



TENTH REGULAR SESSION
CAIRNS, AUSTRALIA
2-6 December 2013

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ON THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION DURING 2013**

WCPFC10-2013-09
18 October 2013

ISSUE: Annual Report of the Secretariat.

This paper reports on the Secretariat activities during 2013. Operational issues were reported to the TCC in paper WCPFC-TCC9 2013-08.

KEY OUTCOMES

1. WCPFC financial accounts for 2012 have been responsibly managed and this is reflected in the unqualified accounts from the Auditors.
2. The Secretariat continues to work actively with the local community so that they better understand the role and contribution that the Commission makes in Pohnpei. The ability to be able to fund small community programs and initiatives has been very useful.
3. The Secretariat has worked closely with the FAO and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the other Tuna regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) to finalise the GEF Program for areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) focusing on tuna fisheries.
4. The West Pacific East Asia (WPEA) GEF project on data collection, review of policy, legal and institutional arrangements and development of tuna management plan are continuing to run smoothly, with the second round of the program expected to be funded in 2014.
5. The Secretariat continues to maintain the Commission buildings and surrounds in good condition.
6. 2012 saw the recruitment of ‘Ana Taholo from Tonga and the Secretariat has advertised for a shark specialist position under the GEF funding to commence early 2014.
7. Successful delivery of Annual Report Part 2 online reporting facility that improved the timeliness and completeness of CCM annual reporting of 2012 activities. This was coupled with the development of a capability for CCM draft Compliance Monitoring Reports to be generated by the Secretariat on the WCPFC internal Information Management System network.
8. The ED House was completed within the budget allocated by the Commission and will provide very suitable accommodation for EDs in the years to come.
9. Housing which has been an issue in the past for Commission staff is improving with long term leases being taken on 2 new houses and we continue to look to improve our portfolio.

1. Introduction

In response to Rule 13 of the Commission's Rules of Procedure, which requires the Executive Director to make a report to the Commission at its regular session on the work of the Commission, this paper summarises the main activities of the Commission during 2013. During this period the work of the Commission included:

- a) conduct of the Commission Tenth Regular Session and the Ninth Regular Sessions of the Commission's subsidiary bodies, Scientific Committee (SC), Northern Committee (NC), Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC) and the seventh session of the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC) to be convened in association with WCPFC10; and working group meetings including Working Group on Tropical Tunas (WG-TT), Catch Documentation Scheme Intersessional Working Group (CDS-IWG), and a second Management Objectives Workshop prior to WCPFC10.
- b) continuing engagement and consultation with other organisations including the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), SPC-OFP, the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Living Marine resources (CCAMLR) the Northern Pacific Anadromous Fisheries Commission (NPAFC) and the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT), including through participation in the informal network of secretariats for tuna-focussed RFMOs (t-RFMOs; www.tuna-org.org) and the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC). In 2013 the Commission was represented at the IATTC Annual meeting, the ICCAT annual meeting, FFA MCS Working Group, Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Committee Officials Annual Meeting, and the Pacific islands Forum leaders meeting.
- c) continuing efforts to establish logistic and administrative support functions at the office of the Secretariat, securing acceptable housing for staff, and the recruitment of the assistant Compliance Manager.
- d) ongoing work by the Secretariat to improve the Commission buildings and the general site;
- e) engagement with the other t-RFMOs the GEF and the FAO to finalise the GEF program for "areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) focusing on tuna fisheries.

2. Work of the Commission's Subsidiary Bodies

Scientific Committee

The Ninth Regular Session of the Scientific Committee (SC9) took place at Pohnpei FSM, 6-14 August 2013. Ludwig Kumoru from PNG chaired the meeting.

A full record of the meeting is available on the website and the outcomes and recommendations will be discussed at WCPFC10.

Northern Committee

The Ninth Regular Session of the Northern Committee (NC9) took place at Fukuoka, Japan, 2-5 September 2013. Masanori Miyahara (Japan) chaired the meeting.

A full record of the NC9 discussion is available on the Commission website and will be discussed following presentation at WCPFC10.

Technical and Compliance Committee

The Ninth Regular Session of the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC9) was held at Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia from 25 September to 1 October 2013. The meeting was chaired by Ms Rhea Moss-Christian from FSM and over 160 participants representing CCMs and observers attended the meeting.

Once finalised, a full report from TCC9 will be available on the WCPFC website. The Provisional CMR documentation is available on the secure side of the WCPFC website. The recommendations will be discussed in full at WCPFC10.

Finance and Administration Committee

The Seventh Finance and Administration Committee (FAC7), chaired by Moses Amos from Vanuatu will meet just prior to, and throughout, WCPFC10, as necessary. In addition to personnel, work programme and budget matters, the FAC considers a range of administrative matters relating to the work of the Commission including issues associated with the headquarters office, the implementation of the Secretariat's Business Plan and progress with the finalisation of a Strategic Plan for the Commission.

ROP-TAG

The ROP-TAG reported to the TCC on the outcomes of its work and these will be discussed at WCPFC10 under TCC issues.

CDS IWG

The CDS IWG met after TCC under Chair Alois Kinol of PNG and has developed a work program to move its work forward, this will be reported to WCPFC10 under TCC issues.

Working Group on Tropical Tunas

The WG-TT met in Tokyo under the WCPFC Chair, Dr Charles Karnella. The outcomes will be discussed at WCPFC10.

3. Secretariat Activities

Secretariat administrative and establishment matters

Recruitment of Secretariat staff

The total Secretariat staffing level is 22 staff positions. There are 9 professional staff and 13 support staff. Staff recruited this year includes 'Ana Taholo from Tonga to the new Assistant Compliance Manager Position. This year we added 4 data entry position that now work out of the Commission office.

IT systems

This year we have continued to improve the IT system and have installed the SAN and virtualized our servers. This has proved us with a far better network for us, and meant that we were successfully able to support CCM online reporting of Annual Report Part 2, and generation within the Secretariat of online reporting. The only issue is capacity as we develop further online IMS programs, but we can add to this system at a reasonable cost.

The corporate network at Pohnpei again logged a full year of operational stability with more than 99% system availability. WCPFC moved the VMS backup to the Pohnpei site and this is working but with some initial issues around the SAN that have now been resolved. A new and improved website was launched in August 2013.

Financial and administrative arrangements

Financial and administrative arrangements operated satisfactorily during the year with the continued use of QuickBooks Enterprise as the Commissions financial management system. Management of the headquarters building services and grounds continues to be a challenge; however, by implementing a regular maintenance schedule the buildings are now in good repair and the grounds landscaping completed. The cost of improving the electrical system for the building is in the FAC papers and we need to look at long term air conditioning solutions.

Annual Accounts and Contributions

The 2012 financial statements were completed, audited and made available through Commission's website within the specified time frames, together with the External Auditor's Reports. The Auditor reported that the statements and accounts complied with the required accounting standards as well as the Commission's Financial Regulations, and presented a fair view of the financial position.

Article 18 (3) of the Convention provides that if a member's contributions are in arrears for the preceding two full years it shall not participate in the taking of decisions by the Commission, subject to the Commission permitting such a member to vote. Currently there is one member who is in arrears for the previous two (2) years.

New Bank Accounts

No new bank accounts were opened this year.

Headquarters Agreement

There have been no issues with the headquarters agreement. Provision of an access road to the Pohnpei Peace Corps has not occurred, however this does not in any way hinder the work of the Commission and understanding local infrastructure and financial issues for the Pohnpei and FSM governments the Secretariat will continue to work with these parties to resolve the issue at some point in the future.

Executive Directors Housing

WCPFC8 approved funding to upgrade a property to house the Executive Directors of the Commission. I am pleased to advise that we have been able to undertake the upgrade work within the approved budget and I moved into the house in January of this year.

4. Contracts and Consultancies during 2013

Commission's Science Services Provider, the SPC-OFP

The SPC-OFP continued in the role of conducting data management, statistical analysis, stock assessment and related analytical services, management analyses and CMM performance monitoring, and other advisory and technical services. In 2013, the SPC-OFP engaged in improving stock assessments in line with recommendations from the report of the Peer Review of the 2011 bigeye tuna stock assessment; completed stock assessments for South Pacific swordfish, silky shark and a collaborative assessment with ISC on North Pacific blue shark. SPC-OFP also reviewed data, but did not conduct an assessment on South Pacific blue shark. SPC-OFP provided 33 papers, reports and data summaries for the SC9, mostly related with assigned science services. SPC-OFP also provided a broad area of other advice services for the Secretariat's inter-sessional activities, notably including support for the data collection in East Asian countries through WPEA Project and support for the scientific elements of the WCPFC Management Objectives Workshop.

Other contracts and consultancies

Commission-related activities

- Legal advisory services: International Fisheries and Marine Law (Professor Martin Tsamenyi, University of Wollongong, Australia);
- Rapporteur: Dr Shelley Clarke and Geoff Williams;
- Auditing of the Commission's financial statements and IT system was conducted by Deloitte & Touche, Inc, Guam.
- The Commission's public website is covered by an SLA with Eighty Options of Tasmania, Australia which provides for technical support and hosting;
- Taz-e of Australia continues to work with the Secretariat to develop the Commission IMS. In addition, an SLA with Taz-e provides specialist technical support to the Compliance IMS and Record of Fishing Vessels (RFV) applications. These are necessary given the mission-critical nature of these systems and their importance to the work of the Commission;
- The Secretariat also has an SLA with BMC of Pohnpei, Micronesia, for the technical support of the corporate network;
- Mark Farrell visited the Secretariat to review the IT systems and provide strategic advice on contingency planning.
- Prof Martin Tsamenyi assisted the Compliance Manager with running an in-house staff training on International Fisheries Law, and we were able to include a couple of participants from FSM and RMI in the week training.
- A facilitator Ian Cartwright and two experts Robin Allen and Jim Ianelli were engaged to support the MOW
- Steve Dunn and Ian Knuckey were contracted through a joint project with SPC, to produce a report for the Commission on e-reporting and e-monitoring initiatives.

SC-related activities

- (Project 14) West Pacific East Asia Project: Continue data collection in Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam through WPEA Project and prepare the second phase of GEF-WPEA Project;
- (Project 35) Refinement of bigeye parameters Pacific-wide: SC9 reviewed the progress of the project and recommended continuation in 2014 (SPC-OFP). Grant application to the EU for additional funding in support of this project;
- (Project 42) Pacific-wide tagging project: The steering committee met during SC9 and reported at SC9;
- (Project 57) Research related to the development to of limit reference points for the key target species in the WCPFC – paper presented to SC9 (SPC-OFP);
- (Project 60) Purse Seine Species Composition (SPC-OFP): Review of the final project report and associated peer review studies by SC9, who made recommendations for refinement of procedures through further research at no cost to the WCPFC;

- Project (69) Improvement of the MultiFan Catch at Length model, in line with the recommendations of the independent peer review of the bigeye 2011 stock assessment (SPC-OFP). Two-year project progress report to SC9;
- Project (70) Improvement of stock assessments in line with recommendations from the report of the Peer Review for the 2011 Bigeye Tuna Stock Assessment (SPC-OFP). Three-year project progress report to SC9;
- (Project BMIS) Development of Bycatch Mitigation Information System: Report to SC9 on database maintenance and improvements; and
- Management Objectives Workshop (MOW) process: Draft strawman document presented to SC9 for comments. Current phase of the process to be completed with MOW2 in November and presentation of strawman and project report to the Commission at WCPFC10.

TCC-related activities

- Finalisation of the by-catch mitigation database (SPC-OFP);
- The Commission has a SLA with the FFA for the provision of VMS services to the Commission through Absolute, and subsequent contracts with Satcom/Vizada, Satcom/Iridium and CLS Argos for air time. VMS (FFA/Absolute)
- The VMS data integrity audit was combined with a security audit of the IMS, RFV procedures (Deloitte).
- To date good progress has been made on the planned developments in 2013 – 2014 of the proposed new modules for the WCPFC IMS, against the stated objectives for the proposed work for 2013-2015 (from FAC6-2012-16). The development of the in-house Compliance Monitoring Scheme reporting system was larger and more complex than originally anticipated, but was given highest priority in the IMS developments. This meant that the work was nonetheless completed in time to allow the Secretariat to successfully meet the 2013 deadlines for delivery of both the Annual Report Part 2 online reporting system and the circulation of preliminary draft Compliance Monitoring Reports to CCMs. In accordance with the proposal approved by WCPFC9, further work is planned in 2014 to continue to improve the capability of the Secretariat to provide integrated MCS reporting and analysis for TCC/WCPFC and other requests.
- WCPFC received assistance from the United States in the form of a software tool that will assist with examining WCPFC VMS data to identify incidents when fishing vessels are in close proximity to a carrier (as an indicator of possible transshipment activity).

In addition to the meetings of subsidiary bodies of the Commission, the Secretariat participated in the following meetings and workshops during 2013.

- The Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting, Republic of Marshall Islands
- FFC MCS Working Group, Honiara, Solomon Islands
- Annual FFC Committee, Honiara Solomon Islands
- FFA VMS Tender Panel meetings (Cook Islands, Honolulu)
- VMS SLA at TCC9 Pohnpei,
- VMS training in Taipei and Manila, MTU inspection training for VMS Manager in Brisbane and Japan,
- Observer training (Philippines, Kiribati Taipei)
- Observer programme Audits in Australia,
- Management Objectives Expert Panel Meeting, Hawaii, Honolulu
- IT discussions with SPC, Noumea, New Caledonia
- SLA Agreement Taz-E Pohnpei
- ISC13, Busan, Korea
- SPC Pre-Assessment Workshop, Noumea, New Caledonia
- WPEA Project related meetings and workshops in Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam

- Tuna Congress, General Santos, Philippines
- ISSF meeting on Compliance, Maui, Hawaii
- ISSF Workshop on Reference Points, San Diego
- International Fisheries Observer and Monitoring Conference, Chile.

5. Relations with other organisations

Regular dialogue was maintained with the ICCAT, CCAMLR, IOTC and CCSBT to share information and exchange views on areas of common interest. The Consolidated List of Authorised Fishing Vessels (CLAV) operates between the five tRFMOs and the Secretariat remains ready to provide monthly updates. Other organisations with which productive relations were maintained throughout the year included the Western Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Council, the Agreement for the Conservation of Albatross and Petrels (ACAP), FAO, and Birdlife International.

IATTC remains one of our key relationships and the ED and the Compliance Manager have worked to build this relationship throughout the year and have met in Honolulu with IATTC. The Finance and Administration Manager attended the Annual IATTC session in July, and the Compliance Manager will attend the Annual ICCAT meetings in November.

6 Future Work of the Commission

This year's Commission deliberations will consolidate the Secretariat tasks associated with implementing outcomes from SC9, TCC9 and the WCPFC10 meeting, with a focus on the Compliance with Conservation Measures, continued development of the supporting IMS, follow-up of the WCPFC Performance Review and ongoing improvements to Observer and VMS programs.

In addition to these tasks, the Secretariat has responsibility for the Commission headquarters in Pohnpei and will continue to ensure that the headquarters buildings and grounds are kept in good working order through a regular maintenance schedule for both buildings and grounds.

The Commission has benefited greatly from the internship program this year and will continue to accommodate interns from member countries and from Universities as appropriate.