



## **Workshop of Stakeholders in WCPO Tuna Fisheries**

**Convened by the Chairman  
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission**

**Rydges Lakeside Hotel, Canberra, Australia**

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### **SUMMARY RECORD**

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#### **OPENING OF THE MEETING**

1. The Chairman welcomed participants to the Workshop of Stakeholders in Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) Tuna Fisheries, 1-2 April 2008.
2. Participants included representatives from Australia, People's Republic of China, European Community (EC), Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Fiji, Japan, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea (PNG), Philippines, Solomon Islands, Chinese Taipei, Tonga, Tuvalu and the United States of America (USA) along with representatives from the regional longline, purse seine and canning industries. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community Oceanic Fisheries Programme (SPC-OFPP), the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and WCPFC Secretariat also attended. A list of meeting participants is included at Attachment A.

#### **INTRODUCTION TO THE WORKSHOP**

3. The Chairman introduced the purpose of the workshop and noted that this was an informal meeting of stakeholders with an interest in WCPO tuna fisheries. The workshop would not have formal standing in the Commission and discussions would not pre-empt any future views or positions as part of WCPFC's future consideration of the issues to be discussed in the workshop. Through this workshop, the Chairman explained that he aimed to further discussions on the outcomes of the recent WCPFC meeting in Guam in December 2007. He noted that the meeting in Guam was unable to deliver a conservation and management measure to address overfishing of bigeye and yellowfin stocks. He also noted that members have committed to address this, along with the issue of compatible measures for the high seas, at the next meeting in Busan in December 2008.
4. The Chairman apologised for not having been able to arrange for the attendance of all WCPFC members and noted that his rationale for organising the workshop was to have a small focused discussion with stakeholders.

## **UPDATE ON BIG-EYE AND YELLOW-FIN TUNA STOCK ASSESSEMENTS**

5. Dr John Hampton (SPC-OFP) provided a presentation on recent trends in the fisheries and an overview of stock status for bigeye and yellowfin tuna. The presentation noted that a preliminary comparison of current data with the data used for the 2006 bigeye tuna stock assessment indicated that this year's stock assessment would be broadly consistent with the 2006 assessment. Dr Hampton noted that the 2008 stock assessment would be presented and considered at SC4.

## **TUNA MORTALITY, FLEET DYNAMICS AND MANAGEMENT APPROACHES**

6. Dr John Hampton (SPC-OFP) also provided a presentation on the characteristics of the regional fleets and the impacts this had on tuna mortality patterns. Dr Hampton also provided a brief summary on potential management options that, from a scientific perspective, could be used to reduce the current levels of overfishing for bigeye and yellowfin tuna.

## **VIEWS AND OPINIONS ON HOW TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM**

7. Mr Kazuo Shima (President, Japan Far Seas Purse Seine Fishing Association) presented a statement on the views of the Asian members of the World Tuna Purse Seine Organisation (WTPO) in regards to how to address the current levels of overfishing of bigeye and yellowfin tuna.

8. Mr Sylvester Pokajam (Managing Director, National Fisheries Authority, PNG) presented the views of Pacific Island Countries on the measures they propose to address overfishing. Mr Pokajam also presented the measures that PNG and the Parties to the Nauru Agreement were taking within its waters to managed fishing effort.

9. Mr Peter Ho (President, Overseas Fisheries Development Council) provided a presentation on the measures taken by Chinese-Taipei longline industry in the WCPO to address capacity concerns and provided suggestions for how the Commission should progress to address overfishing of bigeye and yellowfin tuna.

10. Mr Sean Martin (Pacific Ocean Producers) provided a presentation on the conservation and management measures implemented by the Hawaii fresh fish longline fishery. Mr Martin also suggested potential longline measures to address overfishing of bigeye and yellowfin tuna.

11. Mr Masahiro Ishikawa (President, Japan Tuna Fisheries Cooperative Association) presented a statement representing the Japanese large tuna longliners fishing industry. The statement noted the likely negative impacts of further effort reductions to the Japanese longline industry in addition to the hard economic conditions being faced by industry at present.

12. Mr Alistair Graham (WWF International) provided a statement on behalf of NGOs' international expectations for the work of the Commission in addressing overfishing of bigeye and yellowfin stocks. Mr Graham noted a high level of frustration from NGOs that perceive governments being too close to their domestic industries. He also noted a growing expectation from NGOs for a broader approach to fisheries management arrangements to

not just consider target fish stocks but also non-target fish stocks and the marine ecosystem.

### **MARKET AND CANNERY ISSUES**

13. Mr Phil Roberts (Tri Marine International) provided a presentation on market concerns over the declining catches of bigeye and yellowfin tuna in every ocean. Mr Roberts noted NGO campaigns in the market place and the attention of retailers and consumers on issues of sustainability. He further noted the demand for certification accreditation was likely to increase as a result of these pressures.

14. Mr Michael McGowan (Bumble Bee Foods) provided a summary of tuna cannery capacity and requirements across the world. Mr McGowan noted that certified sustainability of tuna stocks will become a market requirement and also echoed previous statements from Mr Graham that if RFMOs did not begin to effectively manage tuna stocks, other organisations may step in to dictate tuna management requirements.

### **FLEET FISHING PATTERNS**

15. Dr Hampton (SPC-OFP) provided a presentation of fishing patterns of purse seine and longline fleets by flag-states and within EEZs in the region.

### **HIGH SEAS COMPATIBLE MEASURES**

16. Professor Martin Tsamenyi (WCPFC legal adviser, Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security) provided a presentation on issues related to the compatibility of conservation and management measures across EEZs and the High seas. Professor Tsamenyi presented some of the historical background to the concept of compatibility and highlighted obligations under the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement and the WCPFC Convention framework.

17. The presentation noted that measures established for the high seas and adopted in EEZs could be identical or could be different as long as measures have an equivalent effect. Professor Tsamenyi further noted that the establishment of compatible measures is more a question of process and strategy within the Commission rather than a legal interpretation issue.

Note: All presentations delivered at the workshop are available on the WCPFC website.

### **OPTIONS FOR A CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURE**

18. The Chairman presented a summary of the management options to address overfishing of bigeye and yellowfin tuna as raised by the presenters as and part of discussions by workshop participants. He noted three broad principles that had come out of workshop discussions: (1) measures should be established across the purse seine and longline fleets in order to be effective in meeting required reductions and to not pose a disproportional burden on particular fisheries; (2) the aim of such measures should be to minimise impacts on skipjack and albacore catches; and (3) the need to act at the next Commission meeting in December 2008.

19. The Chairman re-emphasised that workshop discussions would not prejudice the future position of delegations at upcoming Commission meetings through 2008. The purpose of this workshop had been to exchange ideas and gain a common understanding of the task before the Commission to address the current levels of overfishing of bigeye and yellowfin tuna stocks.

#### **OTHER MATTERS**

20. The Chairman noted that he would develop a Chairman's draft of a proposed conservation and management measure for bigeye and yellowfin tuna over the coming months. This draft measure will be available after the next Scientific Committee in August 2008 meeting with a view to give members time to consider the draft measure at the next meeting of the Technical and Compliance Committee meeting in October 2008 prior to its final consideration at the 5<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting in December 2008.

#### **CLOSING OF THE MEETING**

21. The workshop closed on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2008.