



## **TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE**

### **Third Regular Session**

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### **OUTCOMES OF THE SMALL WORKING GROUP ON TURTLES (Revised)**

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**WCPFC-TCC3-2007/36 (Rev.1)**

**1 October 2007**

#### **Prepared by the Chair of the Small Working Group on Turtles**

The working group reviewed paper WCPFC-TCC- 2007-27 and tried to make progress with regards towards the development a CMM. The Working Group provides the draft text to TCC3 for consideration.

TCC3 provides Table X for the Commission's consideration in developing a conservation and management measure at WCPFC4 for the reduction of the incidental capture and mortality of sea turtles in longline fisheries in the Convention Area. The material provided in Table X is derived from and is consistent with the advice provided by SC3. SC3 stated that these methods have been shown to reduce the incidental take of sea turtles and not have an adverse effect on the catch of target species.

TCC3 did not have sufficient information on geographical distribution so that the TCC3 decided to support SC3's recommendation to apply proposed measures across the convention area.

The TCC3 recommends that the elements in column A be required in all longline fisheries and that the Commission adopt at WCPFC4 guidelines for the implementation of the elements of column A based on input from CCMs. Any CCMs with such guidelines or proposed specifications are requested to submit them to the Secretariat at least 30 days in advance of WCPFC4. TCC also recommend the Secretariat seek relevant information or guidelines for other fisheries bodies, such as SPC or FFA.

Further, the TCC recommends that the Commission consider which elements of column B may be appropriate in the development and adoption of a conservation and management measure at WCPFC4.

**Table X.** Effective strategies to reduce sea turtle interactions in WCPFC fisheries.

<b>A: Handling Methods</b>	<b>B: Catch Mitigation Methods</b>	
<b>All longline fisheries</b>	<b>1. Shallow-set swordfish longline fisheries</b>	<b>2. Other longline fisheries (if applicable)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry and use line cutters and dehookers to handle and release sea turtles in accordance with WCPFC guidelines.</li> <li>• Where appropriate carry and use dipnets in accordance with WCPFC guidelines.</li> </ul>	1.1 Use large circle hooks <sup>1</sup> 1.2 Use fish rather than squid as bait	2.1 Replace non-circle hooks with circle hooks <sup>1</sup> that are at least as wide (minimum width) as those replaced 2.2 Replace non-circle hooks with hooks <sup>1</sup> (any style) that are at least 20% wider (minimum width) than those replaced 2.3 Use fish rather than squid as bait 2.4 Eliminate the shallowest-set hooks (i.e. those <100 m) in deep set fishing 2.5 Replace the shallowest-set hooks (i.e. those <100m) with circle hooks <sup>1</sup> when deep set fishing
<sup>1</sup> For all methods, hooks should not have points offset any greater than 10°. Review has shown that greater offsets can have negative effects in increasing the frequency of deep hooking as opposed to mouth hooking.		

The TCC3 advises the Commission that some elements in column B if adopted as written in column B could cause some difficulties in implementation from a compliance perspective because of a lack of clear definition, such as:

- Many CCMs do not have existing minimum hook sizes or records of hook sizes which are currently used against which to judge any increase in hook sizes; and
- Similarly there are concerns about how the depth hooks are fishing outlined in elements 2.4 and 2.5 could be practically enforced.
- The definition of a shallow set swordfish fishery.

The TCC recommends that “shallow-set” fisheries be considered those in which the majority of hooks fish at depth shallower than 100 meters.

TCC3 did not have sufficient information to develop appropriate definitions or specifications on gear referred in table X, that could apply across the convention area. It is likely that there may need to be different gear specifications in different geographic areas.

Hence, if any measures in Column B are adopted by the Commission TCC also recommends that CCMs initially establish their own operational definitions or specifications. These definitions or specifications

should be made available to the Commission so that CCMs can work to harmonize the operational aspects of any such measures with the view to developing specifications in the future.

Two parties offered the following statements:

Japan stated that TCC should recommend a more specific sea turtle mitigation measure to the WCPFC4. In particular, the required number of measures to be implemented from the column B should be clarified and Japan believed that the requirement should be “at least one” of the measures in this regard

The US was similarly prepared to support a TCC recommendation that the Commission adopt a conservation and management measure with specific requirements with respect to the elements in column B of Table X. However, the US recognized that certain CCMs believed it was premature for the TCC to make such a recommendation, and agreed that column B as developed by the working group provides a basis for further development of a conservation and management measure by the Commission.