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FFA Members' Additional Proposal to Amend the Tropical Tuna Measure

WCPFC20-2023-DP15
29 November 2023

FFA Member CCMs



FFA

28th November 2023

Dr. Josie Tamate
Chair
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
PO BOX 2356, Kolonia
Pohnpei
Federated States of Micronesia

Dear Chair,

FFA MEMBERS PROPOSAL TO AMMEND THE TROPICAL TUNA MEASURE

I write on behalf of the 17 members of the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency to submit our proposal to amend the Tropical Tuna Measure, attached herewith.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Glen Joseph
Chair
Forum Fisheries Committee

cc: Ms Rhea Moss-Christian, WCPFC Executive Director

Explanatory Note for a proposal by FFA Members to amend the Tropical Tuna Measure

1. Explanatory Note

The Commission adopted [CMM 2022-01](#), a conservation and management measure (CMM) on an interim management procedure for Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) skipjack tuna (SKJ) at WCPFC19, in accordance with the WCPFC Harvest Strategy Work Plan.

In accordance with the implementation schedule of this measure, the Scientific Service Provider (SSP) ran the SKJ management procedure for the first time in mid-2023, with the outputs provided in [SC19-MI-WP-01](#).

The estimation method of the SKJ management procedure ran successfully and returned an estimate of spawning potential depletion ($SB_{\text{latest}}/SB_{F=0}$) in the terminal year (2022) of 0.42.

Under CMM 2022-01, an estimate of spawning potential depletion of 0.42 corresponds to a scalar of 1.0 and sets catches in other commercial fisheries and fishing effort in the purse seine and pole-and-line fisheries at their respective baseline levels for the period 2024-2026, that is:

- (a) purse seine effort at 2012 levels;
- (b) pole-and-line effort at average 2001-04 levels; and
- (c) catch in the domestic fisheries of assessment region 5 (of the 2019 SKJ stock assessment) at 2016-18 average levels (para 17, [WCPFC20-2023-14](#)).

The Commission is scheduled to take into account the output of the SKJ management procedure in reviewing the CMM 2021-01, the CMM for bigeye (BET), yellowfin (YFT) and SKJ in the WCPO, otherwise known as the tropical tuna measure (TTM) this year.

This paper explains the basis for a proposal by FFA Members to amend CMM 2021-01 and include a new paragraph that sets fishing levels for the period 2024-26.

The paper also assesses the proposed revision against the requirements of CMM 2013-06 on the Criteria for the Consideration of Conservation and Management Proposals.

2. Application of CMM 2013-06

The following information is offered to assist the Commission to meet the requirements of CMM 2013-06 in respect to the proposed amendment to CMM 2021-01.

a. Who is required to implement the proposal?

All CCMs with purse seine, pole-and-line and domestic (i.e. assessment region 5 of the 2019 skipjack stock assessment) fishing activities in the WCPFC Convention Area are required to implement the proposal.

b. Which CCMs would this proposal impact and in what way(s) and what proportion?

This proposal will have a beneficial impact on all CCMs that take SKJ in the WCPFC Convention Area over the long term because it is consistent with the outputs of CMM 2022-01, a CMM on a Management Procedure (MP) for WCPO SKJ, which was adopted at WCPFC19. This management procedure will help ensure that the spawning potential depletion ratio of SKJ is maintained, on average, at a level consistent with the target reference point (TRP) in a manner that achieves the objective of relative stability in fishing levels between management periods and in the longer term.

CCMs will not be impacted provided levels are maintained at those provided in (a) to (c). If these levels are exceeded, and CMM 2021-01 needs to be amended, CCMs whose opportunities to participate in WCPO SKJ fisheries are reduced will be impacted. It is not possible at this stage to determine in what ways and what proportion, CCMs would be impacted. However, we emphasise the Commission's requirement to apply Article 30 of the Convention and take into account the special requirements of SIDS and Territories.

c. Are there linkages with other proposals or instruments in other regional fisheries management organisations or international organisations that reduce the burden of implementation?

No.

d. Does the proposal affect development opportunities for SIDS?

The proposal will not affect development opportunities for SIDS provided levels are maintained at those provided in (a) to (c). If these levels are exceeded, and the CCM needs to be amended, and those amendments reduce SIDS opportunities to participate in WCPO SKJ fisheries, then this would have a negative impact on the development opportunities for SIDS. Having said that, no one will benefit more from a healthy SKJ stock than SIDS.

e. Does the proposal affect SIDS domestic access to resources and development aspirations?

The proposal does not affect SIDS domestic access to resources and development aspirations provided levels are maintained at those provided in (a) to (c). If these levels are exceeded and the CMM needs to be amended, and those amendments reduce SIDS opportunities to participate in the WCPO SKJ fisheries, it will likely negatively affect SIDS domestic access to the SKJ stock and development aspirations.

On the other hand, if the estimate of spawning potential depletion ($SB_{\text{latest}}/SB_{F=0}$) for SKJ exceeds 0.57, then the output from the SKJ MP allows for an increase in future catch or effort. The latter may improve SIDS domestic access to resources and development aspirations.

f. What resources, including financial and human capacity, are needed by SIDS to implement the proposal?

No additional resources are required for SIDS to implement the proposal.

g. What mitigation measures are included in the proposal?

There are no specific mitigation measures in the proposal, but FFA Members are open to any proposal that would mitigate the impact of this proposal on SIDS.

h. What assistance mechanisms and associated timeframes, including training and financial support, are included in the proposal to avoid a disproportionate burden on SIDS?

None required.

3. Proposed Changes to CMM 2021-01

New paragraph after paragraph 28:

Notwithstanding paragraphs 24 and 25, in the years 2024-2026:

- (a) Effort in the purse seine fishery shall not exceed the 2012 level;
- (b) Effort in the pole and line fishery shall not exceed the 2001-04 average level; and
- (c) Catch in the domestic fisheries of assessment region 5 of the 2019 skipjack tuna stock assessment shall not exceed the 2016-18 average level.

If these levels are exceeded during 2024-26, this CMM will be amended to ensure that they are maintained.