

# **Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPFC)**

## **Methods Specialist Working Group**

### ***Convener's Draft Terms of Reference***

The Methods Specialist Working Group will coordinate research and make recommendations to the WCPFC Scientific Committee on technical questions related to analytical methods used for fishery management. The initial terms of reference for the Working Group include the following:

1. Develop criteria for evaluating the performance of models applicable to the tuna fisheries of the western and central Pacific Ocean tuna fishery.
2. Investigate the statistical properties and performance of selected stock assessment methods using simulation analysis and other appropriate methods and, on the basis of studies undertaken, make recommendations regarding the most appropriate methods to be used for the assessment of target tuna stocks and important by-catch species of the western and central Pacific Ocean tuna fishery.
3. Provide ongoing review of the structure of stock assessment and projection models as applied to various species of interest and, where necessary, make recommendations regarding enhancements to the models to improve their performance or to address deficiencies with respect to specific applications.
4. Coordinate research to determine appropriate biological reference points for target tuna stocks and important by-catch species of the western and central Pacific Ocean tuna fishery and make recommendations on the basis of this research.
5. Advise the Scientific Committee on appropriate methods of formulating scientific advice for management.
6. Advise Scientific Committee on methods that might be used to support the ecosystem approach to fisheries in the western and central Pacific Ocean.
7. Advise Scientific Committee on analytical research needs.