



**NORTHERN COMMITTEE
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Alternative Baseline Proposal for Vanuatu North Pacific Albacore

WCPFC-NC19-2023/DP-01

Vanuatu



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Introduction

This report provides an update on Vanuatu's efforts to obtain additional reliable information to resolve the pending issue concerning the baseline for North Pacific Albacore. The purpose of this note is to inform the Northern Committee about the challenges faced in accessing historical data and propose an alternative baseline for consideration.

Background

During NC 15, Members raised concerns regarding Vanuatu's North Pacific Albacore fishing effort. Vanuatu has been working closely with the SPC to review its catch and effort data. Vanuatu has consistently informed Members during NC 16, NC 17, and NC 18, that complete fishing vessel numbers and vessel days data for 2002 and 2003 are unavailable. In response, Vanuatu proposed using the most reliable data: 2002-2004 average fishing license information as the baseline for fishing vessels and using 2004 vessel days to estimate the average days per vessel for calculating the vessel days baseline. However, this proposal has not been accepted by the Northern Committee, and Vanuatu has agreed to collaborate with Japan and the United States to seek a resolution before NC 19.

Alternative Baseline Proposal

Vanuatu, in collaboration with the SPC, has made diligent efforts to gather reliable information and has obtained complete catch and effort data from 2004 onwards. However, the coverage for the years 2002 and 2003 remains limited. To address this data gap, Vanuatu proposes utilizing the average figures from 2004 to 2006 as an alternative baseline. The following figures are suggested for consideration:

Number of vessels: $(42 + 26 + 32) / 3 = 33.3$

Number of vessel days: $(3868 + 1983 + 2868) / 3 = 2906.6$

Conclusion

Vanuatu acknowledges the limitations in obtaining historical data for the baseline of North Pacific Albacore due to the lack of a proper data collection system in the past. However, we are committed to finding a resolution and propose using the average figures from 2004 to 2006 as an alternative baseline. We believe this approach will provide a fair and accurate representation of our fishing activities.

We kindly request the Northern Committee's consideration of our proposal and appreciate your understanding regarding the challenges faced in accessing specific data from 2002 and 2003. Vanuatu remains committed to monitoring fishing effort and implementing any controls needed to comply with the agreed baseline.