



**Western and
Central Pacific
Fisheries
Commission**

**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
TWENTIETH REGULAR SESSION**

14-21 August 2024
Manila, Philippines

Development of interim Electronic Monitoring (EM) standards for the WCPFC

**WCPFC-SC20-2023-/ST-WP-05
27 July 2024**

Paper prepared by Chair of the ER and EM IWG

Context

2. At its 20th session the WCPFC agreed to the following actions:

*The Commission noted the Report of the ER&EM WG (WCPFC20-2023-ERandEM-IWG-02) and **agreed to adopt the Schedule of Work set out in Appendix 1 of the report (Attachment 5).***

The Commission tasked the ER&EM WG to develop a set of interim EM standards for adoption at WCPFC21 in 2024.

The Commission noted the need for cooperation with IATTC in the development of EM procedures for WCPFC.

3. Further, in adopting an updated Tropical Tuna CMM (CMM 2023-01), EM was specifically called out in Table 3 of Attachment 1. The use of EM (or increased observer coverage) could allow some members an increased BET longline catch limit.

In adopting these interim standards, the Commission will be making decisions on, and/or setting a direction towards, the following:

- (1) the scope of the EM program (e.g. fleets to be covered);
- (2) the objectives for the EM program (what it is wanting the EM to achieve on these fleets);
- (3) a set of interim standards for EM;
- (4) associated minimum EM data requirements;
- (5) requirements for reporting to the WCPFC on the use of EM; and
- (6) any process that Commission may choose to establish to have assurance that CCMs are implementing EM programs in line with adopted EM standards.

This paper also includes a set of proposed 'Chair's' recommendations for each area.

For the Scientific Committee I would be grateful for feedback on any aspects of the paper, but in particular:

- (1) the monitoring objectives;
- (2) EM data requirements required to reflect the EM Program objectives. In particular, alternative data collection mechanisms, and data requirements that may not yet being achieved through the current ROP minimum data standards; and
- (3) proposed Annual Report Part 1 reporting requirements in *Appendix 3*.

Following the review of this paper by the SC and TCC, and hopefully a further session(s) of the ER and EM IWG in the margins of the TCC meeting, I propose to prepare a paper for the Commission with a final set of recommendations. These recommendations will likely include:

- items that it is proposed that the Commission adopt;
- as appropriate, items to be included in the work plans for SC/TCC/ER and EM IWG for any outstanding tasks needed for establishing EM standards for longline; and
- Items to be included in the work plans for SC/TCC/ER and EM IWG for further development of the WCPFC EM program.

Chair's recommendations

Recommendation 1: The Commission agree that the initial scope of the WCPFC EM program is for longline, with a particular focus on high-seas activities.

Recommendation 2: The Commission agree that subject to agreement of interim EM standards, including minimum EM data requirements, for longline, that work be initiated to extend the WCPFC EM program to longline transshipment activities.

Recommendation 3: The Commission agree that the primary objective of the WCPFC EM program for longline be to help verify reported catches of those species and stocks subject to catch limits.

Recommendation 4: The Commission agree that secondary objectives of the WCPFC EM program for longline be to collect appropriate information and verify other relevant requirements under: CMM 2204-04 (sharks), CMM 2019-05 (mobulid rays), CMM 2018-04 (sea turtles), and CMM 2018-03 (seabirds).

Recommendation 5: The Commission adopt these as interim EM standards for the WCPFC EM program.

Recommendation 6: The Commission direct the ER and EM IWG to draw on standards and associated materials from other RFMOs to identify potential improvements that could be made to give, as appropriate (i.e., without compromising decisions on scope, monitoring objectives, or reporting obligations on CCMs), greater consistency in EM standards across RFMOs.

Recommendation 7: subject to progress made through the ER and EM IWG, SC, and TCC during 2024, that the Commission agree to either 1, 2, or 3 above. If it is 2, or 3, the Commission should direct its subsidiary bodies and the ER and EM IWG to undertake the work needed to allow the Commission to agree to option 1 at WCPFC22 in 2025.

Recommendation 8: The Commission adopts as an interim reporting template the Appendix 3: CCM reporting on their EM program and activities. Relevant CCMs are requested to provide a description of their EM program in Annual Report Part 1 submitted in 2025. The ER and EM IWG, SC21 and TCC21 are requested to review and provide recommendations on any changes to the reporting template.

Recommendation 9: The Commission notes the importance of establishing a WCPFC assurance process for EM Programs, and directs the ER and EM IWG, SC21 and TCC21 to prioritise work, including the development of guidance to support the audit/assurance process, in support of developing a WCPFC Assurance Process in 2025.

Other relevant SC ST papers

Paper	Chair's thoughts
WP-02	Automated species and size 'generation' is still a while way from being a 'MUST' but when proven will be valuable for Purse Seine to address biases in grab sampling
WP-04	There is a lot of ongoing work required thru this IWG to update the ROP MSDF to reflect information CCMs are required to report on for Non-target and associated and dependent species [NTADs]. We need to exercise care if using the ROP MSDF <u>alone</u> as a base for EM data requirements
WP-09	<p>This is only relevant to a few CCMs. The development of EM-related audit points essentially mirrors the proposed approach described in Appendix 3 of WP-05.</p> <p>There will likely be a delay between collecting EM records and being able to submit EM data. Addressing this, and the reporting approaches, will add more nuance to Appendix 3 of WP-05.</p> <p>Para 15 of WP-09 provides some more detail on the calculation of coverage rates that could be usefully added to Appendix 3 of WP-05. Para 17 of WP-09 essentially follows Option 2 from WP-05 for EM data, but does give some guidance on 'MUSTs' fields and proposes that coverage is something determined from submitted EM data.</p>