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Annual Report on the Work of the Commission in 2026

WCPFC23-2026-02
16 October 2026

Submitted by the Executive Director

I. Executive Summary

Key Developments in 2026

WCPFC's 2026 work program reflects an organization committed to maintaining strong sustainability outcomes for the world's largest tuna fishery. Despite growing and competing priorities and significant global security and economic challenges, CCMs continued to invest substantial resources throughout the year to advance the Commission's work. Intersessional discussions in 2026 have positioned the Commission to consider several significant decisions at WCPFC23: an implementing measure for the South Pacific albacore tuna management procedure, a management procedure and allocation framework for Pacific bluefin tuna, and a management procedure for bigeye tuna. If adopted, these would mark a significant advance in the WCPFC's harvest strategy framework. They would also allow the organization to shift its resources and focus on strengthening monitoring and data collection foundations that underpin continued sustainability of WCPFC tuna stocks.

Overview

The Commission completed its 2025 work program with agreement on a Management Procedure for South Pacific albacore tuna, contained in [CMM 2025-01](#), following extensive discussions on South Pacific albacore tuna management for over a decade that culminated in its adoption at the Commission's 22nd Regular Annual Session (WCPFC22). The Management Procedure seeks to support economic development and maintain the stock at levels that achieve stable fishing levels between management periods.

Other measures taking effect in early 2026 include new reporting options for catch discards ([CMM 2025-04](#)) designed to strengthen flag State responsibilities, an amended measure to mitigate impacts on seabirds ([CMM 2025-05](#)), which expanded the measure's spatial coverage and updated technical specifications, and a revised High Seas Boarding and Inspection (HSBI) measure ([CMM 2025-07](#)) that reflects the increased use of monitoring technologies and supports a risk-based approach to HSBI. The Commission also adopted a revised measure for sharks ([CMM 2025-06](#)), which is aimed at improving availability of information on the effectiveness of alternative measures and the collection of better data

on shark catches. The tropical tuna measure ([CMM 2025-02](#)) and the skipjack management procedure ([CMM 2025-03](#)) were also updated at WCPFC22, to account for the Commission's agreement to align its harvest strategy work more appropriately with its tropical tuna measure, which implements the harvest strategies.

The Commission's 2026 meeting schedule (see [Attachment A](#)) increased¹ over 2025 activities and reflected a continuing focus on strengthening and refining WCPFC's data collection and monitoring activities, together with an increase in harvest strategy work. The 2026 calendar included significant intersessional efforts to advance harvest strategies, building on the 2025 adoption of the South Pacific albacore tuna management procedure, development of a bigeye tuna management procedure, and finalization of a Pacific bluefin tuna management procedure. The 2026 meeting schedule also included the first joint working group between the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission and the WCPFC on South Pacific albacore tuna management (SPAJWG), demonstrating the commitment on both sides of the Pacific Ocean to shared management of this trans-Pacific stock.

The Commission's scientific work in 2026 included updated bigeye and yellowfin stock assessments, noting that the Scientific Committee was unable to come to agreement on the bigeye stock assessment and consideration of the yellowfin assessment was deferred to 2027. However, the pending discussions on the bigeye assessment did not impede the ability of the [2nd Bigeye Management Workshop](#) (BMW02) to advance management procedure development after the Scientific Committee meeting, a recognition of the shifting role of stock assessments overall in the Commission's harvest strategy framework.

Multiple intersessional meetings relating to strengthening WCPFC's monitoring and data collection programs filled out the 2026 calendar, with steady progress on developing key components of a WCPFC electronic monitoring program, sustained discussions by the Regional Observer Program (ROP) Intersessional Working Group (IWG) on the flow of observer data for compliance purposes, and the continued development of high seas boarding and inspection (HSBI) voluntary guides. All this work fed into the [22nd Technical and Compliance Committee](#) (TCC22) for review and update, with some intersessional meetings scheduled to continue in November with a view to bringing recommendations to WCPFC23.

An informal review of WCPFC's measures to mitigate impacts of fishing on sea turtles was underway throughout 2026, while the review of WCPFC's marine pollution mitigation measure that began in 2025 continued to progress electronically and during TCC22. Subsidiary bodies reviewed their respective roles in the [WCPFC Climate Change Workplan](#), with the Scientific Committee also considering updates from the SSP on its work relating to climate and ecosystem indicators and development of early warning tools to identify climate-driven changes.

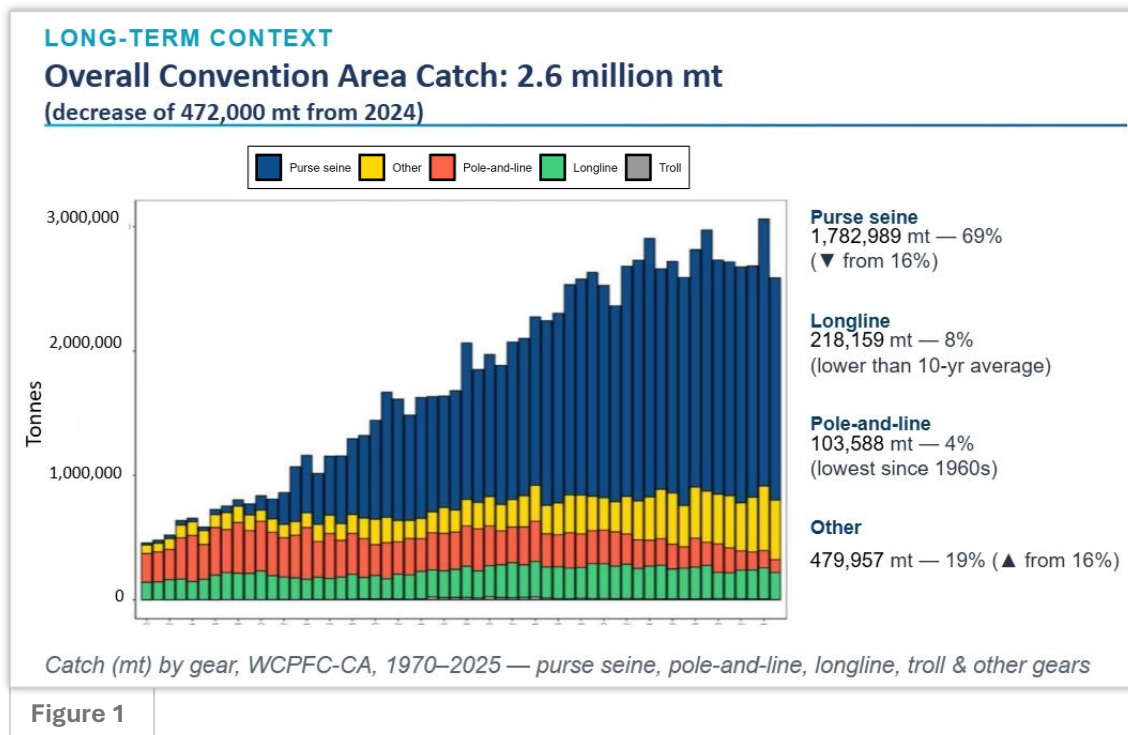
A review of the Commission's implementation of Article 30 of the Convention commenced in mid-2026, led by a three-person panel of independent consultants. The scope of the review includes an assessment of how the Commission has implemented Article 30, including a review of current and past activities, instruments and processes that the WCPFC and CCMs have developed and implemented to recognise the

¹ 21 meetings in 2025 and 45 meeting days vs 25 meetings in 2026 and 56 meeting days.

special requirements of developing States, particularly Small Island Developing States and Territories.

The [22nd Regular Session of the Northern Committee](#) (NC22) is scheduled to have a second session (NC22-2) on 11 November to consider its recommendation of a management procedure for Pacific bluefin tuna for adoption by the Commission at WCPFC23, noting that the IATTC adopted the management procedure at its 104th annual session in early September, following a second meeting of the 11th informal joint working group between IATTC and the WCPFC NC on Pacific bluefin tuna (PBFJWG), which met in July 2026.

Taken together, the Commission's work in 2026 reflects the broader purpose that WCPFC serves. The western and central Pacific Ocean supplies more than half of the global tuna catch, so the Commission's decisions directly affect global food security and the supply of an important source of protein for millions of people worldwide. For Pacific Island countries and territories, healthy tuna stocks underpin economic resilience and development, providing government revenue through access arrangements, employment in fishing and processing, and food and income for coastal communities that have depended on the ocean for generations. The Commission's work also supports the livelihoods of the many thousands of crew, observers, port workers, and processing staff employed across the industry, and the businesses and markets that rely on a stable and responsibly sourced supply of tuna. The sustained investment and effort of members and partners in WCPFC's science, monitoring, and management is, ultimately, an investment in securing these benefits for the region and the world, now and for future generations. Provisional 2025 catch and value figures for WCPFC-managed stocks are summarized in Figures 1-4.²



² Figures were prepared by the WCPFC Scientific Services Provider (SPC-OFP) and the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency for the 22nd Regular Session of the Scientific Committee, and updated in October 2026.

2025 CATCH BY SPECIES

Catches generally down from 2024

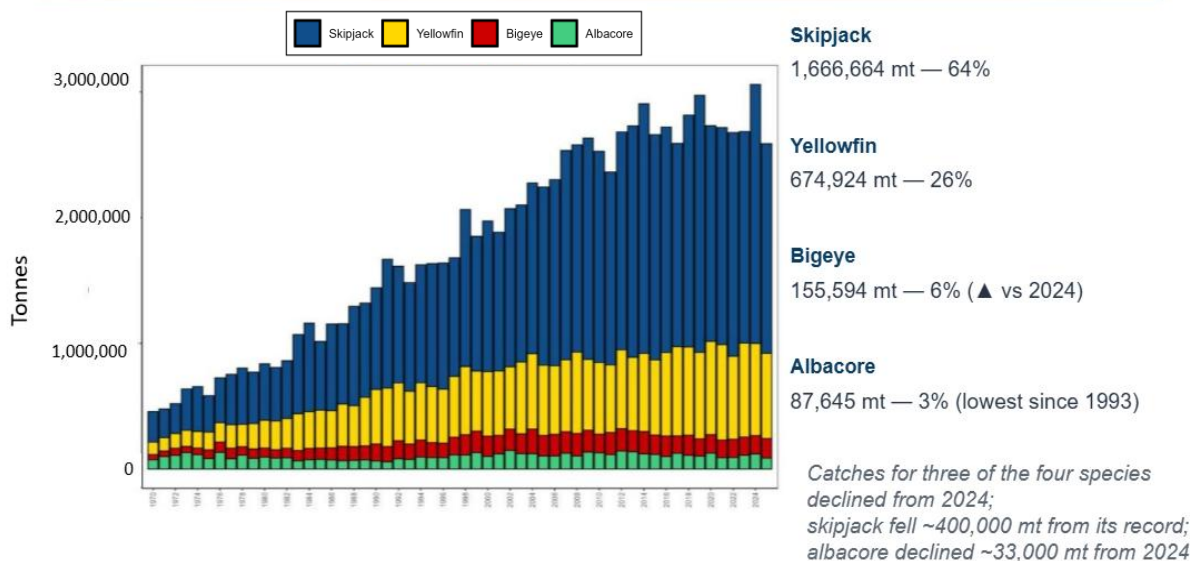
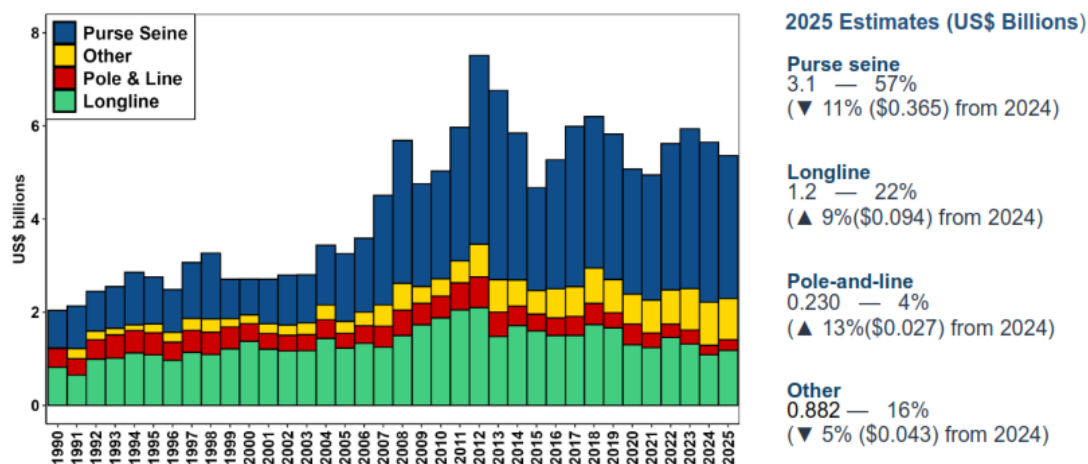


Figure 2

LONG-TERM CONTEXT

Overall Convention Area Catch Value: US\$5.4 billion

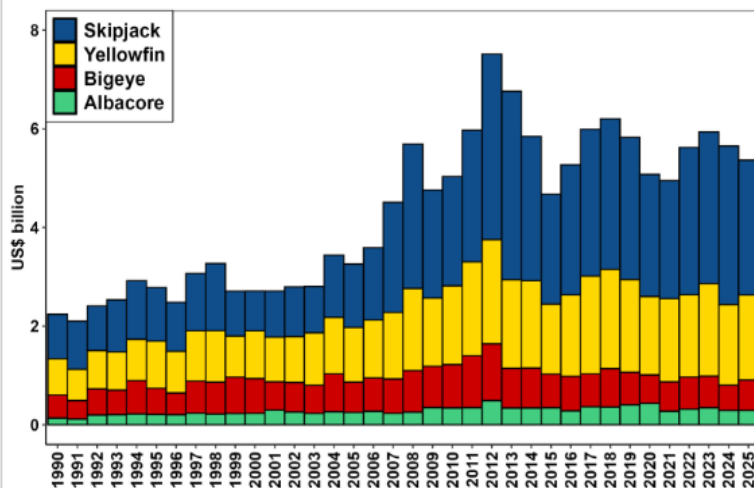
(decrease of US\$287 million (-5%) from 2024)



Catch value (US\$ billions) by gear, WCPFC-CA, 1990–2025 — purse seine, pole-and-line, longline, troll & other gears

Figure 3

2025 CATCH VALUE BY SPECIES



2025 Estimates (US\$ Billions)

Skipjack

2.7 — 57%
(▼ 15% (\$0.480) from 2024)

Yellowfin

1.7 — 29%
(▲ 5% (\$0.086) from 2024)

Bigeye

0.617 — 9%
(▲ 21% (\$0.106) from 2024)

Albacore

0.291 — 5%
(▲ 0.1% (\$330K) from 2024)

Catch values for three of the four species increased from 2024; Skipjack fell ~US\$1.09 billion from its record in 2013 (US\$3.82 billion)

Figure 4

Purpose and Report Structure

This report provides a comprehensive, high-level overview of the Commission's 2026 work program. It is framed around the objective of the WCPF Convention: to ensure, through effective management, the long-term conservation and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks in the western and central Pacific Ocean.

Section II presents the Commission's 2026 activities on the management of tuna and billfish stocks as outcomes, to support an assessment of how the year's work has contributed to the ongoing sustainability of these stocks. **Section III** reports on ecosystem-related matters, including climate change, marine pollution, and mitigation of bycatch species.

Section IV provides an update on WCPFC's monitoring and evaluation framework, followed by updates on the Commission's recognition of the special requirements of developing States (Article 30) in **Section V**. Governance and Institutional Matters, and updates on International Cooperation are provided in **Section VI** and **Section VII**, respectively. Updates on the Commission's 2026 budget are in **Section VIII**. The report concludes in **Section IX** by Looking Ahead to the Commission's future work program as it wraps up another busy year and prepares for its 24th annual cycle of work.

The full calendar of WCPFC's 2026 meetings is provided in **Attachment A**, and an overview of the Secretariat's 2026 activities is contained in **Attachment B**.

II. WCPO Tuna and Billfish Stocks | 2026 Updates

BIGEYE, YELLOWFIN, AND SKIPJACK TUNAS

One of the principal outcomes of WCPFC's work is seen through its management of the three tropical tuna stocks in the [WCPF Convention Area](#), where each of the bigeye, yellowfin, and skipjack tuna stocks is currently assessed as being fished sustainably, i.e. *not overfished* and *not undergoing overfishing*.

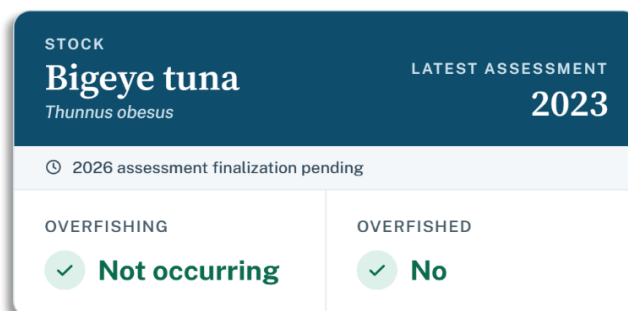
The Commission's current tropical tuna management framework in [CMM 2025-02](#) manages the three WCPO tropical tuna stocks through measures that set longline bigeye tuna catch limits for certain flag CCMs, purse seine fishing effort limits for certain flag CCMs operating on the high seas in the Convention Area, and catch limits on Other Fisheries³ catching primarily yellowfin tuna.

CMM 2025-02 and [CMM 2025-03](#) (Skipjack Management Procedure) were updated at WCPFC22 to extend their period of validity to align with the running of the bigeye tuna management procedure in 2027. At WCPFC23, the Commission will consider the scheduled review of CMM 2025-02 in 2027.

The Commission's 2026 activities in relation to management of six tuna stocks and four billfish stocks is summarized, below.

Bigeye Tuna

The interim objective for bigeye tuna in [CMM 2025-02](#) is to maintain the spawning biomass depletion ratio ($SB/SB_{F=0}$) at or above the average $SB/SB_{F=0}$ for 2012-2015, pending agreement on a target reference point. The latest [bigeye stock assessment](#) from 2023 indicated that the **interim objective was being achieved** and that the **recent depletion level of bigeye tuna was close to the interim objective**.



SC22 considered the 2026 WCPO bigeye stock assessment and recognized it as the most scientifically advanced assessment of the stock, to date, but was unable to reach consensus on the appropriate ensemble grid for characterizing stock status and associated management risks.⁴ Several recommendations were agreed by SC22 to continue to progress development of the stock assessment. Separately, SC22 proposed a special two-day session to take place immediately prior to WCPFC23⁵, which was confirmed intersessionally by the Commission, to further review and consider SC's approval of the bigeye tuna OM grid, among other issues.

³ Commercial tuna fisheries other than the purse seine and longline fisheries, such as pole-and-line, handline, troll, or other fishing gears used in commercial tropical tuna fisheries.

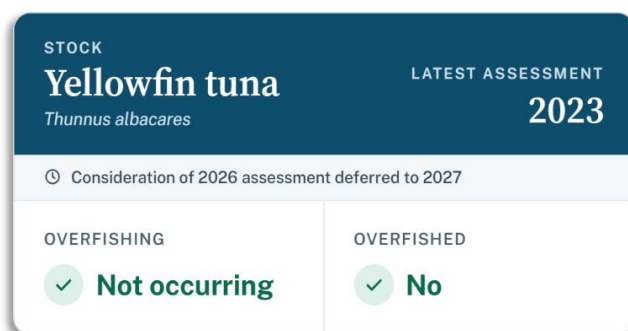
⁴ See paragraph 23 of [SC22 Outcomes Document](#).

⁵ [Special Session of the Scientific Committee](#), 27-28 November 2026, Port Vila, Vanuatu.

In addition, SC22 recommended that a technical workshop be convened in 2027 by the SSP to improve the use of tagging data within stock assessments and that outcomes from the workshop be incorporated into the 2029 bigeye tuna assessment. Funding for that workshop will be considered at the 20th Finance and Administration Committee (FAC20). Notwithstanding the suggestions from SC22 for further work to be undertaken to inform the next assessment, CCMs agreed that the Commission's consideration of a bigeye management procedure was not directly dependent on the most recent stock assessment, further adding that stock assessments should primarily support the monitoring, evaluation, and potential review of management procedures.

Implementation of the bigeye-related provisions in CMM 2025-02 continued in 2026, primarily the option for some flag CCMs to increase their allocated longline bigeye catch limits set out in Table 3 of the CMM, commensurate with an increase in their monitoring coverage. In 2026, Chinese Taipei notified of their intention to increase their longline bigeye catch and advised on additional monitoring coverage.

On harvest strategy development, the Commission progressed its development of a management procedure for bigeye tuna in 2026 through the convening of two Bigeye Management Workshops (BMW), providing CCMs with an opportunity to progress their work intersessionally through a less formal workshop setting. At the time of writing, the report of the second BMW ([BMW02](#)) is being finalized, and its outcomes together with the outcomes of the first BMW ([BMW01](#)) will be shared with the Commission at WCPFC23 to inform discussions under [Agenda Item 11.2 Development of a Management Procedure for Bigeye Tuna](#).



Yellowfin Tuna

The interim objective for yellowfin tuna in [CMM 2025-02](#) is to maintain the spawning biomass depletion ratio ($SB/SB_{F=0}$) at or above the average $SB/SB_{F=0}$ for 2012-2015, pending agreement on a target reference point. The [latest yellowfin stock assessment](#) from 2023 indicated that the interim objective was being achieved, so the **stock is not overfished and not experiencing overfishing**.

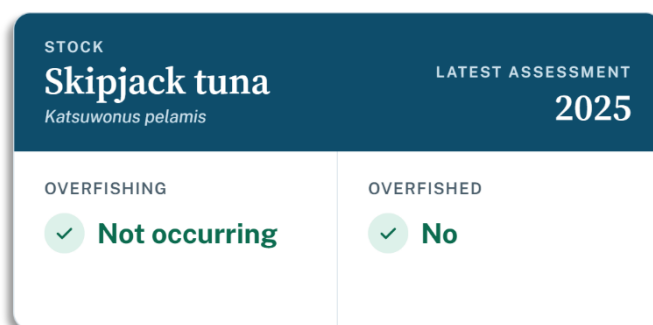
The updated yellowfin tuna stock assessment was presented to SC22, which included three additional years of data through the end of 2024. The updated assessment estimated $SB_{\text{recent}}/SB_{F=0}$ at 0.44, with none of the models in the 48-model uncertainty ensemble falling below the limit reference point of 0.20 or indicating overfishing, which is consistent with the 2023 assessment. Due to unexpected issues during the assessment period that led to delays in the assessment being submitted to SC22, leaving insufficient time for its consideration, SC22 agreed to defer consideration of the updated assessment to SC23 in 2027. In doing so, SC22 provided suggestions to the SSP for further analysis, including for detailed consideration to take place at the 2027 Pre-Assessment Workshop (PAW).

Management of the WCPO yellowfin tuna stock in 2026 continued to be progressed in parallel with bigeye tuna management efforts, including through ongoing consideration of a 'mixed fishery approach', noting that this approach is not officially endorsed by the Commission. Discussions on the bigeye tuna

management procedure in 2026 through the bigeye management workshops have included consideration of its implications on management of yellowfin tuna, and this will be considered at WCPFC23 under [Agenda Item 11.3 Mixed Fishery Considerations](#).

Skipjack Tuna

The interim objective for skipjack tuna in [CMM 2025-02](#) is to maintain the spawning biomass of skipjack tuna on average at a level consistent with the target reference point (TRP) contained in [CMM 2025-03](#) (interim skipjack MP). The interim skipjack MP was first applied in 2024, and the [2025 skipjack stock assessment](#) estimates the stock is, on average, at ~98% of the (re-calibrated) TRP, with an 80% interval of 0.94 – 1.01, which sits within the performance range envisaged for the interim skipjack MP. That indicates the **spawning biomass is being maintained, on average, at a level consistent with the TRP**, per the stated objective.



The skipjack management procedure contained in CMM 2025-03, was also amended at WCPFC22 to accommodate the three-year skipjack stock assessment cycle and ensure that the MP would not be run in the same year as the assessment. SC22 reviewed available information and agreed that there is no information preventing the implementation of the skipjack MP. The latest figures for skipjack catch in the WCPO indicated that the 2025 level (1,668,409mt) was lower than in the previous year (2,060,984), but continued to dominate the overall tuna catch in the WCPFC Convention Area (64% of total).

Implementation of the reduced FAD closure periods of 1.5 months for purse seine vessels operating in-zone and on the high seas, and the additional period of one month for high seas, only, continued in 2026 under CMM 2025-02.

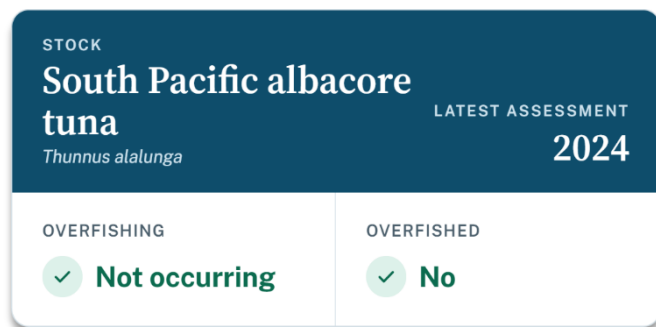
SOUTH PACIFIC ALBACORE TUNA

The Commission’s management framework for South Pacific albacore tuna is contained in [CMM 2015-02](#), which sets a limit on the number of fishing vessels actively fishing for South Pacific albacore in the WCPFC Convention Area south of 20°S. This limit applies to most non-SIDS CCMs and is not to exceed 2005 or recent historical (2000-2004) levels. The CMM also requires annual catch reports in addition to reporting on the number of vessels actively fishing for South Pacific albacore in the Convention Area south of 20°S.

To address a long-standing question on when a vessel should be considered to be “actively fishing for” South Pacific albacore, the Commission at WCPFC20 agreed that this would apply to vessels fishing south of 20°S with an annual catch of albacore in that area with the South Pacific albacore proportion being greater than 50% of the catch of other potential target tuna (albacore, yellowfin and bigeye, southern bluefin, skipjack) and swordfish.

The adoption of a management procedure for South Pacific albacore at WCPFC22 in 2025 marked a significant advancement in WCPFC’s management of this stock. That decision was complemented by the Commission’s agreement to establish a joint working group with the Inter-American Tropical Tuna

Commission (IATTC) on the management of South Pacific albacore tuna (SPAJWG), marking an important milestone in WCPFC's cooperation with its partner organization in the Eastern Pacific.



South Pacific Albacore Tuna

Following a decision at WCPFC22 to convene an allocation workshop in 2026 to progress implementation of the South Pacific albacore management procedure, a workshop was held in Wellington, New Zealand, in late June 2026. At the time of writing, a second workshop will convene virtually on 22 October 2026.

Key outcomes from the first South Pacific albacore allocation workshop ([SPAA01](#)) included the timeline for what available data will be used, acknowledgement that the implementation measure should remain aligned with the management procedure's catch-based output, and agreement that flexibility mechanisms such as transferability form part of the implementation CMM.

[SPAA02](#) will further consider outstanding issues and aim to narrow the issues and options for progressing implementation of the MP, which will be reported to the Commission at WCPFC23 for discussion.

SC22 reviewed the results of the first successful run of the South Pacific albacore management procedure and in accordance with CMM 2025-01, advised the Commission that the output of the management procedure was 56,096 mt. This output is applicable to longline and troll fisheries operating south of 10°S in the WCPFC-CA, excluding the EEZs of Tokelau and Tuvalu.

SC22 and TCC22 reviewed the proposed South Pacific albacore monitoring strategy and agreed that no modifications to the proposed monitoring strategy table are necessary at this time. SC22 further agreed that there is no information preventing the implementation of the South Pacific albacore management procedure (SPALB MP).

Work under SC Project 129 on age-length data stream for tuna stock assessments is underway for South Pacific albacore and priorities for Phase 2 of the project includes expanded otolith sampling and reference datasets for South Pacific albacore. Project P100d applying Close Kin Mark-Recapture techniques to the South Pacific albacore stock is also ongoing. In addition, an updated stock assessment for South Pacific albacore is scheduled for 2027.

At WCPFC23, the Commission will consider the adoption of implementing arrangements for the South Pacific management procedure under [Agenda Item 11.1 South Pacific albacore](#).

WCPFC NORTHERN STOCKS

The Northern Committee's 2026 work program⁶ focused on reviewing the latest science and information on members' compliance with obligations relating to North Pacific albacore tuna and Pacific bluefin tuna.

⁶ See Attachment D of [NC21 Summary Report](#).

The Northern Committee also tasked itself to review the workplan for swordfish management strategy evaluation, review application of the seabird measure in the northern area and sea turtle mitigation research, and measure the effectiveness of measures for NP albacore, Pacific bluefin, and swordfish.

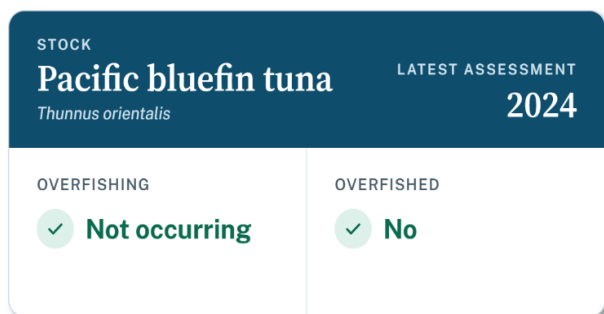
The [22nd Regular Annual Session of the Northern Committee](#) (NC22) met in Nagasaki, Japan from 13-14 July 2026. Consistent with recent years, NC22 was preceded by a meeting of the joint working group on Pacific bluefin tuna (PBFJWG) between the NC and the IATTC. The 11th PBFJWG met from 8-11 July 2026 and considered a PBF management procedure, which was considered further at NC22 but not adopted. At a second session of the 11th PBFJWG that took place in an [intersessional virtual session](#) on 18 August 2026, participants agreed to recommend a draft CMM to be forwarded to the Northern Committee to resolve outstanding allocation issues and finalize the CMM, consistent with the interim MP.⁷

Another session of NC22 (NC22-2) will convene virtually on 11 November 2026 to consider the recommended CMM from PBFJWG11, noting that a [Resolution](#) was adopted by the IATTC at their 104th Annual Session in September.

The three stocks managed by the Northern Committee are considered in more detail in the following paragraphs. Scientific support to the Northern Committee is provided by the [International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean](#) (ISC) and consideration of northern stocks under the purview of the Northern Committee will take place under [Agenda Item 7 Status of Stocks](#) and [Agenda Item 9.1 Report of the 22nd Regular Session of the Northern Committee \(NC22\)](#).

Pacific Bluefin Tuna

Pacific bluefin tuna stocks showed remarkable recovery in recent years, meeting the Commission's second rebuilding target well ahead of schedule. The most recent stock assessment was the [2024 benchmark stock assessment](#), which presented updated stock projection results that confirmed that rebuilding is progressing and although some uncertainty in recruitment variability remained, recovery in 2026 has continued on a positive trajectory.



NC22 received updates from ISC on a peer reviewed PBF stock assessment which pointed to support for continued improvement of assessment methods, noting that a stock assessment is scheduled for 2027.

Based on the latest assessment in 2024, the following stock status for PBF remains:⁸

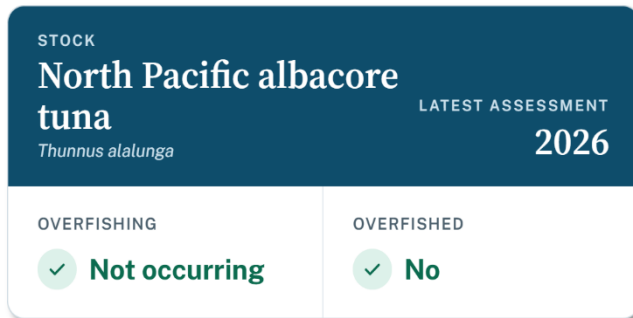
- *No biomass-based limit or target reference points have been adopted for PBF, but the PBF stock is **not overfished relative to 20%SSB_{F=0}**, which has been adopted as a biomass-based reference point for some other tuna species by the IATTC and WCPFC. SSB of PBF reached its initial rebuilding target ($SSB_{MED} = 6.3\%SSB_{F=0}$) in 2017, seven years earlier than originally anticipated by the RFMOs, and its second rebuilding target (20%SSB_{F=0}) in 2021.*

⁷ See paragraph 27 of the [Chairs' Summary](#) of the 11th PBFJWG – Second Session.

⁸ See page 62 of [Report of the Twenty-Sixth Meeting of the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-Like Species in the North Pacific Ocean](#).

- *No fishing mortality-based reference points have been adopted for PBF by the IATTC and WCPFC. The recent (2020-2022) $F\%SPR$ is estimated to be 23.6% and thus the **PBF stock is not subject to overfishing relative to some of the F-based reference points proposed for tuna species, including $F20\%SPR$.***

NC members also continued discussions at the 7th CDS Technical Meeting on the development of an electronic catch documentation scheme for Pacific bluefin tuna (ePBCD) and progressed a draft CMM in addition to technical specifications for a system that will be jointly managed by IATTC and WCPFC.



North Pacific Albacore Tuna

The North Pacific albacore tuna stock is managed through [WCPFC Harvest Strategy \(HS\) 2023-01](#), with a compatible harvest strategy in effect for the Eastern Pacific Ocean under IATTC [Resolution C-23-02](#). HS 2023-01 establishes the following three management objectives, noting that to the extent practicable, management

changes (e.g., catch and/or effort) should be relatively gradual between years:

- Maintain Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) above the Limit Reference Point (LRP), with a probability of at least 80% over the next 10 years
- Maintain depletion of total biomass around historical (2006-2015) average depletion over the next 10 years.
- Maintain fishing intensity (F) at or below the target reference point with a probability of at least 50% over the next 10 years.

HS 2023-01 also includes target ($F45\%SPR$), threshold ($30\%SSB_{current, F=0}$), and limit ($14\%SSB_{current, F=0}$) reference points, where the threshold and limit reference points fluctuate with changes in recruitment.

The ISC conducted a [benchmark stock assessment for North Pacific albacore](#) in 2026. In relation to the three reference points (target, threshold, limit), the status of the North Pacific albacore stock is as follows:

- *The stock is virtually certain (>99%) not to be overfished relative to the threshold ($30\%SSB_{current, F=0}$) and limit ($14\%SSB_{current, F=0}$) reference points adopted by the WCPFC and IATTC, and*
- *The stock is virtually certain (>99%) to be not experiencing overfishing relative to the target reference point ($F45\%SPR$).*

HARVEST STRATEGY WORKPLAN

The [WCPFC Harvest Strategy](#) Workplan identifies tasks for South Pacific albacore, bigeye, and yellowfin in 2026; there are no harvest strategy tasks for skipjack in 2026 (**Table 1**). **Table 2** shows the progress toward adoption of harvest strategy elements for WCPFC tuna stocks and fisheries, and **Table 3** provides additional details about the status of harvest strategy implementation. Any relevant decisions taken by the Commission at WCPFC23 in relation to the tropical tuna stocks covered by CMM 2025-02, and in respect of South Pacific albacore, will be updated in the Workplan.

Table 1. 2026 Harvest Strategy Workplan tasks, including for the Northern Stocks as adopted by the Northern Committee

YEAR	South Pacific Albacore	Skipjack	BigeYE	Yellowfin	Pacific Bluefin NORTHERN COMMITTEE	North Pacific Albacore NORTHERN COMMITTEE
2026	Run management procedure for the first time Monitoring strategy (d) - SC provides advice on the monitoring strategy. - Commission reviews and adopts the monitoring strategy. Commission adopts implementing arrangements for management procedure.	—	Stock assessment Develop management procedures (e) and Management strategy evaluation (f) - SC agree the operating models for MSE. - SC endorses the estimation method. - SC provide advice on performance of candidate management procedures. - SC provides advice on the monitoring strategy. - TCC consider the implications of candidate management procedures. - Commission consider and refine a candidate set of management procedures. Agree Target Reference Point (b) - Commission agree a TRP for bigeye. Commission ADOPT a management procedure.	Stock assessment Develop management procedures (e) and Management strategy evaluation (f) - SC agree the operating models for MSE. - SC provide advice on outcomes under the mixed fishery approach. - Commission consider outcomes under the mixed fishery approach. - SC provides advice on monitoring strategy. Agree Target Reference Point (b) - Commission agree a TRP for yellowfin. Commission adopts the mixed fishery management approach for YFT.	Complete the development of the Harvest Strategy (Task B) - Continue to work to establish LRP, TRP and other elements of harvest strategy. - Recommend any changes to CMM. Complete Task (B) based upon the outcomes of JWG11 in 2026.	Stock assessment (benchmark) Implement the Harvest Strategy (Task B) - Review ISC's advice and consider management measures to further the development of the Harvest Strategy. - Obtain the new assessment results from ISC. Recommend any necessary changes to CMM (Task B(3)).

Table 2. Status of Harvest Strategy Development for Six WCPO Tuna Stocks

Source: SPC for SKJ, SP-ALB, BET and YFT; ISC for PBF and NP-ALB.

ELEMENT	SKIPJACK <i>Tropical purse-seine</i>	SOUTH PACIFIC ALBACORE <i>Southern longline</i>	BIGEYE	YELLOWFIN	PACIFIC BLUEFIN	NORTH PACIFIC ALBACORE
MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES	Adopted	Adopted	Developing	Identified ¹	Identified	Adopted
MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE	Adopted	Adopted	Developing	Not applicable	Identified	Adopted
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	Identified ²	Identified	Identified	Identified ³	Identified	Identified
MONITORING STRATEGY	Adopted	Adopted ⁴	Developing ⁵	Not started	Identified	Adopted
MIXED FISHERY	Developing				Not applicable	Not applicable

Adopted / in place
 In progress
 Not started
 Not applicable

¹ To maintain the yellowfin tuna stock around the average spawning biomass depletion ratio for the period 2012–2015.² “Identified” in the adopted CMM can be noted as “Adopted”.³ BMW02-2026-WP07 explicitly identifies nine performance indicators, although two are not yet available.⁴ Annex III explicitly establishes data requirements and monitoring considerations, while Annex IV establishes procedures for exceptional circumstances. Further refinement may occur during implementation.⁵ Data collection and an estimation method are already part of the proposed MP framework, but broader monitoring arrangements, including exceptional circumstances, still need to be finalized.

Table 3. Status of WCPFC Harvest Strategy Framework

SPECIES	HS ¹ /MP STATUS	IMPLEMENTATION
WCPO skipjack	CMM on a MP for WCPO SKJ adopted in 2025 (CMM 2025-03)	TT CMM (CMM 2025-02)
SP albacore	CMM on a MP for SPA adopted in 2025 (CMM 2025-01)	Scheduled for adoption 2026 Current CMM for SPA: CMM 2015-02
WCPO bigeye	Scheduled for adoption 2026	(TT CMM 2027)
WCPO yellowfin	Scheduled for adoption as part of mixed fishery framework	(TT CMM 2027)
NP albacore	HS for NPA Fisheries adopted in 2022 (HS 2022-01), and updated in 2023 (HS 2023-01)	Not implemented Current CMM for NPA: CMM 2019-03
Pacific bluefin	Potential adoption in 2026 Interim PBF MP (CMM 2026-XX) IATTC Adopted: Resolution C-2026-01	Potential adoption in 2026 CMM for PBF (CMM 2026-XX) IATTC Adopted: Resolution C-2026-02
NP swordfish	HS for NP Swordfish Fisheries (HS 2016-01) adopted in 2016	CMM for NP Swordfish (CMM 2023-03)
SW Pacific swordfish	Very early stages of MP development References: WCPFC22-2025-36 (Rev.02) WCPFC-SC22-2026-MI-WP11	Not implemented Current CMM for Swordfish: CMM 2009-03

¹ **HS for PA Fisheries** includes Management Objectives, Reference Points, Risk Levels, Monitoring Strategy, Harvest Control Rules/Decision Rules, and Other Provisions.

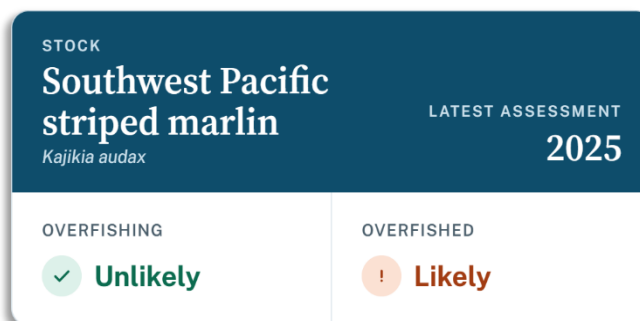
WCPFC BILLFISH STOCKS

The WCPFC conservation and management framework for key billfish species consists of conservation and management measures for Southwest Pacific striped marlin ([CMM 2006-04](#)), South Pacific swordfish ([CMM 2009-03](#)), North Pacific striped marlin ([CMM 2024-06](#)), and North Pacific swordfish ([CMM 2023-03](#)). Catch (and effort) information for each of the billfish stocks is shown in the **Figures** below, followed by summaries of status for each stock and 2026 updates. In addition, SC22 reviewed the results of a 2026 Pacific blue marlin benchmark stock assessment undertaken by the ISC. *Note: WCPFC has not adopted a conservation and management measure for Pacific blue marlin.*

Consideration of WCPFC's conservation and management framework for billfish stocks will occur at WCPFC23 under [Agenda Item 11.4 Review of other CMMs relating to conservation and management of tuna and billfish.](#)

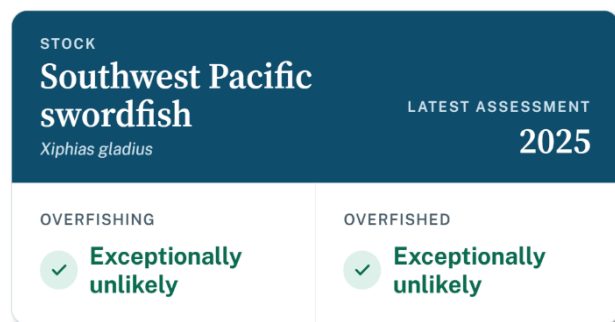
Southwest Pacific Striped Marlin

The conservation and management measure for Southwest Pacific striped marlin is one of the longest standing CMMs of the Commission, with its adoption taking place more than 20 years ago. The CMM recognizes the need to apply a precautionary approach, which at the time of its adoption in 2006, reflected uncertainties in stock status and efforts to avoid moving the stock into an overfished state.



The [latest stock assessment for SW Pacific striped marlin](#) (2024-2025) concluded that the **stock is estimated to be overfished but not undergoing overfishing**, with recent depletion relative to D_{MSY} at 0.77 (95% CI: 0.33 – 2.3) and recent fishing mortality relative to F_{MSY} at 0.77 (95% CI: 0.05 – 1.51). The stock assessment further concluded that there is a 74% probability that the stock is below D_{MSY} and only a 22.9% probability that overfishing is occurring. Importantly, ten-year projections, assuming recent average catch levels, indicate continued recovery, with median D/D_{MSY} projected to reach 1.32 by 2032 and only a 26.05% chance of remaining overfished.

There was no updated or additional information presented to SC22 for consideration.



Southwest Pacific Swordfish

Development of an MSE framework for Southwest Pacific swordfish got underway in 2025, following endorsement by the Commission at WCPFC21 and subsequently by SC21 to progress evaluation of candidate management procedures. With financial support from Australia, French Polynesia, and the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), the SSP is leading MSE development and SC22 considered the

formation of an informal steering committee to support ongoing work.

Key considerations identified by SC22 in the development of SWP swordfish harvest strategy included the need to balance bycatch and target fisheries, addressing discard survival, and the need to separate scientific considerations from management discussions.

There are no agreed reference points for Southwest Pacific swordfish, so the stock is assessed against the default WCPFC reference points (SB/SB_{MSY} and F/F_{MSY}), with additional information. The 2025 assessment indicates the stock is in good condition relative to MSY-based reference points. Although biomass and depletion have declined over time, recent results suggest the female spawning biomass has remained relatively stable in recent years.

The 2026 indicative workplan for development of a SWP swordfish harvest strategy includes consideration by the Commission at WCPFC23 of management objectives, in addition to provision of advice on candidate management procedures for evaluation.

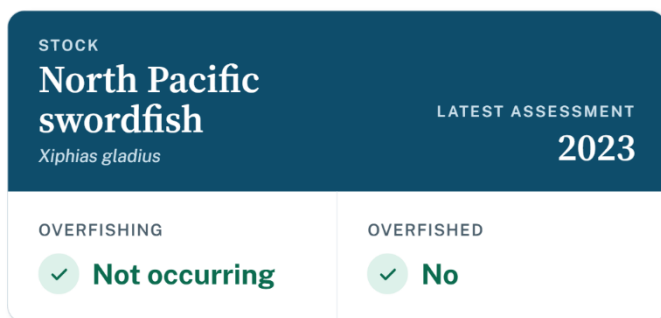
North Pacific Striped Marlin

The ISC conducts the stock assessment for North Pacific striped marlin (NP MLS), and this is reviewed by the Northern Committee and the Scientific Committee.

At WCPFC21, the Commission adopted a revised CMM for NP MLS ([CMM 2024-06](#)) to replace the previous CMM from 2010. The new CMM sets a 2,400-mt total allowable catch (consistent with scientific advice), representing a ~60% cut from the highest catch levels between 2000-2003. An automatic review of the CMM is triggered if the TAC is exceeded. The new CMM also implements transparent bycatch controls by assigning individual limits to five primary CCMs totalling 2,324.8 mt, leaving ~75 mt for other CCMs. An underage reserve lets unused quota carry forward (e.g., 826 mt from 2023 applied to 2025), with access capped at 165 mt to help CCMs meet limits. A new provision requires releasing live MLS to maximize survival once a CCM hits its limit. Finally, the Commission tasked the ISC and Scientific Committee with strengthening stock assessment robustness. The rebuilding plan runs through 2027 pending a new assessment.

At its 2025 meeting, the ISC maintained the stock status advice from the [2023 stock assessment](#) which concluded that when the status of NP MLS is evaluated relative to dynamic 20%SSB_{F=0}-based reference points, the 2020 spawning stock biomass of 1,696 mt is 54% below 20%SSB_{F=0} (3,660 mt) and the 2018-2020 fishing mortality is about 28% above F20%SSB_{F=0}. Therefore, relative to 20%SSB_{F=0}-based reference points, the NP MLS stock is **very likely to be overfished** (>99% probability) and is **likely to be subject to overfishing** (>66% probability).

SC22 called for continued scientific and management attention to the NP MLS stock, expressing concern for its current status, and encouraged further scientific collaboration between ISC and WCPFC on all stocks throughout the Convention Area. NC22 agreed to further consider the CMM at NC23.



North Pacific Swordfish

The Commission adopted its first conservation and management measure for North Pacific swordfish (NP SWO) in 2022, based on a recommended CMM from the 18th Regular Session of the Northern Committee (NC18). In 2023, the Commission adopted proposed amendments from NC19 to require reporting of catches of NP SWO in the Convention Area and

all fishing effort in those fisheries as well as catch and effort across the North Pacific by those CCMs whose fisheries are taking more than 200 metric tons per year of NP SWO. The CMM requires that fishing effort must not increase beyond the 2008–2010 average annual level.

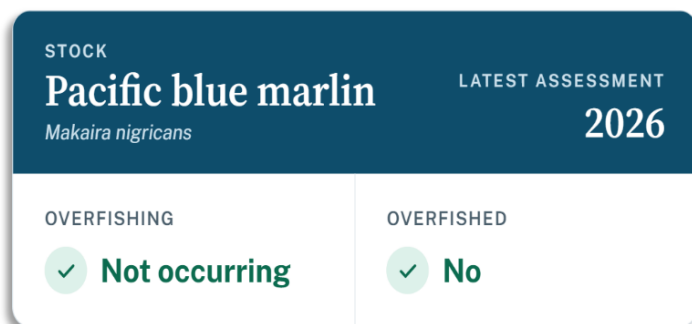
The [latest assessment of NP SWO](#) was conducted by the ISC in 2023 and incorporated data through 2021. The assessment results concluded that overall, total annual catch is declining, CPUE is increasing, and

recruitment is relatively stable. Relative to MSY-based reference points, the assessment further concluded that overfishing is very likely not occurring and the stock is very likely not overfished, with a greater than 99% probability.

NC22 considered candidate inputs for the NP SWO MSE and agreed to finalize these inputs through an intersessional consultation process by WCPFC23, for submission to the ISC in 2027. NC22 confirmed the geographic scope of the MSE, consistent with the 2023 stock assessment, and endorsed the ISC proceeding on this basis. NC22 also endorsed the ISC's proposal to postpone the next stock assessment from 2028 to 2029.

Pacific Blue Marlin

The Pacific blue marlin stock is caught primarily in tropical and sub-tropical waters, distributed across the Pacific Ocean. Most catch of Pacific blue marlin is taken by longline vessels from Chinese Taipei, Japan, and the United States.



The ISC conducted a stock assessment for Pacific blue marlin in 2026, using all available fishery data from ISC Members, the IATTC, and the WCPFC. The base model of the assessment used MSY-based biological reference points and a depletion-based reference point ($20\%SSB_0$), which indicated that under current conditions, the stock was virtually certain to be not overfished and virtually certain to be not subject to overfishing, with a greater than 99% probability.

SC22 reviewed the 2026 assessment for Pacific blue marlin and noted the following management advice provided by ISC26:

- *There is no evidence of fishing mortality exceeding F_{MSY} or substantial depletion in spawning potential or spawning stock biomass relative to MSY level;*
- *The Pacific blue marlin annual removals have been between 13,690–20,400 mt since 2019, corresponding to approximately 53–84% of the MSY catch. The stock may be able to support somewhat higher removals; and*
- *The results show that projected female spawning biomass is expected to increase or remain stable under the F and $F_{30\%SPR}$ and decline toward SSB_{MSY} under the High F and F_{MSY} harvest scenarios. The probability that the stock is overfished or overfishing is occurring by 2034 under each harvest scenario is low.*

SC22 also recognized the importance of Pacific blue marlin to coastal longline and sport fisheries, including for Pacific SIDS, and recommended caution in increasing any future catch. Importantly, SC22 recommended strengthening of North-South Pacific and IATTC collaboration to ensure that management reflects the pan-Pacific nature of the Pacific blue marlin stock.

Scientific Research Projects

In addition to the core services provided by the SSP, nine independent SC projects were endorsed by WCPFC22 for funding support. Progress on these projects is reported in [WCPFC-SC22-2026-GN-IP02](#) (*Intersessional activities of the Scientific Committee*). SC22 also endorsed a list of proposed projects for 2027, together with their terms of reference, as presented in [WCPFC-SC22-2026-GN-WP04 Rev01](#) (*Terms of reference for proposed projects for 2027 – 2029*), which will be further considered at the 20th Finance and Administration Committee (FAC20).

III. Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management (EBFM)

The WCPF Convention acknowledges the duty to consider fishing impacts on the marine environment. This is reflected in the Convention Preamble and in Article 5(d), as follows:

Preambular paragraph 5: Conscious of the need to avoid adverse impacts on the marine environment, preserve biodiversity, maintain the integrity of marine ecosystems and minimize the risk of long-term or irreversible effects of fishing operations.

Article 5(d): assess the impacts of fishing, other human activities and environmental factors on target stocks, non-target species, and species belonging to the same ecosystem or dependent upon or associated with the target stocks.

By accounting for the impacts of fishing on non-target species, habitats, and marine ecosystems, the Commission aims to maintain ecosystem health and resilience while ensuring the sustainable use of fisheries resources. The WCPFC applies EBFM principles by incorporating measures to minimize bycatch, protect vulnerable species, and adapt to environmental changes, such as those driven by climate change, in its conservation and management efforts.

NON-TARGET AND ASSOCIATED OR DEPENDENT SPECIES

The Commission's conservation and management measures (CMMs) for bycatch, or non-target and associated or dependent species (NTADS)⁹, cover seabirds, sea turtles, several shark species¹⁰, mobulid and manta rays, and cetaceans. Collectively, these CMMs focus on minimizing the impact of fishing activities on the marine ecosystem.

The Commission's 2026 intersessional work programme included an informal review of CMM 2018-04 on Sea Turtles, and an informal review of CMM 2017-04 on Marine Pollution. The ongoing intersessional process to develop HSBI voluntary guides involved the updating of the voluntary Bycatch Mitigation Measuring Guide relating to mitigation of seabird bycatch.

Consistent with an SC21 decision to rotate consideration of bycatch measures, SC22 reviewed the CMMs for seabirds (CMM 2025-05) and sea turtles (CMM 2018-04). Further updates are in the sections, below.

⁹ The WCPF Convention uses this term.

¹⁰ Silky, oceanic whitetip, whale shark

SC22 made the following recommendation that built on the acknowledgement by SC21 in relation to expanding longline monitoring coverage levels to support better estimates of bycatch levels interacting with the longline fleet:

SC22 recommended that the TCC and Commission consider options to expand monitoring coverage on longline vessels through human and electronic approaches in the WCPO to improve reporting and so that SC can provide better estimates of bycatch levels and other metrics from these fleets. SC22 noted that coverage of at least 10% of effort would allow for reasonably good estimates of bycatch for frequently caught species, and that higher levels would be necessary for reasonably good estimates for less frequently caught species, especially sea turtles and cetaceans (See paragraph 13 of SC22 Outcomes Document).

Updated information on fisheries interactions with NTADS, as collected through the WCPFC Regional Observer Programme (ROP), is available in the [2026 Annual Report on the Regional Observer Programme](#) submitted to TCC22, noting that data in the report are preliminary.

With the exception of certain shark species, assessments are not undertaken by WCPFC for bycatch species. Interactions between WCPFC-managed fisheries and bycatch species are informed through ROP data, primarily, with additional interaction data provided through vessel logbooks, SciData¹¹ reporting (sharks, cetaceans), high seas boarding and inspection activities, and port state monitoring.

Summaries of the Commission's 2026 activities for each of its managed bycatch species are contained in the following paragraphs. Consideration of WCPFC's conservation and management of NTADS at WCPFC23 will occur under [Agenda Item 12. Review of CMMs Mitigating Impacts of Fishing on Non-Target and Associated or Dependent Species \(NTADS\) in the WCPO.](#)

Seabirds (CMM 2025-05)

At WCPFC22, the Commission adopted a revised conservation and management measure for seabirds, contained in [CMM 2025-05](#). This adoption reflected strong efforts led by New Zealand in 2024 and 2025, together with other FFA members and Japan, to develop a revised CMM that would strengthen seabird mitigation in the area 25°-30°S and minimize the impacts of fishing on vulnerable bird species in the WCPF Convention Area.

SC22 received but did not discuss an [updated assessment](#) of black-footed albatross, and noted that at SC23, seabirds would again be reviewed under the Ecosystem and Bycatch Theme.

Sea turtles (CMM 2018-04)

SC22 reviewed five working papers relating to sea turtles:

- i. A synthesis review of sea turtle interaction processes and mitigation measures that found that large circle hooks and finfish bait cut turtle bycatch rates in shallow-set fisheries but raise shark

¹¹ Officially: [Scientific Data to Be Provided to the Commission.](#)

bycatch rates, and that the evidence for deep-set fisheries is still limited ([WCPFC-SC22-2026-EB-WP06](#)).

- ii. Information that highlighted data limitations resulting in species misidentification, underreporting and inconsistent recording ([WCPFC-SC22-2026-EB-WP07](#)).
- iii. A preliminary analysis of the Hawai'i deep-set fishery that linked higher leatherback interaction probability to certain ocean features, such as SST fronts and eddies, and to certain gear, namely 16/0 circle hooks and monofilament leaders ([WCPFC-SC22-2026-EB-WP08](#)).
- iv. Updates from the informal intersessional review of CMM 2018-04 ([WCPFC-SC22-EB-WP09](#)).
- v. Proposed changes to SciData and ROP data fields to improve reporting of turtle interactions and estimates of post-release survival ([WCPFC-SC22-2026-EB-WP10](#)).

While there was broad support for better science, SC22 expressed caution about new obligations, noting practical implications of new data requirements. In addition, the co-Chairs of the informal intersessional review advised that the work in 2026 had raised more questions than answers and although a proposed revision of CMM 2018-04 had initially been envisioned for consideration at WCPFC23, the co-Chairs indicated that the informal work would shift its focus to further analysis and improved data collection in 2027.

The main recommendations from SC22 focus on joint analysis and data development. SC22 recommended two parallel bycatch risk analyses using joint ROP data:

- a USA-led analysis of leatherback bycatch in WCPO longline fisheries, with results due at SC23;
- a Japan-led analysis using lower-resolution (5°×5° aggregated) data.

SC22 also recommended more work on ways to record the type and amount of gear that remain attached to sea turtles released alive, including animals not brought on board. It noted that this information could also help assess post-release survival for other species.

Mobulids (CMM 2019-05)

Mobulids were considered in 2026 through SC22's review of the WCPFC Sharks Research Plan, which prioritized a project for 2027 focused on data characterization of low information sharks and mobulids.

Sharks (CMM 2025-06)

The WCPFC Shark Research Plan 2021-2030 was reviewed at SC22 and the proposal for a one-year assessment for southwest Pacific blue shark to be delivered to SC23 was ranked as essential. Two projects prioritized for 2027 also include sharks. As a result of SC22's prioritization of its work, SC22 recommended that the review of CMM 2025-06 be deferred until 2028.

Cetaceans (CMM 2024-07)

SC22's consideration of cetacean mitigation measures was limited to recognition of the benefits of increased longline monitoring coverage to the availability of reasonably good estimates of cetacean bycatch. Similar to the review schedule for sharks, SC22 agreed to review cetaceans at SC24 in 2028.

MARINE ENVIRONMENT

The WCPFC's conservation and management measure on marine pollution ([CMM 2017-04](#)) is nearing completion of its two-year informal review, following the Commission's decision at WCPFC21. The review is focused on strengthening the CMM's provisions to mitigate pollution by WCPFC-managed fisheries. On climate change, the WCPFC Climate Change Workplan sets out tasks for each of the subsidiary bodies with a range of actions to support awareness, understanding, and appropriate action when required to both adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change on WCPO fisheries.

Marine Pollution Mitigation

As agreed at WCPFC21, Canada has been leading a two-year intersessional review of [CMM 2017-04](#), following broad support from CCMs for strengthening WCPFC's approach to minimize pollution from fishing activities. The Commission further tasked TCC22 to review a revised CMM that could be adopted at WCPFC23.

SC22 also considered marine pollution mitigation, with a review of information relating to abandoned, lost, or discarded pelagic fishing gear (ALDFG), and recommended that TCC and the Commission consider strengthening observer monitoring of ALDFG across relevant WCPFC longline observer programs, including through electronic reporting and observer training, where appropriate and practical.

In anticipation of the Commission's adoption of a revised marine pollution measure at WCPFC23, SC22 also recommended that the Commission consider scheduling a three-year review period of the new CMM, aligning with the SC's workplan. This recommendation was also supported by TCC22.

As tasked by the Commission, TCC22 reviewed proposed amendments to CMM 2017-04 and formulated recommendations to WCPFC23 relating to GHG emissions and underwater noise, transshipment of waste at sea, and ALDFG and related reporting. The Commission will review the intersessional work and a Delegation Paper from Canada with proposed amendments to CMM 2017-04 under [Agenda Item 10.6 Marine Pollution – Review of CMM 2017-04](#).

Climate Change

In recognition of the threats to WCPO fisheries by climate change, the Commission adopted [Resolution 2019-01](#) in 2019 on the need to incorporate climate change into its fisheries conservation and management discussion. Development of a climate change vulnerability assessment (CCVA) framework in 2025 was jointly funded by the United States and Chinese Taipei, and the results were presented to WCPFC22 for consideration. The Commission decided that rather than continue with development of the CCVA framework, climate considerations should be progressively integrated into existing SC, TCC, and Secretariat processes, using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Other WCPFC22 outcomes included a request to the SSP and Secretariat to explore development of early warning tools to anticipate climate-driven changes, and continuation of integrating of climate considerations into the Commission's scientific and management work, to be guided by ongoing ecosystem and climate indicator development.

2026 Climate Change Workplan

The WCPFC Climate Change Workplan (below) sets out standing tasks for NC, SC, TCC, and the Commission, as well as 2026 taskings. These will be considered at WCPFC23 under [Agenda Item 8](#).

PERIOD	Commission	Northern Committee WITH ISC	Scientific Committee WITH SSP	Technical and Compliance Committee
Standing 2024–2027	Ongoing tasks Integrate climate change - Consider ways to bring climate change into the work of the Commission and subsidiary bodies. - Identify outside climate change resources to support the Commission's work. Vulnerability assessment - Consider information from the CMM Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (2025–202#). Cross-RFMO coordination - Strengthen coordination on climate change, especially with IATTC. - Engage with RFMOs, FAO and their members to build a community of practice ([202#]).	Ongoing tasks ISC coordination - Coordinate with ISC on including climate change advice in management recommendations to NC. Predator-prey impacts - Consider climate impacts on predator-prey interactions and NC tuna stocks. - Feed this into advice to NC and the Commission, and engage with other Pacific fisheries bodies.	Ongoing tasks EAFM and indicators - Continue EAFM work: report cards, climate and ecosystem modelling, essential habitats, and changes in species interactions and overlap. - Agree climate indicators and a process for advising the Commission on them. Data and structure - Improve collection of environmental and climate data. - Consider how the SC structure could support climate work, and report to the Commission. - Project 35b, Pacific Marine Specimen Bank (2024–[27]); 2% annual increase requested). Annual review and advice - Review climate impacts on stocks, ecosystems and fishing under a standing agenda item, including harvest strategies, with advice on gaps. - Coordinate with SPC, ISC and IATTC on climate advice in stock assessments. - Consider vulnerability assessment outcomes for future CMMs. - Test management procedures under climate scenarios in the MSE framework (timing TBD).	Ongoing tasks Vulnerability assessment - Consider its technical outcomes and how to bring climate change into TCC's work. Annual review - Advise the Commission on implementing and complying with CMMs. - Recommend information gaps, analyses and tasks so CMMs support long-term sustainability under Article 10. MSE and climate change - Discuss how to advise the Commission on MSE and climate change (timing TBD).

YEAR	Commission	Northern Committee WITH ISC	Scientific Committee WITH SSP	Technical and Compliance Committee
2026	Annual updates ☐ Receive the Ecosystem and Climate Indicator Report Card. ☐ Receive Secretariat updates on climate change work in other fishery bodies.	—	Indicator validation Indicators - Indicator Validation (2025–2027). - Update and present the annual Ecosystem and Climate Indicator Report Card. SSP projects - Project 120: tropical tuna reproductive biology (2024–26). - Project 123: successor to MULTIFAN-CL (2025–26). - SEAPODYM improvements (2024–27). - Project 42: Pacific tuna tagging (annual). - Projects 117 and 118: tuna and billfish sampling plans (annual). ☐ Further funds required for Indicator Validation and Project 123.	—

IV. Monitoring and Evaluation

In 2026, the Commission's monitoring and evaluation program focused on strengthening the data collection and monitoring systems that underpin Commission objectives and decisions on conservation and management. The main driver is the harvest strategy framework: management procedures are now adopted for skipjack and South Pacific albacore, and procedures for bigeye and yellowfin are in development. These all depend on reliable monitoring data. Much of the 2026 effort took place through five intersessional working groups covering the Regional Observer Programme, electronic reporting and monitoring, port State measures, high seas boarding and inspection, and FAD management. Alongside these were informal reviews of the marine pollution and sea turtle measures. Ecosystem and climate considerations were also maintained, with climate change now a standing agenda item in the subsidiary bodies, and a compilation of catch discard data being considered by SC22 and TCC22.

Externally, the Secretariat has engaged with:

- i. the BBNJ Agreement, which entered into force in January 2026
- ii. data exchange arrangements with CCSBT and IATTC
- iii. FAO port State measures processes
- iv. ISA deep-sea mining planning in the Northwest Pacific

On compliance, the overall picture is a monitoring and control framework that is steadily becoming more automated and integrated, with clear post-COVID recovery. In 2025, high seas boarding and inspections returned to near pre-COVID levels with declining infringement rates. Electronic reporting expanded, especially for transshipment declarations, which now exceed 70%. Purse seine observer coverage is high, and the number of authorized vessels on the Record of Fishing Vessels has stabilized at around 3,100 vessels, well below its 2009 peak.

The persistent weakness is independent verification, particularly for high seas longline operations. Longline observer coverage remains around 5%, while the Scientific Committee has advised that at least 10% is needed for reasonable bycatch estimates. Observer verification of high seas transshipment is weak, and VMS coverage and audit trails are incomplete. Ambiguous wording in some measures, such as "fishing for" a particular stock, also makes compliance hard to assess. Transfers of observer data on potential infringements into the Compliance Case File System remains paused for the third year pending discussions in the ROP-IWG.

To support CCMs with their vessel management obligations, the Secretariat has shifted toward more proactive, year-round support for members rather than relying on the annual reporting cycle. This includes:

- i. earlier reconciliation of reporting gaps and quarterly transshipment checks
- ii. more frequent VMS gap reporting
- iii. database enhancements and new dashboards
- iv. its largest training attachment program to date, where demand now exceeds available funding.

Meetings of the Regional Observer Programme intersessional working group (ROP-IWG), Electronic Reporting and Electronic Monitoring working group (ERandEMIWG), High Seas Boarding and Inspection working group (HSBIWG), and Port States Measures working group (PSMWG) filled the 2026 calendar (refer [Attachment A](#)) with virtual meetings to progress a range of tasks in support of strengthened monitoring and data collection. The FAD Management Options intersessional working group (FAD-MO IWG) continued to work electronically throughout 2026, as well. Further details on 2026 intersessional activities to refine and strengthen WCPFC's monitoring and evaluation framework are set out below.

TCC22 convened in Pohnpei, FSM, from 23 – 29 September 2026 and implemented the WCPFC's 16th year of the Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS). In addition to its annual review of the draft Compliance Monitoring Report (dCMR) and other core compliance monitoring activities, TCC22 considered updated information relating to CCM's implementation of, and compliance with CMMs, and developed technical advice and recommendations to the Commission for its consideration at WCPFC23.

TCC22 was unable to agree on a recommendation for the continuation of the Compliance Monitoring Scheme contained in [CMM 2023-04](#), which expires at the end of 2026. WCPFC23 will consider the continuation of the CMS and under what terms, noting that some CCMs expressed a need to review the CMS to ensure it remains fit for purpose into the future.

Regional Observer Programme

The ROP-IWG met three times in 2026¹², in addition to limited informal discussions during TCC22. The ROP-IWG's 2026 workplan covered finalization of the revised process flow of observer-reported cases into the Compliance Case File System (CCFS), clarification of the scope of monitoring for potential infringements in the CCFS, development of minimum standard data fields for non-catch (non-fish) transfers during transshipment, and ongoing tasks relating to alignment with ER/EM-IWG work, review of transshipment observer data fields, shark species identification, and reporting requirements related to sea turtle mitigation.

TCC22 supported the ROP-IWG continuing to work intersessionally in the lead up to WCPFC23 to finalize the ROP CCFS process flow and other 2026 tasks. The 10th ROP-IWG will take place virtually on 5 November 2026 and discussion will include CCFS Process Flow, Scope of Monitoring into CCFS, and Non-Catch Transshipment Monitoring. The session will also provide an opportunity to consider 2027 taskings.

Electronic Reporting and Electronic Monitoring

The Commission's efforts to progress development of an Electronic Monitoring Program continued to advance in 2026, with three virtual sessions taking place.¹³ Discussions included establishment of a common understanding on primary review authority (flag CCM), with the ROP framework serving as the principal reference. The ERandEMIWG was also able to make progress on development of a Vessel Monitoring Plan (VMP) template, using the IATTC format as a basis, which will serve as an optional reference tool to assist with fleet harmonization across RFMOs. Significant effort has gone into

¹² At the time of writing, the ROP-IWG's third virtual meeting for 2026 is scheduled for 5 November 2026.

¹³ At the time of writing, the ERandEMIWG's third virtual meeting for 2026 is scheduled for 4 November 2026.

development of a draft audit questionnaire and its linkages to applicable Standards, Specifications, and Procedures (SSPs). The questionnaire is complemented by work on an assurance process to review EM video footage while accounting for legal, privacy, and confidentiality requirements.

Interim technical standards are also under consideration in the IWG to incorporate outcomes from the FAO/ISSF-led effort to harmonize EM development across tuna RFMOs, alongside the FFA EM SSPs. A 2027 Workplan will be presented to WCPFC23 for review and adoption. The Commission will also consider a draft CMM to implement a WCPFC Electronic Monitoring Program, which was considered at SC22 and TCC22.

FAD Management

The FAD Management (FADMO IWG) continued to work electronically in 2026. Updates were provided for SC22 consideration and input on the current limit of 350 active dFAD buoys per purse seine vessel and FAD fishery indicators to support ongoing monitoring trends. Further updates were provided to TCC22 relating to satellite buoy data transmission requirements, FAD logbook data fields, including mechanisms for data submission, validation, and alignment with other reporting systems, and the need to avoid duplicate reporting. TCC22 also received updates on the FADMO-IWG's consideration of phased introduction of biodegradable FADs, noting that its effectiveness is dependent on appropriate monitoring and reporting arrangements.

On dFAD deployment in particular, SC22 advised that this could be revisited as part of the anticipated 2027 review of the Tropical Tuna Measure, when updated analysis by SPC of dFAD deployments trends is available. The FADMO-IWG will continue to work intersessionally with a view to providing recommendations to the Commission for consideration at WCPFC23.

High Seas Boarding and Inspection

CCMs met through two virtual sessions in 2026 to continue the Commission's development of voluntary guides to support High Seas Boarding and Inspection (HSBI), with the updating of the bycatch mitigation measurements voluntary guide relating to seabird bycatch mitigation. TCC22 reviewed and recommended the revised voluntary guide for adoption at WCPFC23, building on the adoption of five voluntary regional guides at WCPFC22.

The HSBI WG is expected to continue its work in 2027 on the development of a Crew Labour Standards Inspection Guide, in preparation for the entry into force of the Crew Labour Standards [CMM 2024-04](#) in January 2028.

Port State Measures

The intersessional review of [CMM 2017-02](#) on Minimum Standards for Port State Measures continued in 2026 with one virtual session taking place in April. The session covered the six priority areas: support for SIDS and developing states, including implementation challenges; port entry, arrivals, and denial of access issues; terms of access to Commission data; inspection standards and scope; reporting and data exchange; and integration of other CMM MCS tools.

No further work progressed following the April virtual session and on receiving the update from the PSMWG Chair at TCC22, TCC22 recommended that WCPFC23 continue the intersessional review of CMM 2017-02 in 2027.

Regional partnerships and activities to improve data collection and enforcement

At TCC22, Australia provided a report on [Operation Antares](#), a multilateral MCS operation that took place from 8-24 July 2026 in the high seas of the Convention Area. Australia led the operation in partnership with Naoero, New Zealand, and Solomon Islands. Vanuatu and the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency also provided support. The objective of the operation was to enhance maritime surveillance in the WCPO and monitor compliance with WCPFC CMMs.

Several key observations resulting from the MCS operation were presented for TCC22 consideration: subjective and voluntary reporting requirements in CMM 2018-04 on sea turtles, and reporting requirements and availability of information relating to use of seabird mitigation measures and longline setting activity.

Between May and October 2024, Canada hosted [Operation North Pacific Guard](#) in collaboration with Japan, the Republic of Korea, and the United States. The operation resulted in boardings of 15 high seas fishing vessels and the aerial observation of over 400 fishing vessels, with 11 potential contraventions of WCPFC CMMs arising from 6 WCPFC HSBI events, and 13 potential contraventions of WCPFC CCMs arising from 34 fisheries aerial surveillance missions. All vessels encountered during the operation were targeting highly migratory fish stocks in the WCPFC Convention Area and were duly-authorized on the WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels.

V. Special Requirements of Developing States

Recognition of the special requirements of developing States, particular small island developing States and territories, is a fundamental requirement in the Commission's work. SIDS and territories play an essential role in WCPFC as major resource custodians of shared fish stocks. However, recognition for the roles of SIDS and territories does not diminish the important role of non-SIDS partners in the region. The obligation on the Commission to recognize special requirements falls on all CCMs, each with different roles, notably the assistance provided by non-SIDS through broader donor programs as well as trust funds managed by the Secretariat.

TCC22 centered Article 30 by reviewing a new reporting template in 2026 that seeks to strengthen reporting on capacity needs as articulated by SIDS and territory CCMs, and the available assistance or current activities to address those needs, as informed by non-SIDS. Reporting in 2027 by SIDS and territories is expected to inform non-SIDS on how or whether rendered assistance has responded appropriately to identified needs.

At WCPFC22, Terms of Reference were adopted to guide an Independent Review of the Commission's Implementation of Article 30 of the WCPF Convention. Following a call for Expressions of Interest, three

individuals¹⁴ were selected by CCMs to conduct the independent review and work got underway in July.

A third attempt was made at TCC22 to respond to a Commission tasking to TCC to assess the Commission's compliance with CMM 2013-06 provisions relating to the need to avoid the transfer of disproportionate burden of conservation action onto SIDS and territories. TCC22 considered that further work is needed on developing the assessment criteria and some CCMs are awaiting the output of the Independent Review, which is scheduled for completion at end of June 2027.

West Pacific East Asia Project

The West Pacific East Asia – Sustainable Fisheries Project (WPEA-SFP) supports improved understanding of tuna fisheries in the Pacific Ocean waters of Indonesia, Philippines, and Viet Nam. Approximately 30% of the annual WCPO tuna catches, including about 40% of the total annual yellowfin tuna catch in the WCPO, come from the waters of these three countries. The need for accurate data on catch, effort, and catch composition from this area has been highlighted as a key uncertainty in WCPO stock assessments for years, giving rise to the initiation of the WPEA Project in 2009.

The current phase of the WPEA-SFP began in July 2024 and is funded by the Government of New Zealand through to June 2027. Midway through 2026, the New Zealand Government announced it would provide an additional NZ\$1m to extend the current WPEA project cycle for an additional year, until June 2028.

In 2026, the WPEA-SFP project focused on strengthening the three project countries' ability to prepare and submit their own tuna data to WCPFC. The year began in late January in San Remo, Australia, with the annual Project Working Group meeting, which reviewed progress and began discussing an exit strategy. A brief Data Gaps session (for all three project countries) and an Indonesia port characterization planning meeting were held alongside it. These led to a week-long hands-on Data Gaps Workshop in Sydney in March, run by SPC. There, each country developed R scripts to format its annual catch estimates, submitted them through a test portal that passed validation, and prepared aggregate catch and effort data. Indonesia also had a "train the trainer" operational data workshop in Melbourne, Australia in February, followed by an in-country version in Bogor in April. Philippine and Indonesian representatives attended SPC's Climate Change Indicators and Pre-Assessment workshops in Noumea in March. The project also piloted a new stock assessment mentoring programme, pairing two scientists from each country with SPC mentors and focusing on yellowfin tuna.

At the national level, the Annual Data Workshops were held earlier than usual: Viet Nam in April (Quy Nhon), the Philippines in late May (Palawan), and Indonesia in early June (Bitung, Jakarta and Bogor), Indonesia's earliest to date. Indonesia submitted aggregate catch and effort data as part of its annual data submission for the first time, improving its catch estimation by gear type. The Philippines reported catches up about 14% from 2024, mostly because of a shorter FAD closure, and noted that the project enabled the purchase of port sampling tools and uniforms for its enumerators. For Viet Nam, the most important milestone was signing the long-delayed Implementing Agreement in March, which restored enumerator support in 10 provinces after data collection fell off in 2025.

¹⁴ Barbara Hanchard, Quentin Hanich, and Hussain Sinan.

In late July, a high-level engagement meeting took place with Vietnamese officials in Nha Trang, and an NSAP eDGES refresher training for the Philippines took place in October.

WCPFC's continued support for the WPEA project reflects an ongoing interest in ensuring that the best available scientific data is available to underpin WCPFC's conservation and management decisions. Likewise, the participation by Indonesia, Philippines, and Viet Nam demonstrates their strong commitment to contributing to robust assessments of tuna stocks in the WCPO.

SIDS capacity building activities in 2026

In 2026, the WCPFC Secretariat's main support to members was delivered through an Attachment Programme that entailed eight fisheries officials spending two weeks at the Secretariat for hands-on training. The Attachment Programme was held 13–24 April 2026 and was the largest so far, with officials attending from the Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Fiji, and Vanuatu. The programme was timed just before the annual reporting cycle to support participants with completing reporting obligations as part of their attachment. The programme drew on staff across the Secretariat to train participants on WCPFC systems and obligations, including management of CCM vessels on the Record of Fishing Vessels, VMS, the compliance monitoring scheme and annual reporting, inspections, transshipment, and port state measures. Each CCM delegation also had dedicated sessions on its own priorities. Demand exceeded the budget, so some participants needed to explore other funding, and one late request could not be accommodated. Beyond the programme, the Secretariat ran familiarization sessions on its systems for a range of members and kept updating its Helpdesk guides. It also began moving production of training materials, including videos, in-house to save subscription costs.

VI. Governance and Institutional Developments

Governance and institutional structures enable effective decision-making, implementation, and enforcement within the WCPFC. They ensure transparent, fair operations that consider the interests of CCMs and stakeholders. SC22 repeated discussions from SC21 relating to increasing capacity challenges faced by the SSP in conducting stock assessments in a timely manner that allows for sufficient review and input by CCMs. This prompted greater focus on prioritization of SC's work to ensure that CCMs are fulfilling the committee's functions and providing the required advice and recommendations to inform Commission decision-making.

Scientific Services

For at least the last four years, the SSP has faced challenges relating to timely submission of stock assessments to allow for CCMs adequate time to review and provide feedback on key inputs. Reasons for the challenges include timing of availability of data to incorporate into the assessments and increasing workload demands on SPC stock assessment scientists to deliver those assessments based on member requests. Following consideration and a recommendation by SC19, the Commission at WCPFC20 (2023) agreed to increase the scientific services budget to support an additional full-time assessment scientist to address the workload capacity challenges, but key agreement on an earlier data submission deadline have thus far proved difficult.

The issue reached a critical point in 2026 when the SSP encountered technical issues with the bigeye and yellowfin stock assessments that prevented on-time submission ahead of SC22, resulting in SC22's deferment of consideration of the yellowfin stock assessment to 2027. Ensuring space within the assessment preparation period to cater for unforeseen issues remains an important issue for the Commission.

Separate discussions at SC22 on prioritization of SC's work resulted in an agreed three-year process to hold prioritization discussions with the stock assessment schedule discussed at SC22, the harvest strategy workplan slated for discussion at SC23 (2027), and reviews of CMMs related to the Ecosystem and Bycatch theme scheduled for prioritization discussions at SC24 (2028). Additional taskings to the Secretariat to provide information on the CMM obligations requiring SC advice and when, as well as information on implications for swapping the SC and Commission meeting schedule are expected to inform further discussion on timing issues.

Communications and Media

The Secretariat continued to increase its in-house capacity to manage consistent media and communication in 2026, with more Secretariat staff contributing to the development of media products. The Secretariat published two newsletters¹⁵ between January and September 2026, and another newsletter is planned for late October 2026. In addition, regular posts to social media platforms, [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#), throughout 2026 has resulted in increased visibility on WCPFC's work, evidenced by the growth in "followers" and user interaction with posts.

On 23 June 2026, online global development publication, Devex¹⁶, published an OpEd by the WCPFC Executive Director entitled "[Will the High Seas Treaty use our decades of Pacific fishing data?](#)" The crux of the piece was to highlight the decades of WCPFC experience in management of high seas fisheries and the valuable contribution that this experience represents to the goals of the BBNJ Agreement. Later, on 19 August 2026, the Secretariat published a "[A Conversation Between Leaders](#)" that featured a Q&A between the WCPFC Executive Director and the President of the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF) on harvest strategies.

The Secretariat continues to identify opportunities to share information about WCPFC's work and ensure that information about WCPFC's contributions to sustainable fisheries management is available and contributing to the global ocean governance conversation.

Information and Network Security Governance Framework

The Secretariat continued its efforts in 2026 to strengthen its network and information security framework and ensure that critical data housed in Secretariat on-site and cloud-based servers is secure. The Secretariat delivered regular cybersecurity awareness trainings to staff throughout the year as well as conducted "penetration" testing to identify key vulnerabilities and opportunities to improve WCPFC's information security posture.

¹⁵ Accessible from the [homepage of the WCPFC website](#).

¹⁶ <https://pages.devex.com/about-devex>

In mid-2026, the Secretariat initiated a comprehensive review of its entire IT framework. The purpose was to take stock of the Secretariat’s IT “ecosystem” with a view to ensuring that it remains fit-for-purpose, appropriately addresses vulnerabilities, and is forward-looking to manage and mitigate known risks to WCPFC’s data and information management infrastructure. At the time of writing, the output of the review is still being considered, and further updates will be reported to TCC23.

VII. International Cooperation

INTERNATIONAL OCEAN GOVERNANCE ACTIVITIES IN 2026

The Secretariat provided mid-year updates on international ocean governance activities with relevance to WCPFC in [Circular 2026/66](#), dated 20 July 2026, and additional updates relevant to TCC at TCC22 in the [Executive Director’s Annual Report on Technical and Compliance Matters](#). Brief summaries of key relevant 2026 activities are as follows:

i. [FAO Common Oceans Tuna Project – MSE workshop](#) | Rome, Italy, January 2026

Organized by ICCAT, the workshop was the second of three technical workshops aimed at strengthening collaboration and harmonization among tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (tRFMOs). A principal outcome of the workshop was the collaborative development of a consolidated set of recommendations for tRFMO MSE design, implementation, and communication. The recommendations covered governance and process design, management objectives and performance indicators, science-management dialogue, communication of uncertainty, scientific capacity, data and exceptional circumstances, climate change and non-stationarity, and cross- RFMO collaboration.

ii. [BBNJ PrepCom3 | New York, USA – March/April 2026](#)

PrepCom3 continued discussions on arrangements for implementation of the BBNJ Agreement, which entered into force on 17 January 2026. The first Conference of the Parties is confirmed to take place at United Nations Headquarters from 11-22 January 2026. The tuna RFMO Secretariats have been coordinating efforts to ensure that their respective mandates are well understood by BBNJ Parties in discussions relating to cooperative mechanisms between BBNJ and regional fishery bodies.

iii. [EU Forum on BBNJ | Brussels, Belgium, June 2026](#)

The European Bureau of Conservation and Development convened a High-Level Conference to advance discussions among relevant stakeholders on how the BBNJ Agreement can work alongside existing ocean governance frameworks.

iv. [UNFSA ICSP19 | WCPFC written submission](#)

ICSP19 focused on the topic, “The implications of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction for sustainable fisheries and the role of regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements in this respect”. The Secretariat made a written submission to the Conference, outlining the critical role of RFMOs and Arrangements in implementing the BBNJ Agreement.

- v. [International Seabed Authority \(ISA\) - North Pacific REMP Workshop | Busan, Korea, May 2026](#)

The workshop brought together 30 invited experts to advance development of a regional environmental management framework for deep-sea mineral activities in the Northwest Pacific, focusing on the design of Areas of Particular Environmental Interest (APEIs), region-specific objectives, non-spatial management measures, environmental monitoring, ecological connectivity, climate change, cumulative impacts, and future research priorities. The REMP area overlaps with the WCPFC Convention Area.

- vi. [Kiribati National Ocean Summit \(Te Wa\) | Tarawa, Kiribati, May 2026](#)

Kiribati officially released the 2025 annual report of the Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources and the *Ara Marawa Policy 2026 to 2031* at its national summit, with international partners and other regional agencies in attendance. The Summit also provided an opportunity for the Secretariat to hold discussions with Kiribati on WCPFC-related matters, including capacity-building initiatives.

- vii. [Melanesian Ocean Summit | Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, May 2026](#)

In 2026, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Fiji, and Solomon Islands agreed to formally establish the Melanesian Ocean Corridor of Reserves (MOCOR), a transboundary marine protected area that spans territorial waters of the four island nations.

- viii. [Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System \(FIRMS\) Partnership signing | June 2026](#)

Following a recommendation of SC21 and subsequent adoption by the Commission at WCPFC22, the Secretariat formally joined the FIRMS Partnership in 2026, becoming the last of the five tuna RFMOs to join. Partnership provides opportunities to ensure WCPFCs fisheries management efforts are accurately reflected in global publications maintained by the FAO. As directed by SC21, partnership does not add additional reporting or technical burdens to WCPFC CCMs.

- ix. [10th Anniversary of the FAO Port States Measures Agreement \(PSMA\), Technical Working Group on Information Exchange, and the Global Record Working Group – June 2026](#)

The Republic of Korea hosted a technical working group on information exchange alongside the 10th anniversary of the FAO PSMA, recognizing international collaboration toward strengthening operational tools in support of PSMA implementation.

- x. [11th Our Oceans Conference, Mombasa, Kenya – June 2026](#)

OOC11 was hosted by Kenya under the theme, “Our Ocean, Our Heritage, Our Future”. The main areas of action at OOC11 were: Marine Protected Areas, Sustainable Fisheries, Marine Pollution, Sustainable Blue Economy, Climate Change, and Maritime Security, where 51 commitments totalling US\$1.75 billion were made under the Sustainable Fisheries theme.

Further updates will be provided to WCPFC23 for consideration under [Agenda Item 16. Cooperation with Other Organizations and International Ocean Governance Issues](#).

COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

The Secretariat continued efforts in 2026 to implement the Commission tasking to exchange high seas transshipment information with relevant RFMOs. The initial focus has been on IATTC and CCSBT, noting the shared nature of the organizations as well as proximity of respective Convention Areas to WCPFC. Data sharing with IATTC is becoming increasingly important in light of the establishment of the Joint

Working Group on Management of South Pacific Albacore (SPAJWG) as well as ongoing efforts to align management in the WCPFC-IATTC Overlap Area.

TCC22 recommended that WCPFC23 task the Secretariat with setting up a two-way exchange of southern bluefin tuna transshipment data with CCSBT, within existing confidentiality rules. The exchange would start once CCSBT agrees, and any expansion would need approval from both Commissions. The Secretariat was also tasked to pursue similar data-sharing arrangements with NPFC and IATTC and report progress to TCC23 and WCPFC24.

VIII. Financial Overview

The WCPFC's annual budget covers a broad range of operational and programmatic activities essential for the Commission's mandate to manage and conserve highly migratory fish stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. Key components of the budget include funding for scientific research and stock assessments, which guide management decisions, as well as compliance monitoring systems like the VMS and the ROP. Additionally, the budget supports capacity-building initiatives, particularly for SIDS and participating territories, and covers the administrative costs of the Secretariat, including hosting annual meetings, facilitating intersessional work, and maintaining critical databases and reporting systems. A significant number of voluntary contributions from members and non-governmental organizations that target specific projects or initiatives help supplement the Commission's work. Overall, the budget ensures that the Commission can effectively carry out its conservation and management responsibilities across the region.

2026 Budget (all figures in USD)

At its 2025 annual session, the Commission agreed to a **2026 budget of \$10,305,543** for the General Account Fund. Member contributions comprised \$9,684,257, of which \$6,942,960 has been collected at the time of writing, including outstanding balances from previous fiscal years. The total expenditure for 2026 is estimated to be \$9,910,710 from the General Account Fund.

Further details on the 2026 budget are found in the working paper for the 20th Regular Session of the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC20), *Proposed Budget for the Commission's Work Programme for 2027 and Indicative Budgets for 2028 and 2029* (FAC20-2026-06).

Voluntary contributions

Voluntary contributions continue to play an important role in supplementing the WCPFC's annual budget, providing additional financial support beyond member contributions. These contributions help advance key areas of the Commission's work, including scientific research, capacity building, and technical assistance, including support to SIDS. **Table 4** contains information on 2026 voluntary contributions. A total of **\$1,688,695** was received from CCMs and non-government organizations toward Commission activities, including contributions to the Special Requirements Fund.

Table 4: Voluntary contributions received from members toward Commission activities in 2026.

Member/Organization	Contribution Amount (USD)	Purpose
Australia	\$67,330	Support for Project 21X03 Southwest Pacific Swordfish
	\$70,090	Support WCPFC to deliver Commission meetings
China	\$30,000	Special Requirements Fund
French Polynesia	\$60,000	Support for Project 21X03 Southwest Pacific Swordfish
FSM	\$5,000	TCC22 hosting
Japan	\$145,082	Japanese Trust Fund
Korea	\$132,555	Pacific Tuna Tagging Project
New Zealand	\$562,670	1-year extension of WPEA project
Chinese Taipei	\$400,000	Funding for the Chinese Taipei Trust Fund. \$400,000 to be provided each year for a total of five years.
USA	\$30,000	Special Requirements Fund
	\$60,000	Support continued development of the OPAL Assessment Platform
Marine Stewardship Council	\$65,968	Support for project 21X03 Southwest Pacific Swordfish
PEW with the Ocean Foundation	\$10,000	Support Special Session of the Scientific Committee in Port Vila, Vanuatu
Westpac	\$50,000	Support travel to the Second Bigeye Management Workshop in Honolulu, Hawaii
TOTAL	\$1,688,695	

IX. Looking Ahead

WCPFC closes out another year of significant intersessional work focused on advancing its harvest strategy framework and refining its monitoring and evaluation program, with key decisions expected at WCPFC23. Transitioning to harvest strategies over the past decade has required dedicated and consistent effort by all CCMs, with strong support from service providers and external stakeholders, to modernize WCPFCs management framework.

Climate change and shifting stocks will continue to test this framework, as new and updated information informs management discussions each year. Expected shifts in tuna distribution and migration patterns will require early planning to support the stakeholders whose livelihoods are likely to be most adversely affected.

Scientific uncertainty and data gaps in the Other Fisheries of southeast Asia remain a concern for the Commission. This underscores the importance of the West Pacific-East Asia (WPEA) Project and its implications for the bigeye and yellowfin stock assessments. Continued support for WPEA Project participants will be essential to improving the scientific information available on these two key tuna stocks.

With management procedures now adopted for three tuna stocks (skipjack, South Pacific albacore, and North Pacific albacore) and two additional (bigeye and Pacific bluefin) being considered at WCPFC23, allocation of catch and effort presents further challenges for the Commission. The Convention sets out clear criteria on which to base allocation decisions, but negotiating equitable outcomes is difficult when members' interests span such a diverse range of needs and expectations.

Many CCMs continue to highlight high seas management and transshipment as major issues requiring greater attention. Competing views, some calling for increased monitoring of high seas transshipment and others for an outright ban, have made it difficult for CCMs to agree on a way forward that meets the full range of interests.

Limited independent monitoring of high seas longline fishing continues to constrain the data available for these fisheries, including for purposes of monitoring compliance with and implementation of obligations. This gap restricts WCPFC's ability to build on its strong data foundation and increase its understanding of key fisheries. TCC22 discussed options for improving independent monitoring of high seas longline fishing and agreed to the importance of the Commission transitioning to electronic catch and effort reporting to improve data availability of these fisheries.

Related to this is the Science Committee's repeated call at SC22 for increased longline vessel monitoring to inform efforts to mitigate bycatch interactions as well as marine pollution, including in relation to abandoned, lost, or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG), which is recognized as a growing issue by certain CCMs in the WCPF Convention Area.

The changing ocean governance landscape also presents new questions for WCPFC, including following the entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement in January 2026. These include how overlapping mandates will be managed, and how the Agreement's provisions on the duty to cooperate with relevant fisheries bodies will be operationalized in ways that respect established high seas mandates. Similarly, growing deep-sea mining exploration in the WCPF Convention Area will require WCPFC to closely monitor these activities and their potential impacts on the region's tuna fisheries.

WCPFC-managed tuna stocks currently sit within sustainable limits. While this is a significant achievement, it can also remove the sense of urgency that comes with depleted stocks or overfishing, making it harder to build momentum for difficult decisions. The Commission's challenge is to maintain the momentum, acting proactively to safeguard the health of the stocks rather than waiting for a crisis to force action.

Market-based sustainability programs will continue to shape how WCPFC's work is recognized beyond the Commission. Third-party programs such as the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch remain important to supply chain relationships and market confidence in WCPO fisheries. The growing number of WCPO tuna fisheries undergoing MSC assessment or achieving certification, and the continued use of Seafood Watch ratings in key markets, reflect sustained market interest in the Commission's progress, including its advancing harvest strategies for South Pacific albacore and other key stocks and its commitment to science-based management and ecosystem approaches as the impacts of climate change become increasingly evident.

These programs recognize the strong sustainability performance of individual fisheries and the progress made in implementing harvest strategies, while also identifying areas for continued improvement. Recent assessments have pointed to opportunities to reduce impacts from fish aggregating devices (FADs), strengthen bycatch mitigation in longline fisheries, and expand electronic monitoring coverage. Looking ahead to 2027, the Commission has clear opportunities to support CCMs in applying the best available science to navigate this evolving sustainability landscape, build on existing progress, and secure long-term benefits for fisheries and coastal communities.

As global awareness increasingly connects ocean health to positive planetary outcomes, and as international developments relating to climate change and marine protected areas place new pressures on commercial fisheries, WCPFC has a clear opportunity to position itself as a global leader in sustainable and ethical fisheries management. The entry into force in 2028 of WCPFC's conservation and management measure on crew labour standards ([CMM 2024-04](#)) is an important opportunity for WCPFC to lead by example, demonstrating that responsible fisheries management encompasses not only the health of the stocks but also the safety, welfare, and dignity of the people who work in them. Building on its achievements to date, WCPFC is well placed to meet the challenges ahead and to continue to show what effective regional cooperation can deliver.

Attachment A. WCPFC 2026 Meeting Calendar

#	Meeting/Workshop	Dates	Mode/Venue	Chair(s)/Lead(s)
1	Third Interessional IATTC-WCPFC NC Joint Working Group Meeting on PBF Management JWG103-00	11–13 March	California, USA Hybrid	Masanori Miyahara (Japan) Josh Madeira (USA)
2	First WCPFC and IATTC Joint Working Group on the Management of South Pacific Albacore Tuna Fisheries SPAJWG01	18–19 March	Online	Mat Kertesz (Australia) Guillermo Morán Velásquez (Ecuador)
3	8th Regional Observer Programme Interessional Working Group ROPIWG08	1 April	Online	Lucas Tarapik (PNG)
4	8th meeting of the WCPFC E-reporting and E-monitoring Interessional Working Group ERandEMIWG8	2 April	Online	Lesley Hawn (USA)
5	First informal interessional meeting for the review of CMM 2018-04 Sea Turtles STIIWG01	8–10 April	Online	Yonat Swimmer (USA) Emily Crigler (USA)
6	Third Meeting of the Port State Measures Working Group PSMWG03	15 April	Online	Meli Raicebe (Fiji)
7	Fourth Meeting of HSBI WG HSBIWG04	16 April	Online	David Power (Australia)
8	First Bigeye Management Workshop BMW01	20–21 May	Online	Emily Crigler (USA)
9	9th Regional Observer Programme Interessional Working Group ROPIWG09	3 June	Online	Lucas Tarapik (PNG)
10	9th E-reporting and E-monitoring Interessional Working Group ERandEMIWG9	16 June	Online	Lesley Hawn (USA)
11	First South Pacific Albacore Allocation Workshop SPAA01	25–26 June	Wellington, New Zealand Hybrid	Wez Norris (Australia)
12	Eleventh Joint IATTC-NC Working Group Meeting on PBF Management PBFJWG11	8–11 July	Nagasaki, Japan Hybrid	Masanori Miyahara (Japan) Josh Madeira (USA)
13	22nd Regular Session of the Northern Committee NC22	13–14 July	Nagasaki, Japan Hybrid	Masanori Miyahara (Japan)
14	Fifth Meeting of HSBI WG HSBIWG05	21 July	Online	David Power (Australia)
15	22nd Regular Session of the Scientific Committee SC22	11–19 August	Apia, Samoa Hybrid	Emily Crigler (USA)
16	Eleventh Joint IATTC-NC Working Group Meeting on PBF Management – Second Session PBFJWG11-2	18 August	Online	Masanori Miyahara (Japan) Josh Madeira (USA)
17	22nd Regular Session of the Technical and Compliance Committee TCC22	23–29 September	Pohnpei, FSM Hybrid	Ilkang Na (Korea)
18	Second Bigeye Management Workshop BMW02	1–2 October	Honolulu, Hawaii Hybrid	Emily Crigler (USA)
19	Second South Pacific Albacore Allocation Workshop SPAA02	22 October	Online	Wez Norris (Australia)
20	10th E-reporting and E-monitoring Interessional Working Group ERandEMIWG10	4 November	Online	Lesley Hawn (USA)
21	10th Regional Observer Programme Interessional Working Group ROPIWG10	5 November	Online	Lucas Tarapik (PNG)
22	22nd Northern Committee, second session NC22-2	11 November	Online	Masanori Miyahara (Japan)
23	Special Session of the Scientific Committee SSSC	27–28 November	Port Vila, Vanuatu Hybrid	Emily Crigler (USA)
24	20th Finance and Administration Committee FAC20	29 November – 5 December	Port Vila, Vanuatu Hybrid	Putuh Suadela (Indonesia) Liman Helgenberger (FSM)
25	23rd Regular Session of the Commission WCPFC23	30 November – 5 December	Port Vila, Vanuatu Hybrid	Josie Tamate (Niue)

Attachment B. Secretariat Updates

The Secretariat's work in 2026 was organized around the Commission's active meeting schedule, and anchored in the WCPF Convention, WCPFC CMMs, and relevant Commission decisions and taskings. Secretariat staff restructuring in 2024 and 2025, complemented by sustained effort and investment in staff professional growth allowed for broader engagement across the Secretariat in supporting the Commission's intersessional work in 2026. Strategic planning that began in late 2025 and continued into the 2nd quarter of 2026 further strengthened the Secretariat's preparations to ensure its readiness to meet expectations of the Commission's 2026 work program.

Staff Development

The Secretariat places a high priority on continuous learning and skills development, ensuring that the Commission is strongly supported by a Secretariat that is adaptable, modern, and relevant to the needs of the organization. The Secretariat staff have participated in a range of skills and knowledge training, including the use of AI, project management, leadership, and general administrative and communication skills.

In late May, all Secretariat staff took part in a Futures Workshop that explored different future scenarios that might affect the organization, challenging staff to think about their preparedness for expected changes as informed by available data and trends. Following the Workshop, the Secretariat established a 'Futures Group' composed of senior Support Staff who were tasked with increasing staff participation in decision-making on Secretariat systems and processes. This Group has demonstrated a strong commitment to delivering direct improvements to CCMs through building on existing competencies and the identification of system, process, and training gaps.

All Secretariat staff continue to participate in ongoing cybersecurity awareness training, a necessary requirement for an organization that is operating primarily in a digital environment.

Host Government Relations and Community Engagement

The Secretariat maintained good working relationships with the FSM National Government and Pohnpei State Government in 2026. On the 2026 World Tuna Day, the Secretariat secured an opportunity to meet with the Pohnpei Governor and his Cabinet to share information about WCPFC and its role in supporting FSM fisheries. This engagement led to the Governor signing an Executive Proclamation 26-04 to declare 2 May 2026 World Tuna Day in Pohnpei, Micronesia. The proclamation encourages all sectors of the community to come together in celebrating the cultural, economic, and social importance of tuna while strengthening a shared commitment to preserving this valuable resource for future generations.

Secretariat staff also delivered an awareness presentation to the FSM College of Micronesia's Marine Science class, adding to the list of Pohnpei-based schools that have received information briefings on WCPFC's work. Community awareness activities are complemented by the Secretariat's social media activities, particularly on Facebook.

The Secretariat again welcomed visiting students from Japan on two occasions in 2026, as well as elementary classes from the nearby public school on World Tuna Day.

The Commission's Community Outreach budget supported contributions to the Rotary Club scholarships fund, local sports fishing competitions, local sporting events, and the FSM's annual national tourism and trade expo. The Secretariat also donated used furniture to the Pohnpei State government. The Secretariat continued to make the Annex facility available to several local groups and organizations.

Other Secretariat Activities

The Secretariat engaged in the following international activities in 2026:

- i. FAO Common Oceans Tuna Project (COTP) – MSE development in RFMOs
- ii. Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) Regional Information Management System workshop and MCS Working Group
- iii. United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA) 19th Informal Consultation of States Parties (ICSP19) (written submission)
- iv. 3rd session of the BBNJ Agreement Preparatory Conference
- v. Annual Forum Fisheries Committee and associated workshops on Article 30 and BBNJ Agreement
- vi. 104th Regular Session of the IATTC (IATTC104)
- vii. High-Level Conference: Navigating the RFMO-BBNJ Interface – Dialogue on Cooperation and Coherence
- viii. INFOFISH 2026 Tuna Trade and Industry Conference
- ix. Management Procedures in Tuna RFMOs - Emerging Science, Policy and Implementation Practice
- x. Asia-Pacific Ocean Week - Support of the Effective Implementation of the BBNJ Agreement in the Asia-Pacific region
- xi. Regional Workshop on Introducing Decent Working Conditions in the Fisheries Sector
- xii. Workshop on the development of a regional guideline and template for abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG) reporting in Southeast and South Asia