

# Assessment of the Value of WCPFC Joining the FIRMS Partnership

(SC21-ST-WP-06)

**WCPFC Secretariat and the SPC-OFP**



# Introduction & Background

SC21 tasked by the Commission to assess the value of joining FIRMS

- **FIRMS** (**Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System**): FAO-coordinated global info-sharing partnership on fishery resources
- **Mission**: Provide standardized, authoritative info on status & trends of fishery resources and management
- **WCPFC**: Observer since 2007, not yet a formal partner
- **2025**: Preparatory work with SPC-OFP and the WCPFC Secretariat

# FIRMS Structure & Functions

## Voluntary partnership under the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Division

- **Governing body:** FIRMS Steering Committee – latest meeting was held from June 30 to July 4, 2025, in Copenhagen, where WCPFC was listed as a prospective partner
- **Partners:** RFMOs, RFBs, technical & national institutions (**Attachment A**)
- **Role:** Compile validated partner data, harmonize metadata, publish online
- **Supports FAO global services**, including the Global Tuna Atlas (GTA), the State of the Stocks Index (SoSI), the Global Record of Stocks and Fisheries (GRSF), and the biennial State of the World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) report

# WCPFC Engagement & Preparatory Work

Engaged as observer; contributed to Global Tuna Atlas

- Draft inventory of WCPFC-managed stocks aligned with FIRMS standards
- Compatibility confirmed; clarified reporting roles for joint stocks
- Ongoing SPC-OFP data modernization supports future alignment
- Potential to enhance automation in data submissions

# Value and Potential Challenges

- **Strategic visibility:** strengthens global presence, transparency
- **Data harmonization:** supports interoperability with other RFMOs
- **Scientific & compliance benefits:** traceability, integration with the Global Record of Stocks and Fisheries (GRSF)
- **Institutional coordination and FIRMS integration:** clarifying shared-stock reporting responsibilities, aligning management unit metadata, formalizing FAO partnership, designating a focal point, and establishing workflows for metadata validation and submission.

**Challenges:** coordination with IATTC and ISC on shared stocks; resource constraints related to staff time and technical support



# Recommendations

- SC21 to review FIRMS structure, mandate, and functioning
- Acknowledge preparatory work aligning WCPFC reporting to FIRMS
- Continue capacity-building with FAO and FIRMS partners

**Recommend to the Commission whether WCPFC should pursue the FIRMS Partnership in 2025 and under what terms (e.g., phased implementation, coordination with ISC).**







Western and  
Central Pacific  
Fisheries  
Commission

The background of the slide is a photograph of a large school of tuna swimming in the ocean. The fish are silvery with a hint of blue on their sides, and they are moving in a coordinated pattern. The water is a deep blue, and the overall scene is captured from an underwater perspective.

Thank you