



WCPO Purse Seine Tuna FIP Position Statement for the 2020 WCPFC Commission Meeting

Drafted with agreement from all [WCPO Purse Seine Tuna FIP](#) Participants
November 2020

This Thai Union led Fishery Improvement Project is made up of a fleet of 37 tuna purse seine vessels, flagged either to Taiwan, Korea, Korea (the Republic of), Nauru, Micronesia (Federated States of) or United States of America (the). The vessels fish in the WCPO for the three commercial tropical tuna species (with most of the catch being made up of skipjack). They deploy FADs, and fish on FADs and other floating objects, as well as setting on free schools. The FIP participants include fishing company, trading, processing and NGO, namely, FCF Co Ltd, Silla Holdings, Da Yang, Thai Union, and The Nature Conservancy. The FIP is coordinated by Key Traceability Ltd. who is facilitating the development of this statement.

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 2024.

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 (the following 17 Asks) 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.

As such we ask that:

- **Ask 1:** 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.

Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs)

In the WCPFC, FAD sets account for about 30% of tropical tuna catches. Comprehensive fleet data on FAD deployments and usage are required to effectively manage the tropical tuna purse seine fishery. Currently deployed FADs should be lower entangling and be moving towards fully non-entangling using biodegradable materials to mitigate ecosystem impacts (CMM 2018-01).

Given the high risk of FAD ecosystem impacts, including beaching, marine debris, and cryptic shark and turtle mortality, it is essential to collect and report FAD data — including the number of FADs being deployed and FAD position data and trajectories — to develop science-based management measures. Effective FAD marking mechanisms also are critical. The FIP urges the WCPFC to:



- **Ask 2:** Add a new “FAD Information” section and FAD identification field in the ROP Minimum Standard Data Fields for inventories of FAD buoys on board at the start and end of each trip and adopt requirements for improved reporting on FADs by vessel operators to include FAD structure and composition.
- **Ask 3:** Set a timeframe to transition to FADs without nets (i.e. completely non-entangling) and with biodegradable materials.
- **Ask 4:** Require fleets to remove previously deployed highly entangling FADs from the water.
- **Ask 5:** Design FAD-recovery mechanisms and incentives, such as increasing purse seiners’ FAD retrieval and storing capacity and removing a percentage of FADs from the water relative to the number deployed.
- **Ask 6:** Adopt science-based limits on FAD deployments and/or FAD sets in addition to the existing CMM 2018-01 limit.
- **Ask 7:** Develop a FAD marking scheme based on the FAO Guidelines on the Marking of Fishing Gear for all new FAD deployments, regardless of vessel type.

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). The FIP urges the WCPFC to:

- **Ask 8:** Adopt best practices for the installation of e-monitoring to ensure a standard is created.
- **Ask 9:** Improve the reliability and speed of reporting from coastal states regarding compliance.
- **Ask 10:** 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 11:** 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 12:** 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 13:** Disclose CCM’s plans to address identified areas of non-compliance.
- **Ask 14:** 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 coordinator Tom Evans at t.evans@keytraceability.com.

Signed the WCPO Purse Seine Tuna FIP – November 2020