



**The Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish  
Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean**

**Northern Committee  
Second Regular Session**

**11–13 September 2006  
Tokyo, Japan**

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### **USP Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data**

The Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. Northern Committee Second regular session, 11-13 September 2006, Tokyo, Japan. – Kolonia, Pohnpei : Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, 2006.

31 p.; cm.

1. Fishery management, International—Oceania—Congresses 2. Fishes—Conservation—Oceania—Congresses 3. Fish stock assessment—Oceania—Congresses 4. Tuna fisheries—Oceania—Congresses 5. The Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean—Congresses I. Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission

SH214.9.C77 2006

333.95609648

ISBN978-982-9103-05-5

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**SUMMARY RECORD**

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**AGENDA ITEM 1 — OPENING OF MEETING**

1. The Second Meeting of the Northern Committee took place in Tokyo, Japan, from 11–13 September 2006. The meeting was attended by representatives from Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea, Philippines, United States of America (USA), and Chinese Taipei as well as the observers from the Cook Islands, Palau, Vanuatu, and the Russian Federation. The Secretariat of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) also attended. The list of meeting participants is included as Attachment A.

**Welcoming address**

2. Mr. Miyahara, Chair of the Committee, opened the meeting. On behalf of the host nation, Mr. Nakamae, Deputy Director General of Fisheries Agency of Japan, welcomed all participants. His welcome address is included as Attachment B

**Adoption of agenda**

3. The draft provisional agenda was adopted without modification (Attachment C).

## **Meeting arrangements**

4. The Chair briefly discussed meeting arrangements. Mr. Inomata of Japan was appointed as rapporteur.

## **Election of Vice-Chair**

5. Mr. Benjamin F.S. Tabios Jr. of the Philippines was elected as Vice-Chair.

## **AGENDA ITEM 2 — CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES**

### **Report from the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) and Scientific Committee to the Commission**

6. Dr. Sakagawa, chair of the ISC introduced the report of the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of ISC, which was held in March 2006, in La Jolla, California, USA (WCPFC/NC/07). He mentioned that the report was mainly based on the results of a series of working groups on respective species, and that the assessments of some stocks were conducted with limited available information. He informed the Northern Committee that in order for ISC to make significant progress on its assigned tasks, further cooperation, including improved data associated with stocks in question, would be necessary.

7. The Committee reaffirmed the importance of close cooperation between ISC and the Commission, in particular the Northern Committee, and also noted the importance of receiving timely and reliable scientific advice from ISC on the relevant species for the Committee to consider in formulating recommendations to the Commission on conservation and management measures.

8. The Executive Director of WCPFC, Andrew Wright, briefed the Northern Committee on the principal outcomes of the second regular session of the Scientific Committee, which convened 7–18 August 2006 in Manila, Philippines. He reviewed the fisheries in the western and central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) in 2005, the status of yellowfin and bigeye tuna stocks, bycatch mitigation outcomes related to seabirds, sea turtles, sharks and juvenile yellowfin and bigeye tuna, the draft strategic Research Plan, and the proposed independent review of interim science structure and function of the Commission (WCPFC/NC/08).

9. Dr. Boggs of the USA presented recent results on various experiments conducted by several nations and organizations directed at reducing the incidental take of sea turtles in longline fisheries. He highlighted the positive results from the experiments on circle hooks conducted in the waters around Hawaii, noting in particular the significant reduction in incidental take of sea turtles, including leatherbacks, with negligible or minor reduction of the catch of target species. Other experimental measures by various members are still in

preliminary stage (e.g. the introduction of alternative gears and baits to reduce incidental takes), but were also mentioned because of their prospective utilities.

### **Conservation and management measures for the northern stocks and area**

10. The Chair introduced the letter addressed to the Committee from Mr. Bernard Thoulag, Federated States of Micronesia WCPFC Commissioner (WCPFC/NC2/18). In the letter, Mr. Thoulag alleged that the Northern Committee was encroaching on the competence of the Commission because its Conservation and Management Measure on North Albacore includes the provisions applied to the area between 20<sup>0</sup>N and the equator. The Committee confirmed that the Committee did not have any intention to expand its jurisdiction and will pay due attention to this particular point in future deliberations at the Committee.

11. In accordance with the report of the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission, the Committee reviewed the Conservation and Management Measure on North Pacific albacore, which was adopted in 2005. The Committee agreed that the measure should be continued with no amendment, and requested that Committee members submit information on implementation of this conservation and management measure, in particular on effort control and data provision, for review by the Technical and Compliance Committee.

12. In case the Commission should adopt measures on southern stock of swordfish at its meeting in 2006, the Committee recommended to the Commission that the following paragraph should be included in any such conservation and management measures so that such adoption will not adversely affect the northern stocks of swordfish.

"CCMs shall not shift their fishing effort for swordfish to the area north of 20<sup>0</sup>N in the Convention area."

13. The Northern Committee suggested to the Third Session of the WCPFC Commission that it request the International Scientific Committee (ISC) and the WCPFC Scientific Committee (SC) work jointly to follow up with the Second Session of the SC (SC2) recommendation and, where necessary, compile or develop detailed definitions and specifications for each of the seabird bycatch mitigation methods recommended by SC2 and included in Table 1 of the SC2 main report. It also requests that the results of this joint ISC-SC work be provided to the Third Session of the Northern Committee (NC3) in 2007.

14. It was decided that NC3 would consider — taking into account the results of the joint ISC-SC work (if so requested by WCPFC3) — seabird bycatch mitigation measures that apply in the Convention Area north of the 20 degree parallel of north latitude.

15. It was noted that the Members of the Northern Committee would undertake the following activities, where possible, on a voluntary basis until specific seabird bycatch

mitigation measures have been adopted for the Convention Area, including north of the 20 degree parallel of north latitude:

- a) Make every effort to ensure that where seabirds are captured alive in the course of fishing operations hooks are removed and other measures are taken to minimise mortality and serious injury of such seabirds.
- b) Conduct experimental tests of mitigation methods under science-based research programmes, including methods not included in Table 1 of the SC2 main report, in order to develop appropriate methods for particular fisheries and areas
- c) Seek feedback from fishers and observers on the effectiveness and practicality of various mitigation methods.
- d) Provide appropriate training to their longline fishers on seabird identification and handling and release methods, including providing fishers with information on species identification, handling and release methods, and mitigation methods.
- e) Encourage, or, if possible, require, the longline vessel operators to report details of relevant interactions with seabirds (e.g. in logbooks), including identification of species, how the bird was hooked, and the condition upon release (e.g. alive, dead, whether any gear remained on the bird).

**Table 1.** Recommended mitigation measures (see SC2 Executive Summary)

<b>Column A</b>	<b>Column B</b>
Side setting with bird curtain	Tori line <sup>1</sup>
Night setting with minimum deck lighting	Weighted branch lines
Tori line	Blue-dyed bait
	Deep setting line shooter
	Bait caster
	Underwater setting chute
	Management of offal discharge

<sup>1</sup> If tori line is selected from both Column A and Column B this equates to simultaneously using two (i.e. paired) tori lines.

16. The Northern Committee acknowledged the paper (WCPFC/NC2/21) on sea turtles for its reference and urged that further consideration take place at the second session of Technical and Compliance Committee.

#### **Data needs for assessment of the northern stocks**

17. The WCPFC Executive Director presented an overview of the report of the Ad Hoc Task Group [Data] (AHTG [Data]), which met in Manila, Philippines 31 July–4 August 2006 (WCPFC/NC2/20). He recalled the AHTG [Data] had been established by the Commission at its second regular session to consider the types of data to be managed by the Commission, and to draft rules and procedures for the dissemination, use, and security of that data. He noted that the Scientific Committee had reviewed the report of the AHTG [Data] at its Manila meeting, and that a similar opportunity was to be provided at the forthcoming meeting of the Technical and Compliance Committee with the final report of the AHTG [Data] to be tabled to the third session of the Commission at Apia, Samoa in December. The Northern Committee welcomed the work of the AHTG [Data], noting that confidentiality and security of data are critically important issues for all members of the Commission.

18. The Northern Committee stressed the importance of improving data collection of Pacific bluefin tuna, including data from the entire area of distribution for better assessment of this stock. The Committee requested ISC to provide a preliminary review on the status of the stock in 2007, and complete assessment in 2008 for consideration on management actions. The Committee also requested its members, while waiting to receive reports from ISC, to provide information at its next meeting on the actions they have taken in response to the scientific advice of this year. At its next meeting, the Committee will review meeting both scientific information and members' actions. It encouraged all members of the Commission to provide to the Secretariat, all available data they may hold relating to northern stocks.

19. The Committee recalled the decision of the second regular session of the Commission in relation to scientific data to be provided to the Commission noting that Pacific bluefin was not currently included in the list of species covered by that decision. The Northern Committee recommended to the Commission that the provision of scientific data to the Commission be revised to include Pacific bluefin.

20. The Northern Committee also recommended that the Secretariat, in consultation with the Chair of the Commission and the Chair of the Scientific Committee, develop a proposal for the inclusion of striped marlin in the species to be covered by the work of the Northern Committee.



## **AGENDA ITEM 3 — FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME**

### **2007 work programme**

21. In relation to Agenda Item 2, the Northern Committee considered its prospective workload for subsequent years, for both target and bycatch species, with a view to effectively discharging its duties in an orderly manner. After the discussion, the Committee agreed to its 2007–2011 work program (see Attachment D) with the understanding that this Program is subject to annual review.

## **AGENDA ITEM 4 — COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

### **ISC**

22. The Northern Committee endorsed the draft memorandum of understanding (MOU) between WCPFC and ISC (Attachment G of WCPFC/NC2/11) and requested that it be considered for approval by the third session of the Commission.

### **IATTC**

23. The Committee endorsed the Draft MoU between WCPFC and the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission – IATTC (Attachment E of WCPFC/NC2/11), and requested it be considered for approval by the third session of the Commission. The Committee highlighted the need for ongoing consultation with the IATTC in order to coordinate research and management on northern stocks, in particular, Northern albacore.

### **Joint meeting of tuna regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs)**

24. Japan introduced its information paper on the Joint Tuna RFMOs Meeting (WCPFC/NC2/12), which will be held in Kobe, Japan in January 2007. The Executive Director invited members to provide advice and suggestions to the Secretariat and to assist with WCPFC preparations for the meeting.

## **AGENDA ITEM 5 — OTHER MATTERS**

### **Administrative arrangements for the Northern Committee**

#### *Secretarial functions and associated costs*

25. In response to the discussion held at the previous session, Japan submitted its revised proposal on the Secretarial function of the Committee (ECPFC/NC2/13). While generally welcoming continued efforts for effective functioning of the Committee, it failed to reach consensus on the proposal. In order to make progress in this regard, the

Commission was requested to explore an acceptable solution to the issue, with the understanding that the tabled proposal does not purport to create an independent Secretariat, but to outsource those services through a contract with an appropriate institution. As an interim measure, Japan expressed its intention to dispatch its expert to support the function of the WCPFC Secretariat in this regard, while working further on estimating necessary costs (including a possible contribution formula) and possible functions.

### ***Rules of procedure***

26. Two papers relating to this agenda item were tabled for the consideration by the Committee (WCPFC/NC2/14 and WCPFC/NC2/15). Although the Committee agreed that Appendix A of the WCPFC/NC2/15 would serve as a basis for discussion, it was unable to complete the work at this time. Each member was requested to submit its comments on this item to the Secretariat by 31 October 2006. A short Committee meeting to be convened during the third session of Commission was suggested in order to finalize and submit the rules for adoption by the Commission.

### **Next meeting**

27. Japan offered to host the regular third session of the Northern Committee, 11–13 September 2007, at a venue to be decided. This offer was accepted with appreciation by the Committee.

### **Other business**

28. In relation to illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing issues, some members informed the Committee of information reported by their fishermen regarding drift netting in the high seas of the Convention Area, with some of the unidentified vessels observed fishing for North Pacific albacore. The Committee expressed concern about these reports and agreed to continue to exchange information, preferably in the form of documents, and consider necessary action at subsequent sessions.

29. The Committee acknowledged the statement by the observer from the Cook Islands, expressing the Cook Islands' wish to be a full member of the Committee (Attachment E). The representative of the Cook Islands provided data to demonstrate that its catch occurs in the area north of 20<sup>0</sup>N. In view of this data, the Cook Islands was warmly welcomed as a member of the Committee.

30. The Committee also acknowledged the statement by the observer from Vanuatu, expressing Vanuatu's wish to be an active member of the Committee (Attachment F). A request was made to provide its catch data by species in the area north of 20<sup>0</sup>N and measures to prevent the increasing capacity by vessels abusing its flag. It was suggested

that Japan, currently holding bilateral consultation with the Government of Vanuatu, will consult with the Government of Vanuatu on this issue before the next year's session.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 6 — REPORT TO THE COMMISSION**

##### **Adoption of the report of the Second Regular Session of Northern Committee and recommendation to the Commission**

31. The report of the Second Regular Session of the Northern Committee was adopted.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 7 — CLOSE OF MEETING**

##### **Closing of meeting**

32. The meeting was closed on 13 September 2006.



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**ATTACHMENTS**

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**The Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks  
in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean**

**Northern Committee**

**Second Regular Session**

**11–13 September 2006**

**Tokyo, Japan**

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**OPENING STATEMENT**

Mr. Akira Nakamae,  
Deputy Director General of the Fisheries Agency of Japan

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**11 September 2006**

Chairman, Executive Director, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I have the honor to make a welcome address at the outset of the second session of the Northern Committee of WCPFC. First of all, we would like to extend our sincere welcome to all of the people who come to Japan. It is our great pleasure indeed for Japan to host this important meeting here in Tokyo.

It is needless to say that the Northern Committee of WCPFC has its vital importance for each member of the Committee, both coastal and fishing nations. Japan is one of those that are fully involved in, and committed to, the activities of this Committee. In order to fulfill the objectives of the Convention, hereby securing our national interests on the fisheries in this area, I would like to emphasize that high autonomy and functionality of the Northern Committee should be fully ensured, as we already agreed in the previous meetings. Now that the Committee was successfully established last year in Pohnpei, at the second session this year in Tokyo, we need to maintain this positive and strong momentum to direct the Committee on the right track.



It is my expectation that all of the people have gotten together here, with strong wills to make further progress at this meeting. A variety of substantial issues is before us, which need to be addressed in an adequate manner. In particular, I would like to highlight the importance of effective and feasible steps toward the conservation and sustainable use of target species, which need proper attention and action. At the same time, I would admit that this is not in any way an easy task for all of us; we need to handle this issue with utmost care, taking full account of relevant aspects such as technology, biology, and socioeconomies of the fisheries.

Now, I would like to underline the need to stabilize and strengthen the activities of this Committee. Japan will submit its revised proposal on the secretarial function for your further consideration, keeping the principle of cost-effectiveness in mind. I am pleased to add that, as I expressed our intension at the informal meeting in September last year, Japan is prepared to host future sessions of the meeting of the Northern Committee, bearing due responsibilities and contributions.

Lastly, we have to deepen our mutual understanding, and jointly try to explore acceptable and workable solutions in rather wide and long perspectives. The Japanese delegation is ready to contribute to the discussion for this purpose so that the meeting held in our country would be fruitfully concluded. I would also anticipate that all of you here would work effectively with each other in a sprit of cooperation, as was done before. Once again, I sincerely wish success of this meeting. I also wish you a pleasant stay in Japan.

I thank you.



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**AGENDA**

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**WCPFC/NC2/03  
11 September 2006**

**Opening of meeting**

- 1.1 Welcome
- 1.2 Adoption of agenda
- 1.3 Meeting arrangements
- 1.4 Election of Vice-Chair

**Conservation and management measures**

- 1.1 Report from International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) and Scientific Committee to the Commission
- 1.2 Conservation and management measures for the northern stocks and area
- 1.3 Data needs for assessment of the northern stocks

**Future work programme**

- 3.1 Work programme for 2007

**Cooperation with other organizations**

- 4.1 ISC
- 4.2 IATTC
- 4.3 Joint Meeting of Tuna RFMOs

**Other matters**

- 5.1 Administrative arrangements for the Committee
  - Secretarial functions and associated costs
  - Rules of Procedure
- 5.2 Next meeting
- 5.3 Other business

**Report to the Commission**

- 6.1 Adoption of the report of the second regular session of Northern Committee and recommendation to the Commission

**Close of meeting**

- 7.1 Closing of the meeting



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**Proposed Work Programme for the Northern Committee**

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Work areas	5-year objectives	1-year tasks				
	2007-2011	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>1. Northern stocks</b>						
a. Monitor status; consider management action	Review status and take action as needed for: <sup>1</sup> North Pacific albacore	Obtain and review complete assessment (ISC) and consider				

<sup>1</sup> In the event that the Commission, in accordance with paragraph 5 of Annex I of the Commission Rules of Procedure, adds additional stocks, such as the northern stock of striped marlin, to the list of stocks understood to be “northern stocks”, this work programme will be revised to include periodic status reviews and consideration of management action for such stocks.

Work areas	5-year objectives	1-year tasks				
	2007-2011	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
b. Data	Pacific bluefin tuna	management action Obtain scientific advice and make recommendations for reference points for NP albacore	Obtain and review complete assessment (ISC, w/ WCPFC data) and consider management action			
	Swordfish	Obtain review on the status of the stock (ISC, w/ WCPFC data), as well as reports from CCMs on their domestic management measures, and consider management action				
	Striped marlin (if agreed by the Scientific Committee and Commission).	Obtain review on the status of the stock (ISC) and consider management action	Obtain and review complete assessment (ISC) and consider management action			
	Achieve timely submission of complete data needed for assessments, formulation of measures, and review of Commission decisions	CCMs participating in the NC submit complete data on fisheries for northern stocks to the Commission  Encourage submission to Commission of PBT data from all CCMs and make available to ISC				
<b>2. Non-target, associated, dependent species</b>						
a. Seabirds	Develop/apply appropriate methods to minimize catch and mortality	Develop recommendation for mitigation measures to be adopted by Commission				

Work areas	5-year objectives	1-year tasks				
	2007-2011	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
b. Sea turtles	Develop/apply appropriate methods to minimize catch and mortality	NC CCMs submit mitigation research results to the Commission, for compilation by Commission	Review mitigation research results and consider management action			
<b>3. Review effectiveness of decisions</b>	Annually review effectiveness of conservation and management measures and resolutions applicable to fisheries for northern stocks	Review effectiveness of NP albacore measure (CMM 2005-03)	Review effectiveness of NP albacore measure (CMM 2005-03)			
<b>4. Cooperation with other organisations</b>						
a. ISC	Develop recommendations to Commission for requests to ISC for assessments, analyses, and advice in support of conservation and management measures  Facilitate provision of data needed for assessments to ISC					
b. IATTC	Following Article 22.4, consult to facilitate consistent management measures throughout the respective ranges of the northern stocks	Following paragraph 8 of CMM 2005-03, initiate consultation to maintain consistent measures for NP albacore				



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**OBSERVER STATEMENT  
COOK ISLANDS**

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The Cook Islands would like to take this opportunity to thank the Government of Japan and the staff of the Japanese Fisheries Agency for hosting this second regular session of the Northern Committee. The Cook Islands would further like to provide some information for the benefit of the members present at this important meeting, in relation to its situation in the context of the fisheries in the northern Pacific, and in particular within the WCPFC Convention area north of the equator.

**History**

For the information of the Secretariat and existing members of the Northern Committee, we have had seven Cook Islands flagged albacore troll vessels that have at some stage conducted fishing operations in the WCPFC area north of 20°N since 1994 (please refer to the attached vessel list in Attachment 1). The catch records for these vessels show approximately 1,195 metric tonnes of fish, predominantly albacore, taken for the period 1994–2003. (see Table 2, Attachment 1). All of this catch was taken in the area north of 20°N (Northern Committee sub-area). However, it should be noted that this catch figure may be underestimated due to the difficulties in retrieving the logbook data, and other data gaps. There were no catch data recorded from the northern WCPFC area from 2004–2005, as the vessels fished mainly for southern albacore, and also in the IATTC Convention area during this time.

In this regard, the Cook Islands would also like to thank the National Marine Fisheries Service in La Jolla for their assistance in helping to collate this historical data, as most, if not all, of these vessels had

originally been recording their catch on US troll logsheets. The SPC is in the process of developing a regional troll logbook, which the Cook Islands will use in future.

## **Compliance**

All Cook Islands flagged vessels that are currently fishing are authorized to fish on the high seas (i.e. areas beyond national jurisdiction), including the WCPFC Convention Area north of the equator. In the fisheries agreements between the Cook Islands and the individual companies, there are specific requirements relating to catch reporting, observer coverage, and VMS. These requirements are also covered by our recently adopted fisheries legislation (Marine Resources Act 2005).

At present, two of the five vessels currently operating in the north Pacific are being monitored by our VMS system (Inmarsat C). The other three are expected to have the ALC units installed before the end of 2006.

In addition, we are willing to work with other members and the WCPFC Secretariat in relation to port state inspections and the placement of observers on any and all Cook Islands Flagged vessels as provided for under Cook Islands law.

It is the intention of the Cook Islands Government to respond to any and all fisheries violations in respect of these vessels to the fullest extent of current Cook Islands law (Marine Resources Act 2005), should that unfortunate situation arise, as well as to work with all appropriate bodies and communicate to WCPFC all actions taken against such vessels.

## **Resolution on northern albacore**

As there are now specific conservation and management measures being proposed for the Northern Albacore stock within the WCPFC Convention Area north of 20°N (CCM-2005-03), it is our intention to fully comply with these measures with respect to our Cook Islands flagged vessels fishing in this area. The Cook Islands thereby undertakes to supply all catch information, including nominal catch data, and any other logbook data relevant for the purposes of scientific analysis and stock assessment, to all relevant bodies.

## **Membership**

It should be noted that the Cook Islands is a full member of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), and an active participant in the work of that Commission. The Cook Islands participated in the work of the Northern Committee during the Annual Session of the Commission held in December last year, and in particular, assisted in drafting the resolution on conservation and management of northern albacore.

In addition, earlier this year we applied for, and were subsequently given, cooperating non-member status within the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC). In the process of that application, we supplied all relevant information relating to the fishing activities of our vessels to the IATTC Secretariat.



Given our active participation in the prior work of this Committee, our membership of WCPFC, our cooperation and status with IATTC, and our extended fishing history in this area, we believe we have a real and genuine interest in those fisheries currently under the mandate of the Northern Committee. We would therefore request consideration of our application for full membership within this Committee. However, as the Northern Committee is in fact a subsidiary body of the Commission, we are uncertain as to the formal procedure for membership, and we would appreciate any guidance in this matter from participating members, and the Secretariat of WCPFC. We would also appreciate some resolution of this matter before the next scheduled session of the Northern Committee.

Lastly, in regard to membership contributions, we hope some consideration be given to the issue of developing small island states when deciding on any proposed formula and level of contribution. In connection with this, we would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretariat of the WCPFC Commission for facilitating the Cook Islands' participation at this meeting, and look forward to working constructively with members in the ongoing work of this Committee.

Thank you for your attention.



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**Table 1. Cook Islands Historical Vessel List, 1994–1995**

<b>Vessel Name:</b>	<b>IRC:</b>	<b>Year Fishing:</b>
Dolphin Free	ZKVZ	1994 - Present
Maverick	ZKWB	1996
Walloda	ZKVL	1997 - Present
Sao Pedro	ZKWY	1997
Albacora	ZKVH	1998 - Present
Kona Wind	ZKVI	2000 - Present
Powerful Viking	ZKVK	1998 - Present

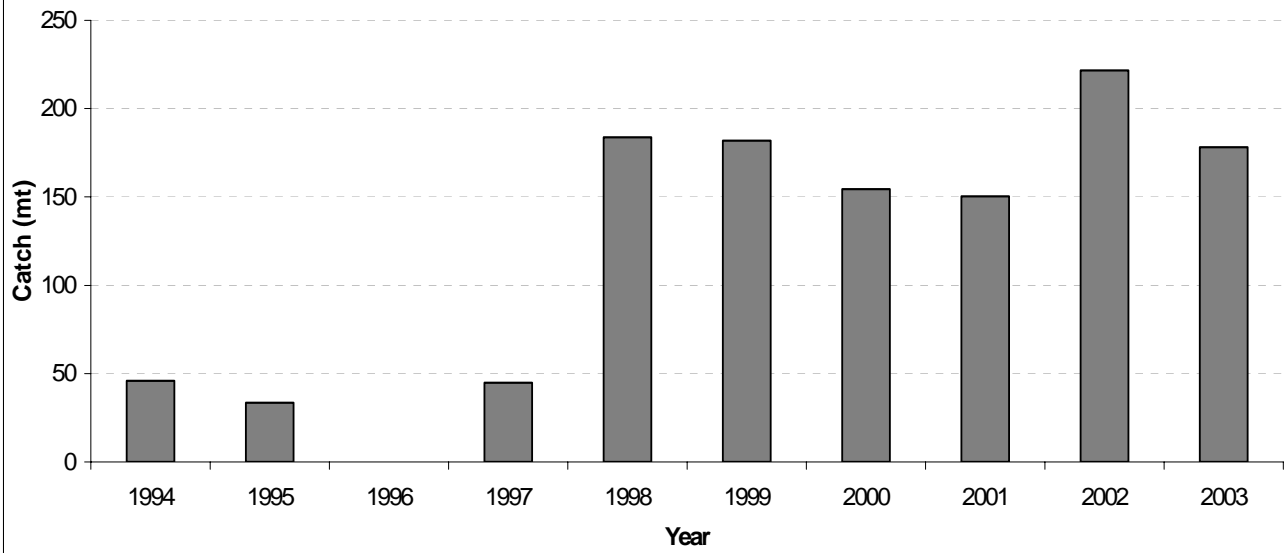
**Table 2. Albacore Troll catch totals - Northern Committee Sub-Area of WCPFC**

YEAR	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Total (mt)	45.9	33.6	0.0	44.9	183.8	181.8	154.3	150.4	221.7	178.2

TOTAL CATCH IN METRIC TONNES: 1194.6 mt

*Note: These estimates are taken from data released by the US Authorities, and only cover logbook data for the four (currently fishing) vessels. There has been some difficulty in retrieving earlier logbook data from vessels (1995 - 1997) that have since been deregistered*

**Figure 1. Albacore troll catch**





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**COUNTRY STATEMENT  
VANUATU**

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Mr. Chairman, and distinguished delegates of the Second Regular Session of the WCPFC Northern Committee, the Republic of Vanuatu is honoured, as an active fishing nation with fishing vessels operating in the IOTC, IATTC, ICCAT, CCALMR, and the WCPFC Convention areas, to participate in the second regular session of the northern Committee.

**Northern Committee membership**

Vanuatu, due to some unforeseen circumstances, did not effectively participate in the first regular session of the Northern Committee. The Vanuatu Government wishes to inform and solicit the understanding of this Committee that it intends to become an active member of the Northern Committee.

**North Pacific fishing fleet**

Vanuatu has up to 68 long line fishing vessels operating in the Northern Pacific region.

**Data reporting**

In compliance with the WCPFC data report requirements, the Vanuatu flag fishing vessels catch data details have been formally sent to the WCPFC Secretariat for verification. In summary, total catch data by Vanuatu flag fishing vessels in the North Pacific for 2004 and 2005 are as follows:

2004 total catch: 4,940,976 kilograms  
2005 total catch: 5,145,262 kilograms

(The catch comprises albacore tuna, bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, shark, stripped marlin, blue marlin, black marlin, swordfish, Moro shark and others).

### **Monitoring of North Pacific fleet**

All Vanuatu Flag fishing vessels operating in the North Pacific region are strictly monitored by the Vanuatu Government through the Department of Fisheries, in collaboration with a Government Authorized Management Body known as "Tuna Fishing (Vanuatu) Company Limited". The operation of fishing vessels is also closely monitored by the use of a Vanuatu Flag State Vessel Monitoring System which is able to track vessels using both the Imarsat and Argos Automatic Location Communicators (ALCs).

### **Report of the ISC and SC**

Based on the ISC and SC scientific report, this committee must consider recommending strict management and compliance measures for endorsement by the Commission for monitoring and control of the exploitation of the following fish species:

North Pacific bluefin tuna  
yellowfin tuna  
bigeye tuna, and  
Northern stock of swordfish

Vanuatu would welcome the implementation of area and time closures on fishing grounds for fishing operations targeting the four species of tuna and tuna-like species. Regarding the management of bycatch species, Vanuatu would support the notion for full retention of target and all non-target species by fishing vessels operating in the North Pacific region.

### **Conservation and management measures for the northern stocks and area**

It is the view of the Vanuatu delegation that strict compliance measures must be put into place to manage the northern fish stocks. In terms of fleet capacity management, Vanuatu will institute a measure that will encourage equal participation in the fishery, ensure long-term sustainable management of the resources, and ensure fair share, long term economical and social benefits.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.