



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

Circular No.: 2024/56

Date: 30 August 2024

No. pages: 12

Subject: Revised Provisional Annotated Agenda and Meeting Notice, and other meeting information for the 2nd Science Management Dialogue (SMD-02)

Dear All,

Further to Circular 2024/46 dated 31 July 2024, please refer to the attached revised Provisional Annotated Agenda and Meeting Schedule for the 2nd Science Management Dialogue meeting, which will be held virtually on 10-12 September 2024 (Pohnpei Time). The meeting will be 5 hours per day (10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.), including a 1-hour break in the middle. Detailed meeting arrangements are available in the [Meeting Notice](#) on the SMD-02 webpage.

Registration for the online meeting is available at the SMD-02 meeting page on the WCPFC website: [Science Management Dialogue | WCPFC Meetings](#). For any IT assistance related to this meeting, please send an email to ITSupport@wcpfc.int. All CCMs are strongly requested to register **by Tuesday, 3 September 2024**. Meeting documents are 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, 3 September 2024**.

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

Please contact the WCPFC Science Manager, Dr. SungKwon Soh (sungkwon.soh@wcpfc.int) with any questions, and please distribute this Circular to all relevant officials and representatives in your area.

Yours sincerely,

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

Rhea Moss-Christian
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Colleagues,

As co-Chairs of the upcoming 2nd Science-Management Dialogue (SMD02) scheduled to take place virtually on 10-12 September 2024 (Pohnpei dates), we are pleased to share some preliminary views in advance to support CCM and stakeholder preparations.

Included in this Circular is a revised Provisional Annotated Agenda¹ and an Indicative Schedule for your review. The Provisional Annotated Agenda was drawn up in consultation with the Secretariat, including the Scientific Services Provider, and takes into account relevant outcomes of the 20th Regular Session of the Scientific Committee (SC20) which concluded recently in Manila, Philippines.

The Commission at WCPFC20 agreed² that SMD02 would focus on the following:

- i. South Pacific albacore management procedures (including review of the interim target reference point).
- ii. Development of BET and YFT target reference points.
- iii. Issues pertaining to the application of SKJ management procedure.
- iv. Harvest strategy capacity-building for CCMs.

On the matter of harvest strategy capacity building, the SSP is doing its best to continue supporting capacity building efforts for members in 2024, including during SMD02.

SC20 considered South Pacific albacore management procedures, provided technical guidance on additional information to be provided for the consideration of the SP albacore iTRP, and adopted the Operating Models used for the testing of management procedures.

SC20 also reviewed information to support development of BET and YFT target reference points and provided guidance on additional analyses for consideration at WCPFC21.

With respect to the SKJ management procedure, the Commission at WCPFC20 noted that a re-evaluation of the skipjack estimation method may need to be undertaken prior to the next implementation of the Management Procedure³. SC20 considered this matter and provided technical guidance on the approach to use when re-evaluating the estimation method within the WCPO skipjack interim MP. Current information was to be provided to the SMD02, while SC21 was recommended to review outputs from the re-evaluation and provide recommendations to WCPFC22 regarding the potential need to revise the current

interim skipjack MP. SC20 also recommended the monitoring strategy be forwarded to the SMD, TCC and the Commission (WCPFC21) for their consideration.

We welcome initial views on any agenda items from CCMs who wish to share in advance of SMD02. We look forward to progressing these important discussions during the SMD02 and to achieving outcomes to support the Commission's further deliberations at WCPFC21.

Please reach out to either of us with any questions or comments in advance of SMD02: Josie Tamate (josie.tamate@gmail.com) and Emily Crigler (Emily.Crigler@noaa.gov).



Josie Tamate

WCPFC Chair



Emily Crigler

SC Chair



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

Meeting Notice

WCPFC-SMD02-2024-01 (Rev.01)¹
30 August 2024

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 five (5) hours from Tuesday, 10 September to Thursday, 12 September 2024**. The SMD-02 will be chaired by both 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 participating in meetings online. Browse the online help at [Using Zoom for WCPFC meetings](#). For any IT assistance related to this meeting, email 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, 3 September 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, 3 September 2024**.

¹ Changes to meeting duration and deadlines for registration and paper submission.



COMMISSION

Second Science-Management Dialogue (SMD-02)

10:00 a.m. – 15:00 p.m., Pohnpei Time, 10-12 September 2024 (Online)

PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA

WCPFC-SMD02-2024-02 (Rev.01¹)

30 August 2024

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:

¹ SC20 outputs are reflected.

- 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 WCPFC approach to Harvest Strategies

The SSP will provide an introductory presentation on the general concepts and progress in the development of WCPFC Harvest Strategies to guide the decision-making in fisheries management to ensure the long-term sustainability of fish stocks. The general overview of the WCPFC's approach to harvest strategies includes developing management objectives, identifying reference points and harvest control rules, monitoring and assessment, stakeholder engagement, adaptative management, precautionary approach, capacity building among CCMs, and collaboration with other RFMOs.

3.2 Outputs from the SC20 Management Issues Theme Session

The Management Issues Theme Convener for SC20 will provide 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 Cooperation with IATTC

SMD-02 will consider cooperation areas in managing the South Pacific albacore stock and fisheries 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.

4.2 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.

² IATTC Parties, co-operating non-parties, co-operating fishing entities or regional economic integration organizations

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 $0.96 \text{ SB}_{2017-2019} / \text{SB}_{F=0}$ ³, 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 $\text{SB} / \text{SB}_{F=0} = 0.42 - 0.56$ (long-term average $\text{SB} / \text{SB}_{F=0}$ (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 presented the preliminary results of WCPFC20 requests at the SC20 (SC20-MI-WP-03) and advised SC20 to review the recalibrated iTRP depletion value and its implications for fishing levels, alternative depletion levels, and management actions while requesting guidance on the methodology for longline catch-based projections.

SC20 recommended that both catch numbers and catch weight be evaluated as the basis for projections to support the review of the interim TRP for South Pacific albacore, and advised the SSP to present outcomes for vulnerable biomass for key fleets, and, for WCPFC21, to perform analyses that related to catch levels at 2017-2019 levels.

SMD-02 will further review the progress made since SC20 and provide recommendations to the Commission for the adoption of interim TRP for South Pacific albacore.

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

4.3 South Pacific albacore management procedures

The Commission at WCPFC20 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.

³ 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 ($\text{SB}_{F=0}$) shall be:

- a. $\text{SB}_{F=0, t1-t2}$ 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.

Due to unresolved technical challenges, the management procedure work was not available to SC20. However, SC20 reviewed and adopted the operating model reference set and robustness set for evaluating South Pacific albacore management procedures while recommending future work to address uncertainties, including the impacts of climate change, effort creep, and stock structure. They also provided technical guidance on the estimation model and the design of management procedure to be evaluated.

SMD-02 will review the progress made since SC20 and provide recommendations to the Commission focusing on selecting an appropriate candidate MP or a suite of candidate MPs. **Background paper X2** may provide background information to support the discussions on this agenda item.

4.3.1 Interrogation of performance indicators and identification of preferred outcomes

Performance indicators inform the process of identifying a single MP or a subset of candidate MPs with desirable outcomes. These indicators are crucial as they quantitatively measure 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.

Updated information on the performance indicators for candidate MPs will be available to SMD-02, but refer to [SC19-MI-WP-06](#) (*Evaluation of candidate management procedures for South Pacific albacore*) for the conceptual background.

4.3.2 Settings and Assumptions of the MPs

The SMD-02 will engage in discussions to review the outcomes of MP-related discussions and recommendations from previous meetings and amend, as needed, 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 harvest control rules.

4.3.3 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 discuss any further work to be conducted by the SSP to finalize the development and adoption 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 (Attachment 4, [WCPFC20 Summary Report](#)), the Commission is anticipated to agree on TRPs for bigeye tuna and yellowfin tuna in 2024.

The SSP presented [SC20-MI-WP-07](#) (Analyses to Inform Discussions on Candidate Bigeye and Yellowfin Target Reference Points) at SC20, which updates the analyses previously presented to WCPFC18 using the latest assessments for these stocks. SC20 noted that based upon these analyses, current objectives for these species cannot be simultaneously met.

SC20 recommended updating SC20-MI-WP-07 for the Commission by including the depletion levels for South Pacific albacore resulting under each candidate TRP level, and assessing the impact on vulnerable biomass for bigeye and yellowfin tuna in tropical and southern longline fisheries. Additionally, SC20 advised re-evaluating bigeye and yellowfin tuna TRPs incorporating recent fishing levels from Indonesia, Philippines, and Vietnam.

SMD-02 will offer advice to the Commission for the adoption of these TRPs for bigeye and yellowfin tuna.

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.

The SSP presented [SC20-MI-WP-02](#) (*WCPFC Skipjack Tuna Monitoring Strategy Report*), which updates the skipjack MP monitoring strategy to reflect recent Commission discussions and highlights key issues for SC20 to review.

In response, SC20 requested the SSP to analyze the impact of FAD closure duration changes and the representativeness of CPUEs on the interim skipjack MP, recommended reviewing the monitoring strategy in non-assessment years, and proposed two updates to the monitoring strategy Table 1 for further consideration by SMD, TCC, and the Commission.

Noting the observations within the monitoring strategy on the decline in pole-and-line fishing effort and implications for the estimation method within the skipjack interim management procedure, SC20 recommended that the SSP evaluate potential modifications to the estimation method for the WCPO skipjack interim MP, considering changes to CPUE indices and alternative assessment approaches, and report the findings to SC21 for further review and recommendations before the next implementation of the MP.

SMD-02 will review the outcomes of MP discussions and the monitoring strategy from SC20 and provide recommendations to the Commission for adoption at WCPFC21.

Background paper X4 may provide background information to support the discussions on this agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM 7. CLIMATE CHANGE

As requested by the Commission, the Co-leads from the United States and the Republic of the Marshall Islands have drafted a Climate Change Work Plan that is currently under review by WCPFC subsidiary bodies. The draft work plan suggests that climate change could be considered in developing management procedures for skipjack and South Pacific albacore and discussed at the SMD. The draft work plan also proposed convening a 2025 SMD focused on climate change, including discussions on incorporating climate in developing harvest strategies.

The SMD-02 may discuss incorporating climate considerations into the development of harvest strategies and any further refinements to the work plan.

AGENDA ITEM 8. OTHER MATTERS

8.1 New report template for WCPFC Stock Assessment Reports

SC20 endorsed the adoption of a new reporting template for WCPFC Stock Assessment Reports. The SC Chair will provide an overview of a standardized approach to reporting stock status and management advice, recommending it as a guideline. SC20 also supported the recommendations in SC20-SA-WP10 for enhancing consistency in reporting, especially in communicating uncertainty, and agreed to use the proposed template as a guideline for SC21, while recommending that SMD-02 and the Commission review and provide feedback if necessary.

AGENDA ITEM 9. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

9.1 Next SMD meeting

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

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

AGENDA ITEM 11. CLOSE OF MEETING



COMMISSION
Second Science-Management Dialogue (SMD-02)
 10:00 a.m. – 15:00 p.m., Pohnpei Time, 10-12 September 2024 (Online)

Meeting Schedule

WCPFC-SMD02-2024-03
30 August 2024

DAY 1

Time	Agenda	Reference
10:00 – 12:00 (120 mins)	1. Opening of the meeting (Prayer) 1.1 Welcome address 1.2 Meeting arrangements 1.3 Adoption of agenda 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE SMD-02 3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION 3.1 WCPFC approach to Harvest Strategies 3.2 Outputs from SC20 MI Theme Session 4. SOUTH PACIFIC ALBACORE 4.1 Cooperation with IATTC 4.2 Review of iTRP	3.1 – SSP presentation 3.2 – MI Theme Convenor 4.1 – SSP report 4.2 – SMD2-BP-01 (SC20-MI-WP-03), SSP presentation
12:00 – 13:00	BREAK	
13:00-15:00 (120 mins)	4.3 South Pacific albacore MPs 4.3.1 Interrogation of PIs and identification of preferred outcomes	4.3 – SMD02-BP-02 (SSP’s new paper on SPA MPs) 4.3.1 – SMD02-BP-03 (SC19-MI-WP-06), SSP presentation

DAY 2

10:00 – 1200 (120 mins)	<p style="text-align: center;">(Agenda 4.3 Continued)</p> <p>4.3.2 Settings and assumptions of the MPs</p> <p>4.3.3 Additional work to be conducted by the SSP to support decision-making on MPs</p> <p>5. DEVELOPMENT OF BIGEYE AND YELLOWFIN TRPs</p>	<p>4.3.2 – SSP introduction</p> <p>4.3.3 – SSP prepares a list of additional work (revisit under Agenda 10)</p> <p>5 – SMD02-BP-04 (SC20-MI-WP-07 update), SSP presentation</p>
12:00 – 13:00	BREAK	
13:00 – 15:00 (120 mins)	<p>6. APPLICATION OF THE SKIPJACK TUNA MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE – MONITORING STRATEGY</p> <p>7. CLIMATE CHANGE</p>	<p>6 – SMD02-BP-05 (SC20-MI-WP-01) and SMD02-BP-06 (SC20-MI-WP-02), SSP presentation</p> <p>7 - SMD02-BP-07 (Co-Leads' CC Work Plan and assessment TOR)</p>

DAY 3

10:00 – 1200 (120 mins)	<p>8. OTHER MATTERS</p> <p>8.1 New report template for WCPFC Stock Assessment Reports</p> <p>9. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS</p> <p>9.1 Next SMD meeting</p>	<p>8.1 – SMD02-BP-08 (Secretariat, Outputs of SC20 related to SC20-SA-WP-10)</p>
12:00 – 13:00	BREAK	
13:00 – 15:00 (120 mins)	<p style="text-align: center;">(Outstanding issues)</p> <p>10. REVIEW OF SMD-02 AGREED POINTS AND OUTCOMES</p> <p>11. CLOSE OF MEETING</p>	<p>10. List of SSP's additional work</p>