



COMMISSION
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 Suva, Fiji (Hybrid)

Climate Change Related Outcomes from NC20, SC20, TCC20 and SMD02

WCPFC21-2024-15
24 October 2024

Submitted by the Secretariat

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide a reference guide to the outcomes of the 20th Regular Session of the Northern Committee (NC20), the 20th Regular Session of the Scientific Committee (SC20), and the 20th Regular Session of the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC20) relating to climate change. Outcomes from the Second Science-Management Dialogue (SMD02) discussions on climate change issues are also included. Further details on the climate change discussions at NC20, SC20, TCC20, and SMD02 are available in the respective summary reports and outcomes documents.

Background

2. The WCPFC adopted a Resolution on Climate Change ([Resolution 2019-01](#)) in December 2019, indicating the Commission's recognition of climate change as a critical issue for fisheries management. Building on this commitment, at WCPFC19 in 2022, the Commission further emphasized the importance of climate change by making it a standing agenda item for itself and its subsidiary bodies—the Scientific Committee (SC), Northern Committee (NC), and Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC). This decision prioritized discussions on how best to integrate climate change information and analyses into the Commission’s work. At WCPFC20, the Commission appointed two co-leads from the USA and RMI to lead the intersessional development of a climate change workplan, to be adopted at WCPFC21.

<p>NC20 <i>Paragraphs 55 – 58, NC20 Summary Report</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The NC reviewed the Workplan and supported the proposed task of coordinating with the ISC as it considers how to incorporate climate change advice into management recommendations to NC. The NC also noted the importance of cooperation with other organizations including not only the ISC and tuna RFMOs, but also RFMOs that manage species such as sardine and mackerel in the NPO that are an important part of the ecosystem of northern stocks. The NC therefore agreed to request the Chair to contact the North Pacific Fisheries Commission on potential cooperation in relation to climate change. 4. The WCPFC Secretariat and the Scientific Services Provider (SSP), reviewed the feasibility of assessing active WCPFC Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) to identify provisions vulnerable to climate change impacts. A comprehensive
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	<p>review of all active CMMS is expected to take 2–3 years and would require adequate data, and resources, including criteria for selecting climate-susceptible CMMs, with preliminary assessments on CMM 2018-03 (Seabirds) and CMM 2023-01 (Tropical tunas) providing insights for guiding future actions. The Secretariat noted that should a full assessment of CMMs move forward, consideration for appropriate resources to enable the Secretariat, including the SSP, to adequately contribute to the assessment would be necessary.</p>
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Ecosystem and Climate Indicators

<p>SC20</p> <p><i>Paragraphs 122 – 129, SC20 Outcomes Document</i></p>	<p>a. Ecosystem and Climate Indicator Report Card</p>
	<p>5. SC20 noted the SSP’s progress towards implementing the SC19-endorsed Ecosystem and Climate Indicators Work Plan.</p>
	<p>6. SC20 noted the delay in the first expert workshop due to travel disruptions associated with the 2024 civil disturbances in New Caledonia.</p>
	<p>7. SC20 noted plans for the SSP to work with the WCPFC Secretariat to prepare for a November 2024 Climate Indicators Expert Workshop, which will include experts in physical and fisheries oceanography, climate and ecosystem science, ocean climate service providers, as well as WCPFC members with a background in climate and ecosystem science.</p>
	<p>b. Research proposal</p>
	<p>8. SC20 noted the introduction of a Draft Climate Change Work Plan to guide the Commission’s efforts to address climate change impacts on WCPFC fisheries and a Draft Terms of Reference for a climate change risk assessment of active CMMs. SC20 acknowledged the work and consultative approach of co-leads on the Work Plan.</p>
	<p>9. SC20 recommended that, in the further development of the draft Climate Change Work Plan, an indication of the status of SC tasks and whether there are ongoing projects or activities that need to commence, along with the resources required, is added in a column, as well as details of expected outcomes and how these will inform the Commission’s decision-making process. This task will require support from the WCPFC Secretariat and an extension of the work plan to 2027.</p>
	<p>10. SC20 noted the uncertainties regarding data availability, the complexity and length of the CMM susceptibility assessment, and the resources available to the Secretariat, SSP, and Commission Subsidiary Bodies to undertake this work.</p>
	<p>11. SC20 encouraged future discussions at the SC and TCC to clarify expected outcomes, resourcing requirements, and the value of this work in informing the Commission.</p>
	<p>12. SC20 requested that the TOR in Attachment B in SC20-EB-WP-02 be further refined, including by incorporating indigenous and traditional knowledge as a valuable source of information.</p>

<p style="margin: 0;">TCC20</p> <p style="margin: 0;"><i>Paragraphs 23 – 28, TCC20 Outcomes Document</i></p>	<p>13. TCC20 welcomed the presentation by the Scientific Services Provider (SSP) on the status of fisheries and updates on the impact of climate change and recommends that in the future the SSP provide information to TCC on the status of the Northern stocks. <i>(ref: TCC20 Outcomes, paragraph 23)</i></p>
	<p>14. TCC20 requested that the Co-Leads on Climate Change in the lead-up to WCPFC21 to revise the Workplan for submission to the Commission for consideration taking into account the views and concerns expressed at TCC20 i.e. ongoing projects or activities that need to commence, along with the resources required, and the flow of outcomes from one Subsidiary Body to another. <i>(ref: TCC20 Outcomes, paragraph 24)</i></p>
	<p>15. TCC20 discussed the importance of implementing an assessment of CMMs susceptible to the impact of climate change, but expressed concern over:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the required Secretariat and SSP resources to support a comprehensive CMM assessment, b. the value of the assessment, c. how it would support the work of subsidiary bodies in providing advice to the Commission, d. whether there would be a phased approach to a CMM assessment, and e. the timeframe for completing an assessment. <i>(ref: TCC20 Outcomes, paragraph 25)</i>
	<p>16. TCC20 noted the draft Terms of Reference for the CMM assessment, presented in Attachment B in WCPFC-TCC20-2024-13. TCC20 noted that most CCMs consider these TORs were subject to a clear understanding of the issues outlined above <i>(paragraph 15)</i>, and TCC20 requests the co-leads to present a revised version addressing these issues at WCPFC21 for the Commission’s consideration. <i>(ref: TCC20 Outcomes, paragraph 26)</i></p>
	<p>17. TCC20 recommended the Commission consider a select number of CMMs for application of a climate change susceptibility assessment in 2025 once the Commission has endorsed the Terms of Reference referred to in paragraph 16 above. <i>(ref: TCC20 Outcomes, paragraph 27)</i></p>
	<p>18. TCC20 welcomed the contributions from the USA and Chinese Taipei of financial resources to support the integration of climate change into fisheries management of the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. <i>(ref: TCC20 Outcomes, paragraph 28)</i></p>

<p style="margin: 0;">SMD02</p> <p style="margin: 0;"><i>Paragraphs 179 – 181, SMD02 Summary Report</i></p>	<p>19. SMD02 noted the proposed Work Plan from the Co-Chairs of the Climate Change Working Group (WCPFC-SMD02-2024-BP-07), which included a reference to a dedicated SMD on climate change in 2025. However, given the important work on harvest strategies to be done in 2025, SMD02 considered that an SMD on climate change should not be held in 2025, although SMD02 agreed that the Commission should continue to incorporate climate change considerations into the work of the Commission.</p>
	<p>20. SMD02 suggested that the Commission continue to support incorporating climate change considerations into the WCPFC harvest strategy process, and that SC consider incorporating SEAPODYM and/or other model projections into MSE and monitoring work where appropriate for South Pacific albacore and skipjack, and potentially yellowfin and bigeye tuna stocks.</p>
	<p>21. SMD02 suggested that WCPFC21 request the Secretariat, with input from the SSP, to develop Terms Of Reference for SC21 for a project funding an independent review of SEAPODYM so that the progress made to address issues raised in the last SEAPODYM review (WCPFC-SC16-EB-IP-06) can be understood prior to explicitly incorporating</p>

	SEAPODYM outputs into future MSE OM grid projections and monitoring work for South Pacific albacore, bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack tuna stocks managed by the Commission.
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