

**NORTHERN COMMITTEE**

**ELEVENTH REGULAR SESSION**

31 August – 3 September 2015

Sapporo, Japan

**SC11 Summary Report to NC11**

**WCPFC-NC11-2015/IP-07-Supplement (Rev.01)**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. SC11 was held in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia from 5-13 August 2014. Mr. Ludwig Kumoru (PNG) chaired the meeting.

**WCPO Tuna Fisheries**

1. The provisional total WCPFC Statistical Area tuna catch for 2014 was estimated at 2,860,648 mt, 83% of the total Pacific Ocean catch of 3,486,124 mt, and 60% of the global tuna catch (the provisional estimate for 2014 is 4,783,629 mt.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Species | Catch (mt) | % |  | Gear | Catch (mt) | % |
| Skipjack | 1,957,693 | 68 | purse seine | 2,020,627 | 71 |
| Yellowfin | 608,807 | 21 | pole-and-line | 203,736 | 7 |
| Bigeye | 161,299 | 6 | longline | 268,795 | 9 |
| Albacore | 132,849  (NP: 49,816; SP: 83,033) | 5 | SP troll albacore | 2,221 | 0.1 |
| remainder | 269,100 | 13 |

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| Figure 1. Catch (mt) of albacore, bigeye, skipjack and yellowfin in the WCPFC Statistical Area | Figure 2. Catch (mt) of albacore, bigeye, skipjack and yellowfin in the WCPFC Statistical Area, by longline, pole-and-line, purse-seine and other gear types |

### DATA ISSUES

1. The following issues were highlighted for data-related issues:
2. SC11 considered whether the purse-seine size data provided through the regional observer programme should be considered as satisfying the flag-state scientific purse-seine size data provision – TCC will clarify this.
3. The tier scoring system for the evaluation of the provision of scientific data is used in the work of the TCC and the Commission, with the understanding that the respective ratings are not necessarily agreed by each WCPFC CCM.
4. SC11 recommends that WCPFC12 notes that a number of CCMs did not achieve the 5% observer coverage of their longline fleets, which impacts on the SC’s ability to address a number of scientific issues.
5. SC11 recommends that Fiji be admitted as a member of the Northern Committee.

# Summary of STOCK status

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Tunas | Bigeye tuna | 1. No stock assessment conducted. 2. The total catch in 2014 was a 5% increase over 2013 and a 5% increase over the average for 2010–2013. |
| Yellowfin tuna | 1. No stock assessment conducted. 2. The total catch in 2014, the highest ever recorded, was a 9% increase over the average for 2010–2013. |
|  | Skipjack tuna | * 1. No stock assessment conducted.   2. The total skipjack catch in 2014, the highest catch recorded, is a 14% increase over the average for 2010–2013.   3. Regarding the spatial distribution of skipjack (including range contraction), no statistical evidence was demonstrated for skipjack range contraction, and SC11 recommended further work on this issue. |
|  | SP albacore tuna | * + - 1. A stock assessment was conducted in 2015.   **Table.** Estimates of management quantities for base case   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Indicator | Base case | | (mt) | 76,800 | |  | 1.00 | |  | 0.39 | |  | 711,400 | |  | 456,984 | |  | 396,500 | |  | 57,430 | |  | 408,361 | |  | 164,451 | |  | 2.86 | |  | 0.40 | |
| Northern stocks | | No stock assessments were conducted in 2015. |
| sharks | NP blue shark | 1. No stock assessment conducted. 2. SC11 noted that ISC provided a bibliography of studies undertaken on North Pacific blue sharks. 3. SC11 also noted that it is important for ISC, in collaboration with SPC, to continue to work to provide information regarding the stock distribution north and south of 20°N in order to enable the SC to provide a recommendation to the Commission about whether this should be considered a northern stock. |
|  | North Pacific shortfin mako shark | SC11 noted that ISC provided stock status and conservation advice from the indicator analysis.  1. SC11 noted that the quality of fisheries data for shortfin mako shark varied for the fleets. SC11 recommends that changes in fishing practices of all fleets be documented through time, which would be important for assessing fishery impacts. |
| Billfish | North Pacific striped marlin | * + - 1. SC11 noted that ISC provided stock status and conservation advice.       2. SC11 expressed concerns about the updated stock status of WCNPO striped marlin, noting that the stock was overfished (SSB2013 at 61% below SSBMSY, SSBcurrent/SSBcurrent,F=0 = 0.12) and that overfishing was occurring (F2010-2012 exceeds FMSY by 49%).       3. SC11 recommends that the Commission develop a rebuilding plan with subsequent revision of CMM 2010-01 (NP striped marlin). |

# MANAGEMENT ISSUES

1. The following issues are highlighted:
2. SC11 requested WCPFC12 to identify the level of acceptable risk related with breaching a LRP for the key target species;
3. SC11 will develop limit reference points for sharks through the updated shark research plan;
4. SC11 considered the draft work-plan for the harvest strategy approach, as required by CMM 2014-06;
5. SC11 considered the scientific aspects of target reference points for WCPO skipjack tuna and SP albacore tuna;
6. Noting the longline bigeye catch and the total number of FAD sets in 2014 was still higher, SC11 recommends the need for additional or alternative targeted measures to reduce the fishing mortality on bigeye tuna;
7. SC11 reviewed evaluation of CMM-2013-01 (WCPFC11-2014-15) presented at WCPFC11, and requests the Science Service Provider provide evaluation of the potential impact of CMM 2014-01 to WCPFC12.
8. Skipjack stock status is relatively insensitive to the proportions of associated or unassociated sets of purse seine effort. Further analysis was requested to be undertaken;
9. SC11 noted significant increases in catchability over the past 20 years (e.g. a 3-5% average annual increase (2005-2011) in purse-seine vessel efficiency), and recognized the need for further analyses to identify the causes of these increases.
10. SC11 noted that around one-third of the purse-seine catch of bigeye is taken by a small component (~10%) of the fleet and requested that further research be undertaken; and
11. SC11 reviewed analyses on potential tropical purse seine fleet sizes given existing effort limits and candidate target stock levels, which is an important contribution to the development of a purse seine capacity management scheme, and supported further work for the Commission’s consideration of fleet capacity.

## Sharks

1. The following issues were highlighted related with sharks:
2. SC11 adopts the Shark Research Plan 2016-2020;
3. SC11 considered the Monte Carlo analysis longline shark mitigation methods (e.g. hook type, leader material, non-deployment of shallow hooks, and a prohibition on shark lines) and requested further research be continued;
4. SC11 recommends that the Commission encourage CCMs to gather and submit information on the implementation of CMM 2010-07 (Sharks), including data on fin to carcass ratios;
5. SC11 recommends that WCPFC12 adopt the guidelines for safe release of encircled animals including whale sharks;
6. SC11 recommends that the Commission consider development of a list of minimum requirements that a shark management plan should include, guidelines to evaluate such a plan, and the definition of a target shark fishery; and
7. SC11 considered and endorsed changes to longline observer data collection standards for bycatch and forwards them to TCC11 for technical consideration.

# SC WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET

1. SC11 adopted the SC work programme and budget (USD) as shown in Table 1.

| Project | Essential | Priority | 2016 | | 2017 | | 2018 | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Core | Other | Core | Other | Core | Other |
| SPC-OFP Budget | x |  | 1,031,200 | 400,000 | 1,031,200 | 400,000 | 1,031,200 | 400,000 |
| Project 14. WPEA Project | x |  | 25,000 | 693,400 | 25,000 | 693,400 | 25,000 |  |
| Project 35. Refinement of bigeye tuna parameters |  | 3 | 50,000 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Project 42. Pacific-wide tagging project |  | 3 | 10,000 | 570,000 | 10,000 |  | 10,000 |  |
| Project 57. Develop proposed LRPs for elasmobranchs |  | 3 | 25,000 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Project 67. Review of impacts of recent high catches of skipjack on fisheries on the margins of the Convention Area |  | 2 | 40,000 |  | 40,000 |  |  |  |
| Project 60. Further paired sampling and unloading data comparisons. |  | 2 | 50,000 |  | 50,000 |  |  |  |
| New Projects identified by SC11 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Maintenance and enhancement of the WCPFC Tissue Bank |  | 3 | 80,000 |  | 80,000 |  | 80,000 |  |
| Review of length-weight conversion factor for all key shark species |  | 1 | 10,000 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sharks Monte Carlo mitigation analysis for purse seine, and extension of longline analysis |  | 3 | 25,000 |  |  |  |  |  |
| EU funded projects that require 20% matching funds |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Technical support for the MOW4/HSW1  Project 63. Harvest control rules  Project 66. Target reference points | x |  | 190,000 | 110,000 | 160,000 |  |  |  |
| Purse seine bigeye catch mitigation analysis. | x |  | 25,000 | 110,000 | 25,000 | 110,000 |  |  |
| New mitigation trials for juvenile bigeye and yellowfin by purse seine |  | 3 | 44,000 | 440,000 | 44,000 |  |  |  |
| Post release of sharks and rays from longline and purse seine vessels |  | 3 | 44,000 | 440,000 | 44,000 |  |  |  |
| New projects Identified by SC10 as High Priority but not funded |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Further development of methods and analysis to account for changes in targeting practices on the catch of non-target species in particular shark species |  | 1 | - |  |  |  |  |  |
| Unobligated (Contingency) |  |  | 83,000 |  | 83,000 |  | 83,000 |  |
| **TOTAL BUDGET** |  |  | **1,732,200** |  | **1,592,200** |  | **1,229,200** |  |

# ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. The following administrative issues are highlighted:
2. A. Batibasaga (Fiji) was nominated and accepted by SC11 as the SC Vice-Chair.
3. Indonesia confirmed to host SC12 in Bali, Indonesia, scheduled to take place from 3-11 August 2016.
4. According to the Rule 33 of the Commission’s Rules of Procedure, the following procedure for the development of SC11 Summary Report was agreed by the SC11 plenary.

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| Due by | Activity |
| 18 August | Theme convenors receive SC11 draft report for review from the Secretariat |
| 24 August | The Secretariat posts the provisional Executive Summary on SC11 website |
| 24 August | The Secretariat receives theme convenors’ comment |
| 28 August | The Secretariat distributes draft summary report to all CCMs and Observers by email |
| 2 October | The Secretariat receives comments from CCMs and Observers |

1. Fiji stated that they would volunteer to host the 2016 Commission meeting.