



**Joint IATTC-WCPFC Working Group on South Pacific Albacore Tuna
First Session (SPAJWG01)**

18-19 March 2026 (Pohnpei) | 17-18 March 2026 (La Jolla)
Virtual Meeting

Terms of Reference for the IATTC-WCPFC Joint Working Group on South Pacific Albacore Tuna¹

SPAJWG01-2026-IP01

4 February 2026

Taking into account the mandates for cooperation and coordination between the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) with respect to the south Pacific albacore tuna contained in, *inter alia*, IATTC Resolution C-24-04 and the recommendation adopted by WCPFC21 instructing the Chair of the WCPFC to help develop Terms of Reference for the establishment of a Joint Working Group;

Recognizing that South Pacific albacore is an important tuna species harvested by members of both Commissions;

In accordance with the provisions of Article XXIV of the Antigua Convention and Article 22 of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean;

Agree:

To establish an IATTC-WCPFC Joint Working Group on South Pacific albacore tuna (SPAJWG) to enhance cooperation between WCPFC and IATTC for South Pacific albacore tuna research and management, with the following terms of reference:

1. The SPAJWG shall be composed of representatives designated by Members of both Commissions and WCPFC Participating Territories, and who may be accompanied by such experts or advisors as each Member may deem appropriate. The SPAJWG may also include, as observers, representatives of relevant intergovernmental organizations as well as non-governmental organizations accredited to either Commission.
2. The functions of the SPAJWG shall be the following:
 - a. To develop a common understanding and approach for the conservation and management of South Pacific albacore in both convention areas;
 - b. To enhance the harmonization of harvest strategies and other conservation and management actions through, *inter alia*, the development of a workplan for the

¹ Adopted by WCPFC at its 22nd Regular Annual Session (see Attachment 15 of WCPFC22 Outcomes).

SPAJWG, which shall be developed at its inaugural meeting in the first half of 2026;

- c. To develop compatible and/or harmonized management arrangements or measures for South Pacific albacore, as appropriate, across all fisheries, including the coordination of catch and/or effort levels between the two Commissions;
- d. To coordinate scientific research and analyses and facilitate the collection and exchange of relevant fisheries data, scientific knowledge, and expertise;
- e. To identify priority areas for improvement in monitoring, reporting, and data sharing;
- f. To collaborate in the identification of ways to streamline the relevant decision-making processes within each Commission to ensure efficient progress towards the robust conservation and management of South Pacific albacore;
- g. To undertake additional tasks related to South Pacific albacore, as appropriate and pursuant to corresponding requests from both Commissions;
- h. To report to each Commission on the advances of its work.

3. Regarding the overlap area, the SPAJWG may consider recommendations for coordinated data collection, scientific work, and management in this area, taking into account decisions jointly taken by the two Commissions.

4. Each Commission will appoint a co-chair of the SPAJWG for the term each will determine.

5. The Secretariats of both Commissions will coordinate the adoption and implementation of all arrangements needed for the work of the SPAJWG. This includes the preparation, translation, and dissemination of meeting documents, information sharing, in a manner consistent with the applicable rules and procedures of each Commission. Unless otherwise provided for, the IATTC Secretariat shall be responsible for providing simultaneous English-Spanish interpretation for meetings of the SPAJWG, and the translation of meeting documents between the two languages, as appropriate.

6. Meetings of the SPAJWG will be convened by the Co-Chairs, consistent with the relevant rules of procedure of both Commissions, and in consultation with the Chair and Director of each Commission, in a format to be decided on a case-by-case basis (virtual, presential or hybrid), taking into account the matters to be discussed and *inter alia*, the availability of funding.

7. The SPAJWG shall adopt its conclusions and recommendations by consensus. If efforts to achieve consensus fail, the meeting reports shall so indicate and shall reflect the SPAJWG discussions.

8. The conclusions and recommendations adopted by the SPAJWG shall be submitted to both Commissions, as well as to their subsidiary bodies as appropriate.

9. In order to optimize its work, as appropriate, the SPAJWG, through the Co-Chairs:

- a. will ensure coordination with other relevant subsidiary bodies of both Commissions, particularly with a view to seeking their inputs;

- b. may seek appropriate inputs from all relevant stakeholders, such as inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations or natural persons such as scientists, researchers, managers, industries, etc.

10. These Terms of Reference shall enter into force at the time of their adoption by both Commissions, with the Terms of Reference and Workplan open for review by each Commission and revised as appropriate, annually.