



WCPFC Position Statement

Science-Management
Dialogue 2022

GLOBAL TUNA ALLIANCE

TOP LEVEL ASKS

Skipjack Management Procedure

Confirm the 'settings' of the proposed skipjack management procedures (aka harvest strategies)

South Pacific albacore Management Procedure

Confirm the 'settings' of the proposed South Pacific albacore management procedures (aka harvest strategies).

Future of the Science-Management Dialogue (SMD) working group

Establish the SMD as a permanent working group




SKIPJACK MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

What is the issue?

- The major Western and Central Pacific Ocean tuna stocks are “in the green¹” – with no overfished stocks or overfishing occurring.
- To ensure this continues, we are calling on the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) to accelerate action to develop comprehensive management procedures (harvest strategies) across these stocks.
- In addition, there are 18 skipjack fisheries in the region that are either Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified or in full assessment.
- These certifications are at high risk of suspension from the program if the WCPFC cannot complete its work plans related to management procedures and harvest control rules by December 2022. The MSC has published a factsheet that outlines this situation.
- Our Partners, engaged in the sourcing of tunas globally, are concerned that if the SMD fails to make significant progress, then MSC certified tuna fisheries in the west and central Pacific Ocean could face difficulty meeting their conditions, and certifiers may suspend them in June 2023. But the bigger picture is that if these fisheries are not managed properly, there is a risk that the current good status of these tuna stocks will be lost. Whether the MSC certification is maintained or lost will indicate what we may see happen.

What are we calling for?

- The SMD to identify a preferred management procedure(s) for Western and Central Pacific Ocean skipjack.



¹ Page 47 of Hare S.R., Williams P.G., Castillo Jord’an C., Hamer P.A., Hampton W.J., Scott R.D., Pilling G.M. 2021. The western and central Pacific tuna fishery: 2020 overview and status of stocks. Tuna Fisheries Assessment Report no. 21. Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community, 53 p. <https://tinyurl.com/4rnunukc>

SOUTH PACIFIC ALBACORE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

What is the issue?

- The major Western and Central Pacific Ocean tuna stocks are “in the green¹” – with no overfished stocks or overfishing occurring.
- To ensure this continues, we are calling on the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) to accelerate action to develop comprehensive management procedures (harvest strategies) across these stocks.
- In addition, there are 12 South Pacific albacore fisheries in the region that are either Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified or in full assessment.
- These certifications are at high risk of suspension from the program if the WCPFC cannot complete its work plans related to management procedures and harvest control rules by December 2022. The MSC has published a factsheet that outlines this situation.
- Our Partners, engaged in the sourcing of tunas globally, are concerned that if the SMD fails to make significant progress, then MSC certified tuna fisheries in the west and central Pacific Ocean could face difficulty meeting their conditions and certifiers may suspend them in June 2023. But the bigger picture is that if these fisheries are not managed properly, there is a risk that the current good status of these tuna stocks will be lost. Whether the MSC certification is maintained or lost will indicate what we may see happen.

What are we calling for?

- The SMD to identify a preferred management procedure(s) for South Pacific albacore.



FUTURE OF THE SCIENCE-MANAGEMENT DIALOGUE (SMD) WORKING GROUP

What is the issue?

- The fundamental role of an SMD is to provide a place for iterative exchange between scientists, managers and stakeholders to guide decision-making while familiarising participants with the harvest strategy approach.
- Neither scientists nor managers can complete their work without multiple rounds of feedback from one another, so it is critical that they can rely on an SMD to meet and discuss their progress throughout the development process.
- SMDs work best when formalised by an RFMO, as a recurring working group will guarantee that participants can build on a prior SMD's progress.
- Although the SMD's main role is to develop stock-specific harvest strategies, the group also provides a chance for capacity building and education among participants.
- In addition, participants can discuss other administrative priorities that are often left unaddressed during regular RFMO meetings, such as how to secure funding for harvest strategy development, and hire MSE experts and external reviewers.

What are we calling for?

- The WCPFC to establish the Science-Management Dialogue (SMD) as a permanent working group to ensure consistent progress on harvest strategy development.





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