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

(9:00am-12:30pm) 18-19 March 2026 (Pohnpei)| (3:00pm-6:30pm) 17-18 March 2026 (La Jolla)
Virtual Meeting

Pathways for developing Compatible Measures

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SPAJWG01-2026-WP01 (WCPFC)
SPAJWG-01-02 (IATTC)
18 March 2026

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Submitted by the WCPFC Co-Chair

1. This paper is intended to prompt initial discussion within the SPA Joint Working Group (SPAJWG) on how to develop compatible management measures for South Pacific albacore. It does not represent agreed positions.

SPA Joint Working Group Terms of Reference

2. *"2. The functions of the SPAJWG shall be the following:*

   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."

SPA Joint Working Group Workplan

3. *"4. Compatible management measures The SPAJWG will consider the effectiveness of the MP across both Convention Areas to develop and recommend to both commissions compatible management measures, including quantitative limits, monitoring, reporting, data sharing arrangements, and coordination of the overlap area."*

Pathways for developing Compatible Measures

4. **Approach 1: Unified Regulatory Alignment** – "Development of a Single, Jointly Recommended Measure". In this approach, the SPAJWG would draft a single, comprehensive text for a Conservation and Management Measure (CMM/Resolution) to be submitted to the respective Commissions. This draft would be identical in its core requirements for both the WCPFC and IATTC.

   ✓ Pros**:** Ensures 100% compatibility across the Pacific; reduces the reporting burden for fleets operating in both Convention Areas.

   ✓ Cons**:** Does not recognize the different contexts for management in each Commission; High administrative difficulty; each Commission has its own legal and procedural requirements that may not allow for "copy-paste" adoption.

5. **Approach 2: Framework & Key Implementation Standards** – "Harmonization through Shared Core Management Standards" The SPAJWG would agree on a set of "mandatory minimums" or key implementation triggers (e.g., specific catch limits, reference points, and data formats). Each Commission then integrates these into its own separate regulatory framework.

   ✓ Pros**:** Respects the autonomy of each Commission; easier to pass through respective technical and compliance committees.

   ✓ Cons**:** Potential for "drift" or minor inconsistencies in how rules are applied or enforced on the ground.

Need to consider high level objective

6. WCPFC SPA Mangement Procedure [CMM 2025-01](#) Objective

"1. The objective of the interim Management Procedure (MP) for South Pacific albacore, is to ensure that:

   a) *the spawning potential depletion1ratio of South Pacific albacore is maintained on average at a level consistent with the target reference point; and*

   b) *the spawning potential depletion ratio of South Pacific albacore tuna is maintained above the limit reference point with a risk of the limit reference point being breached no greater than 20 percent;*

   with a view to maintaining the economic performance of dependent fisheries together with reasonable levels of total catch, in a manner that achieves relative stability in fishing levels between management periods."

Other issues for consideration in developing Compatible Measures

7. The SPAJWG may consider the following additional management issues:

● Need to resolve ongoing management arrangements for the Overlap Area

● Reporting standardization – SPAJWG could prioritize the standardization of reporting requirements (including Electronic Monitoring (EM) and Electronic Reporting (ER)) to facilitate data exchange.

● Harmonization of Management Cycles – The SPAJWG could recommend aligning the timeline of the "Management Procedure runs." For example, ensuring that both Commissions use the same scientific "stock assessment year" to set their next 3-year catch blocks, preventing a scenario where one side is using outdated data compared to the other.