

Nuku'alofa, Tonga
13 – 21 August 2025

Proposal for joint work through the ROP and ER&EM and IWGs

WCPFC-SC21-2025/ST-WP-11

United States of America

In 2025, the Regional Observer Programme (ROP) IWG and Electronic Reporting and Electronic Monitoring (ERandEM) IWG will be undertaking a number of overlapping and related tasks, including review and potential modification of data collection standards to ensure that all relevant data is collected. In addition, both of these IWGs support programs that ultimately have the same objectives.

In 2019, WCPFC16 agreed that “the objectives of the Commission Electronic Monitoring Programme (EMP) shall be to verify catch data, other scientific data, and additional information related to the fishery from the Convention Area and to monitor the implementation of the conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission” ([WCPFC16 Summary Report, para 555](#)). These EMP objectives mirror the objectives of the ROP (para. 4 of CMM 2018-05).

In 2022, a previous ERandEM IWG Chair suggested developing a comprehensive monitoring program. This Chair shared a consultative discussion paper ([WCPFC-ERandEMWG5-2022-02](#)) that outlined a possible approach to integrate the regional electronic monitoring program into the overarching WCPFC fisheries management and institutional framework. Although there was support for this idea in the IWG, limited resources led the subsequent ERandEM IWG Chair to focus on developing EM SSPs, which WCPFC adopted in 2024.

Given the mirrored objectives of both the ROP and the emerging WCPFC EMP, the overlapping work of the ROP IWG and the ERandEM IWG, the previous proposal by the ERandEM IWG Chair, and the progress made by the WCPFC on its EM program since 2022, **the United States proposes that the Commission consider the development of one comprehensive monitoring program, which would include the ROP and EMP.** In order to further consider this proposal, the United States would suggest the following:

1. The Commission tasks the Chairs of the ER&EM IWG and the ROP IWG to propose an approach to establish an overarching WCPFC Regional Monitoring Program, which would include both an EMP and the existing ROP, to be considered for adoption by WCPFC23 (2026).
2. Draft Terms of Reference (TOR) should be developed by the IWG Chairs and other interested parties, including the United States, and should include consideration of the following:
 - a. data collection needs and reporting requirements of both programs;
 - b. existing monitoring requirements across the various fisheries sectors in the WCPFC; and

- c. areas of existing overlap and/or areas where inconsistencies may exist to inform a merger of the two programs.

The progress and outcomes from this work would be presented to SC22, TCC22, and WCPFC23.

The United States is requesting feedback from the SC on this proposal, particularly given the need to ensure data necessary collection standards across both ROP and EM.