



**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
EIGHTEENTH REGULAR SESSION**

ELECTRONIC MEETING
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**The Proposed procedures in accordance with "Access to genetic resources and Benefit-Sharing"
(ABS) concept for publishing scientific paper in the
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission**

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Proposed procedures in accordance with "Access to genetic resources and Benefit-Sharing" (ABS) concept for publishing scientific paper in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission

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Introduction

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which entered into force in December 1993, introduced the concept of "Access to genetic resources and Benefit-Sharing" (ABS; Articles 1 and 15 of the CBD Convention) in order to reconcile the interests of countries that own genetic resources and those that benefit from the use of those resources. The term "genetic resource" refers to genetic material of actual or potential value (Article 2 of the CBD Convention). The "Nagoya Protocol" was adopted in October 2010 as a measure to properly implement the international rules on ABS; it entered into force in October 2014. Japan deposited its acceptance of the Protocol with the UN Secretariat on May 22, 2017. In addition, the Guidelines on the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Opportunities for the Acquisition of Genetic Resources and the Benefits Arising from their Utilization (ABS Guidelines) were promulgated on May 18, 2017. The basic framework of the ABS is that consent to access (use) (Prior Informed Consent; PIC) must be obtained from the donor country of the genetic resources, with the necessary information made known in advance. The mutually agreed conditions require fair and equitable benefit-sharing (Article 15 of the CBD Convention) of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources (research and development, commercialization).

Before the ABS procedure was implemented, biological samples including otolith, vertebrae, muscles tissue, dorsal spines etc. of tuna and tuna-like species, and by-catch species, were collected for many years thorough observer programs, port sampling programs and research cruises etc., from high seas and the economic exclusive zones (EEZ) for scientific studies and for the stock assessments in the western and central Pacific Ocean. Unfortunately, the sampling positions of some samples were not necessarily precise if the samples were obtained from certain fisheries (e.g., purse seine) through port samplings due to its fishing

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characteristics as a fish well should be fulfilled with fish from multiple purse seine sets in a cruise. Under these situations, some of samples are difficult to identify the countries concerned to follow the ABS procedures.

It is important to confirm the availability of these biological samples using for scientific purposes, publishing scientific papers and scientific meeting documents to contribute to the management of the species covered by the WCPFC convention in accordance with the ABS procedure. The biological samples should include those were collected in the past and will be collected in the future through various ways including the observer samplings, port samplings and research cruises. The Scientific Committee of the WCPFC is appropriate to discuss this issue, therefore, we invite the 18th meeting of the Scientific Committee of the WCPFC to consider the proposals below. We assume that if there is no objections to the proposals the biological samples collected in the past and in the future in the western and central Pacific Ocean including EEZs of coastal countries can be used for publication the scientific fruitful results (scientific papers, meeting documents) without specific procedures.

Proposal

- (1) The objectives of the WCPFC Convention are compatible with the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Nagoya Protocol. The biological samples of tuna, tuna related species and bycatch species covered by the WCPFC Convention can be used for scientific purposes that contribute to the management of these species. The benefit sharing in the ABS concept for the genetic resources is assumed to be achieved thorough publishing scientific papers and sharing novel scientific knowledge which contribute to refine the stock assessments and management of the fishery resources.
- (2) If the domestic laws related to the ABS procedure are in place, the procedures of domestic laws will be taken into consideration.

In addition, prior to submitting this proposal to t the 18th meeting of the Scientific Committee, we have sent our proposal to the ABS National Focal Point or primary CBD Primary National Focal Point of 17 CCMs (Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Indonesia, Kiribati, Republic of Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, United States of America and Vanuatu) whose EEZ located in the sub-tropical and tropical area of the western and central Pacific Ocean, and informed them of our intention to make such proposals in advance.

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