



**The Pew Charitable Trusts
Statement to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
Science-Management Dialogue
19-22 August 2022, online**

The Pew Charitable Trusts appreciates the opportunity to participate as an observer at the first meeting of the Science-Management Dialogue (SMD) of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). We appreciate the work of the Secretariat, scientific services provider, dialogue meeting chairs and all members to convene this meeting virtually due to the continuing situation stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. The SMD provides a critical venue for scientists, managers and stakeholders to exchange views to advance the harvest strategy work. At the SMD, we urge CCMs to:

Recommend a skipjack management procedure for the Commission to adopt in 2022. We urge participants to approach this discussion in a spirit of cooperation to recommend a single Harvest Control Rule (HCR) for the Commission to adopt as part of a management procedure at its annual meeting in December. In advance of the SMD, participants should visit the online PIMPLE analytical tool (<https://ofp-sam.shinyapps.io/PIMPLE2022/>) to examine the results of the skipjack Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE). The tool allows users to examine trade-offs in the HCRs that have been developed. It's critical for the Commission to act in accordance with its harvest strategy workplan; all technical elements of a management procedure have been evaluated. Considering the range of management objectives for the stock, we urge participants to prioritize maintaining the status of the skipjack stock around its target reference point.

Recommend steps to advance work on the South Pacific albacore management procedure. We urge participants to carefully consider the progress of the scientific services provider in developing the MSE for south Pacific albacore (SMD01-IP-04) and provide feedback and recommendations to guide the scientific and management inputs needed to advance adoption of a management procedure for this stock.

Recommend making the Science-Management Dialogue a permanent body with a schedule of future meetings. Considering the work ahead to develop management procedures for WCPFC priority stocks, we urge participants to recommend making the SMD a permanent body. A schedule should be developed for future meetings to be held annually to help WCPFC meet the timelines in its harvest strategies workplan. Experience of other RFMOs shows that dialogue groups are successful at providing for the iterative exchange of views among scientists, managers and stakeholders. This is a strength of the management procedure approach and a hallmark of the MSE process. Providing the SMD with the status of a permanent working group with a regular and predictable schedule is necessary to fulfill the commitments in the WCPFC's harvest strategy workplan and to ensure that WCPFC tuna fisheries will remain sustainable in the future.