Scoping Report and Workplan
for 2017-2021
for the Fishery Improvement Project for the Domestically-based Marshall Pelagic Longline Fishery

Version 2
Adopted July 2017
Scoping Report and Workplan 2017-2021

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

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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>B&lt;sub&gt;MSY&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>Equilibrium total biomass at MSY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAB</td>
<td>Conformity Assessment Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASS</td>
<td>Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCMs</td>
<td>Commission Members, Cooperating Non-members and participating Territories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMM</td>
<td>Conservation and Management Measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEZ</td>
<td>Exclusive Economic Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETP species</td>
<td>Endangered, threatened and protected species</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIP</td>
<td>Fishery Improvement Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>FFA</td>
<td>Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCR</td>
<td>Harvest control rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSF</td>
<td>International Seafood Sustainability Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTFV</td>
<td>Luen Thai Fishing Venture, Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIFV</td>
<td>Marshall Islands Fishing Venture, Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIMRA</td>
<td>Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSC</td>
<td>Marine Stewardship Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>PI</td>
<td>Performance Indicator</td>
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<tr>
<td>PNA</td>
<td>Parties to the Nauru Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>RMI</td>
<td>Republic of the Marshall Islands</td>
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<tr>
<td>SFP</td>
<td>Sustainable Fisheries Partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPC</td>
<td>Pacific Community (formerly named the Secretariat of the Pacific Community)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNC</td>
<td>The Nature Conservancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UoA</td>
<td>Unit of assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UoC</td>
<td>Unit of certification</td>
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<tr>
<td>WCPFC</td>
<td>Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCPO</td>
<td>Western and central Pacific Ocean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWF</td>
<td>World Wildlife Fund</td>
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Scope and Purpose
This scoping report and workplan for the Republic of the Marshall Islands pelagic longline tuna fishery follow the requirements of a “comprehensive” Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) as defined by the Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solution’s (CASS) 2015 “Guidelines for Supporting Fishery Improvement Projects”. The goal of the FIP is to make gradual improvements in management systems and fishing practices to a point where the Marshall Islands domestically-based pelagic longline fishery will pass an assessment against the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) fisheries standard.

This FIP covers all species caught by domestically-based longline vessels that are managed by the company Luen Thai Fishing Venture and its subsidiary companies, including subsidiary company Marshall Islands Fishing Venture. A 2013 MSC pre-assessment employed a unit of assessment of western and central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) stocks of bigeye and yellowfin tunas caught by domestically-based longline vessels in the Marshall Islands Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The pre-assessment also assessed the sustainability of the capture of other market and non-market species (all main retained and discarded species) by the fishery against the MSC standard under MSC Principle 2.

This FIP scoping report summarizes the findings from an MSC pre-assessment conducted in 2013, with updated scores for Principal 1 performance indicators (PIs). The pre-assessment report is publicly available from the Marshall Islands FIP website. All past and current scoping reports and workplans are also available from the FIP website. This scoping report was prepared by the FIP co-lead participants, and prepared by an individual with experience applying the MSC fisheries standard. The workplan and scoping report were prepared by an individual with experience applying the MSC fisheries standard. The workplan defines objectives that address all of the fishery’s environmental challenges necessary to achieve a level of sustainability consistent with an unconditional pass when assessed against the MSC fisheries standard. The workplan is for a 5-year period.

Full supply chain traceability is a part of the FIP’s objectives” Previous FIP workplans contained activities to ensure robust supply chain traceability. In implementing this activity, in August 2015 a report from an independent supply chain traceability audit and IUU risk assessment was completed, made available from the FIP website downloads section. This workplan retains an activity to ensure robust supply chain traceability by planning improved traceability to address problems identified in the 2015 audit.

The FIP workplan includes a list of activities, identifies which parties are responsible to complete each activity, identifies timeframes to complete each activity and milestone, includes performance indicators that define milestones against which progress for implementing the FIP can be measured over time, and includes a detailed budget identifying costs and funding opportunities for each activity. The workplan, including the budget, was adopted by the FIP participants.

This workplan also includes activities to meet FIP implementation activities. There is to be ongoing engagement with the domestic management authority and with the tuna regional fisheries management organization. An activity is included in the workplan to track and report on FIP progress at least every six months through production of progress reports posted to the FIP website and by maintaining a record on the FisheryProgress.org website. An activity is included to have an independent, in-person audit of FIP progress and status against the MSC standard be conducted, required to be completed within 3 years of posting a record for the project on the
1.2. Description of the Marshall Islands Domestically-Based Pelagic Longline Fishery
The domestically-based Republic of the Marshall Islands pelagic longline fishery, which targets bigeye and yellowfin tunas with incidental catch of various additional market species (billfishes, other tuna and tuna-like species), has about 42 active vessels. These vessels are flagged to China, Taiwan and the Federated States of Micronesia. All domestically-based longline vessels are managed by Marshall Islands Fishing Venture (MIFV), a subsidiary of Luen Thai Fishing Venture. Total retained catch in 2015 weighted 3,867 t. Bigeye and yellowfin tunas were 56% and 34% of the total retained catch, respectively. Since 2011 the Marshall Islands government has banned shark retention. Fishing grounds are entirely within the Marshall Islands EEZ.

MIFV exports mainly fresh chilled bigeye and yellowfin tunas to markets in the U.S., Canada and China. Lower quality tunas and incidental market species are shipped frozen to China and the Philippines or are sold to the local domestic market. Along with other Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency member countries, the Republic of the Marshall Islands prohibits transshipment at sea unless special authorisation is granted.

In 2016, the observer coverage rate of the domestically-based fishery exceeded the regionally-required 5% coverage rate, but the fishery had not met this minimum rate in previous years. Initiative in early 2017 of an electronic monitoring system promises to contribute to enabling the fishery to consistently meet or exceed the 5% observer monitoring rate. Port sampling covers close to 100% of longline domestic landings.

There is a foreign-licensed distant-water pelagic longline fishery of Japanese-flagged vessels licensed to fish in the Marshall Islands EEZ, which land their catch in Japan. This distant-water longline fishery is not part of this FIP.

1.3. Past FIP Activities
A chronology of FIP activities is provided below, from the initiation of the FIP in 2011 through Nov. 2016. Over the initial year of the project, the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) was the FIP lead. In late 2012 the FIP transitioned to an industry-led FIP by Norpac Fisheries Export and Luen Thai Fishing Venture.

An initial MSC pre-assessment was conducted and Norpac made the resulting report publicly available in 2011. Due to the poor quality of the initial pre-assessment report, a second pre-assessment was conducted in 2013, which forms the basis of this workplan.

- 2011 – FIP is launched by SFP and Norpac Fisheries Export
- 2011 – Key stakeholders identified
- 2011 – FIP website launched (https://sites.google.com/site/wcpobetfip/).
- 2011 – Draft 2-year FIP Workplan distributed to participants and key stakeholders
- 2012 – Stakeholder consultation meeting convened by SFP and Norpac
- 2012 – 2-year workplan adopted
• 2012 – FIP lead transitions from SFP to Norpac Fisheries Export

• 2012 – Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission adopts a formal limit reference point for bigeye and yellowfin tuna stocks (see meeting report for WCPFC 9th commission meeting at http://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/WCPFC9-Summary-Report-final.pdf, paragraph 269, where WCPFC9 adopted SC8 para 298 recommendation to adopt 20%unfishedSB as a limit reference point for the four WCPO tropical tuna stocks, including WCPO bigeye and yellowfin tunas)

• 2013 – Luen Thai Fishing Venture (representing Marshall Islands Fishing Venture), Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority, Costco, New England Aquarium, the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry Authority, Tampa Bay Fisheries and Save-on-Seafood become FIP participants

• 2012/2013 – Ecological risk assessment conducted in 2012, published in 2013 (available online http://goo.gl/PKnLPr). 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, vessel owner Luen Thai Fishing Venture voluntarily removed all narrow J-shaped tuna hooks and replaced these with wider circle hooks on all Marshall Islands-based longline vessels. This was conducted to reduce sea turtle catch rates.

• 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 MSC pre-assessment; CAB finalizes the report in early December (available from the FIP website).

• 2013 – Revised FIP scoping report and workplan for the period 2014-2018 is prepared and draft is distributed to participants and stakeholders for comment.

• March 2013 - 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)

• Feb. 2014 - Workplan for 2014-2018 is adopted

• March 2014 - Stakeholder consultation, Boston (side event to seafood show)

• April-August 2014 - Prepared materials for capacity-building ‘train-the-trainer’ program to enable MIMRA and LTFV/MIFV staff to conduct longline fisher training, including in: (i) RMI longline rules, (ii) proper completion of SPC 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. See:
https://sites.google.com/site/seafoodcompaniestunamanagement/home/training-materials-for-longline-fishers and

https://sites.google.com/site/wcpobetfip/home/captain-training-workshop-materials


- 2 Dec. 2014 – Norpac representative participated in 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 initiated on one Majuro-based longline vessel to pursue formation of a Marshall Islands government electronic monitoring system for the fishery.

- March 2015 – Planning begins to conduct a TNC 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 FIP website downloads section)

- 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 members, cooperating non-members and participating territories (CCMs) – see Joint letter of 8 October 2015 submitted to WCPFC Members, available from the Alignment Group website https://sites.google.com/site/seafoodcompaniestunamanagement/home/wcpo_tuna-p1_alignment

- October 2015 – MIMRA 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 FIP website downloads section) and distributed to FIP participants. Best practices are also continually distributed to captains and crew through ongoing capacity building training workshops.
- **January 2016** - Updated training materials for train-the-trainer workshops are developed, and planning begins for a refresher train-the-trainer workshop for mid-2016.

- **April 2016** - Train-the-trainer workshop convened. The purpose of the workshop was to train 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 SPC/FFA logbook form for pelagic longline fishers, and training in species identification to improve logbook entries.

- **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 completed training for calendar year 2016 (see Section 9 of the FIP website).

- **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 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](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.


- **2016** - 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 [https://www.dropbox.com/s/q39org0wb57n9pt/Republic%20of%20the%20Marshall%20Islands%20MIMRA%20observer%20placement%20form_2016.pdf?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/q39org0wb57n9pt/Republic%20of%20the%20Marshall%20Islands%20MIMRA%20observer%20placement%20form_2016.pdf?dl=0).

- **Jan. 2017** – The domestic management authority (MIMRA), Norpac, TNC and LTFV begin an electronic monitoring (EM) pilot project. Satlink EM systems are installed on 6 LTFV vessels,
and MIMRA staff is trained and begin to analyze EM data and enter the data into the national longline observer program database. See https://sites.google.com/site/wcpobetfip/home/RMI_LTFV_MoU_Feb2017.pdf?attredirects=0&amp;d=1 for the MoU between the Marshall Islands government and Marshall Islands Fishing Venture for the electronic monitoring project.

- 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).


- 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&amp;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&amp;d=1 for the current WCPFC harvest strategy workplan

1.4. FIP Participants, Stakeholder Mapping, Public Evaluations

FIP participants leading the project are Norpac Fisheries Export and Luen Thai Fishing Venture. Additional FIP participants are Costco, New England Aquarium, Pacific Islands Tuna Industry Association, Tampa Bay Fisheries, Save-on-Seafood and The Nature Conservancy.

Norpac Fisheries Export is the main supplier. The Pan Pacific Foods (PPF) loining plant is the main locally-based processing facility for longline landings. Main retailers and food service distributors that have sourced from the fishery include Costco, Safeway, Darden, Walmart and Sam’s Club.

The fishery is managed domestically by the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority (MIMRA), and regionally by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, who are FIP stakeholders.

Additional stakeholders, who are not formal FIP participants, include:
- Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA)
- Pacific Community (SPC, formerly the Secretariat of the Pacific Community)
- International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC)
- Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)
Parties to WCPFC, PNA and FFA, and their delegations to these three regional bodies
World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
FishWise
FishChoice
International Seafood Sustainability Foundation
Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP)
Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions (CASS)
Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Program
Gulf of Maine Research Institute
Pew Environment Group
Retail companies sourcing from the fishery

1.5. Public Evaluations
Public independent evaluations of the FIP are available from:

- [https://www.fishsource.org/fishery_page/2223](https://www.fishsource.org/fishery_page/2223) and [https://www.fishsource.org/fishery_page/2224](https://www.fishsource.org/fishery_page/2224) - an SFP website
2. DEFICIENCIES AND WORKPLAN

2.1. Pre-assessment Findings
Table 1 summarizes the 2013 Marshall Islands MSC pre-assessment outcomes against each MSC performance indicator. For MSC principal 1 performance indicators, and principal 2 performance indicators 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3 (primary species), the outcomes from a more current pre-assessment published in July 2015 are used. The 2015 pre-assessment was for the Federated States of Micronesia longline fishery, and assessed the same two stocks under principal 1 (available online at https://sites.google.com/site/fsmlonglinefip/home) and for primary species under principal 2. Since the Marshall Islands pre-assessment was conducted in 2013, MSC adopted a revised standard. One of the changes was to drop two performance indicators (3.1.4, Incentives for sustainability and 3.2.4 Research plan). Therefore these two performance indicators are not included in Table 1 as the Marshall Islands fishery is no longer assessed against these indicators to determine if it unconditionally passes assessment against the MSC standard.

For indicators where the CAB determined that the fishery is likely to exceed the MSC Scoring Guidepost 80, resulting in an unconditional pass for this indicator (the GREEN scores in Table 1), no activity is planned in this workplan. For indicators where a conditional pass (YELLOW) or fail (RED) was estimated for the fishery, Table 1 identifies deficiencies and information gaps that the MSC CAB identified as needing to be addressed.
Table 1. Marshall Islands domestically-based pelagic longline fishery pre-assessment outcome against each MSC performance indicator as of 2015 for principle 1 PIs and as of 2013 for principle 2 and 3 PIs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>PI no.</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Scoring level</th>
<th>Key deficiencies &amp; information gaps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>1.1.1</td>
<td>Stock status</td>
<td>Yellowfin: WCPO Bigeye: WCPO bigeye tuna is at or below a formally adopted limit reference point. The PI either passes with conditions or fails depending on whether the stock is above or below a ‘point of recruitment impairment’, which has not been determined for this stock. WCPO Yellowfin: The stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. Would pass this PI without conditions.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.1.2</td>
<td>Stock rebuilding</td>
<td>Bigeye: WCPFC CMM (2014-01) for tropical tunas is likely not sufficient to meet the requirement for a formal rebuilding plan. WCPO Yellowfin: Not applicable, the stock is not in need of rebuilding. Would pass this PI without conditions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>1.2.1</td>
<td>Harvest Strategy</td>
<td>Yellowfin: CMM 2014-01 is a limited harvest strategy, meeting the requirements of SG60. Note that if the bigeye harvest strategy is not improved in the next few years, the performance for bigeye and perhaps also yellowfin against this PI will likely get worse.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2.2</td>
<td>Harvest control rules</td>
<td>Bigeye: CMM 2014-01 is a sufficient HCR to meet the SG 60 level, but no better. However, if the HCR for WCPO BET</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
is not improved over time, then this determination may not be sustained (i.e., if WCPFC does not either
determine that BET is rebuilding or otherwise
determines that it is not rebuilding and still does not
adopt a replacement CMM that is likely to allow BET to
rebuild, then both the yellowfin and bigeye UoCs are
likely to fail this PI).

1.2.3 Information and monitoring
Would pass this PI without conditions.

1.2.4 Stock status
Would pass this PI without conditions.

2 Primary Species

2.1.1 Outcome
WCPO Bigeye: Yellowfin is the only main primary
species – the stock status is good. Would pass the
outcome and management PIs with no conditions.

2.1.2 Management
WCPO Yellowfin: Bigeye is the only main primary
species – stock status depleted, but some measures in
place to avoid impacts. Condition to put in place
management 'strategy' is likely on outcome, possible on
management or both.

2.1.3 Information/monitoring
Information good for both stocks. Would pass this PI
without conditions.

Bycatch (discarded) species (now referred to as
“Secondary Species” under the current MSC standard)

2.2.1 Outcome
Not enough information on discards. Four species were
identified as potential bycatch species: escolar, sickle
pomfret, opah and oceanic sunfish. More information on
main species used for bait is also needed.

2.2.2 Management
There are no specific management measures for the
four potential main bycatch species but WCPFC
Resolution 2005-03 on non-target fish species and
control measures for longline and purse seine fisheries
provide indirect (‘partial strategy’) management for these
incidental pelagic species. Since there is no information
available to determine main discarded species, stock
status and whether this fishery is having an impact on
these stocks, it is not possible to determine whether
management measures are required.

2.2.3 Information
There is insufficient information on discards to identify
with high certainty what the main bycatch species are.
No stock assessments have been conducted for the 4
potential main bycatch species.

ETP species 2.3.1 Outcome
Current data on catch levels and haulback disposition of
turtles and sharks by onboard observers is not available.
### 2.3.2 Management

There currently are no domestic regulations in place to manage sea turtle bycatch in the fishery. The Marshall Islands Fisheries Act of 2011 prohibits the fishing, possession and trade of all shark species and their products (all caught sharks must be discarded), but does not require fishing gear or methods, or handling and release practices, to reduce the longline shark catch rate and pre-catch and post-release mortality rates.

### 2.3.3 Information

Need better information from increased observer coverage on current levels of catch and haulback disposition of elasmobranchs, turtles and cetaceans to the species level. Might also need better population-level information.

### 2.4.1 Outcome

Would pass this PI without conditions.

### 2.4.2 Management

Would pass this PI without conditions.

### 2.4.3 Information

Would pass this PI without conditions.

### 2.5.1 Outcome

Would pass this PI without conditions.

### 2.5.2 Management

Would pass this PI without conditions.

### 2.5.3 Information

Would pass this PI without conditions.

### 3 Governance and Policy

#### 3.1.1 Legal and customary framework

Would pass this PI without conditions.

#### 3.1.2 Consultation, roles and responsibilities

Not enough information on level of consultation between MIMRA and the longline catch sector, and information showing that the domestic management system accounts for information provided by the catch sector. Ad hoc processes are acceptable as long as stakeholders are happy with them.

#### 3.1.3 Long term objectives

Would pass this PI without conditions.

### Fishery specific management system

#### 3.2.1 Fishery specific objectives

Would pass this PI without conditions.

#### 3.2.2 Decision making processes

Would pass this PI without conditions.

#### 3.2.3 Compliance and enforcement

There would likely be a condition on too low a rate of observer coverage.
|   |   |   | Availability of observer and surveillance data are too low to determine if there is compliance with required fishing gear and practices.  
There is also inadequate information on government surveillance activities and sanctions resulting from identified infractions to provide a robust understanding of enforcement.  
Not enough information on nature and frequency of reviews undertaken. Need information on whether there is regular internal and occasional external review of the domestic Tuna Management Plan and relevant domestic fisheries legislation. |
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<tr>
<td>3.2.4 Management performance evaluation</td>
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</table>

- **Red** = Fishery is not likely to reach MSC Scoring Guidepost 60 and would fail this performance indicator  
- **Yellow** = Fishery is likely to reach MSC Scoring Guidepost 60 but not 80 for this performance indicator and thus would require a condition to enable the fishery to gradually improve to the 80 level  
- **Green** = Fishery is likely to achieve at least MSC Scoring Guidepost 80 and thus no conditions are required for improvement for this performance indicator
2.2. Activities, PIs, Responsible Parties, Objectives, Milestones, Schedule, Budget

This section describes the planned activities to be undertaken in order to address each of the issues that is preventing the fishery from unconditionally meeting each MSC performance indicator, describes the objective of each activity, milestones (outcomes) anticipated from completion of each activity – including outcomes that enable an assessment of whether the activity was effectively implemented, identifies which organization will lead implementation of the activity, identifies a timeframe (dates when the activity will be implemented), estimates the cost of each activity and the funding source (if identified) for each cost.

2.2.1. Activity 1: Robust Harvest Strategies

**Activity:** Engage with delegations to WCPFC and other relevant stakeholders in order to pursue WCPFC adoption, implementation and compliance with robust WCPO bigeye and yellowfin tuna harvest strategies following the WCPFC harvest strategy workplan, which is available at https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/supplcmm-2015-04/updated-workplan-harvest-strategies-2016-2019-and-record-outcomes-wcpfc13.

**MSC PIs:** 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 2.1.1, 2.1.2

**Responsible parties:** Norpac and LTFV

**Objective:** WCPFC implements the 2015 WCPFC harvest strategy workplan for WCPO bigeye and yellowfin tunas.

Harvest strategies include six main elements: (i) management objectives – including timeframes, (ii) stock-specific target and limit reference points, (iii) acceptable levels of risk of exceeding the reference points, (iv) monitoring strategy, (v) harvest control rules – pre-agreed decisions that aim to stay near targets and to not exceed limits and include actions that are to be taken if reference points are exceeded, and (vi) an evaluation of whether controls are achieving management objectives. A HCR, with associated management actions, together act effectively to reduce exploitation rates as limit reference points are approached and to stay near target reference points. The HCR should take into account the main uncertainties regarding the status of the stocks and fishery impacts, and other important uncertainties.

**Milestones and schedule:** Milestones and schedule are consistent with 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 2015, which includes activities through 2019. The 2020 and 2021 milestones below are therefore extrapolated and not indicated in the WCPFC harvest strategy workplan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>SC report on BET status following updated assessment and confirm that rebuilding plan is no longer required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>WCPFC agrees interim performance indicators to evaluate HCRs for WCPO bigeye and yellowfin tuna stocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>SC provides advice on a range of target reference points (TRPs) for WCPO yellowfin tuna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2.2. Activity 2. Improved Monitoring

**Activity:** Maintain an annual observer coverage rate of ≥ 5% of trips through onboard human observers and electronic monitoring.

**MSC PIs:** 2.1.3, 2.2.1, 2.2.3, 2.3.1, 2.3.3

**Responsible parties:** FIP co-leads in coordination with MIMRA.

**Objective:** Fill information deficits identified in listed performance indicators so that a robust assessment against the MSC standard can be conducted for these indicators. Fisheries monitoring data underpin conducting robust stock assessments, identifying and understanding trends and patterns in nominal and standardized catch and survival rates and catch levels, and assessing the performance of conservation and management measures. Review of amalgamated observer data can enable a determination with increasingly higher certainty as the data series increases in quality of which species qualify as MSC ‘main’ secondary species’ and ETP species as defined by MSC.

**Milestones and schedule:**

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Milestone</strong></td>
<td><strong>Schedule</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Annually prior to WCPFC annual session</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
≥ 5% of trips are observed through human observers and/or electronic monitoring.

Documented in Marshall Islands government Part 1 annual report to WCPFC.

Dec. 2017

Budget: An estimated $100,000 per year is required to cover identified monitoring activities. LTFV and subsidiary companies are required to cover at-sea observer costs under their government license agreement. MIMRA and regional bodies (SPC, FFA) cover the cost for managing the observer program. TNC is funding an electronic monitoring capacity building project.

2.2.3. Activity 3: Crew Training and Training Materials

Activity: Train captains in completion of logbook forms, species identification, prescribed methods to handle and release vulnerable species, government longline rules, and company rules.

MSC PIs: 2.1.3, 2.2.1, 2.2.3, 2.3.1, 2.3.3

Responsible parties: FIP co-leads in coordination with MIMRA, SPC and FFA.

Objective: (i) Optimize accurate data collection on retained and discarded catch in logbooks. (ii) Captains and crew understand current rules and company policies. (iii) Captains and crew understand how to implement prescribed best practice handling and release methods for elasmobranchs, sea turtles, cetaceans, and other species that will be discarded in order to increase the probability of post-release survival.

Milestones and schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Ongoing, annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>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. Document through LTFV log of training activities, posted annually to the FIP website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Ongoing, annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confirm each vessel has a set of the training materials and handling/release equipment onboard. Documented in LTFV annual log of training activities, posted annually to the FIP website.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Budget: Annual $25,000, in-kind by LTFV.

2.2.4. Activity 4: Improve Information and Mitigate Problematic Bycatch

Activity: (i) MIMRA management plan and management measures, including longline fishing licence 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.

The Marshall Islands Fisheries Act of 2011 prohibits the fishing, possession and trade of all shark species and their products (all caught sharks must be discarded), but does not require fishing gear or methods, or handling and release practices, to reduce longline shark catch rate and pre-catch and post-release mortality rates, or to reduce sea turtle and cetacean catch and injury. Use of monofilament (no wire) leaders, whole fish for bait, 14/0 and 15/0 10 degree offset circle hooks (benefit to turtles but might pose a risk of small increase in elasmobranch catch rate relative to using J-shaped hooks of the same size), no use of lightsticks, and no fishing at shallow submerged features were identified in an ecological risk assessment as currently employed bycatch mitigation best practices (Gilman, E., Owens, T., Kraft, T. 2013. Ecological risk assessment of the Marshall Islands longline tuna fishery. Marine Policy 44: 239-255. (Available online http://goo.gl/jBX29o).

MSC PIs: 2.1.2, 2.2.2, 2.3.2

Responsible parties: FIP co-leads.

Objective: The fishery does not has sustainable fishing mortality rates of ETP species and stocks that are overexploited. Minimize fishing mortality rates of stocks and populations of species that are vulnerable to compromised population viability due to anthropogenic mortality sources. A first order ecological risk assessment identified relative risks to shark stocks and sea turtle regional management units.¹

Milestones and schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a Marshall Islands legal and regulatory framework and longline license conditions are consistent with all WCPFC bycatch CMMs. Determine via annual review of Marshall Islands Part 1 annual report to WCPFC.</td>
<td>Annually following WCPFC Scientific Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Retained catch of striped marlin is &lt;5% of the total retained catch. Determine via annual review of Marshall Islands Part 1 annual report to WCPFC.</td>
<td>Annually following WCPFC Scientific Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c No individual shark species makes up &gt;5% of the total discarded catch. Determine via annual review of Marshall Islands Part 1 annual report to WCPFC.</td>
<td>Annually following WCPFC Scientific Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d Company policy bans the use of both shark lines and wire leaders.</td>
<td>Dec. 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e Crew employ prescribed handling and release practices for live sharks and other ETP species. Determine via annual review of Marshall Islands Part 1</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

annual report to WCPFC.

Budget: Estimated $10,000 per year, covered by FIP co-leads.

2.2.5. Activity 5. Surveillance, Enforcement and Compliance

Activity: (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 ≥ 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.

MSC PIs: 3.1.2, 3.1.4, 3.2.3, 3.2.4

Responsible parties: FIP co-leads in coordination with MIMRA and other relevant Marshall Islands government agencies.

Objective: Ensure that the domestic management system elements of surveillance and enforcement are effective. To achieve compliance with management measures, fishery management systems require effective surveillance and enforcement frameworks, and penalties must be sufficiently stringent to deter non-compliance.

Milestones and schedule: A milestone for achieving or exceeding the observer coverage rate minimum requirement is not included here as it is a milestone under activity 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>The domestic system is implementing all WCPFC binding CMMs relevant to the RMI longline fishery. Determine through review of Marshall Islands annual part 1 report to WCPFC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>The domestic management system is making use of information contributed by the catch sector. Determine through information from MIMRA on how MIMRA obtains information from the longline catch sector (ad hoc or more formal system), and how the management system accounts for information provided by the catch sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>There is consistent compliance by the catch sector and no evidence of systematic non-compliance. Determine from MIMRA summary of annual surveillance effort, identified infractions, and sanctions issued in response to identified infractions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Determine via MIMRA annual summary of identified infractions, enforcement actions and penalties.

**Budget**: Estimated cost is $70,000 per year, covered by FIP co-leads.

### 2.3. FIP Management Activities

This section describes FIP management activities. These activities are not linked to enabling the fishery to pass assessment against specific performance indicators.

#### 2.3.1. Communications

FIP participants will conduct ongoing stakeholder consultation. This will be conducted via periodic in-person meetings, distributing progress reports via email, and alerting stakeholders to new materials posted to the FIP project website. FIP participants will continually conduct scoping to identify any new stakeholders that are relevant to include as stakeholders or participants in the FIP.

The FIP participants will maintain the project website. The content of the FIP website will be periodically updated when new relevant information or materials are available.

FIP participants will also produce progress reports and post them to the FIP website and distribute to all participants and stakeholders via email, at least every six months but more often if warranted. The progress reports track and report progress in implementing workplan activities and report progress against the workplan milestones.

These communication activities are estimated to cost $40,000 per year, and will be covered via in-kind contributions by the FIP lead participants.

#### 2.3.2. Independent Traceability Audit

The 2015 CASS FIP guidelines recommended that FIPs, “work toward including traceability as part of their objectives.” The previous workplans for the Marshall Islands FIP contained activities to ensure robust supply chain traceability. In implementing this activity, in August 2015 a report from an independent supply chain traceability audit and IUU risk assessment was completed, and made available from the FIP website downloads section. By December 2019, Norpac Fisheries Export will address the deficits identified in the audit report. A new supply chain traceability audit will be conducted in 2020 (five years since the previous audit) to assess progress since the previous audit, and to assess traceability mechanisms for any new supply chain components of this fishery. The cost for the traceability audited is estimated to be $12,500 and will be covered by the FIP co-leads.

#### 2.3.3. FIP Status and Progress Independent 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). The FIP audit is estimated to cost $15,000 and will be covered by the FIP co-leads.