



**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
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Apia, Samoa (Hybrid)

"FFSAPI-SARGEN HANDLINE FIP CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE-BASED HARVEST STRATEGIES FOR TROPICAL TUNA FISHERIES" FOR THE WCPFC SC22 MEETING

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Submitted by Philippines



**FFSAPI-SARGEN HANDLINE
FISHERIES IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

Philippines

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July 23, 2026

22nd Regular Session of the Scientific Committee (SC22)
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
Apia, Samoa

Thru:

Emily Crigler
Chair, Scientific Committee

Ms. Rhea Moss-Christian
Executive Director

Dr. Sungkwon So
Science Manager

Subject: Continued Support for the Advancement of Science-Based Harvest Strategies for Tropical Tuna Fisheries

Dear Chair and Distinguished Members of the Scientific Committee,

On behalf of the **FFSAPI-SARGEN Handline Fishery Improvement Project (FIP)**, we convey our sincere appreciation to the Scientific Committee of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) for its steadfast commitment to advancing the scientific knowledge that underpins the sustainable management of tuna fisheries in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.

The **FFSAPI-SARGEN Handline FIP** is a voluntary multi-stakeholder initiative involving fishing companies, fishers, processors, exporters, technical experts, non-government organizations, and coastal communities working together to strengthen the environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and long-term viability of the Philippine handline tuna fishery. Through continuous fishery improvement, we seek to contribute to the

conservation of tuna resources while supporting responsible fisheries governance and the livelihoods of fishing communities.

As a collaborative initiative committed to measurable fishery improvements, we recognize that robust scientific advice and effective harvest strategies are fundamental to achieving sustainable fisheries management. Science-based management provides the foundation upon which Fishery Improvement Projects can demonstrate meaningful progress toward internationally recognized best practices and continuous improvement.

We commend the significant progress achieved during the **22nd Regular Session of the Commission held in Manila, Philippines, in December 2025**, which reaffirmed the Commission's commitment to advancing the Harvest Strategy framework for tropical tuna fisheries. We likewise recognize the extensive technical work undertaken by the Scientific Committee and its supporting expert groups in evaluating candidate **Target Reference Points (TRPs)**, developing **Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE)** analyses, and refining the scientific basis for **Harvest Control Rules (HCRs)** and **Management Procedures (MPs)** for **Yellowfin and Bigeye Tuna**. These collective efforts represent a major step toward ensuring that future fisheries management decisions are objective, transparent, and founded upon the best available scientific evidence.

As the Scientific Committee convenes in Apia, Samoa, we respectfully encourage SC22 to continue building upon this important momentum by advancing the scientific work requested by the Commission. Continued progress toward scientifically robust Harvest Strategies will strengthen the Commission's ability to adopt management measures that effectively balance conservation objectives with the sustainable utilization of tropical tuna resources while providing greater predictability and stability for all stakeholders.

For Fishery Improvement Projects such as ours, Harvest Strategies are more than technical fisheries management instruments. They provide the scientific certainty, transparency, and management predictability necessary for long-term planning, responsible investment, and continuous improvement. They also strengthen confidence among fishers, governments, seafood buyers, investors, certification programs, and consumers that tuna fisheries are being managed using the best available scientific advice through agreed regional processes.

The Philippine handline tuna fishery is recognized for supplying premium-quality tuna to international markets through highly selective fishing practices that contribute to minimizing impacts on non-target species. Through the FFSAPI-SARGEN Handline Fishery Improvement Project, participating stakeholders continue to invest in improving fishery performance, strengthening governance, enhancing transparency, and implementing internationally recognized best practices. The continued advancement of science-based Harvest Strategies will complement these ongoing improvement efforts by providing a robust and predictable management framework that supports both resource sustainability and responsible fisheries development.

The Philippine handline tuna fishery provides employment and livelihood opportunities for thousands of fishers, vessel crew, processors, exporters, and coastal families. Continued progress in developing science-based Harvest Strategies will help ensure that these fisheries remain environmentally sustainable, economically resilient, and socially responsible while supporting food security, sustainable economic development, and the long-term well-being of coastal communities throughout the region.

We recognize that achieving sustainable tuna fisheries requires a shared commitment among scientists, fisheries managers, governments, industry, and fishing communities. As stakeholders actively implementing fishery improvements on the water, we remain committed to supporting the objectives of the WCPFC through responsible fishing practices, transparency, collaboration, and the application of the best available scientific advice. We look forward to continuing to work alongside the Commission and its subsidiary bodies in promoting healthy tuna stocks and resilient fisheries for present and future generations.

We thank the Scientific Committee for its invaluable contribution to the conservation and sustainable management of tuna resources in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean and wish all delegates a productive and successful meeting in Apia, Samoa.

Respectfully yours,


ENGR. EMMA F. GARAY
President, FFSAPI


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President, SARGEN HANDLINE