



COMMISSION
Twenty-Second Regular Session
1 - 5 December 2025
Manila, Philippines (Hybrid)

Update on the Intersessional Process to Develop Voluntary Regional HSBI Guides

WCPFC22-2025-13
1 November 2025

Submitted by HSBI-WG Chair

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide WCPFC22 with an update of the progress of the intersessional process to develop voluntary regional HSBI guides (HSBI Guides) and update multi-language questionnaire.

Background

2. At WCPFC21(December 2024), the Commission agreed to an intersessional process in 2025 to develop voluntary regional guides for the use of tools in conducting high seas boarding and inspection ([WCPFC21 Outcomes and Summary report Attachment 25](#)).
3. At WCPFC21, the Commission adopted the [Intersessional process to develop voluntary regional guides for the use of tools in conducting high seas boarding and inspections](#), and elected Mr David Power (Australia) as Lead for the HSBI WG. The intersessional process considered voluntary guides for the following indicative list of HSBI tools:
 - i. DNA testing (including benefits, recommended procedures for sampling and processing to an evidentiary standard),
 - ii. weight estimation,
 - iii. calibration certificates for measuring tools,
 - iv. measurement of tori lines,
 - v. measurement of weighted branch lines,
 - vi. collection of photographs and video evidence (including file type recommendations, and capturing actions of inspectors such as measurements and DNA sampling,
 - vii. recommendations for dissemination of photographic and video evidence consisting of many, or large files that cannot be sent via email, and
 - viii. update the Standardized Multi-language Questionnaire.

2025 Updates

4. The Secretariat created a dedicated webpage on the WCPFC webpage to support collaboration: [Intersessional Process to develop voluntary regional guides for the use of tools in conducting high seas boarding and inspections | WCPFC](#).
5. A group of technical experts was established, with all CCMs and observers encouraged to participate in the Working Group.
6. In February 2025 Australia initiated the process and sought participation in a virtual meeting. The first meeting of the HSBI WG took place on Tuesday March 4, 2025, Chairs Summary Report.
7. Australia and the WCPFC Secretariat collated the feedback and discussion points from the first virtual meeting into a draft set of voluntary HSBI regional guides, which were developed as:
 - i. DNA testing Guide
 - ii. Weight estimation Guide
 - iii. Measuring tool calibration Guide
 - iv. Bycatch mitigation measuring Guide
 - v. Photo and Video Evidence Guide
8. Australia circulated the draft set of guides and received feedback, and thereafter convened two additional virtual meetings to repeat the feedback and development loop for the guides:
 - Virtual meeting 2, 26 June 2025: [Chairs Summary Report HSBI WG02](#) | [Meeting site](#)
 - Virtual meeting 3, 7 August 2025: [Chairs Summary Report HSBI WG03](#) | [Meeting site](#)
9. From the 7th of August 2025, participants were invited to provide feedback on the drafted set of guides from the 3rd virtual meeting which were provided to TCC21 for consideration as outlined in the [Chairs update paper WCPFC-TCC21-2025-24](#).
10. TCC21, while noting that CCMs may continue to provide suggestions and inputs into the draft voluntary guides in the lead up to WCPFC22, endorsed the following five draft voluntary guides for HSBI and recommended them to the Commission for adoption:
 - i. HSBI DNA Sampling Guide | [TCC21-2025-24A_rev2](#)
 - ii. HSBI Catch Quantification Guide | [TCC21-2025-24B_rev3](#)
 - iii. HSBI Measuring Tool Calibration Guide | [TCC21-2025-24C_rev2](#)
 - iv. HSBI Bycatch Mitigation Measuring Guide | [TCC21-2025-24D_rev2](#)
 - v. HSBI Collection and Dissemination of Photographic and Video Evidence Guide | [TCC21-2025-24E_rev1](#)
11. TCC21 noted the update from the HSBI WG Chair on the progress to develop draft revisions to the Standardized Multilanguage Questionnaire ([TCC21-2025-24F_rev3](#)). TCC21 encouraged CCMs to continue to work with the Australia to finalise draft revisions to the HSBI Standardized Multilanguage Questionnaire for consideration and adoption at WCPFC22.
12. Following TCC21 Australia worked closely with China to review and update the Multilanguage questionnaire and collated further comments received from all parties on the questionnaire and HSBI guides.

13. The updated set of HSBI guides and the latest version of the questionnaire based on comments received as of 31 October 2025 are available here:
- i. HSBI DNA Sampling Guide | [WCFPFC22-2025-13a](#)
 - ii. HSBI Catch Quantification Guide | [WCFPFC22-2025-13b](#)
 - iii. HSBI Measuring Tool Calibration Guide | [WCFPFC22-2025-13c](#)
 - iv. HSBI Bycatch Mitigation Measuring Guide | [WCFPFC22-2025-13d](#)
 - v. HSBI Collection and Dissemination of Photographic and Video Evidence Guide | [WCFPFC22-2025-13e](#)
 - vi. HSBI multi-language questionnaire | [WCFPFC22- 2025-13f](#)
14. The HSBI WG chair will seek to hold session of the HSBIWG in the margins of WCPFC22 to finalise proposed changes to the questionnaire and the HSBI guides. CCMs are encouraged to send any final comments and suggested edits to HSBI WG Chair and WCPFC secretariat ahead of WCPFC22.
15. A CMM2013-06 assessment was conducted by the HSBI WG Chair and is included at **attachment A**.

Attachment A

Application of CMM 2013-06

The following information is provided to assist the Commission to determine the nature and extent of the impact of the draft voluntary guides for High Seas Boarding and Inspection (HSBI Guides) and the amendments to the Multi Language Questionnaire on SIDS and territories in the Convention Area as per the requirements of CMM 2013-06.

a. Who is required to implement the proposal?

The proposed HSBI guides and questionnaire are voluntary in nature and will be available to all CCMs to use as they determine necessary. The HSBI working group Chair together with the WCPFC secretariat will ensure the final documents are available on the WCPFC website where all CCMs can access them.

b. Which CCMs would this proposal impact and in what way(s) and what proportion?

This proposal will have an impact on all CCMs conducting high seas boarding and inspections (HSBI) and CCMs whose vessels are subject to HSBI activities. The HSBI guides are intended to outline minimum standards for conducting inspection activities and strengthen consistency in how inspections are conducted by all CCMs.

The updates to the questionnaire will reduce the burden on all parties involved through helping improving communication during HSBI activities.

c. Are there linkages with other proposals or instruments in other regional fisheries management organizations or international organizations that reduce the burden of implementation?

Yes, the HSBI guides and questionnaire will be publicly available and can be considered by other RFMOs as needed.

d. Does the proposal affect development opportunities for SIDS?

No.

e. Does the proposal affect SIDS domestic access to resources and development aspirations?

No.

f. What resources, including financial and human capacity, are needed by SIDS to implement the proposal?

The HSBI guides and questionnaire are voluntary tools that are intended to support the HSBI process. They are a resource that will assist SIDS conducting HSBI activities to effectively meet the requirements of the HSBI measure 2006-08. There are no additional financial human resources requirements needed to use the voluntary HSBI guides and questionnaire.

g. What mitigation measures are included in the proposal?

There are no specific SIDs measures included in the proposed HSBI guides and questionnaire as these documents are intended to assist SIDs and any CCM that conduct HSBI activities.

h. What assistance mechanisms and associated timeframe, including training and financial support, are included in the proposal to avoid a disproportionate burden on SIDS?

Subject to CCM adopting the proposed voluntary guides, Australia in collaboration with the FFA and other interested parties, can deliver training and further guidance to SIDs on the updated HSBI guides and associated processes. These guides and the questionnaire will provide enduring benefit to SIDs through improving the guidance, consistency and communication during HSBI activities.