Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission

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ANNUAL REPORT ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE WCPFC DATA ACCESS
RULES AND PROCEDURES

WCPFC-TCC21-2025-RP08
25 August 2025

Submitted by the Secretariat

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on WCPFC's non-scientific data holdings and their administration by the Secretariat.

Introduction

2. The rules categorising data as public or non-public and the administration of such data is governed by the [Rules and Procedures for the Protection, Access to, and Dissemination of Data Compiled by the Commission](#) (2007 data RaP).

3. Additional rules for non-scientific data holdings are in the [Rules and Procedures for the Protection, Access to, and Dissemination of High Seas Non-Public Domain Data and Information Compiled by the Commission for the Purpose of Monitoring, Control or Surveillance (MCS) Activities and the Access to and Dissemination of High Seas VMS Data for Scientific Purposes](#) (2009 MCS data RaP). A summary of non-scientific data holdings is in **Annex 1.**[1]

4. Summary details of data requests approved in 2024 are available to CCMs | [List of CCMs non-public domain data request received and actioned by the Secretariat](#). The list includes filters that allow users to view data by request type and time period.

Access to WCPFC data holdings

Accessing public and non-public domain data

5. Access to public domain data is through the WCPFC webpages and more recently via Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), where possible. Certain data requests, such as scientific data, are handled on a case-by-case basis when the information is not available on the WCPFC website.

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[1] TCC11 requested that the Secretariat summarise WCPFC non-scientific data holdings for TCC12.

6. The Secretariat has an established process for reviewing and deciding on case-by-case requests for access to non-public domain data. All approved data request review forms, related correspondence, and records of data released are maintained in the WCPFC Information Management System (IMS).

7. Secure WCPFC webpages that are accessible only to CCMs provide details of each CCM's Official Contacts, as maintained by the respective Party Administrator. This information is an important way for the Secretariat to verify the authority of individuals requesting access to non-public domain data. **It is therefore important that CCMs ensure their contact information is kept up to date to avoid potential delays in processing data requests.** The Secretariat will contact any authorities to verify the person requesting access where the person is not known.

8. The Secretariat recognises the need to improve the management of data requests, including timely access to data. VMS data has been available for several years via a Trackwell API. The Secretariat now has an established API for access to transhipment data, reducing the need for manual data extraction and emailing of spreadsheets.

9. In response to an SC20 meeting outcome,[2] the Secretariat updated the *Guidelines for the Template for SC Project Proposals* in 2025 so that proponents of SC research projects can include information about the WCPFC datasets the are expected to be accessed to support the project. There is also a new section that allows the WCPFC SSP (SPC-OFP), where possible, to provide comments on the feasibility of providing the requested data in the specified format. Including this information at the time the Scientific Committee considers whether to approve a research project is expected to enhance transparency around future requests to access non-public domain data for scientific purposes and may also support planning and preparation by the SSP for approved data requests.

10. The Secretariat has been considering opportunities to improve the transparency and efficiency of processing data requests. Two key avenues are being explored: (1) the development of an online facility to support CCMs in requesting access to data and tracking the outcome and consideration of their requests, and (2) the preparation of guidance and helpdesk materials.

11. In 2024, the Secretariat held internal discussions on the basic design of the proposed online facility referenced in the aforementioned paragraph. Planning for its development is expected to proceed once higher-priority initiatives, such as the new Compliance Monitoring Report system and the refresh of the WCPFC website, have been completed.

12. While guidance for CCMs on the procedures for requesting access to non-public domain data is scheduled for completion by the end of 2025, additional guidance materials will also be required to assist users in navigating a proposed new online tool. These materials will support the effective rollout of the proposed online facility. (Refer to TCC21 Working Paper 22)
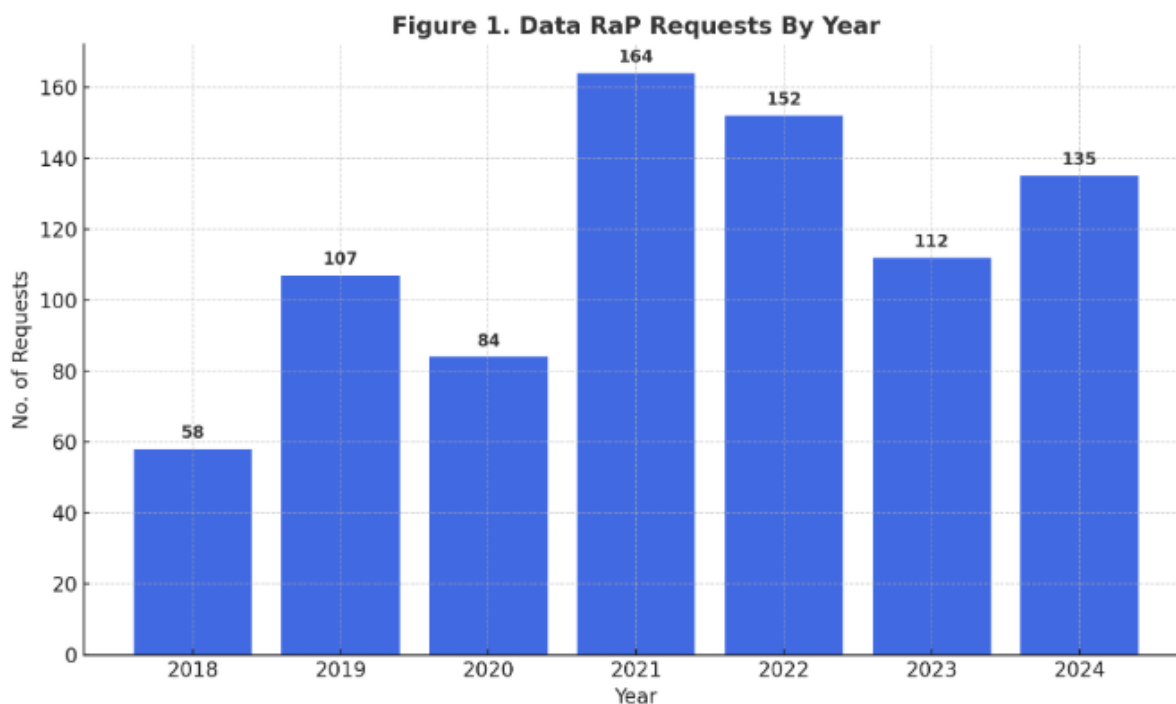
Who has access to data?

13. The 2007 data RaP categorises those authorised to access WCPFC data where necessary to perform their duties as:

   a. WCPFC Secretariat and Service Providers authorised by the Executive Director; and

   b. Officers of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies.

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[2] SC20 recommended that the template for the project proposals for SC projects, as agreed in Table 3 in Attachment K of the SC9 Summary Report, be updated to include information on the WCPFC Data sets required to support the project, as well as notes from WCPFC SSP on feasibility to provide WCPFC data in the format requested, when possible. (SC21 Summary Report, paragraph 771).

14. The Secretariat maintains a register of access to all WCPFC non-public domain data.[3] The register records the Secretariat staff positions, Service Providers, and any other individuals given access to this data (refer to **Annex 2 A**). The Secretariat also maintains records of access to individual Commission systems (refer to **Annex 2 B** for a summary of access during 2024/2025). A list of all CCMs that access the WCPFC VMS system is shown in **Annex 3**.

15. Secretariat staff and individuals working with the Secretariat for short periods, such as interns, are required to sign a confidentiality agreement. Confidentiality provisions are also in the contracts of all WCPFC service providers.

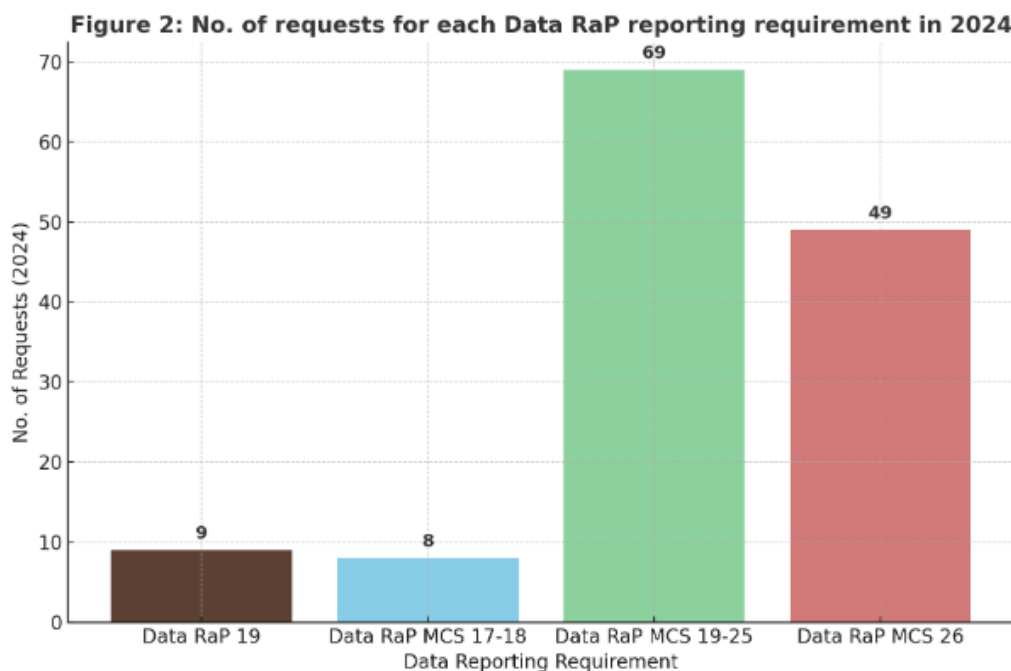*Numbers and types of non-public domain data requests*

16. **Figure 1** shows that 135 Data RaP requests were approved in 2024, a 20% increase from 112 in 2023. This represents the more stable use of data requests after recovery from the COVID-related low of 84 in 2020, when MCS operations were constrained by port access and restrictions on high seas inspections.

17. Although the 2024 figure remains slightly below the post-COVID peak in 2021 (164) and 2022 (152), the data suggests that volume of requests and the broader scope of data that are requested are now stabilising. This trend indicates a shift by CCMs toward more strategic and risk-based use of data, underpinned by strengthened analytical capacity and operational adjustments developed in response to the challenges of the COVID-19 period.

Figure 1. Data RaP Requests By Year

18. **Figure 2** shows the breakdown of the 135 data requests received in 2024, categorised by reporting requirement. The majority of requests were for:

    a.   Historical and near real-time high seas VMS data (under Data RaP MCS 19–25): 69 requests (51%)

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[3] Required by 2007 data RaP paragraph 18

b. Transhipment reports (under Data RaP MCS 26): 49 requests (36%)

c. Access to a CCM's own data (under Data RaP 19): 9 requests (7%)

d. High seas boarding and inspection data (under Data RaP MCS 17–18): 8 requests (6%)

19. Compared to 2023 when 112 requests were submitted (59 for VMS data and 45 for transhipment reports), the 2024 data shows both an increase in total volume and shifts in relative demand. While transhipment reports remained a significant focus, accounting for 36% of requests in 2024, this is a slight decline from 45% in 2023, though still above the 30% recorded in 2022.

20. Overall, the continued high proportion of transhipment-related requests highlights ongoing MCS interest in monitoring high seas transhipment activity. The data also suggests growing consistency in the types of information being sought, indicating that CCMs are refining their operational priorities and data needs, particularly in relation to VMS and transhipment data.

Figure 2: No. of requests for each Data RaP reporting requirement in 2024

21. In its 2024 report on the administration of data rules, the Secretariat noted a rise in requests for high seas vessel activity data during 2023, particularly to support port CCM reviews of entry applications and inspections of foreign flagged vessels. This trend was not observed in 2024. Several of the 2023 requests came from Cooperating Non-Members (CNMs), some of which are signatories to the United Nations Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA). However, these requests were declined in accordance with the MCS Data RaP, which restricts access to non-public domain data for MCS purposes to Commission Members and Participating Territories.[4]

22. In response to this issue raised by CNMs, WCPFC21 tasked the newly established Intersessional Working Group to Review CMM 2017-02 (Port State Minimum Standards) with reviewing the linkage between CMM 2017-02 and MCS data rules in its review of that CMM, including with respect to the potential for CNMs to access MCS data.

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[4] WCPFC-TCC20-2024-23_rev1 Review of Data Access and Data Exchange Arrangements

Annexes

Annex 1: Summary of WCPFC non-scientific data holdings

Data Holdings	Relevant CCMs that required the data
WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels (RFV) data and associated fished and did not fish reports	CMM 2018-06 (or its earlier versions)
List of Chartered Vessels	CMM 2024-03 (or its earlier versions)
WCPFC IUU vessel list and associated correspondence	CMM 2019-07 (or its earlier versions)
Cooperating Non-Members requests and associated correspondence	CMM 2019-01 (or its earlier versions)
Non-public domain data requests and associated correspondence and documentation	2007 Data RaP and 2009 MCS Data RaP
VMS related • WCPFC VMS • Vessel MTU Register • VMS Manual Reporting • MTU Audit Inspections list • List of approved ALCs • "Flick the switch" notifications	• CMM 2014-02 • VMS SSPs • VMS SSPs • VMS SSPs • VMS SSPs • CMM 2014-02 6c
HSBI related • Register of Authorised Inspection Vessels • HSBI event reporting • Authorities of fishing vessels • Authorities of inspection vessels	• CMM 2006-08 • CMM 2006-08 • CMM 2006-08 • CMM 2006-08

Compliance Case File System related
• Article 25(2) compliance cases (2013 onwards)
• Alleged infringements based on ROP observer reporting data
   ○ FAD Set alleged infringements (2015 to current)
   ○ Observer Obstruction alleged infringements (2015 to current)
   ○ Shark-catch alleged infringements (2015 to current)
   ○ Marine Pollution (2019 to current)
   ○ ROP Pre-notification issues (2016 to current)
   ○ Cetacean and Whale Shark interactions (2016 to current)
	• Convention Article 25 and Article 23 (5)
	• CMM 2023-01 (or its earlier version)
	
	• CMM 2018-05 15 (g) (CMM 2007-01 or its earlier version) and WCPFC12 para 569 Att U
	• CMM 2024-05 (2022-04 2010-07, 2011-04, 2013-08, 2014-05 and CMM 2019-04 or its earlier version)
	• CMM 2017-04
	• WCPFC12 para 569 Att U
	• CMM 2024-07 (or its earlier versions) and CMM 2024-05 (or its earlier versions or CMM 2012-04)

Data Holdings	Relevant CCMs that required the data
Compliance Monitoring Report online system • Annual Report Part 2 (2012 onwards) • Compliance Monitoring Report (2012 onwards) • Annual reporting against CCM limits in CMMs (2000 onwards)	• Various CMMs • Various CMMs reviewed in the CMR • Various CMMs reviewed in the CMR
ROP related • ROP coverage reporting and associated updates • ROP observer programmes and contact points • List of WCPFC/IATTC cross endorsed observers • List of ROP observers • ROP Audit reports • ROP databases	• CMM 2007-01 08 / CMM 2018-05 08 • CMM 2007-01 / CMM 2018-05 • CMM 2007-01/ CMM 2018-05 • CMM 2007-01 / CMM 2018-05 • CMM 2007-01 / CMM 2018-05 • CMM 2007-01 / CMM 2018-05
Other databases • High Seas purse seine catch discard reporting • High seas transshipment event reporting • SMA Zone Entry/Exit – EHSP-SMA • SMA Zone Entry/Exit – HSP-1	• CMM 2009-02 12 • CMM 2009-06 35 a (iii) and 35 a (iv) • CMM 2010-02 (2011-2016) • CMM 2023-01 Attachment 2 (or its earlier version)
Contact details • Authorised MCS Entities and Personnel • Authorised VMS Trackwell, VRST, CCFS, RFV and VMS personnel • Official contacts including Party Administrators • Circular Recipients	• 2009 MCS Data RaP
VMS and IMS Security Audits (2012 - 2021)	• CMM 2014-02 VMS SSPs section 6.10 • Since 2022, the Secretariat at TCC19, advised the Commission that it would be shifting away from an annual, limited-in-scope security audit to a continuous, systems security mindset. Updates on this work is provided annually to TCC.

Annex 2A: Register of Secretariat and Service Provider Access to WCPFC non-public domain data in 2024 and 2025 (as of 5 August 2025)		
Data or System	**Position**	**Service Provider/Additional Access**
Full access to all data	Executive Director	
Full access to all data	o ICT Manager o IT Officer For administration and maintenance of all systems and data	Contractors: o Taz-E for system enhancements and IMS support o Western Pacific Technology Inc. for service support as required for duties o Eighty Options for service support to the website and subsites o BPM for audit purposes
Commission VMS data (includes Eastern High Seas Pocket – Special Management Area)	o Compliance Manager o Deputy Compliance Manager o Fisheries Management and Compliance Adviser o Reporting Analyst Officers o Vessel Management Officers o CCM Support Officer o ROP Training and Audit Consultant	Service Providers: o Trackwell o SPC-OFP science and data management staff for cross-verification of ROP and logsheets and to one year old data for science purposes
Eastern High Seas Special Management Area	o Compliance Manager o Deputy Compliance Manager o Vessel Management Officers o Reporting Analyst Officers	
WCPFC ROP data	o ROP Training and Audit Consultant o Compliance Manager o Deputy Compliance Manager o Fisheries Management and Compliance Adviser o Reporting Analyst Officers, Vessel Management Officers o SPC-OFP ROP data staff o WCPFC data entry staff	Service Provider: o SPC-OFP science and data management staff

Annex 2A: Register of Secretariat and Service Provider Access to WCPFC non-public domain data in 2024 and 2025 (as of 5 August 2025)		
Data or System	**Position**	**Service Provider/Additional Access**
MCS related Information Management System: discard reports, transhipment reports, HSBI reports, CMM reporting and correspondence, WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels, Access to Compliance Monitoring Report drafts, provisional reports and correspondence, High Seas Pocket Monitoring	o Vessel Management Officers o Compliance Manager o Deputy Compliance Manager o Legal Adviser o Fisheries Management and Compliance Adviser o Reporting Analyst Officers o ROP Training and Audit Consultant CCM Support Officer o Vessel Management Officers o CCM Support Officer o Data Entry staff o Science Manager o Assistant Science Manager	Service Provider: o SPC-OFP science and data management staff for transhipment data related to the Transhipment Intersessional Working Group o Taz-E as IMS developer and for technical support o Eighty Options as website and online systems developer o IATTC – Ricardo Belmontes (through TCC20 attendance) o Dragonfly Data Science for data analysis and to support annual report presentation o Raijeli Natadra – MCS Analytical Consultant
Catch and effort data through TUFMAN2	o Science Manager o Assistant Science Manager Compliance Manager o Deputy Compliance Manager o Fisheries Management and Compliance Adviser o ROP Training and Audit Consultant	Service Provider: o SPC-OFP science and data management staff o Taz-E as IMS developer and for technical support o Eighty Options as website and online systems developer o Saggitus – Dr Steve Brouwer for data analysis and to support annual report presentation o Dragonfly Data Science for data analysis and to support annual report presentation
o WCPFC scientific data o RFV and Charter Information	o WCPFC staff by special arrangement	Service Provider: o SPC-OFP science and data management staff

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o Access to preliminary and draft Compliance Monitoring Report information o Access to maintain the data and science pages on the WCPFC website.		
Access for specific projects for the period of contract	o WCPFC staff by special arrangement	Service Provider: o SPC-OFP science and data management staff for transhipment data related to the Transhipment Intersessional Working Group study o Raijeli Natadra MCS Analytical Consultant for development of WCPFC Secretariat Staff Procedures/Training documentation Consultants: o Kim Duckworth for TSER related support o Eighty Options for Web development o Taz-E for data modelling expertise and systems analysis o Saggitus – Dr Steve Brouwer for data analysis and to support annual report presentation o DJ Consulting – Mr Douglas Jackson for data analysis and reporting tools Dragonfly Data Science
WCPFC Meeting Server giving access to: o Secured meeting information o An interactive Online Discussion Forum for document review and comment in support of meetings	o WCPFC staff	o Individual access for each meeting facilitated through the WCPFC meeting registration process

Annex 2A: Register of Secretariat and Service Provider Access to WCPFC non-public domain data in 2024 and 2025 (as of 5 August 2025)		
Data or System	**Position**	**Service Provider/Additional Access**
Record of Fishing Vessels and MTU Register Upgraded system released 3 April 2023	○ WCPFC Compliance and MCS staff	○ CCMs in accord with data rules ○ FFA as an authorised MCS entity on behalf of some of its members
WCPFC VMS Trackwell System	○ WCPFC Compliance and MCS staff ○ WCPFC data entry staff	○ CCMs in accord with data rules ○ Access includes relevant areas of the individual CCMs EEZ if the CCM has 'flicked the switch', as well as any other areas previously agreed.
VMS Reporting Status Tool (VRST)	○ WCPFC Compliance and MCS staff	○ CCMs in accord with data rules
Eastern High Seas Pocket Special Management Area WCPFC VMS data and historical manual entry and exit reports	○ WCPFC Compliance and MCS staff ○ WCPFC data staff	○ CCMs in accord with data rules
E-Transhipment system (TSER)	○ Compliance Manager ○ Deputy Compliance Manager ○ Fisheries Management and Compliance Adviser ○ CCM Support Officer ○ Reporting Analyst Officers ○ WCPFC data entry staff	○ ○ CCMs in accord with data rules

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Annex 2A: Register of Secretariat and Service Provider Access to WCPFC non-public domain data in 2024 and 2025 (as of 5 August 2025)		
Data or System	**Position**	**Service Provider/Additional Access**
Transhipment E-Reporting Tool	o Compliance Manager o Deputy Compliance Manager o Fisheries Management and Compliance Adviser o CCM Support Officer o Reporting Analyst Officers	o CCMs in accord with data rules
Compliance Case File System Upgraded system released 23 March 2023	o WCPFC Compliance Manager o Deputy Compliance Manager o Fisheries Management and Compliance Adviser o Reporting Analyst Officers o CCM Support Officer	o CCMs in accord with data rules Service Provider: o Defend for audit purposes
Compliance Monitoring Report and Annual Report Part 2 Upgraded system released 2024/2025	o WCPFC Compliance and MCS staff o WCPFC Scientific staff	o CCMs in accord with data rules
Secure Secretariat section of the WCPFC website giving access to analytical tools supporting cross database analysis for monitoring and reporting issues to CCMS and the Commission	o WCPFC Compliance and MCS staff o WCPFC Scientific staff	o Consultants for matters related to their tasking with WCPFC

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Annex 3: List of CCMs with at least one client login for the WCPFC VMS system (current and previous)[5]. Flag CCMs can also view their flag vessels in EEZs receiving VMS data from the WCPFC VMS.

CCM	To view flagged vessels in high seas WCPFC area	100nm high seas buffer around EEZ#	EHSP SMA **	Date inclusion of EEZ took effect
Australia	Y	Y		15 March 2013
Canada	Y			
China	Y			
Cook Islands	Y	Y#	Y	14 May 2010 #
European Union	Y			
Federated States of Micronesia	Y	Y#		4 April 2013 #
Fiji	Y	Y		15 June 2025
France – French Polynesia France – New Caledonia	Y Y	Y Y	Y	16 June 2013 13 June 2013
Indonesia	Y			
Japan	Y	Y		
Kiribati	Y	Y#	Y	
Republic of Korea	Y			
Republic of Marshall Islands	Y	Y#		
Nauru	Y	Y#		19 July 2015 #
New Zealand (incl. Tokelau)	Y	Y#		23 Feb 2010 #(NZ) 22 Aug 2012 #(TK)
Niue	Y	Y#		1 Jan 2013 #
Palau	Y	Y#		1 Sept 2013 #
Papua New Guinea	Y	Y#		2 October 2021#

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[5] Note only the 100nm high seas buffer is a Data Rules and Procedures data request. Access to other data is provided in accordance with other CMMs and WCPFC decisions.

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CCM	To view flagged vessels in high seas WCPFC area	100nm high seas buffer around EEZ#	EHSP SMA **	Date inclusion of EEZ took effect
Philippines	Y	Y		
Samoa	Y			6 Oct 2013 #
Solomon Islands	Y	Y		8 April 2016 #
Chinese Taipei	Y			
Tonga	Y	Y#		13 Mar 2015 #
Tuvalu	Y	Y#		8 Sept 2013 #
United States of America	Y	Y		9 Mar 2013
Vanuatu	Y	Y		28 Nov 2020
France – Wallis and Futuna	Y	Y		16 June 2013
Ecuador	Y			
Curacao	Y			
El Salvador	Y			
Liberia (2025)	Y			
Panama	Y			
Thailand	Y			

# denotes FFA access as a nominated MCS entity

** All CCMs have access to the 'live list' of vessels in the EHSP which is displayed on the secure webpages (refer to WCPFC-TCC21-2025-RP06 Annual Report on the Eastern High Seas Pocket Special Management Area)