**Transshipment Intersessional Working Group (TS-IWG)**

**2021 Report to the Commission**

**At WCPFC18**

Over the past year, since its last report to the Commission, the TS-IWG has made progress in several areas critical to the review of CMM 2009-06, the Conservation and Management Measure on the Regulation of Transshipment.

First, the TS-IWG finalized the [Scope of Work (SOW)](https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/scope-work/communication-ts-iwg-co-chairs-confirming-adoption-scope-work) for the information analysis in support of its review of CMM 2009-06. The Secretariat and SPC are already undertaking Phases 1 and 2 of the three phase information analysis, with both of those phases expected to be completed by the end of Q1 2022. There is currently enough funding, to complete Phases 1 and 2, but as much as 30,000 USD may be required to complete Phase 3 of the analysis by summer 2022. If additional funding is secured and the information analysis is completed on schedule and as outlined in the SOW, the TS-IWG would be able to review the information analysis before TCC18 and potentially be able to provide advice to WCPFC19 regarding proposed revisions to CMM 2009-06. The co-Chairs will provide a draft schedule of 2022 virtual meetings to its members in the first quarter of 2022.

In addition to finalizing the SOW, the TS-IWG has taken on the TCC17 recommendation that it be asked to consider specific recommendations from the United States' proposal on ROP Minimum Standard Data Fields for Transhipment at Sea. Paragraph 40 from the [TCC17 Provisional Outcomes Document](https://meetings.wcpfc.int/node/14099):

*40. TCC17 recommended that the TS-IWG be asked to consider the following recommendations from TCC17-2021-DP01:*

*a. that TCC17 should recommend WCPFC18 adopt specific data fields from the Forms FC1, FC2, and FC3 as ROP minimum standard data fields to be collected by ROP observers during transshipments at sea.*

*b. that TCC17 should remind its members and WCPFC18 of the ROP Minimum Standard specifying that that ROP data should be submitted to the Secretariat where possible within 120 days of the observer disembarking the receiving vessel.*

At the [co-Chairs’ request and consent of the TS-IWG’s members](https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/ts-iwg-update/ts-iwg-update-27-nov-2021), the Secretariat hosted an online TS-IWG meeting in early December 2021 to review 40(a) and 40(b).

While the discussion of 40(a) and specific data fields was extensive, participants in the TS-IWG online meeting members were unified in supporting 40(b), understanding that this timeline is similar to the guidelines for purse seine and longline observer data submission. Further, while 120 days may have been appropriate in the past, when data were provided via paper logbooks and reports, with many CCMs transitioning to electronic reporting, truncating the timeline for submitting ROP data could be considered by the TS-IWG in 2022 as one element for improving monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) of transshipment in the Convention Area.

With respect to 40(a), many members shared that they would require more time to deliberate specific data fields as transhipment ROP minimum standard data fields. Noting the need to provide an initial list of data fields, the TS-IWG reviewed the voluntary WCPFC ROP carrier forms posted to the [WCPFC ROP page](https://www.wcpfc.int/folder/rop) (FC-1, FC-2, and FC-3) as the starting point for discussion. Stemming from that discussion, the TS-IWG developed an initial table of proposed minimum standard data fields (Attachment 1) that could be considered by the Commission. While some of these data fields in Attachment 1 will require further discussion and clarification by the TS-IWG in 2022, several data fields were identified by members as being widely understood and fundamental to MCS-related ROP reporting on transhipment. These fields include:

* Carrier or Receiving vessel IMO Number
* Offloading Vessel IMO Number
* Date of Transhipment
* Location of Transshipment
* Time Transshipment Commenced and Ended (in UTC)

In the nearly two years since the COVID-related intersessional decisions suspended the requirement for observer coverage for all at sea transhipment in the Convention Area, CCMs have repeatedly highlighted the need to prioritize and improve MCS of transhipment activity. Noting this priority, and the fact that ROP MCS-related information can help the Commission and national authorities document and verify the transhipment activity itself and the vessels involved, the TS-IWG has prioritized adoption of these fields by the Commission.

Further, many other critical transhipment data fields in Attachment 1 will require substantive and nuanced discussion in 2022 to achieve a common understanding among members. Such data fields covered by the TS-IWG online meeting included, but were not limited to:

* Carrier Total Fish Hold Capacity
* Amount of fish being carried and transhipped
* Method for estimating fish weight (with prompt for visual vs. scale vs. other?)
* Port of offloading or vessel destination

Other data fields were identified during the TS-IWG online meeting as potentially important for monitoring the implementation of other WCPFC CMMs, such as fields for the use of required seabird bycatch mitigation measures on the donor fishing vessel. In future TS-IWG discussions, such potential data fields would need to be considered in the context of other relevant CMMs.