).</p> <p>d – o: Are scheduled to be conducted by SC and the Commission according to the updated WCPFC harvest strategy workplan (current workplan is Attachment L to the WCPFC14 report, available online at https://www.wcpfc.int/meetings/wcpfc14).</p> <p>For example, for milestones d, e, f and g:</p> <p>d (SC advice on range of yellowfin TRPs) will be implemented in August 2018.</p> <p>e (WCPFC adoption of yellowfin TRP) The updated WCPFC harvest strategy workplan (current workplan is Attachment L to the WCPFC14 report, available online at https://www.wcpfc.int/meetings/wcpfc14) calls for bigeye and yellowfin TRPs to be adopted at the commission regular session in December of 2019 and 2018, respectively.</p> <p>f (SC advice on range of bigeye TRPs) will be implemented in August 2019.</p> <p>g (WCPFC adoption of bigeye TRP) - The updated WCPFC harvest strategy</p>
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				<p>workplan (current workplan is Attachment L to the WCPFC14 report, available online at https://www.wcpfc.int/meetings/wcpfc14) calls for bigeye and yellowfin TRPs to be adopted at the commission regular session in December of 2019 and 2018, respectively.</p> <p>p = annual ongoing. Through mid-2017 the FIP participants contributed to the WCPO Tuna MSC Alignment Group. The Group's 2017 position statement to WCPFC, which was co-signed by the FIP participants, is available online at https://sites.google.com/site/seafoodcompaniestunamanagement/home/WCPO_Tuna_Alignment_Group. The Group was dissolved due to donor cessation of funding in mid-2017. The FIP participants will start in 2018 to annually contribute to ISSF joint advocacy to WCPFC. The ISSF joint letters to WCPFC can be found at: https://iss-foundation.org/what-we-do/advocacy/joint-advocacy/</p>
<p>2 – Improved Monitoring: Maintain an annual observer coverage rate of ≥ 5% of trips through onboard human observers and electronic monitoring.</p>	<p>2.1.3, 2.2.1, 2.2.3, 2.3.1, 2.3.3</p>	<p>≥ 5% of trips are observed through human observers and/or electronic monitoring</p>	<p>Dec. 2017 and ongoing thereafter</p>	<p>Accomplished in 2016 and 2017. The onboard human observer coverage rate of vessels participating in the FIP during these 2 calendar years was 5.6% of trips in both 2016 and 2017 .</p> <p>The minimum required coverage rate under a binding Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission conservation and management measure is 5%) - see the observer</p>

				<p>placement forms at https://www.dropbox.com/s/q39orq0wb57n9pt/Republic%20of%20the%20Marshall%20Islands%20MIMRA%20observer%20placement%20form_2016.pdf?dl=0 and https://www.dropbox.com/s/3sy08f00pbixq0y/Log_2017_Marshall_Is_Longline_Observer-coverage.pdf?dl=0 and documented in Marshall Islands government 2017 Part 1 annual report to WCPFC – see https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/AR-CCM-13%20RMI%20PART%201%20Rev%201%20%2820%20July%202017%29_0.pdf. The RMI 2018 annual report to WCPFC is not yet available – it will be available prior to the August SC meeting.</p> <p>An electronic monitoring (EM) program, initiated in early 2017, continues this calendar year, with 5 vessels participating. See https://sites.google.com/site/wcpobetfip/home/RMI_July2017_EM_prog_report.pdf?attredirects=0&d=1.</p>
3 – Crew Training: Train captains in completion of logbook forms, species identification, prescribed methods to handle and release vulnerable species, government longline rules, and company rules.	2.1.3, 2.2.1, 2.2.3, 2.3.1, 2.3.3	<p>a. Annually each captain receives training in: (a) species identification; (b) handling and release best practices for turtles, sharks, rays and cetaceans; (c) logbook recording, and (d) summary of current regulations and company policies</p> <p>b. Confirm each vessel has a set of the training materials and handling/release equipment onboard.</p>	Ongoing, annual for both milestones	<p>a = completed for 2017. All captains and crew completed training for the calendar year – see Section 9 of the FIP website to download the training log - https://www.dropbox.com/s/eo4mqffqjpc/sism/RMI_training_log_2017.pdf?dl=0</p> <p>b = completed during annual captain and crew training courses.</p>
4 - Improve Information and Mitigate Problematic Bycatch:	2.1.2, 2.2.2, 2.3.2	a. Marshall Islands legal and regulatory framework and longline license conditions are consistent with all WCPFC bycatch	a,b,c = Annually following WCPFC Scientific Committee	a = completed. Marshall Islands 2017 Part 1 annual report to WCPFC (url is above) confirms that the Marshall

<p>(i) MIMRA management plan and management measures, including longline fishing license conditions and regulations, implement all binding WCPFC CMMs on bycatch management and mitigation. (ii) Ban the use of both shark lines and wire leaders in order to reduce catch rates of sharks.</p>		<p>CMMs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Retained catch of striped marlin is <5% of the total retained catch. c. No individual shark species makes up >5% of the total discarded catch. d. Company policy bans the use of both shark lines and wire leaders e. Crew employ prescribed handling and release practices for live sharks and other ETP species. 	<p>d = Dec. 2017</p> <p>e = annually</p>	<p>Islands government is in compliance with all applicable CMMs.</p> <p>b = completed. Marshall Islands 2017 Part 1 annual report to WCPFC (url is above) documented that striped marlin is <5% of total retained catch of the longline fleet that operates in the Marshall Islands' EEZ.</p> <p>Note that the most current stock assessment report continues to categorize the stock as overfished and overfishing is still occurring - ISC BILLWG. 2015. Stock assessment for striped marlin (<i>Kajikia audax</i>) in the western and central north Pacific Ocean through 2013. http://isc.fra.go.jp/pdf/ISC15/Annex11_WCNPO_STM_ASSESSMENT_REPO_RT_2015.pdf</p> <p>c = completed. Marshall Islands 2017 Part 1 annual report to WCPFC (url is above) confirms no individual shark species was >5% of the total discarded catch by longline vessels that fished in the Marshall Islands' EEZ.</p> <p>d = completed. A 2013 Luen Thai Fishing Venture company policy bans the use of both shark lines (branchlines attached to floats and float lines) and wire leaders - http://183.90.188.162/LTFV_shark_policy_Bilingual_R2.pdf</p> <p>e = completed. Marshall Islands 2017 Part 1 annual report to WCPFC (url is above) documents that the WCPFC</p>
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				CMM sea turtle measure binding components do not apply to the Marshall Islands longline fishery and that no seabirds were captured in 2016.
<p>5 - Surveillance, Enforcement and Compliance: (i) Confirm annually that the domestic system is implementing all WCPFC binding CMMs relevant to the RMI longline fishery. (ii) Annually determine whether the domestic management system is making use of information contributed by the catch sector. (iii) Achieve \geq 5% observer coverage to provide information needed to evaluate whether there is compliance with required fishing gear and practices. (iv) Evaluate information on annual surveillance effort, identified infractions, and sanctions issued in response to identified infractions, in order to enable an assessment of whether there is consistent compliance or otherwise evidence of systematic non-compliance.</p>	<p>3.1.2, 3.1.4, 3.2.3, 3.2.4</p>	<p>a. The domestic system is implementing all WCPFC binding CMMs relevant to the RMI longline fishery. b. The domestic management system is making use of information contributed by the catch sector. c. There is consistent compliance by the catch sector and no evidence of systematic non-compliance. d. Evidence that domestic government sanctions are consistently applied in response to identified acts of non-compliance, and that penalties for these infractions are sufficient to deter non-compliance.</p>	<p>a,c,d = ongoing annually b = Dec. 2018</p>	<p>a = completed. Marshall Islands 2017 Part 1 annual report to WCPFC (url is above) Appendix 1 – CMM Reporting documents Marshall Islands compliance with all relevant binding WCPFC CMMs.</p> <p>b = MIMRA periodically consults with the longline catch sector companies, and collects data through port sampling, logbook and observer programs. Documentation of government use of information contributed by the longline catch sector is through the Marshall Islands 2017 Part 1 annual report to WCPFC (url is above), which includes summaries from logbook data submitted by the longline vessels on catch and effort and summaries of port-sampling and observer data.</p> <p>c and d = in progress; may be completed as part of an MSC full assessment, tentatively planned to be initiated, or otherwise the FIP leads plan to request from MIMRA a summary of surveillance effort, list of identified infractions, enforcement actions taken for each infraction, and outcomes of each enforcement action during calendar year 2018.</p> <p>The most current available WCPFC Compliance Monitoring Report covers</p>

				year 2016 (Attachment U to the WCPFC14 summary report, - url is above) and documents Marshall Islands full compliance with all WCPFC obligations, including relevant binding CMMs.
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4. MSC Performance Indicator Scores

Table 2 identifies contemporary (April 2018) scores against each MSC performance indicator, with western and central Pacific Ocean bigeye tuna used as the unit of assessment. Scores are also provided from the baseline 2013 MSC pre-assessment and scores assessed in Dec. 2017, which was when the most previous update of PI scores was conducted. . The April 2018 scores are taken from a preliminary draft Client Draft Report prepared by ME Certification Inc., the MSC CAB for the FSM MSC full assessment. The April 2018 scores are preliminary draft scores by the MSC full assessment team of the MSC Conformity Assessment Body ME Certification for the FSM MSC full assessment. The draft scores and rationales are available online at <https://tinyurl.com/prelim-scores-rationales-Ap18>.

Table 2. Baseline and current scores against each MSC performance indicator for western and central Pacific Ocean bigeye tuna caught by pelagic longline vessels operating in the EEZ of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

MSC Performance Indicator	2013 (2013 MSC pre-assessment)	Dec. 2017		April 2018	
	Score	Score	Explanation for change	Score	Explanation for change
1.1.1 Stock Status	80+	80+	A 2017 stock assessment report concluded that the WCPO bigeye tuna stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. (WCPFC SC13 document SA-WP-05: 2017. McKechnie S, G. Pilling, and J. Hampton Stock assessment of bigeye tuna in the western and central Pacific Ocean. Rev 1. https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/SC13-SA-WP-05%20%5Bbet-assessment%5D%20REV1.pdf .	80	No change. Score from April 2018 ME Certification preliminary draft Client Draft Report for the FSM MSC full assessment. See rationale at url above.
1.1.2 Stock Rebuilding	NA	NA	Not relevant – as the stock is not in need of rebuilding (see reply to PI 1.1.1).	NA	No change. Score from April 2018 ME Certification preliminary draft Client Draft Report for the FSM MSC full assessment. See rationale at url above.
1.2.1 Harvest Strategy	60-79	60-79	See current WCPFC harvest strategy workplan.	70	Score from April 2018 ME Certification preliminary draft Client Draft Report for the FSM MSC full assessment. See rationale at url above.
1.2.2 Harvest Control Rules and Tools	60-79	60-79	No change. See current WCPFC harvest strategy workplan.	60	Score from April 2018 ME Certification preliminary draft Client Draft Report for the FSM MSC full assessment. See rationale at url above.
1.2.3 Harvest	80+	80+	No change. See current WCPFC harvest	80	No change.

Strategy: Information and Monitoring			strategy workplan.		Score from April 2018 ME Certification preliminary draft Client Draft Report for the FSM MSC full assessment. See rationale at url above.
1.2.4 Assessment of Stock Status	80+	80+	No change	100	Score from April 2018 ME Certification preliminary draft Client Draft Report for the FSM MSC full assessment. See rationale at url above.
2.1.1 Retained Species Status	60-79	80+	WCPO yellowfin tuna is the only main primary species. The current 2017 WCPO yellowfin tuna stock assessment report (https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/SC13-SA-WP-06%20YFT-stock-assessment_2017_REV1.pdf) indicates that the stock is highly likely above a point of recruitment impairment.	80+	No change
2.1.2 Retained Species Management Strategy	<60	80+	Management strategies are in place for the 'main' primary species, WCPO yellowfin tuna under the current WCPFC tropical tuna CMM and PNA VDS, with regular review via stock assessments. For yellowfin the stock status is good so there is no issue with determining if there is an objective basis for confidence that the management strategies for the main species would be effective.	80+	No change
2.1.3 Retained Species Information / Monitoring	60-79	60-79	No change in score. The 2016 and 2017 onboard observer coverage rate was >5%, an improvement over recent previous years. There is good information on retained catch from logbook and port sampling data, and increasingly from observer data. The score could be argued to achieve >80, but we leave it as was previously assessed for now.	80+	No change
2.2.1 Bycatch (secondary species) Status	60-79	60-79	No change. Analysis of available observer data has not been conducted to determine with high	60-79	No change

			certainty what are the main and minor species that make up the non-retained (discarded) catch. Main species used for bait is Indian oil sardine, purchased from China, which is likely not a conservation concern. Blue and silky shark non-retained catch are likely the secondary species of concern.		
2.2.2 Bycatch Mgmt. Strategy	<60	60-79	<p>While there is uncertainty due to poor data quality on the composition of discarded catch, it is likely that blue and silky sharks are the discarded species of conservation concern. The Marshall Islands pre-assessment identified escolar, sickle pomfret, opah and oceanic sunfish as likely secondary species, which likely are not a conservation concern. The latest Part 1 annual report to WCPFC reports 0 striped marlin catch.</p> <p>The general WCPFC resolution on non-target fish species (Resolution 2005-03), current WCPFC CMM on sharks (CMM 2014-05 - https://tinyurl.com/cmm-shark), Marshall Islands government ban on shark retention, and LTFV ban on using shark lines and wire leaders combined make up a 'partial strategy' achieving at least a score of 60-79 and possibly >80.</p>	60-79	No change
2.2.3 Bycatch (secondary species) Information / Monitoring	<60	60-79	There is qualitative and some quantitative information available for main secondary species of blue and silky sharks from logbook, port sampling and observer program data. For bait, the company keeps records of bait purchases (quantitative). As for population status, there are stock assessments for silky and blue sharks, although the outcome for the latter is uncertain, and monitoring is in place for the Indian oil sardine (see reference for	85	With observer coverage rate now exceeding the WCPFC minimum required rate for the past 2 calendar years, plus electronic monitoring on 5 vessels, information and monitoring are greatly improved.

			<p>Andrews 2008 in FSM pre-assessment report). With a higher observer coverage rate consistently >5% over several years, a score of >80 could be achieved.</p> <p>The 2016 onboard human observer coverage rate of vessels participating in the FIP was 5.6% (32 of 574) of trips (the minimum required coverage rate under a binding Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission conservation and management measure is 5%) - see the 2016 observer placement form at http://tinyurl.com/observer-rate16 and documented in Marshall Islands government 2017 Part 1 annual report to WCPFC – see http://tinyurl.com/RMI-part1-17.</p> <p>Since the previous scoring, an electronic monitoring system pilot project has begun to be implemented, with Satlink EM systems installed on 6 vessels, and government staff trained and processing the EM data to enter it into the Marshall Islands observer database. See progress report on electronic monitoring project: http://tinyurl.com/EM-RMI.</p>		
2.3.1 ETP Status	<60	<60	<p>No change</p> <p>With improved data on ETP species the score for this PI might increase. It is likely that the ETP species are silky, blue and oceanic white tip sharks, and several sea turtle species, including leatherback sea turtles.</p>	<60	<p>No change.</p> <p>Analyses of the observer program data are needed to confirm identification of the ETP species caught in the fishery.</p>
2.3.2 ETP Management Strategy	<60	<60	<p>No change</p> <p>There are no domestic regulations in place to manage sea turtle bycatch in the fishery.</p>	<60	<p>No change. Need to confirm that sea turtles qualify as ETP species catch for PI 2.2.1 and sea turtle species do qualify as ETP catch, then evaluation of the domestic legal and regulatory framework is needed to determine</p>

					if these frameworks are adequate.
2.3.3 ETP Information / Monitoring	<60	60-79	Same rationale as for PI 2.2.3.	60-79	No change
2.4.1 Habitat Status	80+	80+	No change	80+	No change
2.4.2 Habitat Management Strategy	80+	80+	No change	80+	No change
2.4.3 Habitat Information / Monitoring	80+	80+	No change	80+	No change
2.5.1 Ecosystem Status	80+	80+	No change	80+	No change
2.5.2 Ecosystem Management Strategy	80+	80+	No change	80+	No change
2.5.3 Ecosystem Information / Monitoring	80+	80+	No change	80+	No change
3.1.1 Legal/Customary Framework	80+	80+	No change	80+	No change
3.1.2 Consultation, Roles and Responsibilities	60-79	60-79	No change	60-79	No change
3.1.3 Long Term Objectives	80+	80+	No change	80+	No change
3.2.1 Fishery Specific Objectives	80+	80+	No change	80+	No change
3.2.2 Decision Making Processes	80+	80+	No change	80+	No change
3.2.3 Compliance and Enforcement	60-79	60-79	No change	60-79	No change
3.2.4 Management Performance Evaluation	60-79	60-79	No change	60-79	No change