



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

**Circular No.: 2025/07  
Date: 14 February 2025  
No. pages: 5**

**Subject: Commencing the Intersessional Process to Develop Voluntary Regional HSBI Guides, led by Australia**

Dear All,

A warm welcome to the intersessional process to develop voluntary regional guides for the use of tools in conducting high seas boarding and inspections (HSBI), led by Australia.

At WCPFC21, the Commission agreed to an intersessional process in 2025 to develop voluntary regional guides for the use of tools in conducting high seas boarding and inspection ([WCPFC21 Outcomes and Summary report Attachment 25](#)).

The intersessional process will consider voluntary guides for the following indicative list of HSBI tools:

- i. DNA testing (including benefits, recommended procedures for sampling and processing to an evidentiary standard),
- ii. weight estimation,
- iii. calibration certificates for measuring tools
- iv. measurement of tori lines,
- v. measurement of weighted branch lines,
- vi. collection of photographs and video evidence (including file type recommendations, and capturing actions of inspectors such as measurements and DNA sampling),
- vii. recommendations for dissemination of photographic and video evidence consisting of many, or large files that cannot be sent via email, and
- viii. update the Standardized Multi-language Questionnaire

As we begin this process, we acknowledge receipt of nominated participants thus far and invite CCMs and observers to submit additional nominations.

The development of the voluntary HSBI regional guides relies heavily upon the contributions of advice and documentation from participants. Therefore, two initial invitations are as follows:

- For participants to provide feedback and comments on a draft HSBI guide framework document (see Attachment 2). This guide is to provide the intersessional process with a base point for collecting and determining information for the set of HSBI guides.
- For participants to have the opportunity to present on a topic of interest from the list of HSBI tools above, at the first virtual meeting.

### **Proposed meeting dates and times**

The schedule of work as approved by the Commission at WCPFC21 indicated that there would be (at least) two informal intersessional virtual meetings/workshops, and that these would be chaired by Australia. It is proposed that the first virtual meeting will take place on **4 March 2025, 10:00 – 13:00 (UTC+11)**. A Draft Agenda is contained at Attachment 1 to this Circular.

If participants are unable to join the first virtual meeting, written submissions are also welcomed.

Australia and the WCPFC Secretariat will collate the feedback and discussion points from the first virtual meeting into a draft set of guides for consideration at a second virtual meeting, currently proposed for May.

Relevant documents to this intersessional process will be posted to a dedicated webpage on the WCPFC website: [Intersessional Process to develop voluntary regional guides for the use of tools in conducting high seas boarding and inspections | WCPFC](#). Draft Voluntary HSBI Regional Guides will be presented to TCC21 for consideration prior to their proposed adoption at WCPFC22.

### **Process and next steps**

Interested CCMs and Observers to:

- nominate technical experts to participate in the intersessional process.
- provide existing guides and documentation for relevant HSBI tools, from the agreed list.
- register interest in delivering a presentation on a particular HSBI tool, from the agreed list, in the 1<sup>st</sup> virtual meeting.

For any questions or submission of information, including documents for consideration at the first virtual meeting, please contact:

Intersessional Chair: David Power ([david.power@afma.gov.au](mailto:david.power@afma.gov.au)), Senior Manager, Foreign Compliance Policy, Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA)

cc. Lara Manarangi-Trott ([lara.manarangi-trott@wcpfc.int](mailto:lara.manarangi-trott@wcpfc.int)), Compliance Manager, WCPFC

cc. Emily Lawson ([emily.lawson@afma.gov.au](mailto:emily.lawson@afma.gov.au)), Senior Policy Officer, Foreign Compliance Policy, AFMA

Yours sincerely,

David Power  
Chair of the Voluntary HSBI Regional Guides Intersessional Process



**Virtual Meeting 1 of HSBI WG**

4 March 2025 10:00 – 13:00 (Pohnpei time)

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**Draft Agenda**

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- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Opening of Meeting                           | Australia |
| 2. Introduction and Opening Remarks             | Members   |
| 3. Discuss Framework for the List of HSBI Tools | Australia |
| 4. HSBI Tools Presentations                     | Members   |
| 5. Programme of Work                            | Members   |
| 6. Summary and Close of Meeting                 | Australia |

**DRAFT HSBI GUIDE FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT – PROPOSED TO SUPPORT  
CONSULTATION VIA THE WCPFC INTERSESSIONAL PROCESS**



# Voluntary HSBI Regional Guides

TOOLS FOR HIGH SEAS BOARDING AND INSPECTIONS

WCPFC Intersessional Process | Version 1 | 2025

The objective of this overarching guide is to provide a working document that can be revised and improved by all Participants as knowledge is shared. The preparation of this document relies upon the provided written and verbal, advice and documents, by Participants.

The content is divided into sections relevant to the indicative list of HSBI tools. It is envisaged that while these sections are drafted and contained within this one document, they may be separated to individual guides/documents for consideration by TCC21.

WCPFC21 Outcomes | Attachment 25 - terms of reference

14. The HSBI Guides will accommodate, to the extent possible, any existing HSBI guidance shared by CCMs that have established HSBI procedures.
15. The application of the HSBI Guides will be voluntary and apply to HSBI activities within the WCPFC area of competence.
16. The HSBI Guides will set out voluntary procedures for HSBI Inspectors to follow and will include, but are not limited to, data collection and sampling protocols.
17. The development of HSBI Guides will complement the existing HSBI CMM 2008-06 and other related CMMs that impose obligations relevant to HSBI activities (e.g. bycatch mitigation measures). However, under no circumstances shall the development of these guides contravene the provisions of CMM 2006-08 and related CMMs, nor shall it produce a discriminatory effect on members conducting HSBI

## DNA testing Guide

Contents:

- Use of DNA sampling during HSBI
- Procedures for DNA sampling and processing to an evidentiary standard

## Weight estimation Guide

Contents:

- Estimation of catch on board by HSBI officers
- Hold inspection
- Estimation of how much fish in a hold

Logbook interrogation and comparison to catch estimation

- - Electronic and written

## Measuring tool calibration Guide

Contents:

- Calibration certificates for measuring tools
- tape measures
- scales

## Bycatch mitigation measuring Guide

Contents:

- Measurement of tori lines
- Measurement of weighted branch lines

## Photo and Video Evidence Guide

Contents:

- Capturing the actions of inspectors during inspections
  - such as while taking measurements and DNA sampling
- Photo and video evidence collection
- Photo and video evidence sharing
  - such as preferred file types, large and numerous files and method of sharing (online, physical)

## Standardized Multi-language Questionnaire