



COMMISSION
Twentieth Regular Session
4-8 December 2023
Rarotonga, Cook Islands (Hybrid)

Review of CMM 2015-02: South Pacific Albacore

WCPFC20-2023-13
1 November 2023

Prepared by the Secretariat

Purpose and Introduction

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide summary information to support the Commission's review of CMM 2015-02: South Pacific Albacore.
2. The paper reviews the history of the south Pacific albacore CMM, the 2022 interim management arrangements for south Pacific Albacore fisheries, and recent SC19 recommendations related to the review of CMM 2015-02. The issue of the ongoing challenges with how to interpret the CMM 2015-02 limit obligation is considered, and some recommendations are provided.
3. Information related to south Pacific albacore harvest strategy development is contained in [WCPFC20-2023-14 Rev1](#) *Progress on the Development of Harvest Strategies for SP Albacore, Skipjack, Bigeye, and Yellowfin Tunas*. An update from the SPA Roadmap IWG Chair (Fiji) on the work being progressed through the IWG, is also anticipated at WCPFC20.

History of the south Pacific albacore CMM

4. The inaugural south Pacific albacore CMM was adopted at the 2nd Regular Session of the Commission ([CMM 2005-02](#)) and included among the first set of substantive conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission. This was replaced by CMM 2010-05 in 2010 and again in 2015 with what is now the current iteration in [CMM 2015-02](#).

Application of Limits

5. [Paragraph 1](#) of the CMM is an "*actively fishing for vessel capacity limit*" which applies to most CCMs fishing for south Pacific albacore in the waters south of 20S. This language is unchanged from the inaugural CMM 2005-02. Australia, China, New Zealand, and Chinese Taipei have notified the Commission of their limits with reference to the baseline of 2005 or 2000 – 2004 levels. The European Union, Japan, and Korea who are acknowledged to have vessels fishing in the waters south of 20S, have reported that their vessels do not "fish for" south Pacific albacore, so have an unspecified limit. The United States has notified of the baseline levels for the troll fishery 2000 – 2004 levels but the applicable limit is not yet specified. The limit is considered applicable to Indonesia and Philippines and is also unspecified but in recent years they have not had any vessels

operating in the area south of 20S.¹ The limit does not apply to small island developing State and Territory CCMs in the Convention Area (paragraph 2).

Changes to CMM and Reporting

6. The changes agreed to the CMM for south Pacific Albacore over time were to the CMM reporting requirement (now CMM 2015-02 paragraph 4). This was intended to ensure the Commission received information to clarify baselines and to support monitoring of compliance with the quantitative limits. Key points relating to changes are:
 - a. CMM 2005-02 did not include an annual reporting requirement.
 - b. CMM 2010-05 added a new annual reporting obligation intended to support monitoring and review of the quantitative limits.
 - c. CMM 2015-02 included changes to the reporting requirement to further clarify reporting requirements and ensure the monitoring and assessment of vessels and catches from vessels fishing for south Pacific albacore in waters south of 20S.
7. [Paragraph 4](#) of CMM 2015-02 requires that CCMs report the annual catch levels taken by each of their fishing vessels that have taken south Pacific albacore, as well as the number of vessels actively fishing for south Pacific albacore, in the Convention area south of 20°S. Catch by vessel is to be reported according to the following species groups: albacore tuna, bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, swordfish, other billfish, and sharks. Initially this information will be provided for the period 2006-2014 and then updated annually. CCMs are encouraged to provide data from periods prior to these dates.
8. **Annex 1** collates information reported by CCMs to the Secretariat and/or SPC-OFP in response to paragraphs 1 of CMM 2010-05, paragraph 1 of CMM 2015-02 or paragraph 4 of CMM 2015-02. Noting that the catch and effort information provided is self-reported, over the period 2015 – 2022 some differences between years and amongst CCMs can be seen in the levels of annual catch and vessel numbers reported as fishing for south Pacific albacore in the waters south of 20S. Across all CCMs combined, there have been relatively stable trends in reported annual catches and vessel numbers reported as fishing for south Pacific albacore in the waters south of 20S over this period.

Interim arrangements for south Pacific albacore fisheries (2022) and latest scientific advice

9. At WCPFC18, the Commission noted the ongoing work to review CMM 2015-02 through the SP Albacore Roadmap IWG and the concerns regarding the delayed process to implement an interim TRP adopted in 2018, the need to take action to rebuild the stock to support the economic viability of fleets and to achieve a long-term TRP (WCPFC18, paragraphs 195 – 196). Considering these concerns, the Commission agreed to an interim arrangement for south Pacific albacore as follows:

197. Given the urgency of these concerns, the Commission agreed that until a new CMM for south Pacific Albacore is adopted, each CCM is encouraged to take steps to implement interim controls on south Pacific albacore catch or effort across the convention area south of the equator.

¹ In early 2023, the Secretariat released an enhanced CMM page that includes Audit Points and Limits (<https://cmm.wcpfc.int/>)

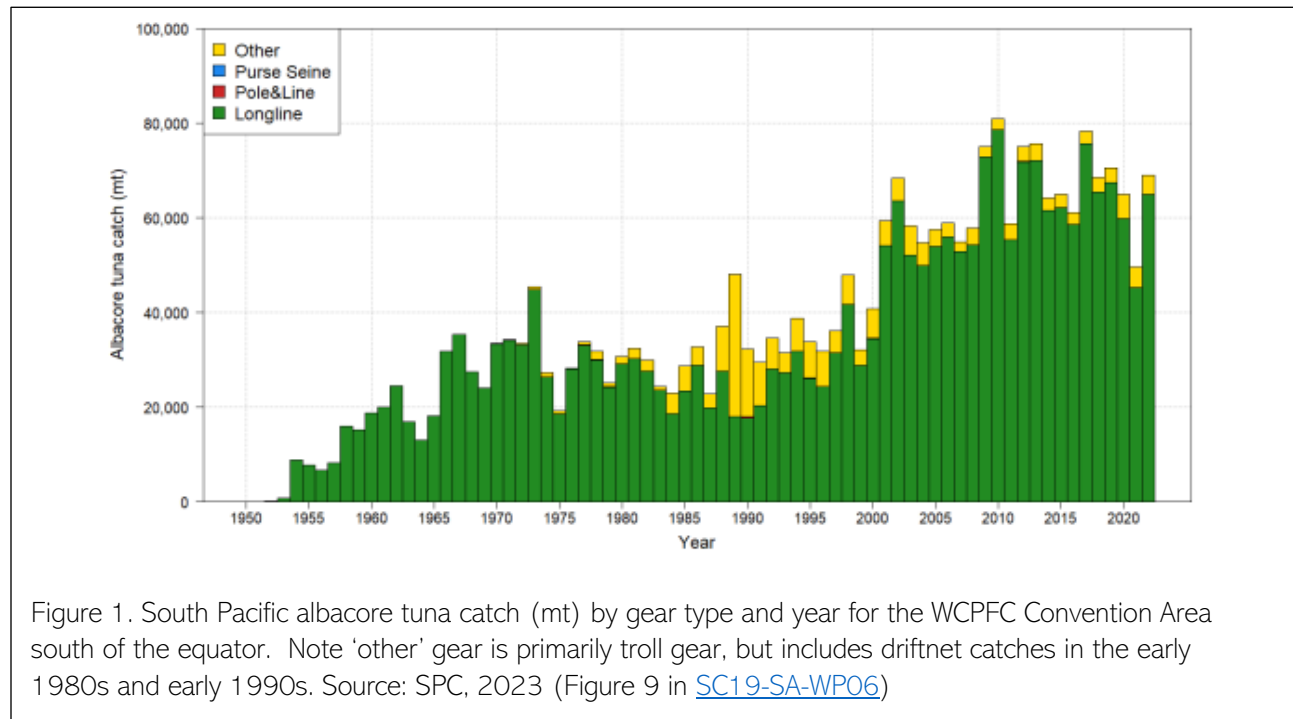
i. CCMs are encouraged to limit commercial fishing of south Pacific albacore within EEZs to domestically applied catch or effort limits in recent years.

ii. Each CCM is encouraged to ensure that its flagged vessels for this species shall not exceed the high seas catch or effort (such as number of vessels) of south Pacific albacore by its flagged vessels in recent years.

198. These interim arrangements do not confer the allocation of rights to any CCM and are without prejudice to any future decisions of the Commission.

199. These interim arrangements shall not prejudice the legitimate rights and obligations under international law for small island developing State and Participating Territory CCMs in the Convention Area for whom south Pacific albacore is an important component of the domestic tuna fishery in waters under their national jurisdiction, and who may wish to pursue a responsible level of development of their fisheries for south Pacific albacore in their EEZs or adjacent high seas.

10. The last stock assessment was reviewed by the Scientific Committee in 2021 at SC17.² The management advice from SC17 indicated a mostly healthy state. However, concerns were noted about spawning stock biomass becoming depleted across the model period (1960-2019), with a notable increase in depletion in the most recent years. SC17 recommended that longline catches should be reduced to avoid further and extended declines in the vulnerable biomass so that economically viable catch rates can be maintained, especially for longline catch of adult albacore.



² Source: <https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/04/south-pacific-albacore-tuna> - also see [WCPFC20-2023-14](#) Harvest Strategy Development for SP Albacore, Skipjack, Bigeye, and Yellowfin Tunas

11. Some of the highlights from the latest indicator analysis (SC19-SA-WP-06) presented at SC19 include:
- a. For the southern WCPFC-CA, total albacore catch was 68,957t, a 39% increase from 2021 and a 4% increase from the 2017-2021 average. In 2022, percentage catch by gear was: longline - 94%, other gear - 6%, pole-and-line -<1%, purse seine -<1% (see **Figure 1**).
 - b. The largest fish are caught in the longline fisheries, and catches in 2022 (64,916t) increased by 44% from 2021 and increased by 4% from the 2017-2021 average (see **Figure 1**).
 - c. The troll catch is made up of small fish, typically less than 80cm in length. Catch by other gear (mostly troll catch) (4,027t) decreased by 6% from 2021 and increased by 11% from the 2017-2021 average (see **Figure 1**).
 - d. In recent years, catches have concentrated in the 10°S-20°S latitudinal band. While 2022 estimates remain provisional, the spatial distribution of the longline catch is similar to the distribution of catches seen over the preceding 5-year period, with the exception of a concentration of catch between 5°S and 10°S, centred around 170°W. The troll catch since 2020 has increased considerably from the previous few years, achieving a level last seen in the early 2000s (see **Figure 2**).
 - e. Over the entire time series, catch rates have been highest south of 10°S, and the overall pattern is an increasing CPUE from north to south. In the more recent period, catch rates have been highest in the high seas areas between 30°S and 40°S. CPUE in the region around southern Melanesia (Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Fiji) shows a decline over time however, 2022 values were notably higher than in 2021 (see **Figure 2**).
12. SC19 recommended that the 2024 assessment of south Pacific albacore be south Pacific-wide. Noting the need to provide management advice specifically for the WCPFC-CA and the ongoing developments relating to the Harvest Strategy process, if a fleets-as-areas approach is considered for the 2024 assessment, SC19 recommended retaining a separate area for the IATTC. SC19 noted that a WCPFC-CA only model might also be considered as a one-off sensitivity analysis. If results from the one-off sensitivity analysis for the WCPFC-CA-only model are different from the WCPFC-CA results from the Pacific-wide model, additional analyses should be conducted with a view to understanding which spatial structure is more reliable when considering future assessment development.³

³ See SC19 Outcomes Document paragraph 78.

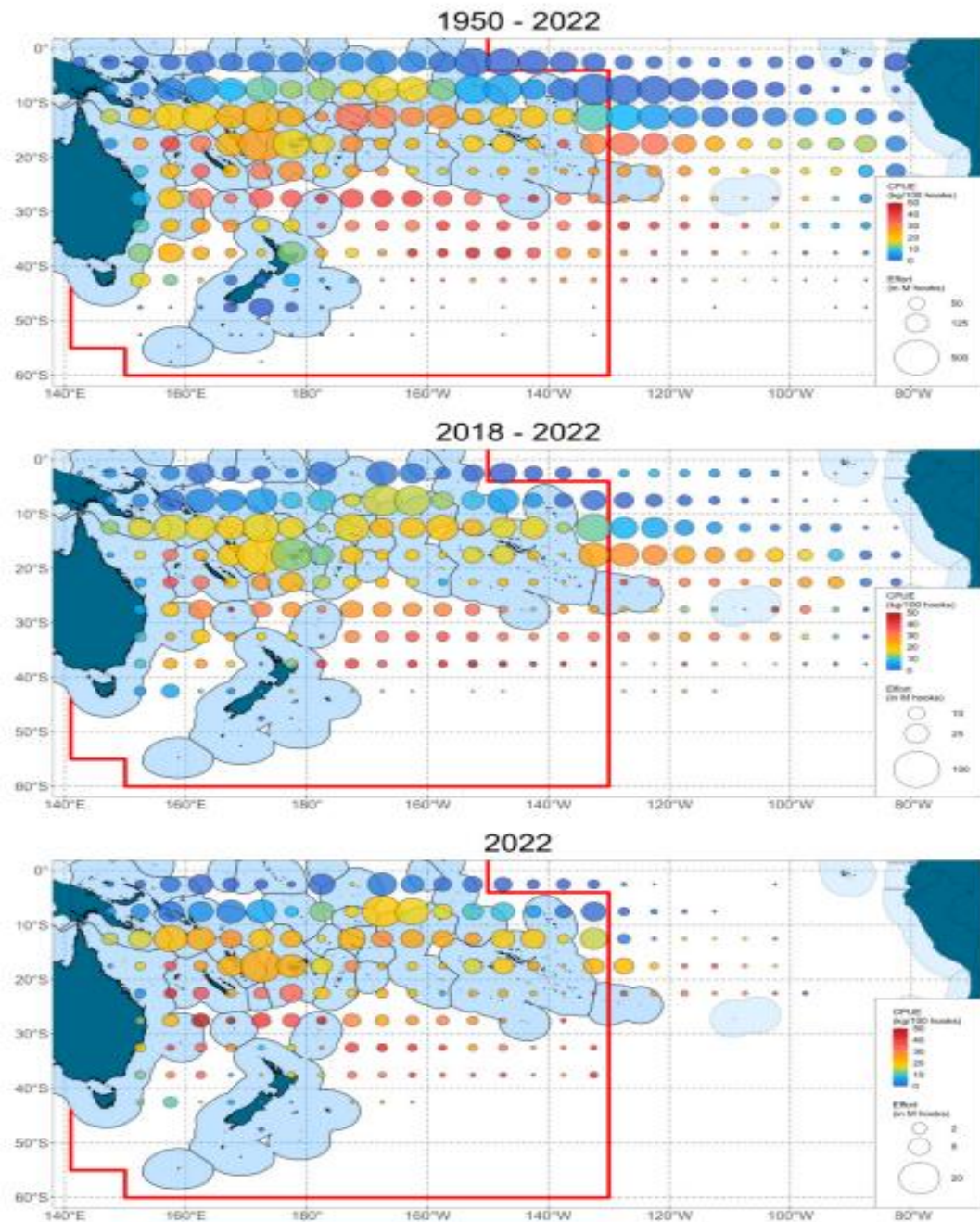
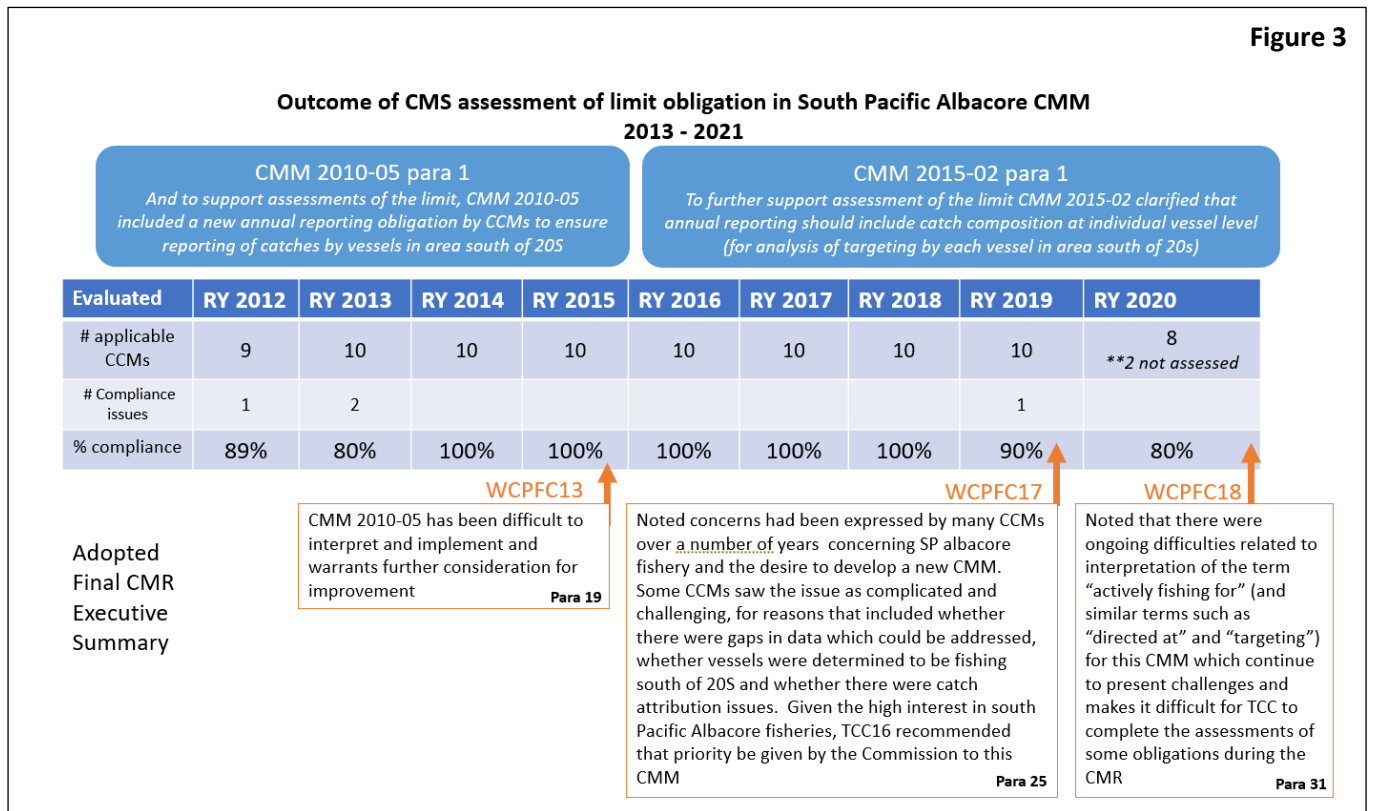


Figure 2. Distribution of 5 x 5 longline effort (represented by circle size) and South Pacific albacore tuna CPUE (represented by colour) for the period 1950 – 2022 (top), 2018-2022 (middle) and 2022 (bottom). Note the differences in scales between plots. The WCPFC Convention Area is outlined in red. Catch data for the EPO are incomplete. Source: SPC, 2023 (Figure 12 in SC19-SA-WP06)

Review of TCC assessments of compliance with the CMM 2015-02

13. TCC has annually assessed the limit obligation in the south Pacific albacore CMM through the Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS) except for this year (covering RY 2021 and RY 2022). A summary of the outcomes of annual CMS assessments of the limit obligation over 2013-2021 (covering RY 2012-2022) is provided in **Figure 3** (below). This illustrates how CMM revisions to add and then clarify the annual reporting requirement obligations in the south Pacific albacore CMM were intended to respond to the difficulties faced by TCC in assessing compliance with the limit over many years. **Annex 1** collates information reported by CCMs to the Secretariat and/or SPC-OFP in response to paragraphs 1 of CMM 2010-05, paragraph 1 of CMM 2015-02 or paragraph 4 of CMM 2015-02.



14. Prior to 2015, TCC had acknowledged that there were challenges for TCC to complete assessments of compliance with the south Pacific albacore CMM limit (CMM 2010-05 para 1) e.g., see note from WCPFC13 final CMR in lower left side of **Figure 3**. The limitation at that time was that some CCMs had gaps in the provision of complete operational catch and effort data. This meant the data available to the Secretariat when preparing the draft Compliance Monitoring Report (dCMR) tended to be based on the levels of longline activity based on VMS analysis for relevant CCMs in the area where the limit applies. This was problematic because the information was not targeted to the vessels that each flag CCM considers to be “actively fishing for” South Pacific albacore in the area south of 20S.
15. Since the adoption by the Commission of CMM 2015-02, the SSP has had the additional paragraph 4 reported information to support their preparation of supporting information for the Secretariat

to use in preparing the dCMR. The table in **Annex 1** presents the summary reporting based on paragraph 4 reporting. However, because there are gaps in the provision of complete operational catch and effort data by some CCMs to which the limit applies, the CMM 2015-02 paragraph 4 report can be submitted in an anonymized format, and there is a 5% minimum observer coverage rate on longline and troll vessels area where the south Pacific albacore CMM limit applies, the Secretariat approach in the dCMR evaluation continues to be based mostly on self-reported information provided by the CCM.⁴ This represents an important data collection gap impacting the SSP and the Secretariat’s ability to validate data and verify compliance with limits.

16. The following CMS audit points for the south Pacific albacore CMM were adopted by the Commission at WCPFC19, in December 2022:

Obligation and brief description	Full text of obligation	Current Audit Point definition
<u>CMM 2015-02 01</u> Limit on number of vessels actively fishing for SP ALB south of 20S above 2005 or 2000-2004 levels	1. Commission Members, Cooperating Non-Members, and participating Territories (CCMs) shall not increase the number of their fishing vessels actively fishing for South Pacific albacore in the Convention Area south of 20°S above 2005 levels or recent historical (2000-2004) levels.	CCM reported its number of flagged vessels actively fishing for SP Albacore south of 20S and the Secretariat can verify the CCM’s reported information and confirm that the allowable limit has not been exceeded.
<u>CMM 2015-02 04</u> Annual report of SP ALB by vessel by species	4. CCMs shall report annually to the Commission the annual catch levels taken by each of their fishing vessels that has taken South Pacific albacore, as well as the number of vessels actively fishing for South Pacific albacore, in the Convention area south of 20°S. Catch by vessel shall be reported according to the following species groups: albacore tuna, bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, swordfish, other billfish, and sharks. Initially this information will be provided for the period 2006-2014 and then updated annually. CCMs are encouraged to provide data from periods prior to these dates.	The Secretariat confirms that the CCM submitted information on annual catch levels by its flagged vessels taking SP Albacore, as well as the number of CCM flagged vessels actively fishing for SP Albacore south of 20S, with catch levels reported by species groups.

17. In 2023, TCC19 used the agreed CMS audit point to assess the annual reporting requirement obligation (CMM 2015-02 04) in the south Pacific albacore CMM for RY 2021 and RY 2022. Noting that the information provided is self-reported, no compliance issues were raised by TCC.
18. Although CMS audit points were adopted by the Commission in December last year for the limit obligation found in paragraph 1, as noted above, the limit was not included in the list of obligations for review by TCC19. The Secretariat’s understanding is that one of the reasons that CMM 2015-02 paragraph 1 was not included was the outcome of the previous CMS assessment which confirm the continuing difficulties in assessing the limit.
19. The most recent CMS assessment of the limit obligation occurred in 2021 (covering RY 2020), prior to the adoption of CMS audit points. TCC17 found no compliance issues for most CCMs (Australia, European Union, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Philippines, and United States). However, TCC17 recorded two assessments with majority/minority views, and subsequently WCPFC18 recorded that due to a lack of consensus, and for different issues, the Commission was not able to

⁴ [TCC19-2023-11](#) Available data for verifying compliance in the Compliance Monitoring Scheme

complete assessments of the limit in RY 2020 for China and Chinese Taipei. For ease of reference the relevant paragraphs from the Final Compliance Monitoring Report (CMR) adopted at WCPFC18 are provided in **Annex 2**.

20. The Final CMR) adopted at WCPFC18 records several points expressed by CCMs that related to the difficulties in TCC completing evaluations of CMM 2015-02. These included:
 - A strong interest by many coastal State CCMs in developing a new measure for the south Pacific albacore fishery that ensures the long-term sustainability and economic viability of their national longline fisheries into the future.
 - A difference of opinion amongst CCMs in relation to the suitability of the evaluation approach used by the Secretariat and SSP, based on the CMM 2015-02 paragraph 4 reported data, to estimate the counts of vessels per flag CCM that “actively fished for South Pacific albacore in waters south of 20S.” Some CCMs felt that consistency of evaluation approach to all CCMs was important. Others questioned the current methodology and were uncomfortable with the catch data analysis being weight-based.
 - There were questions about the baseline data for the assessment of the quantitative limit under CMM 2015-02, which is intended to be based on average of 2000-2004 levels, or 2005 levels. There was a suggestion that for consistency, the current evaluation approach of compliance with the limit, should be applied to the baseline data it is available and then it should be used by the Commission to adjust south Pacific albacore CMM limits as required.
21. Ultimately, the Commission at WCPFC18 (December 2021) noted that:
 - a. there were ongoing difficulties related to interpretation of the term “actively fishing for” (and similar terms such as “directed at” and “targeting”) for this CMM which continue to present challenges and makes it difficult for TCC to complete the assessments of some obligations during the CMR.
 - b. the disparities in available operational-level data for determined baseline periods raised difficulties in undertaking compliance assessments as this results in some limits being based on analysis of operational-level data and other limits being based on self-reporting, and
 - c. the issues raised in the discussions on CMM 2015-02 emphasized the importance of ensuring that CMMs are clear in their application and are able to be monitored and enforced.

To this end, the Commission requested that the South Pacific Albacore Roadmap WG take note of this in consideration of its future work.

Options to assist TCC in completing future assessments of the limit obligation

22. This section of the paper considers options and some recommendations considered by TCC to enable CMS evaluations of the south Pacific albacore CMM limit obligation. At the outset, it is recognized that the formulation of the limit in the CMM for south Pacific albacore has been unchanged since the adoption of the inaugural CMM in 2005 and that unspecified limits remains as a gap in the Commission’s ability to fully understand the performance of this CMM. CCM’s efforts

to date have been focused on enhancing the CMM annual reporting requirement to provide more targeted information. It is also recognized that there has been considerable work to date, led by Fiji, through the South Pacific Albacore Roadmap WG, to facilitate the review of CMM 2015-02.

23. The Commission is also committed to developing and implementing harvest strategies for south Pacific albacore fisheries as a matter of priority and is scheduled to adopt management objectives and a revised TRP in 2023. In addition, the SSP continues to develop the MSE framework and candidate MPs for adoption in 2024 (see [WCPFC20-2023-14 Rev1](#) *Progress on the Development of Harvest Strategies for SP Albacore, Skipjack, Bigeye, and Yellowfin Tunas*).
24. Given these circumstances, it is assumed that the current formulation of the limit in the CMM for south Pacific albacore is unlikely to change in the near term. The suggestions within this paper could be considered as an interim approach aimed at assisting TCC in continuing to complete assessments of the limit obligation using agreed CMS audit points until a SP albacore Management Procedure and hard limits for all CCMs have been agreed.
 - I. Supplement the CMM 2015-02 paragraph 4 reporting requirement with new RFV-related reporting requirements
25. At TCC19 the Secretariat presented a paper [TCC19-2023-11](#) *Available data for verifying compliance in the Compliance Monitoring Scheme*. This explained that verification of obligations relating to limits on “vessels fishing for” would be strengthened if relevant CCMs were to notify WCPFC, possibly through updates made in the RFV, of key information that would assist the Secretariat to clearly define the individual vessels on the RFV authorized by the responsible flag CCM in a particular year to operate under CMM limits for the “vessels actively fishing for” or “vessels fishing for”. The aim of compiling this information would be to provide a point of reference for the Secretariat analyses that cross-check VMS records and other data sources on the activities of the relevant vessels. This would improve the level of verification that could be undertaken in future dCMR evaluations of these types of limit obligations. This suggestion was received positively by TCC participants and TCC19 recommended in paragraph 32 of the TCC19 Outcomes document that WCPFC20 consider “*Whether a new data field, “Target Species” should be added to the RFV and, if so, task TCC20 with developing the data field and framework for potential future implementation.*”
26. The following presents an option for a future framework for RFV-reporting requirements for the CMM 2015-02 paragraph 1 limits:
 - a. Commission adopts an amendment to the RFV SSPs [CMM 2022-05](#) which would add into Attachment 1 a new data field “Area based CMM limit obligation(s)”, described as “*any CMM-specific authorisations granted by the flag State for the vessel to fish under one or more specific “vessel is fishing for area-based CMM limits”*”, reflected in the following table.

Min.⁵	Field name	Field format	Field description/instructions	Example	Ref. in CMMs
	Area based CMM limit obligation(s)	Text If vessel is authorised under multiple CMMs, separate applicable obligations with “;”	Any CMM-specific authorisations granted by the flag State for the vessel to fish under one or more specific “vessel is fishing for area-based CMM limits” Enter the obligation identifier eg “CMM 20xx-xx xx” as listed in Area based CMM limit obligation list maintained by the WCPFC Secretariat. Leave blank if the vessel is not authorized by its flag State to be used for fishing under any of the specified CMM limits.	CMM 2015-02 01, CMM 2019-03 01	CMM 2018-06 or its replacement: 6(r)

- b. Recalling that the analysis presented in Table 3 of paper [TCC19-2023-11](#), had identified a further four limit obligations which are “area-based vessels fishing for” type of limits, this is the list of CMMs that would be in the initial list of limit obligations that would also be populated into the “drop-down” menu on the RFV for CCMs to complete:

CMM 2006-04 01	Limit number of fishing vessels fishing for MLS south of 15S to 2000 – 2004 levels
CMM 2009-03 01	Limit number of vessels fishing for SWO south of 20S to the number in any one year between 2000-2005
CMM 2015-02 01	Limit on number of vessels actively fishing for SP ALB south of 20S above 2005 or 2000-2004 levels
CMM 2019-03 02	CCMs take measures to ensure level of fishing effort by vessels fishing for NP ALB is not increased
CMM 2021-02 02	Total effort by vessels for Pacific Bluefin limited to 2002 - 2004 levels in Area north of 20N

- c. The Secretariat would be tasked to update the list presented in point b. above if revisions or new “area-based vessels fishing for” limits are adopted, or if amendments are made to the current CMMs which sufficiently changes the limit to not be a “area-based vessels fishing for” limit.
- d. The Secretariat would also be tasked to develop a new “AR Part 2 reporting question” that would be similar in format to the current “Fished and Did Not Fish” online reporting facility, to enable relevant CCMs complete a report about each vessel that is listed in the RFV as authorized

⁵ Fields marked “√” in this column together comprise the “minimum data requirements” for inclusion on the RFV, as described in CMM 2022-05 paragraphs 11 and 12.

for a specific “area-based vessels fishing for” type of limit, did fish or did not fish in accord with the relevant CMM limit(s) in the previous year. This form of individual vessel annual reporting of applicability of specific “area-based vessels fishing for” CMM limits, is expected to further assist the Secretariat with completing the verification of CCM self-reported information in Annual Report Part 2, and as per the agreed CMS Audit Points for these obligations.

- e. Owing to these RFV-related additional reporting requirements, the verification activities of the limit obligation by the Secretariat should more readily be able to include analyses of VMS data and other available information including reported catch data. In this regard, CCMs may also consider prioritizing the development of an online facility managed by the Secretariat, so that CCMs with flagged vessels of a relevant vessel type that are detected through the Commission VMS or by other means, and may potentially be fishing in the applicable area where an “area-based vessels fishing for” type of limit applies, are able to report to the Secretariat an explanation if a) the vessel does not have the appropriate field indicated in the RFV; or b) if the vessel did have the appropriate field indicated in the RFV, but the flag CCM considers that the specific “area-based vessels fishing for” type of limit did not apply to the vessel. This will ensure that relevant flag CCMs are supported through being informed about potential reporting gaps arising from the new RFV data field and associated annual reporting requirements, and that they can work closely with the Secretariat to resolve any inconsistencies between different data sources in advance of dCMR evaluations.

II. CMM system as source of information about basis for baselines for specific “area-based vessels fishing for” type limit obligations

27. To improve clarity about the basis for baselines for CMM 2015-02 paragraph 1 limit there should be work undertaken by the Secretariat, in close cooperation with the relevant flag CCMs, to review and update the information in the CMM system at the obligation level related to the source of the baseline for this limit.
28. To facilitate this review, the Secretariat would be tasked in 2024 to prepare a report for each flag CCM to which one or more of the five “area-based vessels fishing for” type of limits apply, and to list the information available to the Secretariat and SSP related to that CCMs notified limits. The CCMs are requested to assist the Secretariat to determine whether a relevant CCMs notified limit is:
 - a. based on baseline data that was previously submitted to the Secretariat;
 - b. based on baseline data that the CCM confirms will be submitted to the Secretariat by a specified date;
 - c. estimated because data for the baseline period was not collected or otherwise not available to the CCM; or
 - d. estimated because data for the baseline period is not able to be submitted to the Secretariat.
29. Based on the information obtained, the Secretariat should also update the CMM system at the obligation level, for relevant CCMs, as required.
30. In 2024, the Secretariat will present to TCC20 an update on the progress of this task, and if completed in time, this should include a summary of the information obtained for review by TCC. It

is expected that the process of collating this information about the baseline limits could assist TCC and/or the SP Albacore Roadmap WG to further consider what changes to the CMM may be required.

III. Strengthen monitoring through expanding observer coverage and establishing Electronic Monitoring

31. CMM 2015-02 applies to fisheries that are currently subject to a minimum requirement of 5% ROP coverage. This limits the level of independent verification undertaken in TCC's assessments because the ACE table summaries used to support the TCC evaluations are based on scientific data provisions that are also submitted by CCMs for their vessel's activities. In this respect, the following outcome from SC19 is pertinent. SC19 *"noted the explanation from the SSP that aggregating the catch by species in the longline operational data at the trip level (when the trip is terminated by an at-sea transshipment) is fundamental for the validation processes using other independent sources of data (e.g. transshipment observers and carrier declarations) to provide more certainty in the data used in assessments and other work of the Commission."* To improve the level of independent verification of longline catch or effort limits, it is necessary to increase ROP observer coverage and to enable use of Electronic Monitoring to increase the scope and coverage and thus the availability, of independently collected data. TCC supported the intent, and in paragraph 20 of the TCC19 outcomes document reaffirmed the importance of increasing monitoring and observer coverage in the longline fishery, including through the implementation of electronic monitoring.
32. The work currently being undertaken by the TS-IWG and ERandEM IWG has the potential to expand the coverage of independently verified data sources. Once these data sources are established, they will further assist in improving the level of verification that can be undertaken in future dCMR evaluations for longline fishing activity-based limits, such as CMM 2015-02 paragraph 1. WCPFC20-2023-18 will consider the status of work aimed at improving information and data required to support management decisions for south Pacific Albacore as well as other key tropical tunas.

Recommendations

33. WCPFC20 is invited to consider approving the Secretariat's proposed interim approaches to assist TCC in completing future compliance assessments of the CMM 2015-02 paragraph 1 limit obligation (see paragraphs 25 – 29 of this paper).
34. If supported, WCPFC20 is invited to take the following decisions:
 - a. adopt a framework that will establish RFV-reporting requirements for the CMM 2015-02 paragraph 1 limits and other "vessels fishing for-type CMM limits", by adopting an amendment to the RFV SSPs [CMM 2022-05](#) which adds into Attachment 1 a new data field "Area based CMM limit obligation(s)" as described in the following table:

Min.⁶	Field name	Field format	Field description/instructions	Example	Ref. in CMMs
	Area based CMM limit obligation(s)	Text If vessel is authorised under multiple CMMs, separate applicable obligations with “;”	Any CMM-specific authorisations granted by the flag State for the vessel to fish under one or more specific “vessel is fishing for area-based CMM limits” Enter the obligation identifier eg “CMM 20xx-xx xx” as listed in Area based CMM limit obligation list maintained by the WCPFC Secretariat. Leave blank if the vessel is not authorized by its flag State to be used for fishing under any of the specified CMM limits.	CMM 2015-02 01, CMM 2019-03 01	CMM 2018-06 or its replacement: 6(r)

- b. Task the Secretariat with prioritizing the development of an enhancement to the WCPFC’s annual reporting online facilities to enable relevant CCMs to complete a report as part of Annual Report Part 2, for individual vessels an equivalent of “fished” and “did not fish” in accord with the relevant CMM limit(s) in the previous year (this would be based on the CCM reported RFV data in previous year at a. above).
- c. Task the Secretariat to continue to consider opportunities for relevant flag CCMs to be supported and informed about potential reporting gaps arising from the new RFV data field and associated annual reporting requirements, and to explore IT-related tools to assist the Secretariat with working closely with relevant CCMs to resolve any data and reporting inconsistencies in advance of dCMR evaluations.
- d. Task the Secretariat, working with relevant CCMs, to review and update the CMM database with information about basis for baselines for specific “area-based vessels fishing for” type limit obligations and to present an update on progress to TCC20 in 2024.

35. Based on the information obtained, the Secretariat should also update the [CMM system](#) at the obligation level for relevant CCMs, as required.

⁶ Fields marked “√” in this column together comprise the “minimum data requirements” for inclusion on the RFV, as described in CMM 2022-05 paragraphs 11 and 12.

Annex 1: Reporting by CCMs against paragraphs 1 and 4 of CMM2015-02. (as at 20 June 2023)⁷

		CMM 2015-02 Para. 4													
		2006-2014		2015			2016			2017			2018		
	GEAR	Vessels	Catch	Vessels	Catch by vessel	Catch	Vessels	Catch by vessel	Catch	Vessels	Catch by vessel	Catch	Vessels	Catch by vessel	Catch
AUSTRALIA	LL	YES	YES	36	YES	585	34	YES	715	36	YES	687	53	YES	608
CHINA	LL	YES	YES	70	YES	6,504	76	YES	3,945	63	YES	6,676	37	YES	4,960
COOK ISLANDS	LL	YES	YES	2	YES	58	3	YES	81	11	YES	232	8	YES	371
EUROPEAN UNION	LL	YES	YES	4	YES	2	4	YES	0	3	YES	2	3	YES	2
FIJI	LL	YES	YES	49	YES	1,498	72	YES	2,572	65	YES	3,456	73	YES	3,538
FRENCH POLYNESIA	LL	YES	Partial	42	YES	518	73	YES	636	53	YES	561	42	YES	275
JAPAN	LL	YES	YES	NO	NO	851	2	YES	835	2	YES	974	27	YES	608
	PL	NO	NO	NO	YES	0	3	YES	7	2	YES	2	1	YES	39
KIRIBATI	LL	...	...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NEW CALEDONIA	LL	YES	YES	26	YES	1,003	17	YES	1,527	16	YES	1,137	18	YES	1,271
NEW ZEALAND	LL	YES	YES	34	YES	207	32	YES	242	32	YES	189	34	YES	239
	TR	YES	YES	139	YES	2,425	137	YES	1,669	115	YES	1,952	148	YES	2,271
NIUE	LL	YES	YES	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
REPUBLIC OF KOREA	LL	NO	NO	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SOLOMON ISLANDS	LL	YES	YES	5	YES	49	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CHINESE TAIPEI	LL	YES	YES	YES	YES	3,264	44	YES	4,947	61	YES	7,517	65	YES	8,393
TONGA	LL	...	...	5	YES	31	4	YES	46	6	YES	22	5	YES	19
TUVALU	LL	...	...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
USA	LL	YES	YES	3	YES	14	2	YES	3	3	YES	7	0	YES	0
	TR	YES	YES	7	YES	156	9	YES	300	15	YES	555	12	YES	433
VANUATU	LL	YES	YES	21	YES	3,132	16	YES	2,262	26	YES	3,792	24	YES	4,549

⁷ This table was presented in [TCC19-2023-IP06](#) Summary of reporting under CMM 2010-05 and CMM 2015-02: south Pacific albacore

		CMM 2015-02 Para. 4											CMM 2015-02 Para.1			
		2019			2020			2021			2022			# Vessels (avg. 2000-2004)	# Vessels (2005)	NOTES
	GEAR	Vessels	Catch by vessel	Catch	Vessels	Catch by vessel	Catch	Vessels	Catch by vessel	Catch	Vessels	Catch by vessel	Catch			
AUSTRALIA	LL	34	YES	646	34	YES	842	32	YES	844	33	YES	854		132	5
CHINA	LL	81	YES	4,464	35	YES	3,594	46	YES	2,156	64	YES	6,171		70	2, 10
COOK ISLANDS	LL	7	YES	264	6	YES	286	3	YES	184	2	YES	44	n/a		4
EUROPEAN UNION	LL	3	YES	2	3	YES	4	7	YES	4	7	YES	0		EU - not specified	5
FIJI	LL	61	YES	2,518	61	YES	3,083	56	YES	2,571	45	YES	2,670		n/a	4
FRENCH POLYNESIA	LL	41	YES	229	48	YES	335	43	YES	292	42	YES	312		n/a	4
JAPAN	LL	27	YES	567	21	YES	952	23	YES	694	22	YES	745		not specified	1, 7
	PL	1	YES	25	0	YES	0	1	YES	227	1	YES	48		not specified	1, 7
KIRIBATI	LL	-	-	-	2	YES	16	4	YES	285	3	YES	145		n/a	4
NEW CALEDONIA	LL	19	YES	1,211	22	YES	1,472	18	YES	1,208	16	YES	1,575		n/a	4
NEW ZEALAND	LL	28	YES	650	28	YES	165	28	YES	78	22	YES	145		270	5
	TR	145	YES	2,320	142	YES	2,859	151	YES	3,383	135	YES	4,147		combined with LL	5
NIUE	LL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		n/a	6
REPUBLIC OF KOREA	LL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		not specified	6
SOLOMON ISLANDS	LL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		n/a	6
CHINESE TAIPEI	LL	50	YES	6,057	102	YES	9,255	32	YES	2,569	27	YES	3,911		81	9
TONGA	LL	6	YES	22	5	YES	12	4	YES	8	6	YES	26		n/a	4
TUVALU	LL	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	YES	60	0	YES	0		n/a	4
USA	LL	0	YES	0	0	YES	0	0	YES	0	0	YES	0		not specified	3, 5
	TR	9	YES	876	18	YES	1,912	21	YES	1,908	18	YES	1,401		not specified	3
VANUATU	LL	15	YES	3,449	26	YES	3,518	30	YES	3,486	10	YES	1,446		n/a	4

NOTES

1. Japan provided 2006-2014 vessels and catch according to CMM 2015-02 Para 4. requirements on 31st October 2016. Japan provided 2015-2022 vessels and catch in their April 2023 data submission.
2. China provided 2015 vessels and catch according to CMM 2015-02 Para 4. requirements on 4th November 2016.
3. USA provided 2006-2014 vessels and catch according to CMM 2015-02 Para 4. requirements on 10th June 2017. USA also provided 2015-2022 vessel catch and vessel numbers.
4. Operational data submitted to SPC (as a member country) on a regular basis since 2000 and therefore satisfies the requirement for producing breakdowns of catch and vessel numbers by year.
5. Operational data submitted to WCPFC for years 2015-2022, and therefore satisfies the requirement for producing breakdowns of catch and vessel numbers by year.
6. These fleets do not appear to have been active in the WCPFC Area south of 20°S for years 2015 onwards.
7. Operational data submitted to WCPFC for 2016-2022, and therefore satisfies the requirement for producing breakdowns of catch and vessel numbers by year. Operational data provided for 2015 does not cover the area south of 20°S while there is evidence of catch.
8. Cells with 'Partial' mean that coverage of the catch by vessel data was evaluated to be < 80% but > 40%. Cells with 'NO' mean that coverage of the catch by vessel data was evaluated to be < 40%.
9. Chinese Taipei provided 2006-2014 vessels and catch according to CMM 2015-02 Para 4. requirements on 31st December 2016. Chinese Taipei also provided 2015 vessel catch and vessel numbers on this date. The 2016 catch has been determined from aggregate catch/effort data provided by Chinese Taipei. The 2017-2022 catch and vessels has been determined from operational data provided to the WCPFC by Chinese Taipei and coastal states.
10. Operational data submitted to WCPFC for years 2015-2022, which would normally satisfy the requirement for producing breakdowns of catch and vessel numbers by year, but coverage is not 100%. However, China also provided separate summaries of annual catch by vessel for the WCPFC area south of 20°S (according to CMM 2015-02 Para 4.) which represents 100% coverage.

Excerpts from Final Compliance Monitoring Report adopted at WCPFC18⁸ related to CMM 2015-02 limit assessments.

23. In accordance with CMM 2019-06, paragraph 35, where there were majority/minority views on the assessment, TCC17's provisional assessment reflects the majority view and records the minority view. TCC17 notes the following assessments with majority/minority views for the Commission for its final assessment:

a. CMM 2015-02 01–The majority view was that Chinese Taipei should be assessed as Priority Non-Compliant; however, there was a minority view that the obligation should be assessed as CMM Review.

b. CMM 2015-02 01–The majority view was that China should be assessed as Compliant; however, there was a minority view that the obligation should be assessed as Priority Non-Compliant.

24. After further deliberation at WCPFC18, there remained majority/minority views on these two assessments. As there was not consensus on the compliance status, WCPFC18 noted the majority and minority views for these two assessments.

25. A summary of the detailed discussion of this assessment is contained in Section VI.

...

28. TCC17 noted that TCC consistently had difficulty assessing some obligations due to differing interpretations of those obligations and different views on how implementation of the obligation was to be assessed.

29. With regard to CMM 2015-02 on South Pacific Albacore, TCC17 noted that concerns had been expressed by many CCMs over a number of years concerning the South Pacific albacore fishery and the desire to develop a new measure.

30. Chinese Taipei noted during CMR review process that there is lack of consensus for the definition of “vessels fishing for south Pacific albacore”. This issue should be discussed further, including at future Commission meetings. The majority of CCMs were of the view that the data provided by the Scientific Services Provider (SPC-OFP) indicates that this CCM had exceeded its limit for the number of vessels actively fishing for albacore south of 20°S and noted that this had been assessed this way consistently in the past and therefore should be assessed as Priority Non-Compliant. A minority of TCC17 highlighted the difficulty that TCC had in defining terms such as “fishing for” a stock and also questioned the basis for the assessment of “actively fishing” in terms of the weight of catch. Many CCMs noted that the breach of the quantitative limits in CMM 2015-02, paragraph 1, by Chinese Taipei was considered a serious issue.

31. WCPFC18 noted that there were ongoing difficulties related to interpretation of the term “actively fishing for” (and similar terms such as “directed at” and “targeting”) for this CMM which continue to present challenges and makes it difficult for TCC to complete the assessments of some obligations during the CMR.

⁸<https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/wcpfc18-2021-fcmr/2021-final-draft-compliance-monitoring-report-covering-2020-activities-adopted> paragraphs 23-25, 28-35

32. Most CCMs considered that it was important to treat all CCMs the same and to use a consistent approach to the use of baseline data for the assessment of the quantitative limit under CMM 2015-02. One CCM raised an issue on the quantitative limit under CMM 2015-02, which was not raised in the dCMR. It noted its view that China should be assessed as Priority Non-Compliant as in its view China had exceeded the number of vessels which fished in 2005 as set out in [TCC17-2021-IP07](#), which was based on TCC14-2018-IP14. China noted that the data set out in TCC17-2021-IP07 was based on partial information and that the baseline of 70 vessels had been accepted by TCC in past assessments. One CCM disputed TCCs acceptance of the baseline 70 vessels, based on TCC14-2018-IP14.

33. CCMs noted that China did provide additional information related to the number of vessels and their catch for the baseline year (2005) however this information was received after the deadline for submission of information after TCC17 and could not be verified and hence was not considered in this discussion, but that this information would be reviewed by the Scientific Services Provider (SPC-OFI) and the Secretariat in accordance with existing practice in the new year.

34. WCPFC18 also noted that the disparities in available operational-level data for determined baseline periods raised difficulties in undertaking compliance assessments as this results in some limits being based on analysis of operational-level data and other limits being based on self-reporting.

35. WCPFC18 noted the issue raised during discussions on this CMM and emphasized the importance of ensuring that CMMs are clear in their application, and are able to be monitored and enforced. WCPFC18 requested the South Pacific Albacore Roadmap WG take note of this in consideration of its future work.
