

Review of cetacean reporting requirements in the WCPFC

SC21-2025/ ST-WP-08

SPC-OFP

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
TWENTY-FIRST REGULAR SESSION
Nuku'alofa, Tonga
13–21 August 2025

Tasking

SC21 will review background information provided by the SSP and develop scientific advice for WCPFC22 on appropriate requirements for effective reporting of cetacean interactions in tuna and associated species fisheries.

This work will include consideration of data types, collection methods, reporting formats, and alignment with SciData provisions to ensure robust and consistent monitoring across gear types, particularly in support of implementing CMM 2024-07 and enhancing cetacean interaction data from both longline and purse seine operations.

The approach – largely focused on improvements in ROP data collection and CCM reporting in Part 1 Reports

Paper content

- Review CMM requirements and operational and ROP data reporting to address them
- Identified gaps for potentially valuable data fields to characterize cetacean interactions
 - Including metadata about how often key (DCC) fields relating to cetaceans are reported – a potential indication of feasibility
- Recommended a few potential actions for the SC to consider

Recommendations

- Consider explicitly noting the required reporting of cetacean catches under the SciData provisions, potentially with a footnote to the key species to be reported
- Explicitly require reporting on cetacean interactions and encirclements, steps taken to ensure safe release, and assessment of the life status of the animal on release, in the CCM annual reports to the SC, given dedicated logsheet fields for reporting interactions are not available
- Consider including the time that a species of special interest (e.g., cetacean) is first sighted as part of the Regional Observer Programme Minimum Standard Data Fields (purse seine)
- Encourage CCMs to promote training of vessel operators and observers where data reporting gaps are identified to facilitate the complete and accurate reporting of cetacean interactions