

Activities addressing challenges in the delivery of stock assessments in time for member's peer review WCPFC-SC22-GN-IP-06

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
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SPC-OFP
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WCPFC22 reviewed WCPFC22-2025-18 and the Commission agreed to the following outcomes (WCPFC22 summary report para 261, sub-bullets (c) to (f)):

- c) requested SC22 and the SSP to review the current assessment workflow and identify realistic steps to improve efficiency, including earlier engagement with CCMs during assessment development, while maintaining the quality and integrity of scientific advice.
- d) [requested the SC Vice-Chair to lead intersessional work to develop options for prioritizing the work of the Scientific Committee for consideration by SC22 and further requested SC22 to report its recommendations on prioritization to WCPFC23.]
- e) requested the SC22 to further consider potential modifications to the current SciData submission deadline to a date earlier than 30 April.
- f) tasked the WCPFC Secretariat, Commission and Subsidiary Body Chairs, and SSP to evaluate options for adjusting meeting timetables for consideration by WCPFC23 and its subsidiary bodies in 2026.

Earlier engagement with CCMs during assessment development (c)



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- Balance collaboration and CCM input into regional stock assessments while ensuring all CCMs can contribute, and respecting WCPFC's approach to ensuring independent scientific analysis.
- SSP engaged with CCMs on the 13th and 20th November 2025, through two online 'pre-pre-assessment' workshops to gather initial feedback from interested CCMs. This was followed by the hybrid Pre-Assessment Workshop held in Noumea during the week of the 23rd March 2026 (see SC22-SA-IP-01).
- SSP ensures these SPC meetings are open to all interested CCMs through hybrid approaches. Further liaison with interested CCMs has occurred on an ad-hoc basis following those meetings.
- The SSP highlights that there is also a need to ensure time is available for the assessment scientists to deliver results.

Modifications to the SciData submission deadline (e)



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- Two key areas of development have been:
 - The efforts of distant water CCMs to provide updated historical longline data by the end of the previous calendar year.
 - The adoption at WCPFC22 of standardized data submission templates contained in WCPFC22-2025-38 for SciData submissions
- General positive feedback on process. On average, members took 18 days from first data submission to final accepted version (SC22-ST-WP-03). Expectation that greater timeliness in data availability will be achieved in subsequent years as processes become more embedded and familiar.
- Some CCMs have outlined challenges they face in meeting an earlier data provision deadline, but no alternatives have been offered outside the status quo for addressing the need for earlier data submission.
- SC22 has an opportunity to have further discussion focused on identifying potential solutions to individual challenges, noting that an increase in the use of electronic reporting, as facilitated through the ER and EM IWG, represents a clear solution.

Adjusting WCPFC meeting timetables (f)



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- No clear solution

- Other tuna RFMO Secretariats indicate rescheduling is not currently feasible.
- Swapping the timing of WCPFC TCC and SC meetings has implications on the time available to the Secretariat and SSP to adequately prepare the draft Compliance Monitoring Report for review by TCC.
- Other tRFMO meetings have implications for CCMs that participate in them.
- Re-arranging tRFMO meeting calendars therefore appears a longer-term objective requiring negotiation between multiple tRFMO Secretariats, and needs several years to implement.

Other observations

- Strategic additional resources are unlikely to help given upskilling requirements
- Consideration of the breadth of SC activities (SC22-GN-WP-05) as well as the range of SC projects is warranted, particularly given FAC member's observations and limited resources.

Recommendations

- SC22 is invited to:
 - support early submission of data by CCMs who are able, with those facing challenges to continue to explore and identify solutions to accommodate earlier data submission.
 - provide feedback to the SSP on performance of the standardised data submission process to allow further refinement.
 - consider the number and prioritisation of SC projects put forward to the Commission for funding, in particular a process of prioritising funding of projects that contribute directly to Commission priorities as identified in relevant CMMs, the Convention, and other decisions. This could form part of the discussion of staged processes around SC22-GN-WP-05.