

Position Statement for WCPFC Annual Commission Meeting 2024

28 November – 3 December 2024

Drafted with agreement from all FIP Participants – November 2024

ATTN: WCPFC and delegates

The vessel owners and industry participants of this FIP submit this letter to request additional support from CCMs for the measures that will further tuna conservation at the Commission meeting beginning 28 November 2024. There are several critical measures and issues that require immediate attention by the WCPFC this year, and others that need to be advanced in 2025. We strongly urge WCPFC acts in December 2024 to ensure that Recommendations that are about to partially or fully expire, continue to be effective in 2025. Other priority issues are listed below:

Compliance Processes

- Direct the Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS) Intersessional Working Group to develop guidelines for the participation of accredited observers and a scheme of responses to non-compliance to present to the Commission for adoption in 2025.

Tuna stock conservation

- Cooperate with IATTC in order to ensure that South Pacific Albacore is managed consistently throughout its range.
- Maintain current management measures for the Pacific bluefin stock so that it can continue to rebuild.

Management measures for tropical tunas

In line with ISSF's established approach to strengthening FAD management:

- Establish a timeline for transitioning to 100% biodegradable FADs consistent with the timeline agreed by the IATTC or IOTC.
- Adopt a requirement for provision of near-real-time FAD position and acoustic biomass records data for scientific use with appropriate time-lags to protect confidentiality.
- Task the FAD Working Group (FADMO-IWG) with developing, as a matter of priority, in 2025: (i) requirements for the transmission of satellite buoy data; (ii) a WCPFC "FAD register"; (iii) a WCPFC "FAD logbook" similar to what is used by the IATTC and Parties to the Nauru Agreement; and (iv) FAD recovery program/strategies.
- Develop and adopt a FAD marking scheme, including requiring the marking of the buoy and the FAD structure.

Electronic Monitoring (EM) and Reporting & Observer Coverage

- Adopt in 2024 interim electronic monitoring program standards for all gear types and a timeline for EM implementation beginning in 2025. To the extent possible, harmonize these standards with those adopted by IOTC, ICCAT and IATTC to account for the many vessels that move between the RFMOs.
- Adopt a timeline and plan to substantially increase observer coverage in longline fisheries.

Transshipment regulation

Adopt revisions to CMM 2009-06 to strengthen the regulation of at-sea transshipment in line with [best practice standards](#), including requiring:

- that all transshipment activities, including those that don't include fish, to be reported to the Secretariat in near real-time electronic reporting (not longer than 24 hours after the event) for all transshipment activity, using minimum standard data fields, including IMO numbers;
- the use of AIS and that VMS data are reported for all transshipments of WCPFC-covered species;
- progressive increase in observer coverage on the unloading vessels involved in transshipment and the provision of observer data to the WCPFC, as well as the national program; and
- establishing criteria for authorization of at-sea transshipment and a review process.

Effective management procedures (Harvest Strategies)

- Adopt Target Reference Points and continue to develop Management Procedures for bigeye and yellowfin tuna.
- Adopt an interim management procedure for South Pacific albacore tuna.

Bycatch mitigation and shark protections

- Adopt a seabird conservation management measure that reflects up-to-date scientific advice on bycatch mitigation best practices.
- Amend CMM 2022-04 to require that all retained sharks be landed with fins naturally attached without exceptions.

For any further information, please do not hesitate to contact the FIP manager.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.