



**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
SEVENTH REGULAR SESSION**

Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia
9-17 August 2011

INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

WCPFC-SC7-2011/GN-IP-01

I. Science Services from SPC-OFP

1. The Commission, in December 2005, signed an MOU with the Commission's Science Services Provider (SPC-OFP) to provide science and data management services; this MOU has been refined annually to accommodate a schedule of work for each calendar year (Annex I of the MOU). In 2009, the Commission and the SPC agreed to revise the MOU to provide for a three-year arrangement as directed by the Commission. The three-year MOU applies through 2012 and will be reviewed again at WCPFC9 in December 2012. The components of 2011 services in Annex I include:

- Data management, statistical analyses and related services
 - Data Management
 - Compilation of catch and effort estimates
 - Data dissemination
 - Technical / policy advice
 - Support of other data-related projects of the Commission
- Stock assessment and related analytical services
 - Target species stock assessments and auxiliary analyses
 - Implementation of the shark research plan
 - Model development and refinement
- Management analyses and CMM performance monitoring
 - Conservation and Management Measure performance monitoring
 - Analyses to support development of Conservation and Management Measures
- Other advisory and technical services

2. In addition to producing 40 papers, reports or data summaries for SC7 and providing *ad hoc* advice and support throughout the year, the SPC-OFP i) assisted the West Pacific East Asia Oceanic Fisheries Management Project, funded by Global Environment Facility and other donors, by participating in the maintenance and refinement of data collection in Indonesia, Philippines, and Vietnam, including assisting various workshops on port sampling, logbook system, training of database manager, etc.; ii) convened Preparatory Stock Assessment Workshop for the WCPO stocks, iii) conducted the Pacific Tuna Tagging Project (PTTP) and coordinated PTTP Steering Committee Meeting; and assisted various Kobe meeting issues.

II. SC6 Summary Report

3. The Secretariat published electronic and hard copy of the 2010 Commission and its subsidiary meetings, including the 6th Scientific Committee Summary Report.

III. Cooperation with other organizations

4. The Secretariat was represented at the following science-related meetings during the last 12 months:

- WCPFC stock assessment preparatory workshop, 4-8 April 2011, Noumea, New Caledonia;
- The 11th ISC and its Working Group meetings, 14-25 July 2011, San Francisco, USA;
- WPEA OFM Project related meetings, October-November in 2010, and April and July in 2011.

IV. Western Pacific East Asia Oceanic Fisheries Management Project

5. Collection of reliable fishery data in the West Pacific East Asian area is a priority concern of the Commission's science. Catch production in Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam waters was estimated to be around 20-25% of the total tuna catch in the WCPO. Through the West Pacific East Asia Oceanic Fisheries Management Project (WPEA), biological and landing data, collected from port sampling of the three countries by around 70 hired enumerators, were submitted to SPC-OFP. Once a year, data collection procedures and databases were reviewed and audited by the Commission's Data Manager Peter Williams (SPC-OFP). To build country capacity on science, WPEA also supported participation of the three countries' data managers and stock assessment scientists in an annual Tuna Data Workshop and Stock Assessment Workshop hosted by SPC. For operational data collection, a logbook system was initiated in each country, and observer programmes were partially implemented in Philippines and Vietnam. To strengthen legal and managerial area of tuna fisheries, consultancy contracts were made to investigate gaps between national policy, legal and institutional arrangements and WCPFC requirements (the WCPFC Convention and conservation and management measures). Researches were conducted to review and strengthen national tuna fisheries association activities of each country, and to draft national tuna management plans for review by relevant government staff and industry representatives. International experts were involved in each consultancy activity. In early 2011, the WPEA team identified about 15 individual project activities per country for 2011, where most of the activities were carried over from the previous year to produce more solid outputs.

V. Japanese Trust Fund Project

6. Eleven project applications were received for 2011, with 10 projects selected for funding support from the Japanese Trust Fund. Projects approved for funding support include those from SPC, PNG, Fiji, Philippines, Indonesia, Samoa, RMI, Tonga and WPEA. A total of USD 424,593 will be funded for these projects. This year (2011) is the final of the five-year JTF support. Dr Ziro Suzuki will convene his last JTF Steering Committee meeting during SC7.

VI. Other Work Programme Activities

7. Other SC work programmes conducted in 2011 include:

- 1) (Project 14) Formulation of the WPEA OFM annual work plan for 2011 and implementation of the activities – Progress will be reviewed at the 2nd Project Steering Committee meeting on Saturday, 13 August 2011;

- 2) (Project 19,34,55) FAD bycatch mitigation research funded by PNG: David Itano will provide a progress report on this research at SC7.
- 3) (Project 35) Refinement of bigeye parameters Pacific-wide – SC7 will review the final pilot project report to determine the priority for the extension of this research to Pacific-wide;
- 4) (Project 39) Regional study of the stock structure and life-history characteristics of South Pacific albacore – SC7 will review the final project report of this three year project;
- 5) (Project 42) Pacific-wide tagging project: Tag recovery is one of the most important steps in a several million-dollar tagging project and in 2011, this project fund supported to a locally-based Tag Recovery Officer in Pohnpei;
- 6) (Project 57) Identifying Provisional Limit Reference Points for the key target species in the WCPFC: The four tasks identified at SC5 were conducted by CSIRO and SPC-OFP, which will be considered at SC7;
- 7) (Project 60) Purse Seine Species Composition: SC7 will review the final outputs of the three-year project activities;
- 8) (Project 61) NP striped marlin assessment: As requested by the Commission (Para 101, WCPFC7 Report), SPC-OFP participated in the ISC's Data preparation WS for the NP striped marlin stock assessment in January and May 2011;
- 9) (Project 64) Collation of South Pacific striped marlin data and CPUE analysis: New Zealand will provide provisional research outcomes at SC7;
- 10) (Project BMIS) Development of Bycatch Mitigation Information System: All database will be updated and BMIS manual will be developed by January 2012;
- 11) Unobligated budget of USD 30,000 is secured for any further research after SC7, including the extension of LRP project.