



**COMMISSION**  
**FIRST SOUTH PACIFIC ALBACORE ALLOCATION WORKSHOP**  
25 – 26 June 2026  
Wellington, New Zealand (Hybrid)

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**Chair's Summary Report**

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**WCPFC-SPAA01-2026**  
**3 July 2026**

**AGENDA ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE WORKSHOP**

1. The First South Pacific Albacore Allocation Workshop (SPAA01) was convened in Wellington, New Zealand, from 25–26 June 2026, in hybrid format, following a decision by the Commission at its Twenty-First Regular Session (WCPFC21). The Workshop was established to advance the allocation of South Pacific albacore and the agreement of proportional shares necessary to support implementation of the adopted South Pacific albacore Management Procedure. The Workshop was chaired by Mr Wez Norris of Australia.
2. The Chair opened the Workshop and welcomed CCMs, observers, and the Pacific Community (the SSP). The Chair acknowledged New Zealand as host and thanked CCMs, the Secretariat, and the SSP for their preparations. CCMs welcomed the convening of the Workshop and expressed their commitment to constructive engagement, including those participating online.
3. The Chair recalled that the Commission had established SPAA01 as a workshop rather than a committee to allow for greater flexibility and less formality in the conduct of discussions. CCMs were invited to approach the Workshop in that spirit, including through a willingness to explore ideas capable of bridging differences between long-held positions, rather than restating existing positions. The objectives of SPAA01 were introduced as: (i) reviewing relevant data to support allocation discussions; (ii) considering proposals on possible allocation frameworks; (iii) considering supporting measures relevant to the implementation of any allocation arrangement; (iv) narrowing allocation options where possible; and (v) identifying next steps to support further work by CCMs and the Commission.
4. In adopting the agenda, one CCM proposed that the two delegation papers be considered together under Agenda Item 3, noting that they addressed related and overlapping issues. The Chair recalled that the schedule had been structured to keep allocation as the central focus but accepted the merit of considering the papers together. It was agreed that the data review under Agenda Item 2 would proceed first, followed by presentation and discussion of both delegation papers and brief commentary on the related information paper. The schedule was adjusted on that basis.
5. Wallis and Futuna made an opening statement, which is recorded in **Annex 1**.

## AGENDA ITEM 2. REVIEW OF DATA FOR ALLOCATION DISCUSSIONS

### 2.1 Review of the Commission's fishery data

6. The SSP presented the background data prepared to support the allocation discussions, as set out in [WCPFC-SPAA01-2026-IP01](#) and subsequent revisions. The presentation explained the different data products available and the considerations relevant to their interpretation. It distinguished between the aggregate 5°×5° dataset used for the stock assessment, Management Procedure testing and operation, and annual catch estimates by EEZ. It was noted that zone-based estimates are derived using different estimation methods and spatial allocation procedures, and that estimating South Pacific albacore catch within particular zones is not straightforward. Minor differences between the aggregate dataset and the sum of zone-based estimates are therefore expected. Historical catch and effort data were presented for multiple spatial configurations, including south of the equator, south of 10°S and south of 20°S, together with flag-based estimates on the high seas and flag-based catches by zone over an extended historical period.
7. The Workshop discussed the historical distribution of catch and effort between EEZs and the high seas, the derivation of the TAC under the Management Procedure, and differences between aggregate and zone-based estimates. It was noted that the proportion of catch taken within EEZs has declined over the last decade, while effort remains more concentrated within EEZs, reflecting higher catch rates on the high seas and differences in fleet composition, vessel density and targeting practices. It was explained that the Management Procedure produces a catch-based output for the area of implementation south of 10°S, excluding areas exempt from the Management Procedure, and that differences between datasets result from logsheet coverage, estimation methods and the independent production of certain datasets by some CCMs. By way of illustration, it was noted that an indicative TAC derived from the aggregate data used in the harvest strategy work may differ from the corresponding total reflected in zone-based estimates, and that the two products cannot always be compared on a like-for-like basis.
8. The Workshop discussed technical aspects of the datasets, including the treatment of chartered vessels, the allocation of historical catches before comprehensive operational data became available, and ongoing updates arising from misplaced logsheets and flag-assignment issues. Clarification was sought on how historical aggregate data had been apportioned between the high seas and EEZs before full operational data coverage was available. It was explained that, before logsheet coverage reached present levels, catch was attributed by flag and zone on the basis of available logsheets, with residual annual catch estimates assigned to areas of lower coverage, introducing some uncertainty. The SSP explained that catch by chartered vessels is generally attributed to the chartering CCM in the zone in which fishing occurs, but that conditional chartering and movement of vessels between zones during a year can complicate attribution.
9. CCMs requested the SSP to provide further information and data products to support the allocation discussions. These included: (a) written clarification on how chartered vessels are treated in the allocation datasets, including the attribution of catches under chartering arrangements, the treatment of conditional chartering and mid-year changes, and the methodology applied to chartered vessel catches; (b) an additional summary showing the proportion of catch taken within each EEZ by domestic fleets compared with licensed foreign fleets; and (c) additional summaries, similar to [Table 9](#), presenting in-zone, flag-based catch analyses for the areas south of 10°S and south of 20°S. The SSP provided further clarification on chartering and the domestic/licensed foreign fleet summary in a revised [information paper](#) made available on the second day. The SSP also clarified that the additional in-zone, flag-based summaries for areas south of 10°S and south of 20°S could be investigated, but could not be produced during the Workshop and would require further work, including because historical logsheet coverage may limit what can be produced for some earlier years.

10. The Workshop discussed the need for a fixed data baseline to provide stability and certainty for the allocation discussions. It was noted that the datasets continue to change as additional logsheets are received and historical data are corrected, and that allowing further updates during the allocation process could shift baselines and complicate negotiations. The Workshop supported using catch and effort data through the end of 2024 for the current allocation process, with amendments or new information submitted after the 30 April 2026 data deadline not incorporated into the dataset used for these discussions.

## **2.2 Other sources of data and information**

11. Several CCMs emphasised that allocation discussions should extend beyond historical catch and consider the broader range of criteria set out in Article 10(3) of the Convention. They noted that historical catch is only one of the relevant criteria, and that CCMs would need to bring forward information relevant to other considerations, recognising that some criteria are readily quantifiable while others are not.

12. The Workshop also discussed the spatial scope of the data to be used for allocation baselines. One CCM cautioned that expanding the allocation baseline north of 20°S could risk capturing recent, unmanaged increases in effort, particularly on the high seas, and could thereby reward speculative expansion of the fishery. Other CCMs emphasised the importance of incorporating catch from the area south of 10°S, consistent with the spatial scope adopted for the Management Procedure, while acknowledging concerns regarding historically unmanaged effort.

13. One CCM raised concern regarding gear-specific differences, noting the distinct dynamics of the high seas South Pacific troll fishery compared with the high seas longline sector. It was noted that the troll fishery is seasonal, follows migratory pathways, and has a long history of participation, and that these differences should be recognised to avoid disadvantaging low-impact, seasonal high seas participation.

14. The Workshop returned to the metrics to underpin the allocation discussions and the implementing measure. It was agreed that catch volume measured in metric tonnes could serve as the primary and most stable data metric for allocation discussions and for implementation of the Management Procedure, providing an objective foundation for baselines. Effort data would be retained as a supplementary consideration relevant to catch rates and fishing pressure. Notwithstanding, the workshop noted that it will be the prerogative of each CCM to determine how it will implement its proportional share of the Total Allowable Catch, such as through effort limits, licensing or catch controls.

## **AGENDA ITEM 3. REVIEW OF CCM PROPOSALS ON ALLOCATION FRAMEWORKS**

### **3.1 Presentation of delegation papers**

15. Two delegation papers were presented under this agenda item. The United States presented [WCPFC-SPAA01-2026-DP01](#) which set out initial proposed elements for the South Pacific albacore implementing measure. The paper was framed around four pillars: a domestic utilisation requirement intended to ensure that EEZ allocations generate local development benefits; enhanced MCS requirements, including a proposal relating to high seas transshipment; a graduated implementation schedule to transition to the MP-determined TAC; and language clarifying that the South Pacific albacore arrangement would be species-specific and should not establish a precedent for other highly migratory stocks. The paper included draft CMM text for each of these elements.

16. FFA Members presented [WCPFC-SPAA01-2026-DP02](#), which reaffirmed their proposal for zone-based management arrangements for South Pacific albacore. The paper proposed a high-level split of the TAC in

the Management Procedure area (south of 10°S less Tokelau and Tuvalu), with 75% allocated to EEZs and 25% allocated to the high seas. FFA Members stated that the proposal was intended to secure the rights and interests of coastal States and territories, while also providing opportunities for cooperation with distant-water fishing nations on both in-zone and high seas fishing opportunities. FFA Members further emphasised that allocation outcomes based solely or primarily on catch history would not adequately reflect the Convention, particularly the rights and interests of coastal States, territories and SIDS.

17. In response to a clarifying question to the FFA Members, it was confirmed that the proposed apportionment relates specifically to South Pacific albacore and to total removals from the management area, regardless of gear type.

### **3.2 Initial discussion of the proposals**

18. As agreed in adopting the agenda, the two delegation papers were considered together under Agenda Item 3, recognising the close relationship between the proposed allocation framework and supporting implementation measures. The initial discussion therefore addressed both the basis for allocation and related implementation elements. The Chair subsequently used the discussion to identify allocation-related issues for further consideration under Agenda Item 3, while implementation-related issues are reflected under Agenda Item 4. Issues concerning the data range, stability of the allocation dataset and alignment with the catch-volume basis of the Management Procedure are reflected under Agenda Item 2.
19. All coastal State CCMs and Participating Territories in the Management Procedure Area supported a zone-based allocation framework comprising EEZ allocations and a high seas allocation. These CCMs referred to coastal State sovereign rights, the special requirements of SIDS and Participating Territories, and the importance of South Pacific albacore to domestic fleets, island economies, food security and future fisheries development. It was also noted that zone-based management is already reflected in Commission arrangements, including the vessel day scheme for purse seine and longline fisheries, and that coastal States bear a significant share of the management, monitoring, compliance and enforcement burden, including through arrangements that predate the Commission. It was also noted that much of the area between 10°S and 20°S is comprised of Pacific Island EEZs, reinforcing the relevance of a zone-based approach. Several CCMs emphasised that an allocation framework based only, or primarily, on historical catch would not adequately reflect the Convention and could disadvantage SIDS and Participating Territories with limited historical catch but clear development interests in the fishery.
20. Some other CCMs expressed caution about adopting zone-based management as the predetermined foundation of the allocation framework, or accepting a fixed 75% EEZ / 25% high seas split at this stage. These CCMs noted that South Pacific albacore is a single highly migratory stock and that the Management Procedure produces an overall TAC for the area of implementation. Some CCMs considered that CCM-based catch limits or hybrid arrangements should remain available as options, particularly where these could better reflect historical participation, existing fishing effort, compliance history and other criteria at CCM level. Concerns were also raised that attributing all catch taken within an EEZ exclusively to the coastal State could overlook the historical participation, investment and operational dependence of flag States whose vessels had fished in those waters under access arrangements.
21. The proposed 75% EEZ / 25% high seas split attracted considerable discussion. Some CCMs sought further explanation of the rationale for the proposed split, including the reference period used, the weighting and application of Article 10(3) criteria, and the practical implications for high seas fishing opportunities. Some CCMs noted that recent high seas catch proportions were materially higher than 25%, and expressed concern that a substantial reduction in high seas opportunities could make consensus difficult. FFA Members explained that the proposed split was not based solely on catch history, but was intended to

reflect a broader, principle-based application of the Convention, including Article 10(3), Article 30, coastal State rights, SIDS special requirements, and long-term considerations relevant to the fishery.

22. Differing views were expressed on the appropriate reference period and the role of catch history. Some CCMs emphasised the relevance of recent fishing patterns and existing levels of fishing effort, including periods following key Commission decisions on target reference points or existing vessel limits. One view emphasised the continuing relevance of the baseline reflected in the measure, noting that CCMs had controlled their fishing south of 20°S in accordance with that measure and that it remained relevant to any allocation of high seas fishing opportunities. Other CCMs stressed that historical catch is only one of the criteria listed in Article 10(3) and should not override broader Convention considerations. The Workshop heard repeated views that catch history could not be the sole criterion for South Pacific albacore allocation, while recognising that it would remain an important consideration, particularly for any high seas component.
23. Several CCMs and Participating Territories emphasised the dependence of coastal States and territories on their EEZ fisheries. They noted that some territories operate locally based fleets, have limited alternative fishing opportunities, and rely on South Pacific albacore for economic, cultural, food security and future development reasons. It was also noted that Participating Territories should not be assessed only by recent catch history, particularly where they have development aspirations but limited historical commercial catch. At the same time, several CCMs noted that strong recognition of coastal State/Territory rights in the high-level split could coexist with continued opportunities for distant-water fishing fleets through access arrangements and other cooperative mechanisms.
24. CCMs raised several questions about matters not fully addressed in the proposals. These included the treatment of catch between the equator and 10°S, how any EEZ and high seas components would be apportioned among CCMs, the treatment of Participating Territories, and the relationship between allocation and supporting implementation measures. It was explained that, under the adopted Management Procedure, catch between the equator and 10°S is treated as an externality and monitored against the assumptions used in Management Procedure testing. One CCM requested that further information on the apportionment of shares among coastal State CCMs and Participating Territories be made available, noting that allocation concerns not only the high-level EEZ/high seas split, but also the distribution of each component among CCMs.
25. Following the initial discussion, the Chair drew together the principal issues arising from the proposals and interventions. The allocation-related issues, including the basis for allocation, the proposed EEZ/high seas split, catch history, Article 10(3), and the apportionment of allocation components, continued to be considered under Agenda Item 3. Other implementation-related issues identified by the Chair, including domestication, transferability and flexibility, MCS, externalities, species-specificity and phased implementation, are reflected under Agenda Item 4.

### **3.3 Further consideration of allocation issues**

26. In response to requests made during the initial discussion, FFA Members provided [supplementary material](#) further explaining the rationale for the proposed 75% EEZ / 25% high seas split. The material set out an indicative application of the Article 10(3) criteria and was presented as an illustration of the reasoning behind the proposal, rather than as a fixed formula. FFA Members explained that the indicative application produced an outcome of approximately 82% to EEZs and 18% to the high seas, compared with a long-term historical catch distribution of approximately 60% to EEZs and 40% to the high seas, and that the proposed 75% / 25% split was intended as a balanced position. FFA Members explained that the proposed split sought to balance historical catch with broader Convention considerations relevant to coastal States, SIDS and Participating Territories.

27. Several CCMs supported the proposed high level split as an appropriate recognition of coastal State and Participating Territory interests. These CCMs noted the importance of South Pacific albacore to domestic fleets, island economies, food security and future development, and emphasised that Participating Territories should be treated consistently with coastal States for the purposes of the EEZ/high seas discussion. It was also noted that a strong EEZ component could coexist with continued fishing opportunities for distant-water fleets through access arrangements and other cooperative mechanisms.
28. Several other CCMs expressed concern about adopting a fixed 75% EEZ / 25% high seas split at this stage. Questions were raised about the derivation of the split, the weighting of Article 10(3) criteria, the appropriate reference period, and the implications for high seas fishing opportunities. Some CCMs considered that certain Article 10(3) criteria, including conservation contributions, compliance history and domestic consumption, may be more appropriately assessed at CCM level rather than as a basis for a spatial EEZ/high seas division. Concern was also expressed that the methodology appeared to treat the Article 10(3) criteria as carrying equal or fixed weight, and that the characteristics of the South Pacific albacore fishery complicated the uniform application of some criteria. Several CCMs also emphasised that historical catch and existing fishing effort remain important, particularly in relation to any allocation of the high seas component.
29. Many CCMs cautioned that detailed negotiation over formulae and weightings could risk delaying progress and lead to a prolonged negotiation over criteria. Other CCMs considered that further clarity on criteria, weighting and their application would be necessary before any high-level split could be agreed. The Chair noted emerging convergence that catch history is important but cannot be the sole basis for allocation, that the allocation framework for South Pacific albacore should be species-specific and non-precedential, and that further work should avoid becoming a purely formulaic exercise.
30. The Workshop also discussed the apportionment of any EEZ and high seas components among CCMs. It was confirmed that Participating Territories would be treated as coastal States for the purposes of the discussion of sovereign rights and the EEZ/high seas split. FFA Members indicated that their proposal included Participating Territories as coastal States and contemplated zone-based management through EEZ or sub-regional blocks. It was also indicated that coastal State CCMs and Participating Territories largely regarded the apportionment of EEZ limits as a matter for them to consider among themselves, including through possible sub-regional bloc allocations rather than individual CCM limits. Several CCMs noted that the high seas component could not be left undefined and that CCMs would need to understand how both the EEZ and high seas components would translate into fishing opportunities. The Chair emphasised that, irrespective of whether an EEZ/high seas split was ultimately adopted, CCMs would need to understand the criteria, principles and process through which each component would be apportioned.
31. A divergence of sequencing emerged. One view favoured first securing agreement on the high-level EEZ/high seas split as a foundation for subsequent work on the allocation of each component. Another view was that indicative CCM-level fishing opportunities should be developed first, or at least in parallel, so that CCMs could understand the practical implications of any proposed high-level split before being asked to accept it. One CCM suggested that a limited set of illustrative scenarios be developed to show how different EEZ/high seas splits would translate into CCM-level fishing opportunities. Another possible option raised was whether coastal State CCMs managing on a zone basis could also receive a Commission-set limit usable on the high seas. The Chair noted the merit of further scenario work, while cautioning against allowing the discussion to become a purely catch-history-based negotiation.
32. To assist the discussion, the SSP demonstrated a dashboard tool capable of illustrating different EEZ/high seas splits against an indicative TAC for the Management Procedure area. It was emphasised that the tool was illustrative only and did not reflect agreed criteria, weightings or final allocation shares. The tool was

welcomed as a useful aid to discussion, while recognising that it should inform, rather than replace, a principle-based allocation process.

33. FFA Members also presented illustrative allocation scenarios based on different reference periods and combinations of catch history and Article 10(3) considerations. It was agreed that a refined and annotated version of the scenarios would be prepared for CCMs to support further informal and intersessional discussion.
34. The proposed EEZ/high seas split and allocation components remained unresolved. The Workshop noted support from all coastal State and Participating Territory CCMs for a zone-based allocation framework comprising EEZ allocations together with a high seas allocation, while several non-coastal State CCMs expressed a willingness to continue considering such a framework subject to further information and clarification. One CCM was not prepared to accept zone-based management as the predetermined basis for the allocation framework and considered that a CCM-based approach should remain available. The Workshop agreed that catch history could not be the only criterion used for South Pacific albacore allocation, while noting general agreement that catch history was likely to hold greater weight in relation to the high seas component. The Chair strongly encouraged continued intersessional engagement by all CCMs, noting that further progress should be a collective effort and should not rely only on coastal State CCMs or the proponents of the existing proposal.

#### AGENDA ITEM 4. REVIEW OF CCM PROPOSALS ON SUPPORTING MEASURES TO IMPLEMENT THE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

35. The Workshop noted that several implementation-related issues had arisen during the discussion of the delegation papers under Agenda Item 3, given the close relationship between the allocation framework and the measure required to implement the South Pacific albacore Management Procedure. Under Agenda Item 4, the Chair invited CCMs to return to these issues in a more focused way, including domestication, chartering, transferability and flexibility, MCS provisions, management of externalities to the Management Procedure, the species-specific nature of the South Pacific albacore framework, and phased implementation.
36. On domestication, some CCMs supported the objective of promoting domestic development benefits, including locally based fleets, employment, food security and future fisheries development. Some CCMs supported provisions to ensure that EEZ allocations generate genuine local benefits and are not used solely as a conduit for foreign-fleet revenue. Several CCMs considered, however, that while domestication and local economic development are important objectives, the means of achieving those objectives should remain a matter for individual coastal State CCMs and Participating Territories to determine. These CCMs cautioned that prescribing domestic utilisation requirements in a CMM could constrain national choices about fleet development, access arrangements and the use of allocation benefits. It was therefore noted that domestication remained an important objective, but that there was not agreement to include a specific domestic utilisation requirement in the implementing measure.
37. CCMs also discussed chartering and access arrangements. Some CCMs noted that chartering had played an important role in supporting fisheries development, including by enabling coastal State CCMs and SIDS to develop catch histories and participate more actively in the fishery. Other CCMs raised concerns about transparency, attribution and accountability in chartering arrangements, particularly where chartering intersects with allocation and transferability. One concern raised was that chartering across zones, combined with transferability, could create accountability gaps unless supported by clear attribution and reporting rules. It was noted that management of chartering arrangements may be best addressed through the Charter Notification Scheme and related measures, while catch and effort attribution would need to be addressed in the implementing arrangement.

38. On transferability and flexibility, CCMs expressed broad support for including mechanisms such as temporary transfers, catch reconciliation and other flexibility arrangements in the implementing measure. It was noted that transferability is already reflected in Commission practice, including through vessel day schemes and special provisions under the tropical tuna measures, and that common ground appeared achievable. These mechanisms were seen as important to support practical implementation of the TAC, accommodate seasonal and operational variability, assist CCMs in adapting to TACs that may be lower than recent catch levels, and reflect the mixed-species nature of the fishery. One view was that transferability should be available as broadly as possible, including between high seas allocations and between high seas and EEZ components, provided the TAC generated by the Management Procedure is not exceeded. Other CCMs noted that the scope and conditions for transfers, including any transfers between EEZ and high seas components, would depend on the allocation framework ultimately adopted and would need safeguards to ensure transparency, reconciliation, reporting and no double counting. It was generally agreed that transfers would be temporary rather than permanent, with detailed conditions left for further consideration.
39. CCMs also discussed the risk of South Pacific albacore becoming a “choke” species in mixed-species fisheries, particularly where albacore is taken incidentally while vessels are targeting other species. Specific reference was made to fisheries targeting southern bluefin tuna and tropical tunas, including bigeye, where vessels may take small quantities of South Pacific albacore as incidental catch. Some CCMs raised concern that rigid limits, full-retention requirements or poorly designed implementation rules could unnecessarily constrain fishing activity in those fisheries. It was also noted, however, that fisheries operating across multiple management frameworks or harvest strategies are not unusual, and that this issue should be capable of being managed through appropriate implementation design. Some CCMs noted that transferability, catch reconciliation, clear implementation rules and appropriate treatment of incidental catch would be important to account for albacore mortality without unduly constraining fisheries managed under other Commission or RFMO processes. One CCM suggested that full mortality accounting, prompt release of live incidental catch and safeguards against high-grading could assist in managing this risk.
40. CCMs recognised that effective implementation of the South Pacific albacore Management Procedure would require robust monitoring, control and surveillance arrangements. Differing views were expressed on whether specific MCS provisions, including transshipment, observer coverage, electronic monitoring, unloading monitoring and charter management, should be included in the South Pacific albacore implementing CMM or progressed through existing Commission processes, particularly TCC. Some CCMs considered that certain MCS elements were integral to the allocation and implementation package. Other CCMs cautioned that species-specific MCS requirements for a mixed-species longline fishery could create complexity, duplication or delay.
41. Transshipment was discussed in particular. Some CCMs considered that transshipment and related MCS matters could appropriately be progressed through TCC, provided this did not delay work on the allocation framework and implementing measure. Some CCMs noted that a prohibition on high seas transshipment of South Pacific albacore could be difficult to apply in practice where vessels take albacore only incidentally, particularly if such vessels would be required to land or tranship differently solely because of small quantities of albacore catch. One CCM emphasised that transshipment had been a long-standing issue before the Commission and that a decision should be taken by the Commission by the end of the year, whether within the South Pacific albacore measure or separately.
42. CCMs also discussed other MCS and implementation elements, including observer coverage, electronic monitoring, unloading-data standards, full retention, discard reporting and mortality accounting. Some CCMs supported strengthened independently verified monitoring in the longline fishery, including through human observers and electronic monitoring consistent with relevant minimum standards. It was also noted that independent reporting would enhance transparency, and that further agreement would be needed

on how observer or electronic monitoring coverage should be calculated, particularly for trips operating across multiple jurisdictions. Some CCMs also supported development of unloading-data standards for consideration by the Scientific Committee, and catch-retention provisions modelled on the tropical tuna measure to reduce high-grading and waste. Increased observer coverage was also identified as relevant to meeting scientific objectives, including for species of special interest and rare interactions, with some CCMs preferring that such albacore-specific elements remain within the implementing measure. One CCM also raised concern about the practical difficulty of short-timeframe discard notification requirements and suggested that this issue be examined further.

43. On management of externalities to the Management Procedure, the Workshop noted that, under the adopted South Pacific albacore Management Procedure, catch between the equator and 10°S, including Tokelau and Tuvalu EEZs, and catch outside the WCPFC Convention Area are treated as externalities and monitored relative to the assumptions incorporated into Management Procedure testing. The Workshop agreed that allocation discussions should focus on the area south of 10°S, excluding Tokelau and Tuvalu EEZs. CCMs noted that catches outside the area of implementation would still need to be monitored, including because changes in those catches could affect the assumptions underpinning the Management Procedure.
44. There was general agreement regarding the need to ensure that any South Pacific albacore arrangement would not be treated as a precedent for other highly migratory stocks, particularly tropical tunas. Two CCMs consulted on without-prejudice text, and produced text subsequently agreed by the workshop (see para 19 in the Chair's Recommendations below).
45. On phased implementation, the Workshop recognised broad support for considering some form of phased implementation or transitional arrangement to support implementation of the Management Procedure and the transition from current catch levels to the TAC generated by the Management Procedure. CCMs noted that such an approach could help mitigate economic and operational impacts on CCMs and fishing fleets and provide greater certainty during the initial implementation period. It was also noted that phased implementation could take different forms, including a transitional TAC or a transitional allocation arrangement. The Workshop did not settle on a specific approach, and noted that any phased implementation arrangement would need to remain open for further consideration and be formally tested against the Management Procedure.
46. The Workshop noted broad support for progressing transferability and flexibility and for considering phased implementation as part of the further development of the implementing measure. The Workshop noted that relevant MCS matters should be referred to TCC, and that relevant technical matters should continue to be considered through SC, as appropriate. Several implementation elements remained unresolved, including the detailed design of transferability and reconciliation mechanisms, the treatment of chartering and attribution, the scope of any albacore-specific MCS provisions, and the form of any phased implementation.

#### AGENDA ITEM 5 AND 6. NARROWING ALLOCATION OPTIONS, NEXT STEPS AND FUTURE WORK

47. The Workshop considered the extent to which allocation options had been narrowed through the discussions under Agenda Items 2, 3 and 4. Progress was recorded on several matters, including the use of a fixed data baseline, catch volume in metric tonnes as the primary implementation metric, the treatment of externalities to the Management Procedure, the species-specific and non-precedential character of the arrangement, broad support for transferability and flexibility, consideration of phased implementation, and the referral of relevant MCS matters to TCC. The recognition of Participating Territories as coastal States for the purposes of the EEZ/high seas discussion, and the distinction between the high-level split

and subsequent apportionment of each component among CCMs, also helped clarify the issues requiring further work.

48. It was acknowledged, however, that the central allocation questions remained unresolved. These included the magnitude of any EEZ/high seas split, the choice between a zone-based and a flag-based, CCM-based or hybrid architecture, the weighting and application of Article 10(3) criteria, and the method for apportioning each component among CCMs. The Chair emphasised that resolving these matters would require active engagement by all CCMs with an interest in the fishery and should not depend on a single proposal or group of CCMs.
49. The Chair noted that continued bilateral and informal engagement would be essential in the intersessional period, including to further develop and discuss possible approaches and avoid proposals being developed in isolation. CCMs also discussed the practical timing and format of further work. An in-person meeting option was raised but was not pursued, in light of scheduling, budgetary and logistical constraints. A virtual workshop was identified as the most feasible approach, with the Secretariat to canvass possible dates and avoid major RFMO meeting conflicts where possible. Relevant matters would also continue to be considered through SC and TCC, as appropriate.
50. Against that background, the Chair outlined the following recommendations and next steps. These recommendations are reproduced as presented to CCMs during the Workshop:

#### **Chair's Recommendations**

##### **A. Priority**

1. The Workshop agreed that agreement on a measure to implement the South Pacific albacore (SPA) Management Procedure is a high priority to ensure ongoing sustainability and economic viability of CCM fisheries.

##### **B. Data range and stability**

2. The Workshop recommended that catch and effort data for the South Pacific albacore allocation discussions include data up to the end of 2024.
3. The Workshop further recommended that any amendments or new data submitted after the 30 April 2026 deadline not be incorporated into the dataset used for these allocation discussions.
4. The Workshop noted that the SPA management procedure is based on SPA catch volume and recommended the implementing measure remain aligned.

##### **C. Basis for allocation**

5. The Workshop noted support from all coastal State and Participating Territory CCMs for a zone-based allocation framework comprising EEZ allocations together with a high seas allocation, consistent with the sovereign rights of coastal States and the relevant provisions of the Convention.
6. The Workshop further noted that several non-coastal State CCMs expressed a willingness to continue considering a zone-based allocation framework, while seeking additional information and clarification on its underlying rationale and application.
7. The workshop agreed that catch history cannot be the only criterion used for SPA, although there was also general agreement that catch history is likely to hold greater weight in terms of high seas allocation.

##### **D. Domestication**

9. While many participants supported the objective of promoting domestication and local economic benefits, several participants considered that decisions on how to realise those benefits should remain the responsibility of individual coastal State CCMs and Participating Territories, rather than through a Conservation and Management Measure.

#### **E. Transferability and flexibility**

10. The Workshop agreed that transferability and other flexibility mechanisms, including catch reconciliation, should form part of the CMM to support the practical implementation of the Management Procedure and operation of the total allowable catch (TAC). There was broad recognition that such mechanisms would assist CCMs in adapting to TACs that may be lower than recent catch levels, while accommodating the seasonal and operational variability of the fishery.

11. The Workshop further recognised that flexibility is particularly important given that South Pacific albacore is harvested as part of a mixed-species fishery. Appropriate flexibility mechanisms would help ensure that South Pacific albacore does not become a "choke" species that unnecessarily constrains the sustainable harvest of other target species.

12. It was generally agreed that transfers would be temporary, rather than permanent.

#### **F. Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) provisions to support implementation of the Management Procedure**

13. The Workshop recognised that effective implementation of the South Pacific albacore Management Procedure will require robust monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) arrangements.

14. Participants expressed differing views on whether MCS provisions, such as transshipment, electronic monitoring, observers and charter management should be included within the South Pacific albacore implementing CMM or progressed through existing Commission processes, particularly the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC).

15. The Workshop further noted broad support for progressing transshipment but not to delay the allocation framework and implementing measure.

16. The Workshop recommend that the MCS provisions in US DP01 and FFA IP02 be recommended to the TCC Chair for consideration at TCC22.

#### **G. Management of externalities to the MP**

17. The Workshop recognised that, under the adopted South Pacific albacore Management Procedure, catch in the area between the equator and 10°S, including Tokelau and Tuvalu EEZs, and catch outside the WCPFC Convention Area are treated as externalities and monitored relative to the assumptions incorporated into the Management Procedure testing.

18. The Workshop agreed that allocation discussions should focus on the area south of 10°S, excluding Tokelau and Tuvalu EEZs.

#### **H. Species-specific nature of the South Pacific albacore allocation framework**

19. Workshop participants recommended that the following text be included in the draft WCPFC implementing measure for south Pacific albacore:

"Management measures for South Pacific albacore reflect the biological, operational and economic characteristics particular to this fishery. Decisions and measures adopted in this context should not predetermine or prejudice the nature, extent, or application of such measures in other fisheries, whilst recognising that the Convention provides a comprehensive framework for the conservation and

management of highly migratory fish stock which is not species or fishery specific in its application. The adoption and application of this CMM shall not be interpreted as establishing a precedent for the allocation of other highly migratory stocks, particularly tropical tunas, within the Convention Area, in accordance with the principle of non-prejudice to the rights, jurisdiction, and duties of CCMs under the Convention."

#### **I. Phased implementation**

20. The Workshop recognised broad support for some form of phased implementation or transitional arrangement to facilitate implementation of the Management Procedure and the transition from current catch levels to the total allowable catch (TAC) generated by the Management Procedure. Such an approach was recognised as a means of mitigating economic and operational impacts on CCMs and fishing fleets while providing greater certainty during the initial implementation period.

21. The Workshop noted that phased implementation could take different forms, including a transitional TAC or a transitional allocation arrangement, and that the specific approach should remain open for further consideration and would need to be formally tested.

#### **J. Next Steps**

22. The Workshop agreed to the following next steps:

- a. That relevant matters discussed here should be continued in the work of SC and TCC.
- b. To convene a virtual workshop in late October to progress allocation discussions.
- c. That CCMs, particularly those that will be subject to the SPA MP, are encouraged to submit proposals regarding allocation frameworks to the Secretariat two weeks before the workshop.
- d. That the Chair would compile proposals and advice from CCMs and seek to produce a consolidated set of scenarios/options/criteria for consideration at the virtual meeting.

### **AGENDA ITEM 7. CLOSE OF THE WORKSHOP**

51. In closing the Workshop, the Chair thanked CCMs for their constructive engagement, including those participating online, and expressed appreciation to the host, the Secretariat and the SSP for their support. The Chair noted that, while key allocation questions remained unresolved, the Workshop had clarified the main issues, identified areas of convergence, and established a path for further intersessional work, including submission of further proposals, continued informal engagement and a further virtual workshop. The Chair undertook to circulate a summary of the Workshop's outcomes to guide that work. The Workshop was then closed.

Mr. Chair, dear delegates,

Thank you Chair for giving me the floor and allowing me to speak on behalf of Wallis and Futuna Islands, as participating territory.

We are delighted to be here with you for this working group, which is of particular importance to our territory.

As everybody knows, Wallis and Futuna is a small, isolated island territory in the Pacific. Covering just over 262,000 km<sup>2</sup>, our exclusive economic zone is among the smallest in the Convention area. This fact, however, should not overshadow Wallis and Futuna's role in these negotiations.

To date, we do not have a commercial fishing industry in Wallis and Futuna; due to our inability to develop such a fishery, we therefore have no historical catch records. However, this absence of a fishing industry should not be interpreted as a lack of interest, nor as a waiver of our rights to this resource.

We believe that fishing is a driver of future development for our territory.

Therefore, we are working to develop a fishing industry, focused on the local market and purposed to ensure our food sovereignty.

We hope that the discussions during this working group will take into account Article 30 of the Convention, which guarantees the right for development to territories. We believe it is essential that any decision resulting from this working group preserve the territories' future access to their resources.

We are convinced that our discussions will enable us to find a balanced compromise that takes into account the needs of each member, including the smallest ones.

Wallis and Futuna intends to move forward in cooperation with all members, in the same goal : a sustainable management of the resource and a safe future for our communities.

Thank you