



**DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW TROPICAL TUNA MEASURE
WORKSHOP 2 (TTMW2)
Electronic Meeting
6-10 September 2021**

**STATEMENT TO THE 2ND WORKSHOP ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW TROPICAL
TUNA MEASURE**

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The Pew Charitable Trusts
Statement to the 2nd Workshop on the Development of a New Tropical Tuna Measure
September 6-10, 2021, online

The Pew Charitable Trusts welcomes the opportunity to participate as an observer at the 2nd Workshop to Develop a New Tropical Tuna Measure for the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). We appreciate the work of the Chair, Members and Secretariat to convene this workshop to discuss initial aspects of the new measure. We urge members to build on the discussions of the first workshop and seize this opportunity to strengthen important aspects of the management of tropical tunas. Among the issues on the agenda, we offer three priorities that should be addressed:

1) Strengthen the measure to act as a bridge to the adoption of harvest strategies. The workshop should recommend a measure that maintains existing management objectives for bigeye and yellowfin tunas and ensures skipjack is managed to avoid a decline in biomass to minimize the risk of the three stocks breaching the limit reference point, until harvest strategies are agreed. To enable the Commission to develop harvest strategies, the measure should set specific timelines for their development and adoption and require the convening of a scientist-manager dialogue in 2022, as was recommended by the Scientific Committee (SC17).

2) Improve oversight of longline vessels by increasing observer coverage, adopting electronic monitoring standards and improving transshipment reporting. The current tropical tuna measure requires 100 percent observer coverage on purse seine vessels, but only 5 percent on longline vessels – which very few longline fleets achieve. The measure should increase the required level of longline observer coverage to match that of the purse seine fishery which would promote high levels of compliance with the tropical tuna measure and improve the data available for science. To achieve that coverage, development of an electronic monitoring (EM) program is urgently needed. As such, the measure should commit the Commission to adopt EM standards by 2022. Meanwhile, as at-sea transshipments from longliners continue to increase, the Commission must improve regulation of longline and carrier vessels involved in these activities. Members should support the US proposal to TCC17 for the adoption of specific data fields to be collected by ROP observers during at sea transshipments.

3) Adopt controls on fishing that are effective at managing the mortality of non-target species. The current measure also includes provisions to manage species caught in association with, and the impacts of, FADs. Controls on FADs should be strengthened to prohibit the use of mesh in the design of FADs; limit the number of active FADs allowed to be used by individual vessels to their recent average while a more precautionary limit is developed; and set a date to transition to the use of biodegradable materials and develop FAD retrieval systems, which would reduce the death by entanglement of non-target species and reduce the impact of lost FADs on the ecosystem. Although longline impacts are not addressed in the tropical tuna measure, members should signal a clear willingness to revise the comprehensive shark measure to improve the status of shark species in the western and central Pacific, as part of an overall effort to mitigate impacts of fishing on the ecosystem.