

Strengthening Scientific Data Reporting to Support Sea Turtle Conservation (CMM 2018-04)

SC21-2025/ ST-WP-05

SPC-OFP

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
TWENTY-FIRST REGULAR SESSION
Nuku'alofa, Tonga
13–21 August 2025

Tasking

SC20 requested SSP to prepare a paper for SC21 on possible sea turtle data reporting requirements for vessels to record during fishing operations, for longline and purse seine vessels, to be incorporated in the annual reporting of Scientific Data to be provided to the Commission (SciData).

The approach – aim to align the requirements in CMM 2018-04 with the SciData requirements.

Paper content

- Review ROP data reporting relative to turtle interactions
- Reviewed FAD good practices (relative to turtle interactions) and their progress/implementation within the WCPFC
- Identified gaps in the SciData relative to the CMM
- Ultimately recommended a few potential actions for the SC to consider

Recommendations

- Rename the catch reporting sections in the SciData, currently labelled as 'Weight of fish caught per set', to include turtles
- Consider adding hook size and type (with standardized reporting options) to the operational longline gear characteristics to comply with provision 7(a)(i) in the CMM
- Ensure established CCM criteria to characterize shallow-sets can be determined from operational data fields (e.g., number of hooks between floats, hook depth, etc.).
- Bait type is already established as a voluntary operational data field; encouraging reporting of these data could strengthen the reporting.