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Co-operating Non-Member Requests for 2025

WCPFC21-2024-05
24 October 2024

Submitted by the Secretariat

Purpose

1. This paper provides information to support the Commission’s consideration of applications for Co-operating Non-Member (CNM) status in 2025.

Background

2. [CMM 2019-01 Conservation and Management Measure on Co-operating Non-Members](#) sets out a two-step process for the Commission’s decision on requests for CNM status which is illustrated in **Annex 1**. Commission decisions on applications for 2024 at WCPFC20 are shown in **Annex 2** and include consideration of participatory rights and activity in the WCPFC/IATTC Overlap Area.
3. On 29 February 2024, the Executive Director sent letters to all 2024 CNM applicants confirming the successful outcome of their CNM application for 2024 after consideration at WCPFC20. The letter also confirmed their financial commitment for 2024 and provided information on the process and timing for 2025 applications for CNM status. These letters are available to authorised users through the secure CCM Portal at [2024 Cooperating Non-Member Applications | WCPFC](#) along with any other relevant letters and communications.

CNM requests for 2024

4. The Secretariat received eight completed applications for CNM status in 2025. Six of these are from CNMs in 2024 and are listed in Table 1, below. The remaining two applications are from Liberia and the Bahamas who have previously held CNM status. Nicaragua holds CNM status in 2024 but has not reapplied for CNM Status in 2025. This information is available at [2024 Cooperating Non-Member Applications | WCPFC](#).

5. **Table 1** provides information on the payment of financial contributions for 2024 as at 1 October 2024.

Table 1: Financial contributions from CNMs for 2023 and 2024 as of 1 October 2024

Co-operating Non-Member	2023 assessed financial contribution	2023 payments ¹	2024 assessed financial contribution	2024 payments
Curacao	27,715	27,670	29,576	29,501
Ecuador	48,362	48,317	51,908	52,017
El Salvador	23,477	23,477	26,649	26,649
Nicaragua	15,775	15,790	17,287	17,262
Panama	24,403	24,403	26,807	26,807
Thailand	21,440	21,440	23,162	23,162
Viet Nam	18,050	18,050	20,235	20,235

Outcomes from the TCC20 review of applications

6. TCC20 reviewed the applications for CNM status in 2025 and made recommendations to WCPFC21 which are reflected in the [TCC20 2024 Outcomes](#) as set out in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: TCC20 Recommendations to WCPFC21

An extract from page 2 of the [TCC20 2024 Outcomes](#)

TCC20 provided the following recommendations and technical advice to WCPFC21 on Cooperating Non-Member (CNM) requests:

- a. TCC20 reviewed the following eight applications for CNM status and is forwarding them to WCPFC21 for consideration: Bahamas, Curacao, Ecuador, El Salvador, Liberia, Panama, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- b. TCC20 reminded CNM applicants of the obligations included in CMM 2019-01, particularly paragraph 3 and paragraph 11(a), which states that CNMs shall *“comply with all conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission”*. It was noted that compliance issues of some applicants were pointed out during the CMR process.
- c. TCC20 reminded the applicants that WCPFC21 could give further considerations to the applications in relation to the compliance status of each applicant in particular, noting that the CMR process is still ongoing leading up to the Commission meeting.
- d. TCC20 noted that some required information, such as compliance and data submission status, etc, was not provided in the cases of Curacao’s and Vietnam’s applications and requested that those applicants provide such missing information before WCPFC21 meeting, by submitting revised applications to the Secretariat.

¹ Please note any small variation between the assessed contribution and payment relates to transfer fees.

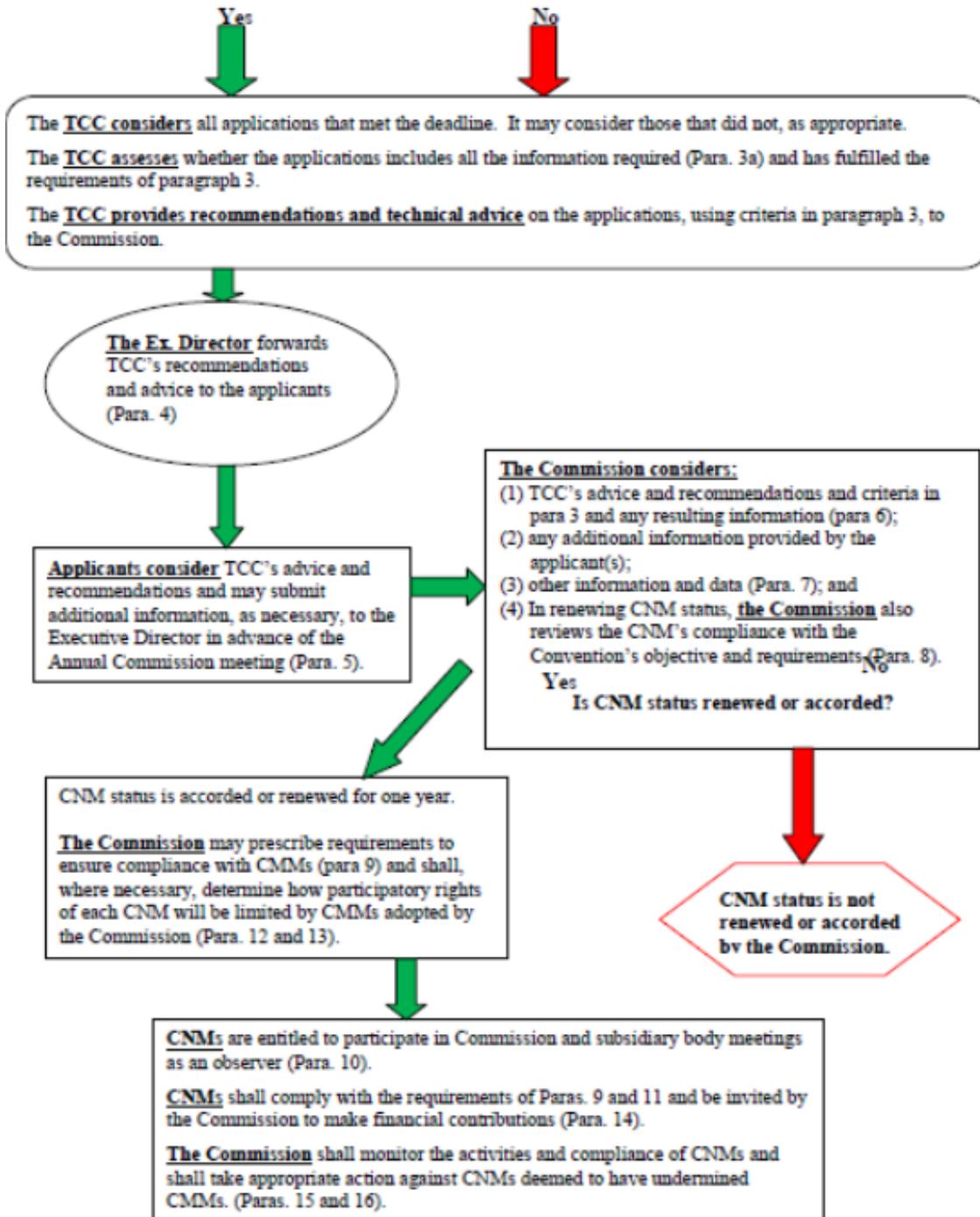
- e. TCC20 also reminded CNM applicants of the importance of attendance at the TCC meeting where the applications are considered and the obligation to provide all data required to submit in accordance with relevant conservation and management measures.
- f. TCC20 noted that Ecuador was not able to attend the meeting due to an unforeseen problem with the national power supply system.
- g. TCC20 noted the usefulness of the Commission's new electronic reporting tools such as TSER (Transshipment Electronic Reporting System) which could alleviate the workload of the Secretariat and encouraged the CNM applicants to use the tool if their vessels are to transship at high seas.
- h. TCC20 also noted all the eight applicants' statements of commitment to ensure payment of financial contribution during the meeting. TCC20 noted that the contributions of Curacao, Ecuador, El Salvador, Panama, Thailand and Vietnam for 2023 and 2024 were paid, confirmed by the WCPFC Secretariat during TCC20.
- i. TCC20 noted that Liberia paid their contribution for the 2023 in February 2024 and that CNM status was not granted for Liberia for 2024.
- j. TCC20 reminded that CNMs should ensure that financial contributions are paid in a timely manner.
- k. TCC20 noted that the review by TCC of all eight applications for CNM status was complete and recommends WCPFC21 consider all applicants for CNM status.

- 7. On 9 October 2024, the Secretariat sent all CNM applicants for 2025 a letter with the information on the outcomes and recommendations from TCC20. For relevant CNMs, the letter also indicated the deadline for providing additional information to address any remaining issues for them in the 2024 draft Compliance Monitoring Report reviewed at TCC20.
- 8. Any letters or documents received in relation to TCC20 recommendations on applications will be included in the WCPFC21 documentation available through the [2024 Cooperating Non-Member Applications | WCPFC](#) webpage.
- 9. As at previous Commission meetings, it is anticipated that a small working group will be established to prepare draft decisions for consideration by WCPFC21. Decisions would include reviews of participatory rights, and any other consideration of matters raised during discussions at TCC20.

Recommendation

- 10. WCPFC21 is invited to review CNM applications and decide each applicant's status and associated rights as a Co-operating Non-Member for 2025.

Was the application to request CNM status (new or renewal) submitted in English at least 60 days before the TCC? (Para. 1)



EXCERPT FROM WCPFC20 SUMMARY REPORT: AGENDA ITEM 4 - MEMBERSHIP AND OTHER APPLICATIONS

4.3 Applications for Cooperating Non-Member (CNM) status

Paper: [WCPFC20-2023-08_Rev01](#)

1. The Commission considered applications for CNM status for 2024 in accordance with CMM 2009-11, including recommendations from TCC19. As outlined in working paper 08_Rev01 (Cooperating Non-member Requests for 2024), eight applications for CNM status were received in 2023 from Curaçao, Ecuador, El Salvador, Liberia, Nicaragua, Panama, Thailand, and Vietnam.
 2. WCPFC Assistant Compliance Manager, Eidre Sharp, presented the recommendations emerging from TCC19. Korea noted the mandatory contribution obligations of WCPFC and looked forward to discussing this in the Small Working Group (SWG).
 3. Australia on behalf of FFA CCMs supported the TCC19 recommendations to renew CNM status for **Ecuador, El Salvador, Panama, Thailand, and Vietnam**. They reminded CNMs of the requirement under CMM 2019-01, particularly paragraph 3 and paragraph 11(a), which states that CNMs shall “comply with all conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission,” and urged CNMs to exercise effective flag State control over their vessels in the Convention Area. They reiterated TCC19’s reminder to CNM applicants of the TCC15 recommendation that CNM contributions be treated with the same expectations applied to full members and that contributions from members would be “due and payable in full within 60 days of the receipt of the communication of the Executive Director or as of the first day of the calendar year to which they relate, whichever is the later.” FFA CCMs did not support granting CNM status to any applicant who had not paid their financial contribution. They also supported TCC19’s recommendation noting the importance of the mandatory reporting obligations of the WCPFC and strongly reminded CNMs of the obligation for all CCMs to provide the required information prior to TCC meetings in order to ensure that the TCC can fully consider compliance with the WCPFC’s Conservation and Management Measures.
4. The Commission approved the applications for CNM status for 2024 from Curaçao, Ecuador, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, Thailand, and Vietnam. In the case of Liberia, the Commission approved the application on the condition that any outstanding payments of the financial contribution for 2023 be paid and received into the Commission account by 31 December 2023.

- **Participatory rights of CNMs**

66. In view of the discussion on the applications for CNM status for 2024, the Chair tasked the CNM Small Working Group with finalizing recommendations on CNM participatory rights to WCPFC20.
67. TCC Vice-Chair Ilkang Na chaired the CNM Small Working Group. After meeting, the SWG reported back to plenary with recommendations for the CNM participatory rights to be approved but noted that the financial contribution from Liberia remained outstanding. The SWG did not

have time to reach agreement on any changes to any applicant's participatory rights so recommended that the current rights should remain in place for 2024.

68. The EU noted that there had been some lack of clarity on participatory rights, such as on the kinds of activities that carrier and bunker vessels should or should not do in relation to the deployment and servicing of FADs, but there had been no agreement on this. They suggested tasking TCC20 to advise what kind of vessels could be used to deploy or service FADs in the WCPFC convention area.
69. WCPFC20 considered the request for participatory rights of eight CNMs for 2024. The CNM SWG considered changing certain CNMs' participatory rights but was not able to reach an agreement due to limited time.

70. WCPFC20 approved the following participatory rights for 2024:
- i. **Curaçao:** The participatory rights of Curaçao are limited to carrier vessels to engage in transshipment activities in the Convention area.
 - ii. **Ecuador:** The participatory rights of Ecuador for fishing in the WCPO are limited to purse seine fishing, with no participatory rights for fishing on the high seas for highly migratory fish stocks in the Convention Area. Any introduction of purse seine fishing capacity is to be in accordance with paragraph 12 of CMM 2019-01 and CMM 2021-01 or its replacement measure.
 - iii. **El Salvador:** The participatory rights of El Salvador for fishing in the WCPO are limited to purse seine fishing only. The total level of effort by purse seine vessels of El Salvador on the high seas shall not exceed 29 days in the Convention Area. Any introduction of purse seine fishing capacity is to be in accordance with paragraph 12 of CMM 2019-01 and CMM 2021-01 or its replacement measure.
 - iv. **Liberia:** The participatory rights of Liberia are limited to carrier vessels to engage in transshipment activities in the Convention area.
 - v. **Nicaragua:** The participatory rights of Nicaragua are limited to purse seine fishing for one vessel, with no participatory rights for fishing on the high seas for highly migratory fish stocks in the Convention Area. Any introduction of fishing capacity is to be in accordance with paragraph 12 of CMM 2019-01 and CMM 2021-01 or its replacement measure.
 - vi. **Panama:** The participatory rights of Panama in the WCPO are limited to the provision of carrier and bunker vessels. Panama's participatory rights also apply to vessels that supply food, water and spare parts to carrier vessels that engage in transshipment activities, provided that these vessels do not engage in activities supporting fishing vessels, including providing and/or servicing FADs.
 - vii. **Thailand:** The participatory rights of Thailand in the WCPO are limited to the provision of carrier and bunker vessels only.
 - viii. **Vietnam:** The participatory rights of Vietnam in the WCPO are limited to the provision of carrier and bunker vessels only.

WCPFC/IATTC Overlap Area

71. In accordance with the decision of WCPFC9 regarding the management of the overlap area of 4°S and 50°S between 130°W and 150°W, vessels flagged to Ecuador, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Panama will be governed by the IATTC when fishing in the overlap area.
72. In accordance with the Data Exchange MOU agreed by both Commissions, fishing vessels flying the flag of a member of either the IATTC or WCPFC shall cooperate with the RFMO to which they are not a member by voluntarily providing operational catch and effort data for its fishing activities for highly migratory species in the overlap area.
73. For the purpose of investigation of possible IUU fishing activities and consistent with international and domestic laws, vessels flying the flag of a CNM that is a Contracting Party to the IATTC will cooperate with those coastal State members of the WCPFC whose EEZs occur in the overlap area by voluntarily providing VMS reports (date, time and position) to those coastal States when operating in the overlap area.
74. The Commission tasked TCC20 to provide recommendations regarding the type of vessels that should be allowed to deploy and service FADs in the WCPFC Convention Area.

75. After these decisions were finalised, El Salvador thanked the Commission for agreeing CNM participatory rights for another year and asked for the following statement to be entered into the record.

El Salvador statement

76. Chair: This delegation thanks the Commission and its members for granting the CNM status renewal for El Salvador; and we would like to point out that as stated by Ecuador and Vietnam earlier at this meeting, El Salvador is interested in becoming full member of the Commission, an intention that has been expressed on a yearly basis through the application of the status renewal since El Salvador started activity in the WCPO. We take note of the decision of the Commission this year in not accepting new members, and we hope that the Commission can consider the suggestions for the development of a clear path in this regard. In that sense El Salvador thanks the statements made by several members of this Commission that can associate with the establishment of a process to draw a clear line on the requirements that needs to be fulfilled to obtain an invitation and become a member. El Salvador would like to state that we are at the disposal of the Commission and its members to assist in the development of this framework. El Salvador understands that new membership that could be granted does not undermine the rights and privileges ensured by the WCPFC to coastal states whose fishing rights in their EEZs are preserved by International Law, and trust in the spirit of cooperation that all CCM should have to guarantee the equality of the fishing opportunities in international waters.