



**TO ALL COMMISSION MEMBERS, COOPERATING NON-MEMBERS,
PARTICIPATING TERRITORIES AND OBSERVERS**

Circular No.: 2024/46

Date: 31 July 2024

No. pages: 7

Subject: Meeting Announcement for the 2nd Science Management Dialogue Meeting (SMD-02) and Provisional Annotated Agenda

Dear All,

CCMs will recall that at WCPFC20, the Commission agreed to hold a Science-Management Dialogue in 2024 (SMD-02) and convene the session online between SC20 and TCC20, with possible dates of 10-12 September 2024 (Pohnpei time).

Therefore, I write to confirm that SMD-02 will proceed on the dates indicated at WCPFC20 and will be co-chaired by the Commission Chair, Dr. Josie Tamate, and SC Chair, Emily Crigler. The Commission at WCPFC20 also agreed that SMD-02 will focus on:

- a. South Pacific albacore management procedures (including review of the iTRP);
- b. Development of BET and YFT TRPs;
- c. Issues pertaining to the application of the SKJ management procedure, and
- d. Harvest strategy capacity-building for CCMs (SPC-facilitated).

The provisional annotated agenda was developed in consultation with the SMD-02 co-Chairs and is attached together with the meeting notice to this Circular. In due course, other meeting documents will be posted on the SMD-02 meeting webpage.

I invite CCMs and other stakeholders to review the SMD-02 provisional annotated agenda and send any comments you have to the WCPFC Science Manager, Dr. SungKwon Soh (sungkwon.soh@wcpfc.int), by the close of business on 10 August 2024 (Pohnpei time).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rhea Moss-Christian".

Rhea Moss-Christian
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



COMMISSION
Second Science-Management Dialogue (SMD-02)
10-12 September 2024
Online

Meeting Notice

WCPFC-SMD02-2024-01

In accordance with the decision made by the Commission at WCPFC20 in December 2023, the second Science-Management Dialogue meeting (SMD-02) will be held online at **10:00 a.m. Pohnpei time (UTC+11) for four (4) hours from Tuesday, 10 September to Thursday, 12 September 2024**. The SMD-02 will be co-chaired by the Commission Chair, Dr. Josie Tamate (Niue), and SC Chair, Emily Crigler (USA).

Virtual platform for SMD-02

Zoom will be the online meeting platform for hosting the SMD-02. The WCPFC Secretariat has compiled a series of support topics to assist users who are participating in meetings online. Browse the online help at [Using Zoom for WCPFC meetings](#). For any IT assistance related to this meeting, please send an email to ITSupport@wcpfc.int.

Registration

Registration for the online meeting is available at the SMD-02 meeting page on the WCPFC website: [Science Management Dialogue | WCPFC Meetings](#). All participants are requested to register using this facility to participate in the virtual SMD-02 meeting. Following the approval of a participant's registration and approximately two weeks prior to the meeting, an invitation email with a link to the Zoom meeting will be sent to the participant's registered email address.

All CCMs are requested to use the online registration system to approve their delegation. If you have any queries related to registration, please contact the Secretariat via email wcpfc@wcpfc.int. All CCMs are strongly requested to register **by Tuesday, 27 August 2024**.

SMD-02 Meeting Documents

Meeting documents will be available on the SMD-02 meeting webpage. All meeting documents should be submitted to the Secretariat (SungKwon.Soh@wcpfc.int) as early as possible but no later than **Tuesday, 27 August 2024**.



COMMISSION
Second Science-Management Dialogue (SMD-02)
10-12 September 2024
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PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA

WCPFC-SMD02-2024-02

AGENDA ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

- 1.1 Welcome address**
- 1.2 Meeting arrangements**
- 1.3 Adoption of agenda**

AGENDA ITEM 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE SMD-02

The objectives of the SMD-01 were to achieve a consistent understanding among members of the harvest strategy approach ([WCPFC-SMD01-2022/BP-01](#)). Likewise, the purpose of the SMD-02 could be considered as a continuation of these efforts, possibly focusing on further refining the harvest strategies based on the outcomes and feedback from the WCPFC20 and SC20. It might involve evaluating the effectiveness of the strategies implemented, discussing new scientific data, and making necessary adjustments to the management procedures.

Therefore, the purpose of the SMD-02 is multifaceted and crucial to advance harvest strategies within the WCPFC:

- a. Consistent Understanding among all members of harvest strategy's structure, function, and how it is to be implemented;
- b. Beginning discussions to prioritize and identify a subset of candidate management procedures, and determining additional work required for further analysis; and
- c. Discussing both short-term and long-term processes that will aid the Commission's decision-making regarding management procedures and developing a detailed implementation plan and schedule to guide these processes.

SMD-02 notes that WCPFC20 has outlined a focused agenda for the SMD-02 in 2024 (Para 263, WCPFC20 Summary Report). The key areas of focus will be:

- a. South Pacific albacore management procedures, including a review of the ITRP
- b. Development of TRPs for bigeye and yellowfin tuna

- c. Application of the skipjack management procedure
- d. Capacity building for CCMs, facilitated by the SSP, which will be included throughout the whole SMD-02.

AGENDA ITEM 3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Outputs from the SC20 Management Issues Theme Session

The Management Issues Theme Convener for SC20 will be responsible for providing the key outputs from the discussions on harvest strategies. This will likely include a summary of the deliberations, any consensus reached on management approaches, and recommendations for future actions to be considered by the Commission at WCPFC21.

AGENDA ITEM 4. SOUTH PACIFIC ALBACORE

4.1 Review of iTRP

SC19 recommended that WCPFC20 review a list of candidate Target Reference Points (TRPs) as outlined in the document [SC19-MI-WP-03](#) (*Update to further inform discussions on South Pacific albacore objectives and the TRP*). The recommendation was to consider adopting a TRP for South Pacific albacore that is based on a set of reference years rather than a specific level based on biomass depletion percentage.

Subsequently, at WCPFC20, after discussions in a small working group, the Commission agreed on an iTRP for South Pacific albacore. This iTRP was specified as $0.96 SB_{2017-2019}/SB_{F=0}^1$, with the aim to maintain the South Pacific albacore stock around this level on average when implementing a management procedure. It was also noted that this iTRP would be subject to review following the 2024 stock assessment and the further development of candidate management procedures.

Furthermore, WCPFC20 tasked the SSP to undertake evaluation of a range of alternative candidate South Pacific albacore target reference points between $SB/SB_{F=0} = 0.42 - 0.56$ (long-term average $SB/SB_{F=0}$ (WCPF-CA), or preferably equivalent levels defined in terms of a reference period) that will be considered in the context of the review of the adopted iTRP.

The SSP will present the outcomes or requests from the SC20 on the review of the adopted iTRP for South Pacific albacore and any available results of the WCPFC20-requested evaluation of alternative candidate TRPs.

¹ Technical definitions:

“Spawning potential depletion” refers to the estimated South Pacific albacore spawning potential as a percentage of the estimated spawning potential in the absence of fishing (i.e., the unfished spawning potential). The metric is dynamic and is estimated for each model time step.

The method to be used in calculating spawning potential in the absence of fishing ($SB_{F=0}$) shall be:

- a. $SB_{F=0, t1-t2}$ is the average of the estimated spawning potential in the absence of fishing for a time window of ten years based on the most recent South Pacific albacore stock assessment, where $t1=y-10$ to $t2=y-1$ where y is the year under consideration; and
- b. The estimation shall be based on the relevant estimates of recruitment that have been adjusted to reflect conditions without fishing according to the stock recruitment relationship.

Background paper X1 may provide background information to support the discussions on this agenda item.

4.2 South Pacific albacore management procedures

The Commission tasked the SSP to undertake evaluations of some selected candidate Management Procedures for South Pacific albacore, where the output of the HCR is total allowable effort and alternatively where the output of the same or similar HCR is total allowable catch.

The focus will be on selecting an appropriate candidate MP or a suite of candidate MPs by the SMD-02.

Background paper X2 may provide background information to support the discussions on this agenda item.

4.2.1 Interrogation of performance indicators and identification of preferred outcomes

The process of identifying a single MP or a subset of candidate MPs with desirable outcomes is informed by performance indicators. These indicators are crucial as they provide a quantitative measure of how well each MP meets the management objectives. The SMD-02 will utilize these indicators, along with online tools, such as [SPAMPLE](#), to guide the selection process. Additionally, the outcomes of the SC20 will play a significant role in informing this decision, ensuring that the chosen MP or MPs align with the latest scientific recommendations and management strategies.

For more detailed information on the performance indicators for candidate MPs, refer to [SC19-MI-WP-06](#) (*Evaluation of candidate management procedures for South Pacific albacore*).

The SSP will present any outcomes or recommendations from the SC20 regarding these evaluations.

4.2.2 Settings and Assumptions of the MPs

The SMD-02 will engage in discussions to potentially amend the settings and assumptions of the MPs. This could involve:

- Defining fisheries and fishery controls within the harvest strategy to ensure they align with the management objectives.
- Considering a 3-year management cycle for the MPs, which could provide a balance between responsiveness to stock status changes and stability for fishery operations.
- Discussing alternative settings for MPs, which may include different control rules to better manage the fisheries.

4.2.3 Additional work to be conducted by the SSP to support decision-making on MPs

The SSP will conduct additional work to support these decision-making processes on MPs. This work is essential to refine the MPs and ensure they are robust and effective for the management of South Pacific albacore.

SMD-02 will raise and discuss any further work to be conducted by the SSP to finalize the development of the South Pacific albacore MP at WCPFC21.

AGENDA ITEM 5. DEVELOPMENT OF BIGEYE AND YELLOWFIN TRPs

According to the Indicative Work Plan for the Adoption of Harvest Strategies under CMM 2022-03, the Commission is anticipated to agree on TRPs for bigeye tuna and yellowfin tuna in 2024.

The SSP will present TRP options. Subsequently, the SMD-02 will offer advice to the Commission for the adoption of these TRPs, which is scheduled for 2024.

Background paper X3 may provide background information to support the discussions on this agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM 6. APPLICATION OF THE SKIPJACK TUNA MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE – MONITORING STRATEGY

WCPFC19 adopted a management procedure for WCPO skipjack tuna (CMM 2022-01), and WCPFC20 noted the successful running of the skipjack Management Procedure. WCPFC20 noted that a re-evaluation of the skipjack estimation method within the MP needs to be undertaken prior to the next implementation of the Management Procedure in 2026.

WCPFC20 also reviewed a draft monitoring strategy for skipjack tuna and agreed that:

313. The Commission noted that it was not yet in a position to adopt a monitoring strategy for skipjack tuna at this time but there was a need for intersessional work, led by the SC and TCC Chairs, to facilitate the development by SSP of a monitoring strategy for adoption at WCPFC21, using the information in Attachment B of [WCPFC20-2023-14](#) as a reference.

SMD-02 will examine any monitoring strategy for skipjack tuna that has been provided from the SC20, specifically based on Attachment B of [WCPFC20-2023-14](#). The advice from SMD-02 will be considered by the Commission for adoption at WCPFC21.

AGENDA ITEM 7. CLIMATE CHANGE

As requested by the Commission, the Co-leads of Climate Change have drafted the Commission's Climate Change Work Plan for review by all subsidiary bodies, including the SMD group. The SMD-02 will review the work plan and related issues and provide advice to the Co-leads for further refinement.

AGENDA ITEM 8. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

8.1 Next SMD meeting

SMD-02 will consider objectives and timing for SMD-03.

AGENDA ITEM 9. OTHER MATTERS

9.1 Cooperation with IATTC

SMD-02 will consider cooperation area in managing the South Pacific albacore Pacific-wide, noting the WCPFC20 decision:

268. Noting the importance of the application of compatible measures between WCPFC and IATTC to enhance the effectiveness of collective conservation and management efforts, the Commission agreed to invite representatives from the IATTC secretariat, and CPCs2 as appropriate, to participate as observers in SMD-02.

AGENDA ITEM 10. REVIEW OF SMD-02 AGREED POINTS AND OUTCOMES

AGENDA ITEM 11. CLOSE OF MEETING