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**Draft Outline for a South Pacific Albacore CMM that Implements the Management Procedure**

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29 October 2024

**Submitted by the South Pacific Group<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> Cook Islands, Fiji, Niue, Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu

29 October 2024

Rhea Moss-Christian  
Executive Director  
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission  
PO Box 2356, Kolonia  
Federated States of Micronesia

Dear Executive Director Rhea Moss-Christian,

### Draft outline for a south Pacific albacore CMM that implements the Management Procedure<sup>1</sup>

This proposal is made on behalf of the 6 members of the South Pacific Group (SPG)<sup>2</sup>. The WCPFC South Pacific Albacore roadmap identifies the need for two conservation and management measures (CMM)s: One CMM defines the management procedure (MP; scheduled for 2024) and a second CMM defines the management arrangements to implement that MP (scheduled for 2025). A proposal for the management procedure has been provided for the consideration of WCPFC21 and the SPG would also like to offer some initial thoughts on what might be contained in the management arrangement for implementing that MP. This would be a new measure that replaces CMM 2015-02 that we consider to be ineffective and inappropriate as an implementing measure.

We assume that the MP will produce a total annual catch (TAC) for SPA for the forthcoming three-year period. The MP CMM will contain no details of how the TAC will be achieved (allocation, limits etc) but will acknowledge that the management arrangements may include catch, effort and other mechanisms of control.

The SPG offer up the following for consideration in the development of a new implementing CMM:

#### Guiding Principles

1. Applies in EEZs and high seas throughout the range of the stock in the WCPF-CA.
2. Reflects current best understanding of SPA science and its assessed status.
3. Prevents further decreases in vulnerable biomass in order to sustain/improve catch rates and support improving economic conditions for SIDS domestic fleets and relevant national fisheries.
4. Accommodates subregional zone-based management approaches and limits and ensures compatible management and limits on the high seas.
5. Recognises the sovereign rights of coastal CCMs States to explore, exploit, conserve and manage highly migratory species within areas under their national jurisdiction.
6. Recognises the special requirements of, and avoids transferring a disproportionate burden of conservation upon, SIDS and Participating Territories.

#### Components of the implementing arrangement CMM

7. Applies to the WCPF-CA south of the equator and to both longline and troll fisheries.

**Commented [PM1]:** Mixed fishery framework considerations in particular interaction between BET and SPA MP. Will require updated evaluations of MP outcomes.

<sup>1</sup> Prepared without prejudice to the positions of SPG Member CCMs individually or collectively

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8. Applies to catches within the overlap area until such time as IATTC establish compatible Resolutions CMMs with those CMMs adopted by WCPFC.
9. The implementing arrangement CMM should be designed to achieve the required catch levels from the MP. This may be achieved through proportional allocations within the coastal CCMstate EEZs and an allocation for the high seas. Allocations for Cooperating Non-Members (CNMs) will be managed through participatory rights. Allocation in the high seas will be determined by another process within the WCPFC<sup>1</sup>, but will contain WCPFC current monitoring and reporting requirements, and possible specific measures to be developed monitoring and reporting requirements to ensure it stays within its portion of the TAC.
10. Within the coastal CCMstate EEZs, the required catch [or effort] levels may be achieved using a variety of management approaches including catch control and/or PNA LL VDS controls as appropriate to the CCM or subregional body.
11. Noting this range of management approaches and the presence of interannual variability in SPA availability of CCM EEZs and on the high seas, the measure may contain some flexibility for achieving the required catch levels. This may include:
  - a. Reconciling catches over a three-year period, with an agreed maximum over catch rule in the first two years of the TAC period.
    - i. For example, an annual TAC of 100 t could be achieved as 100, 100, 100t or as 130, 120, 50 t across the three-year period all of which reconciles to 300 tonnes and complies with the maximum over catch rule.
  - b. The capacity for states-CCMs and/or subregional bodies to jointly reconcile their catches against similarly joint/combined catch limits, from time-to-time and when necessary, with such arrangements notified to the Commission.

12. Provisions for the management of small fleets and SPA taken as bycatch in other fisheries.

13. Provisions that ensure all catches of SPA and tuna and tuna-like species caught in SPA fisheries by a third party's fleet through access arrangements in a coastal CCMs EEZ shall be attributed to that coastal CCM.

~~12-14.~~ Provisions to encourage IATTC to adopt compatible measures for how SPA in the EPO is managed and how this CMM will respond to changes in EPO management will be included.

#### Management measures

~~13-15.~~ Provisions will be made in this CMM pertaining to catch retention. The suggestion is to retain catch onboard [and then land or tranship at port] all south Pacific albacore, bigeye and yellowfin tuna. Discards to be allowed only if the hold on the last set is full with exemption applying for depredation (unfit for human consumption). [Discarding must be undertaken with either observer or EM verification.]

~~14-16.~~ Sovereign rights of coastal CCMsStates to determine how some of these management measures will be applied in their waters, or to apply additional or more stringent measures.

#### Monitoring requirements

All CCMs provided an SPA allocation implements the following:

~~15-17.~~ Electronic reporting of operational catch and effort data (logsheets) to the Commission including discards reporting requirements.

~~16-18.~~ 100% unloadings data to be (electronically) collected and reported to the Commission.

~~17-19.~~ Minimum 5% human observer coverage of fishing vessels in areas where allocation applies. In addition, Electronic Monitoring may be applied if/when appropriate.

~~18-20.~~ Any vessels transshipping albacore must have 100% human observer coverage on carrier vessels. This may include EM if required information for transshipment notification/declaration can be verified (e.g. volume of fish transferred and species can be effectively monitored).

<sup>1</sup> Noting Article 10(3) of the Convention.

**Reporting**

19-20. CCMs will report annually to the WCPFC Secretariat at SC, TCC, and the annual Commission meeting.

**Final provision**

21. Adoption of this CMM shall replace CMM 2015-02.

We welcome any interested CCM to get communicate with us at WCPFC21 or intersessionally to further progress this work, with the goal being to adopt an implementing CMM for the SPA MP at WCPFC22. Please direct any inquiries to myself ([roseti.imo@maf.gov.ws](mailto:roseti.imo@maf.gov.ws)) and the SPG Technical Adviser, Lars Olsen ([olsenpacific@gmail.com](mailto:olsenpacific@gmail.com)).

Yours sincerely



Roseti Imo, Chair (Samoa)  
South Pacific Group