



**COMMISSION
FOURTEENTH REGULAR SESSION**
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STRATEGIC PLAN

**WCPFC14-2017-27
31 October 2017**

Paper by the WCPFC Secretariat

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to seek guidance of the Commission on how to pursue further the development of a Strategic Plan for the Commission and its Secretariat.

Background

2. The Commission at its WCPFC13 meeting in 2016 considered a proposed draft Strategic Plan that was developed through a process that was agreed at the WCPFC12 meeting in 2015. A copy of that draft Strategic Plan is provided as *Attachment 1* for ease of reference.

3. At WCPFC12, the Commission considered a proposal by the Secretariat for a process to review the current planning framework and suggested a multi-tier planning framework that includes a long term, high level strategic plan; a shorter-term corporate (or business) plan; and the annual work programme. The process agreed and pursued included the engagement of independent consultants to facilitate the process which involved broad consultations with members and stakeholders; development of draft plans for consultative purposes; convening of a two-day workshop; and producing a final draft Strategic Plan for consideration at WCPFC13. The process was structured in response to the criticisms of the former strategic plan namely the lack of ownership by members and stakeholders; that it was Secretariat driven; and it lacked high level strategic guidance.

4. The proposal was approved by the Commission, except that the budget sought to develop the plan was \$69,500 was reduced to \$39,500 by the Commission. Working within the confines of the budget the consultations initially envisaged was severely curtailed and as a result the consultants necessarily resorted to skype and phone consultations and questionnaires instead of visiting headquarters and attending key meetings for face to face consultations with members and stakeholders.

5. The members of the Commission when they considered the proposed draft Strategic Plan at WCPFC13 welcomed the exercise to develop a plan but observed some difficulties with the proposed Strategic Plan. The difficulties observed included:

- a) the plan didn't include the difficult issues for the Commission and was not drafted in a way that suggested solutions to those problems;
- b) anything beyond the scope of the WCPFC Convention will not be supported;
- c) the process didn't cater for the SIDS interests;
- d) the draft plan did not provide a viable way forward due to major policy differences amongst members;
- e) FFA CCMs articulated their high priority strategic issues;
- f) the plan was missing some of the members issues of great concern; and
- g) the plan should be done by members not consultants.

6. At WCPFC13, the Commission ultimately noted the draft plan submitted and tasked the Secretariat to work with interested CCMs and Observers to further refine the draft Strategic Plan and to initiate development of the Corporate Plan.

Key issues for consideration

7. The observations and comments shared at WCPFC13 were not easy to reconcile in a refinement of the draft Strategic Plan. The mix of views did raise questions in the Secretariat's mind about whether there is an appetite amongst the membership to pursue the development of a strategic plan for the Commission and whether it is an issue worth investing time and resources in it in light of other pressing commitments.

8. Although there was no intersessional process launched in 2017 to progress the draft Strategic Plan, the Executive Director had some informal conversations on the issue of the utility for a strategic plan for the Commission and received some mixed observations. They include concerns that there are far more pressing priorities at the moment than considering a strategic plan; the WCPFC convention is sufficient to guide the work of the Commission and there was no obvious need for such a plan; seeking agreement on high level strategic priorities for the Commission is not feasible; and prioritizing priorities is a futile exercise because every member desires to have their priorities reflected which defeats the very rationale for a strategic planning exercise.

9. When the Secretariat initially presented the case to the Commission for a strategic plan the following points were emphasized:

- a) The WCPFC Convention remains the foundational document for the Commission and the strategic plan is not designed to renegotiate the Convention but must remain consistent with and subservient to the Convention;
- b) The strategic plan is a corporate planning document designed to assist:
 - organize better the affairs of the Commission and the Secretariat by setting clear time-bound achievable objectives;
 - allocate more efficiently and effectively Commission resources according to identified priorities; and
 - in leveraging the sourcing of external resources to support the work of the Commission;
- c) At the core of strategic planning is rationalizing and prioritizing priorities and being realistic that with finite resources not all priorities can be pursued and achieved at the same time. When a priority is not included in the plan it does not mean it ceases to be

a priority, it simply means that it is not as immediate as the others in term of the timeline for their implementation;

- d) The plan is a living document and is subject to ongoing review and updating to account for new developments and innovations; and
- e) The plan must be owned by members and stakeholders and therefore the process to develop the plan is as important as, if not more than, the substance of the plan.

10. Reflecting on the key points that underpinned the case for a strategic plan, and the views that members had expressed, the Secretariat had serious reservations about the utility of progressing the refinement of the draft Strategic Plan or initiating the development of a Corporate Plan, through a intersessional process with limited members participation. With other pressing priorities for the Commission that were pursued through intersessional processes throughout 2017 the Secretariat opted not to engage interested members in another intersessional process about progressing the strategic plan. More importantly, the Secretariat felt that clearer guidance may be required from the Commission on a more robust, inclusive and participatory process to pursue the further development of a strategic plan.

11. Before the discussions focus on the details and structure of a more robust process to develop the plan, it is suggested that the Commission must firstly have a frank and honest dialogue on whether the Commission needs a strategic plan and is there an appetite to pursue the development of such a plan.

12. If the Commission determines that under the current circumstances developing a plan is not a priority, then the Commission will simply continue to function and organize its affairs without such a plan.

13. However, if the Commission reaffirms its support for the development of a strategic plan then the Commission must consider a robust process to progress further the development of the strategic plan that respond to the criticisms levelled at the process agreed to develop the draft plan considered at WCPFC13 namely:

- a) it didn't cater for the interests of SIDS; and
- b) the plan must be done by members not consultants.

14. Taking into account the criticisms of the last process, a possible terms of reference for the new process to further develop the Strategic Plan may include the following:

- a) the Commission to select two member countries (Lead CCMs) one from the FFA CCMs and the other from the non-FFA CCMs to lead the process to further develop the strategic plan with support from the Secretariat;
- b) the Lead CCMs to undertake consultations with all CCMs and stakeholders, taking advantage of meetings attended by many CCMs;
- c) the Commission to agree on a 1 or 2 days intersessional meeting to progress the development of the strategic plan;
- d) The Lead CCMs to report back to WCPFC15; and
- e) The Commission to approve an appropriate budget to support the process to further develop the strategic plan.

Recommendation

15. The Commission is invited to consider the issues relating to progressing further the development of the Strategic Plan for the Commission and decide:

- a) on whether or not to support the further development of the Strategic Plan; and
- b) if the decision in a) above is in the affirmative, to decide on the process to support the further development of the Strategic Plan including possible term of reference in paragraph 14.



**TO ALL COMMISSION MEMBERS, COOPERATING NON-MEMBERS,
PARTICIPATING TERRITORIES AND OBSERVERS**

**Circular No.: 2016/65
Date: 16 November 2016
No. pages: 7**

Strategic Plan for WCPFC

Dear All,

Further to Circular No. 2016/59 dated 17th October, 2016 I enclose for your consideration and review the draft Strategic Plan as updated by Mr Tushar Kansal the Facilitator for the development of the plan and a cover letter from Mr Kansal. The draft Strategic Plan will be considered at the 13th Regular Session of the WCPFC in Fiji from 5 to 9 December, 2016.

Mr Kansal's letter and the draft Strategic Plan will be posted on the WCPFC13 meeting website as the working paper for agenda item 15.1.

Yours sincerely,



**Feleti Penitala Teo, OBE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

15 November, 2016

Dear WCPFC Members, Cooperating Non-Members, Participating Territories and Observers,

I have attached a **revised draft** of the Commission's strategic plan. This document is intended to reflect the discussions that we had in Pohnpei immediately preceding TCC12 and also reflect comments and feedback provided by Australia, Chinese Taipei, the European Union, FFA, Japan, and the United States to the draft that was circulated in mid-October.

Please review the attached draft and come to WCPFC 13 prepared to discuss the draft strategic plan. I will be unable to join you in Fiji for medical reasons, but my colleague Gina Bartlett will present the draft strategic plan and work with CCMs to move the process forward.

Finally, although the focus at this point of the process is on text, not layout or graphics, the text in this present draft will undergo a light design process in advance of WCPFC 13. Following adoption of the strategic plan by the Commission, the strategic plan will proceed through a fuller layout and design process to prepare the document for public dissemination.

Thank you all for your participation in the strategic planning process. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me or with the Secretariat if you have any questions or concerns.

Regards,



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Consensus Building Institute
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Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Strategic Plan

Draft – 16 November, 2016

Forward

[By WCPFC Chair, Rhea Moss-Christian; addressing history of the Commission, why this strategic planning process is important today, and future of the Commission from an optimistic perspective]

Context for Strategic Planning

The Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (the WCPFC Convention) entered into force in June 2004, creating one of the first regional fisheries management organizations to be established after the adoption in 1995 of the UN Fish Stocks Agreement. The objective of the Convention is to ensure, through effective management, the long-term conservation and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks in the western and central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) in accordance with the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement. For this purpose, the Convention establishes a Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPFC).

The strategic planning process has been focused on analyzing key trends shaping the fisheries and fishing industries in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean to provide a pathway forward for the Commission over the next ten years. The ten-year strategic plan is complemented by an operationally focused three-year corporate plan. Both of these documents have been developed with significant involvement and consultation of Commission members, cooperating non-members, and participating territories (CCMs) and other stakeholders.

WCPFC Strategic Vision

Effective management, long-term conservation, and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks in the WCPO for present and future generations through the application of precautionary fisheries management, based on the best scientific information available, while minimizing adverse social and environmental impacts and giving full recognition to the special requirements of developing States Parties to the Convention, in particular of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and territories.

-WCPFC Strategic Plan, 2011-2013

Purpose of Strategic Planning

The Commission has undertaken the current strategic planning process in the context of the WCPFC Convention. The Convention remains the foundational and guiding document for the Commission's ongoing work and the ten-year strategic plan and the three-year corporate plan seek to guide efforts to operationalize the objectives and mandate of the Convention.

This strategic planning process sought to build on the Commission's baseline strengths and achievements to-date while identifying how the Commission can nimbly respond to the challenges facing it today and potentially in the future in order to continue to promote the long-term conservation and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks in the western and central Pacific Ocean. In particular, the Commission's strengths include the world-class quality of the science program; specific management measures and elements of the compliance program that have been implemented over the past decade; the leadership role played by members and participating territories, including the Pacific Island states; the enhanced capacity of flag states to effectively manage vessels flying their flags; and the professionalism and competence of the Secretariat.

At the same time, significant transition and transformation in the Commission's broader operating environment provide an opportunity for the Commission to define its future direction for continued relevance and strength. The data gathering phase of the strategic planning process identified a number of key trends shaping the future of fisheries and the fishing industry in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean, including improving technologies to harvest fish stocks and also around monitoring and reporting; increasing pressure on WCPO fish stocks; and greater public awareness and interest in fishery sustainability from civil society, consumers, and the market.

In light of the significance of these trends on the fisheries and the fishing industries in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean, it is incumbent on the Commission to strategically position and mobilize its efforts and resources to continue to promote the long-term conservation and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks in the WCPO. This strategic plan translates the Convention's mandate into tangible goals and objectives that will guide the Commission's direction over the next ten years. By creating shared priorities, the Commission will be better able to set priorities, focus energy and mobilize resources, strengthen operations, and ensure that key participants and stakeholders (including member states and participating territories, cooperating non-members, inter-governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the Secretariat) work cooperatively and with efficiency towards common goals, establish agreement around intended outcomes, and assess and adjust the Commission's direction in response to a changing environment.

Jurisdiction, Authority, and Governance

The Pacific Ocean is home to some of the world's most abundant populations of tuna species such as bigeye, albacore, skipjack, and yellowfin, and to billfish species such as marlin and swordfish. Collectively, these fish are referred to as highly migratory stocks because of the great distances they can swim, often across ocean provinces and the boundaries of multiple countries. There are many different methods used for capturing highly migratory stocks, but the WCPFC is primarily concerned with the impact of fishing vessels that use longlines and purse seine gear, as well as troll lines, pole and line gear, and other small scale fishing methods, including some artisanal methods. The Commission develops conservation and management measures that are often specific to fishing gear types, primarily because different gear types target different species.

The area covered by the Convention covers almost 20 percent of the earth's surface and comprises waters of the Pacific Ocean with southern and eastern boundaries delineated by article 3 of the WCPFC Convention. In the east, the convention area adjoins and overlaps, the area of competence of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission.

The Convention establishes a governing body known as the Commission that is comprised of members. The Commission holds annual meetings and is presided over by a Chair and a Vice-Chair, who are elected from amongst the contracting parties. Four subsidiary bodies support the work of the Commission and meet in the months prior to the annual meeting, which is always held

in December. These are the Scientific Committee, the Technical and Compliance Committee, the Northern Committee, and the Finance and Administration Committee. All Commission decisions are generally taken by consensus.

Goals and Objectives for 2027 in Line with the WCPFC Convention

Goals and guiding objectives put forward in this strategic plan were developed with significant involvement and consultation of Commission members, cooperating non-members, and participating territories and other stakeholders. These goals do not constitute all the activities that the Commission currently does, and will continue to do. Rather, this strategic plan seeks to identify a few key areas for strategic focus on which the Commission will place particular emphasis during the next ten years.

In addition to the goals presented below, the Commission will consider addressing the following issues of concern, as possible, within the next ten years:

- Fishing capacity management;
- Compatibility of management measures among exclusive economic zones and between exclusive economic zones and the high seas; and
- Allocation.

WCPFC Members

Australia, China, Canada, Cook Islands, European Union, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, France, Indonesia, Japan, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Chinese Taipei, Tonga, Tuvalu, United States of America, Vanuatu.

WCPFC Participating Territories

American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, French Polynesia, Guam, New Caledonia, Tokelau, Wallis and Futuna.

WCPFC Cooperating Non-members

The Commission confers Cooperating Non-Members status on an annual basis to some non-member states in order for those states to be able to participate in the WCPO fisheries. The current list of Cooperating Non-Members is posted on the WCPFC website.

GOAL #1: Adopt and implement harvest strategies and other tools to conserve and sustainably utilize fish stocks and manage interactions with the environment.

Guiding objectives

1. Implement harvest strategies and other tools through the development and adoption of CMMs to manage key stocks, including tuna and other species.
2. Reduce uncertainty and improve robustness in the assessment of the status of stocks, the social and economic aspects of the fisheries, and the interaction between WCPFC fisheries and the marine ecosystem, including variations in climatic conditions, and integrate such knowledge into harvest strategies.

GOAL #2: Enhance compliance with conservation and management measures.

Guiding objectives

1. Enhance, develop, and implement monitoring, compliance, surveillance, and enforcement tools.
2. Combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.
3. Enhance, develop, and implement port-state and flag-state measures.
4. Address non-compliance with appropriate responses and remedial measures.
5. Assist CCMs in addressing their capacity challenges in order to better enforce compliance.

GOAL #3: Implement ecosystem-based management.

Guiding objectives

1. Maintain healthy ecosystem structure and conserve biodiversity.
2. Assess and integrate the two-way interaction between the environment and fisheries into developing management measures for target and bycatch species.
3. Monitor measurable targets for non-target stocks and bycatch in order to identify systemic trends and to identify emerging issues.
4. Minimize waste and pollution.
5. Monitor and eliminate discards.

GOAL #4: Strengthen capacity of developing states, in particular small island developing states and territories, to manage and develop their tuna fisheries.

Guiding objectives

1. Enhance the scientific and technical capacity of developing states, in particular small island developing states and territories.
2. Enhance and sustain the capacity of developing states, in particular small island developing states and territories, to fully participate in fisheries management in line with the WCPFC Convention, including the development of a sustainable financing mechanism for the fund established under article 30(3) of the WCPFC Convention.

GOAL #5: Enhance Commission operations by deploying best available data and science and by enhancing transparency of Commission governance and operations.

Guiding objectives

1. Enhance and sustain quality and accessibility of robust scientific and technical data and other relevant information to underpin robust, science-based management decisions.
2. Enhance and integrate the Commission's information management systems to provide timely inputs and outputs.
3. Enhance transparency of the Commission's governance and operations.

Future Opportunities and Updating the Strategic Plan

Strategic planning is an exercise in trying to plan for an uncertain future. While necessary and helpful for setting priorities and working towards common goals, circumstances can and will evolve, perhaps in ways not anticipated today. With this context in mind, the Commission will convene a process to revisit and refresh the strategic plan five years after adoption. In addition to updating and adapting the goals and objectives articulated here, the review process may consider broader contextual developments such as changes in the broader governance framework for fisheries or changes in ocean use.