



**TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE
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Update from the Chair of the Electronic Reporting and Electronic Monitoring Intersessional Working Group (ERandEM IWG)

WCPFC-TCC22-2026-26_Rev02¹

07 September 2026

Submitted by the Chair of the ERandEM IWG

Purpose

1. This paper provides the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC) with a summary of intersessional progress made by the Electronic Reporting and Electronic Monitoring Intersessional Working Group (ERandEM IWG) and seeks TCC feedback on recommended priority tasks and an updated ERandEM IWG future workplan.

Background

2. In accordance with the workplan adopted at WCPFC22, the ERandEM IWG has continued its work to develop a proposed assurance and audit process for longline EM standards modeled on the Regional Observer Program (ROP) audit framework. In addition, the ERandEM IWG is progressing advice on potential updates to the interim EM standards to enhance harmonization across RFMOs, while reviewing and developing standardized templates and other key standard components where unified reporting provides clear value to members.

Key Progress and Outcomes

- a. **Primary Review Authority:** Established common understanding that primary EM record review sits under flag CCM authority (directly or via authorized service providers), using the ROP framework as the principal point of reference.
- b. **Optional Harmonization Tools:** Progress has been made in drafting a VMP template (adapted from the IATTC format) to serve as an optional reference tool to assist CCMs with fleet harmonization across RFMOs.
- c. **Draft CMM for the development of a WCPFC EM Program:** At the IWG8 virtual meeting, the United States presented a consultative draft CMM for the implementation of a WCPFC EM

¹ This Rev02 updates the future workplan priorities and timelines.

program, designed to establish a framework to implement a WCPFC EM program, which closely aligns with the existing WCPFC ROP, and to implement longline monitoring coverage requirements, for adoption at WCPFC23. Central to the proposal is a 20% EM coverage rate for longline vessels, which would satisfy existing 5% observer coverage requirements while leaving 100% purse seine observer mandates intact. While members broadly supported prioritizing longline monitoring, delegates raised key concerns regarding rapid hardware installation costs, data ownership, charter responsibilities, and SIDS capacity constraints—suggesting a phased implementation approach instead. Although no substantive decisions were taken, the ERandEM IWG emphasized the need for close alignment, noting that its developing audit and assurance framework will be directly incorporated into the CMM once adopted.

- d. **Audit Questionnaire:** The ERandEM IWG has refined the draft audit questionnaire based on feedback from CCMs and regional bodies (including FFA and SPC). Working group members are currently considering a proposed layout establishing a more direct link between the audit questions and the applicable Standards, Specifications, and Procedures (SSPs), specifically the MUSTs, offering a more intuitive and transparent way for members, programs, and auditors to navigate and apply the questionnaire.
- e. **Assurance Process:** The ERandEM IWG is currently exploring options for a Secretariat-led assurance process to review video footage while fully respecting CCM legal, privacy, and confidentiality constraints. One key approach under consideration is periodic on-site record reviews, where the Secretariat would sample EM records to verify video quality, system functionality, and annotation accuracy.
- f. **Updated Interim Technical Standards:** To maintain direct alignment with the proposed audit questionnaire, the ERandEM IWG is currently considering updated and expanded standards. This latest draft incorporates outcomes and recommendations from the 2024 FAO/ISSF Harmonization Workshop, alongside relevant provisions from the FFA Electronic Monitoring Standards, Specifications, and Procedures (EM SSPs; [WCPFC19-2022-DP-08](#)²). Newly agreed standards will be integrated directly into the audit questionnaire to establish a clear line of sight between compliance obligations and audit criteria.
- g. **Proposed ERandEM IWG 2027 Workplan:** The future workplan prioritizes uncompleted initiatives carried over from 2026 including updating technical data standards and EM standards for carrier vessels. (attached)

² WCPFC19-2022-DP08 sets out the EM Standards, Specifications, and Procedures for on-board EM systems, EM hardware and software in Data Review Centres, EM system certification, EM records transmission, EM Records analysis and quality assurance, EM Records and data storage, EM records and data ownership and access, and EM records and EM data security and confidentiality which were adopted at WCPFC19.

Next Steps for the ERand EM IWG

Consideration for a WCPFC EM program audit and assurance process

3. This paper brings together the key components, logical dependencies, and outstanding decisions needed to establish a robust audit and assurance framework for the WCPFC EM Program. Building on previous ER&EM IWG discussions, it emphasizes the distinction between internal quality assurance—where national or regional EM programs re-analyze a portion of EM records to check completeness and analyst accuracy—and external quality assurance, which involves an independent review conducted under Secretariat authority to verify overall data accuracy.
4. To show how these key components fit together, the document is organized into four main sections:
 - a. Proposed modifications to the WCPFC Interim EM standards to capture data quality assurance requirements;
 - b. Proposed processes and key decisions regarding an audit framework;
 - c. A draft audit questionnaire; and
 - d. Proposed processes for independent data quality assurance reviews.
5. By connecting these pieces, this paper will help members understand how each component fits into a cohesive framework, providing the clear path needed for the IWG to review, refine, and ultimately adopt the complete audit and assurance process.

Interim technical standards working draft document

6. This most recent draft takes into consideration the outcomes and recommendations arising from the FAO/ISSF Harmonization Workshop (2024), as well as relevant information contained in the FFA Electronic Monitoring Standards, Specifications, and Procedures (EM SSPs), WCPFC19-2022-DP-08.
7. Section SSP2b of [WCPFC19-2022-DP-08](#) describes the process for internally verifying and validating EM records by the relevant DRC as a quality-control measure. While the section outlines a process for an EMP and provides detail on both verification and validation procedures, it also offers useful background for the IWG on how an EM Data Quality Reviewer could review EM records and the EM data produced by the EM analyst.
8. More importantly, this draft absorbs the comments and suggestions from IWG members to present a clean draft for consideration. Member feedback has been comprehensively documented in a summary table immediately preceding Annex 1.

Indicative EM Programme Audit Requirements and Cost Estimates for EM Programme Audit

9. This discussion paper by the Secretariat aims to help the IWG consider the financial resources needed to maintain an EM Program Audit scheme. Based on experience with the Regional Observer Program audit process, the Secretariat has provided best-effort estimated figures for the indicative costing. However, these estimates should not serve as the basis for an operationalized program without further cost investigations.

Audit Questionnaire – Proposed Structural Refinements

10. Subsequent to reaching agreement on the audit questionnaire, a further request from some IWG members to take another look at the structure of the questionnaire and consider whether there may be opportunities to further enhance its clarity and usability. This has been taken into consideration, and the proposed layout now establishes a more direct link between the audit questions and the applicable SSPs, specifically the MUSTs. This would provide a clear line of sight between the audit questions and the relevant compliance obligations and may offer a more intuitive and transparent way for members, programs, and auditors to navigate and apply the questionnaire.

Recommendations

11. TCC22 is invited to:
 - a. **note** the updates on intersessional work of the ERandEM IWG.
 - b. **provide** feedback on the updated ERandEM IWG Workplan.

Proposed future workplan for the ER and EM IWG

Task	Working approach	Timing	Date to WCPFC
Advice on potential changes to the interim EM data standards to improve harmonization across RFMOs (based on outcomes of the ABNJ Tuna II “ <i>Electronic Monitoring Tuna RFMO Minimum Standards Harmonization Workshop</i> ” to be held in Dec-2024)	EREMIWG with SC and TCC review	2027	WCPFC24
Initiate work on EM standards for carrier vessels conducting transshipment for longline vessels.	EREMIWG and TS IWG with SC and TCC review	2027-2028	TBC
Elaborate a draft CMM for the development of a WCPFC Electronic Monitoring Program in 2027, as appropriate, depending on WCPFC23 outcomes	EREMIWG with the United States, SC and TCC review	2027	TBC
Review EM data requirements based on relevant CMM requirements not already covered in the ROP minimum data fields	EREMIWG and ROP IWG with SC and TCC review	2027	WCPFC24
Review and/or develop templates for Part 1 EM program reporting and other parts of the EM standards where standardized reporting would be of value to members.	EREMIWG with SC and TCC review	2027-2028	WCPFC24