



**TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE
TWENTY-SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

23-29 September 2026

Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia (Hybrid)

HSBI Intersessional Working Group - Chair's Update

WCPFC-TCC22-2026-25

26 August 2026

Submitted by the HSBI-IWG Chair

Status update

1. The High Seas Boarding and Inspection Working Group (HSBIWG05) has met twice during 2026 on 16 April and 21 July 2026. The full meeting reports are available on the WCPFC website [HSBIWG04](#) and [HSBIWG05](#).
2. Participants in the intersessional process included representatives from Australia, Canada, China, Fiji, France, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Chinese Taipei and United States, as well as the International MCS Network, Global Fishing Watch, Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency, Sharks Pacific and the WCPFC Secretariat. A full list of participants is in the meeting reports.
3. The Working Group has made steady progress addressing the programme of work assigned to it following the Twenty-Second Regular Session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC22), held in Manila. The key items for consideration are:
 - a. Updates to the voluntary Bycatch Mitigation Measuring Guide relating to seabird bycatch mitigation; and
 - b. Development of a Crew Labour Standards Inspection Guide.

Bycatch Mitigation Measuring Guide

4. The updates to the Bycatch Mitigation Measuring Guide were presented by Japan and the intersessional working group supported presenting these to TCC for consideration. The proposed updates respond to changes to the seabird measure adopted at WCPFC22 and include feedback raised by IWG participants.
5. TCC22 is invited to consider the revised Bycatch Mitigation Measuring Guide and recommend that the revised guide be considered by WCPFC23 for adoption. A copy of the revised Bycatch Mitigation Measuring Guide is available on the WCPFC TCC22 website here [WCPFC-TCC22-2026-25A](#).

Development of a Crew Labour Standards Inspection Guide

6. The IWG has made good progress in sharing updates on existing arrangements supporting inspections on crew labour standards and a draft a Crew Labour Standards Inspection Guide has been developed based on feedback from IWG participants.
7. In discussing the development of a draft guide, it was noted that this is a relatively new area of work for the HSBI process and that the development of practical guidance, procedures and tools would be important to assist boarding officers in identifying, recording and reporting relevant observations in a consistent manner.
8. The discussions also reflected a common view that the Working Group should focus on producing materials that are operationally useful, aligned with the applicable conservation and management measure, and capable of supporting follow-up by the relevant flag CCM.
9. To support the development of a Crew Labour Standards Inspection Guide, all IWG participants were invited to share their own practical experience and any documentation that may be relevant. During the second IWG on 21 July Australia, New Zealand, Chinese Taipei and the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) delivered presentations sharing relevant experience and an update on work under.
10. Several cross-cutting themes emerged from the presentations. These included concern about the time required for meaningful crew interviews, the educational and literacy barriers that can affect the reliability of written questionnaires, and the need for practical techniques to support comprehension and accurate responses in a time-constrained inspection environment. Further discussion also underlined the importance of neutral and practical inspection methods, and the value of sharing procedures among CCMs that are still developing their own approaches to labour-related HSBI observations.
11. In that regard, several CCM's have shared relevant documentation including checklists for their inspection officers as well as questionnaires to support interviews with crew members relating to crew labour standards. All available documents will be uploaded to the to the TCC22 site for consideration alongside this update.

Proposed approach for consideration of the Draft Crew Labour Standards Inspection Guide

12. It is proposed that the HSBI-IWG will meet again in the margins of TCC22 to consider an updated draft of the Crew Labour Standards Inspection Guide before it is discussed in plenary. The [draft available](#) on the TC22 site has been updated to reflect feedback from the last IWG meeting held on 21 July and participants still need further time to consider it.
13. Several participants have also noted the need for further time to consult with the industry on the development of the draft guide and accompanying inspection checklists and questionnaires. It is likely this will require further time into 2027.
14. TCC22 is invited to provide feedback on the progress so far and to provide direction on the proposed timeframe for adopting the Guide, noting the measure is due to take effect in January 2028.