**SC14 – ECOSYSTEM AND BYCATCH THEME DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Agenda Item 6.3.1**

**Draft Recommendations** associated with EB-WP-10 Hook shielding devices to mitigate seabird bycatch: review of effectiveness

1. SC14 noted that hook-shielding devices are a novel seabird bycatch mitigation measure which encase the point and barb of baited hooks to prevent seabird attacks during line setting.
2. SC14 noted that the evidence presented on hook-shielding device effectiveness was for Hookpods, one hook-shielding device which met the following performance characteristics:
   1. the device encases the point and barb of the hook until it reaches a depth of at least 10 m or has been immersed for at least 10 minutes;
   2. the device meets current minimum standards for branch line weighting as specified in the seabird bycatch CMM; and
   3. the device is designed to be retained on the fishing gear rather than being lost.
3. Some CCMs raised operational and cost-related concerns regarding the application of these devices to their fisheries.

Recommendations

SC14 recommends:

1. that TCC14 and WCPFC15 note that evidence is available to support the inclusion of hook-shielding devices, specifically Hookpods, on the list of seabird bycatch mitigation options, in addition to already existing mitigation options.
2. the revision of CMM 2017-06 to add the use of hook-shielding devices, specifically Hookpods, as an optional stand-alone seabird bycatch mitigation measure in order to provide more choices and greater flexibility to the fishing industry to mitigate seabird bycatch in their fishing operations.
3. that if hook-shielding options other than Hookpods, or any other innovative options, are proposed for use in WCPFC in the future, SC and TCC should review the evidence on effectiveness, efficiency, and practicality of the technology in mitigating seabird bycatch.
4. that if the revision of CMM 2017-06 to include hook-shielding devices is accepted, SC should be tasked with reviewing information on the use of Hookpods in commercial fishing operations no later than 3 years from the implementation date.
5. that while there was no proposal that hook-shielding devices be made mandatory, if this was proposed in future thorough review by SC and TCC would be required. (adopted)
6. (blank)