



**TO ALL COMMISSION MEMBERS, COOPERATING NON-MEMBERS,
PARTICIPATING TERRITORIES AND OBSERVERS**

Circular No.: 2025/17

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No. pages: 2

Subject: Note from SPC on 2025 modelling approach for South Pacific Albacore Harvest Strategies

Dear all,

Attached is a technical note from the Scientific Services Provider (Pacific Community (SPC)) on its planned 2025 modelling approach for South Pacific albacore harvest strategies. This reflects WCPFC21 outcomes, including the goal to adopt a management procedure and implementing measure by WCPFC22. It also incorporates development of a bigeye tuna management procedure under the mixed fishery framework.

This advice of the planned 2025 modelling approach is with a view to supporting the SSP to commence the necessary preparatory work in preparation for the discussions at SC21 and the South Pacific Albacore Management Workshop (SPAM-WS) to be held between SC21 and TCC21.

For inquiries, please contact Dr. Graham Pilling (grahamp@spc.int).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rhea".

Rhea Moss-Christian
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SSP note on the modelling approach for South Pacific albacore harvest strategies

This note updates WCPFC members on the SSP's planned approach to South Pacific albacore harvest strategy modelling in 2025, considering the decisions made at WCPFC21. This approach will be used to develop outputs for technical discussion at SC21 in August.

In 2024, modelling assumed that the management procedure for South Pacific albacore would set future longline and troll fishing levels throughout the southern WCPFC Convention Area, i.e. from the equator southwards. Levels of fishing in the rest of the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) were set at a fixed level of 22,500mt.

WCPFC21 agreed to “develop a management procedure and implementing measure for South Pacific albacore during 2025, with a view to adopt both a management procedure and its implementing measure at WCPFC22” (WCPFC21 summary report, paragraph 716). The Commission also tasked the SSP to “progress the development of a Management Procedure for BET using the agreed candidate TRP[s]” (WCPFC21 summary report, paragraph 435). The compatibility of the bigeye and South Pacific albacore management procedures should be considered by the SPA-WS, scheduled for September 2025 (WCPFC21 summary report, paragraph 713).

Progressing both the South Pacific albacore and bigeye management procedures in 2025 implies the implementation of the ‘mixed fishery’ framework, which WCPFC16 tasked the Scientific Committee and the SSP with progressing. As detailed in [WCPFC-SC15-2019/MI-WP-04](#) and [WCPFC-SC16-2020/MI-IP-06](#), this framework manages WCPFC Convention Area fisheries through single stock management procedures for skipjack, South Pacific albacore and bigeye.

The mixed fishery framework implies a modification to the 2024 South Pacific albacore modelling assumptions. In 2025 therefore, the modelling approach of relevance to South Pacific albacore will be as follows:

- The management procedure for South Pacific albacore will define the future levels of fishing in longline and troll fisheries within the WCPFC Convention Area south of 10°S.
- Under the mixed fishery approach, future levels of fishing within longline fisheries operating from 20°N to 10°S will be set by the bigeye management procedure. This will define the South Pacific albacore catch in the area from the equator to 10°S within the WCPFC Convention Area. South Pacific albacore catches in this region represented an average of 12% of the overall South Pacific catch weight in 2020-2022.
- The assumed fixed EPO catch level will be guided by the discussions that were had at WCPFC21, with relevant alternatives considered under the ‘robustness set’ of models.
- In the South Pacific albacore evaluations, the assumed catch levels in the equator to 10°S region, i.e. those now outside of the South Pacific albacore management procedure, will be guided by fishing levels required to achieve the bigeye TRP options specified by WCPFC21. Alternative levels of catch in this region can be considered under the ‘robustness set’ of models for South Pacific albacore MP testing.
- Under this revised approach, South Pacific albacore management procedures will be developed to achieve the same objectives as those developed previously.

As agreed by WCPFC21, outputs of the SPA harvest strategy modelling (incorporating mixed fishery issues) will be discussed at the ‘SPA-WS’ held online between SC21 and TCC21.