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**REVIEW OF CMM 2015-02: SOUTH PACIFIC ALBACORE AND SUMMARY OF
REPORTING TO WCPFC**

WCPFC-TCC21-2025-IP01

8 September 2025

Submitted by Secretariat and the Scientific Services Provider (SSP (SPC-OFPP))

Purpose

1. This paper presents summary information for TCC21 relating to [CMM 2015-02](#): South Pacific Albacore, including reporting received by the Commission under [CMM 2015-02](#) and its predecessor, [CMM 2010-05](#).

History of the south Pacific albacore CMM

2. The inaugural south Pacific albacore measure ([CMM 2005-02](#)), adopted at the Commission's 2nd Regular Session, was one of the first substantive conservation and management measures agreed by the Commission. It was later replaced by CMM 2010-05 in 2010, and subsequently, by the current measure, [CMM 2015-02](#), in 2015.

Application of limits

3. [Paragraph 1](#) of the CMM is an "*actively fishing for vessel capacity limit*" which applies to most non-SIDS CCMs fishing for south Pacific albacore in the waters south of 20S in the WCPFC Convention Area. This wording remains unchanged from the original CMM 2005-02.
4. The status of limits for WCPFC members as notified is:
 - a. Australia, China, New Zealand, and Chinese Taipei have notified the Commission of their limits, referencing the baseline of 2005 or the 2000 – 2004 levels.
 - b. The European Union, Japan, and Korea who have acknowledged having vessels fishing in the waters south of 20S, have reported that their vessels do not "fish for" south Pacific albacore, so therefore have unspecified limit.
 - c. The United States has notified of the baseline levels for the troll fishery 2000 – 2004 levels but the applicable limit is not yet specified.

- d. The limit is considered applicable to Indonesia and Philippines and is also unspecified but in recent years these CCMs have not had any vessels operating in the area south of 20S.¹
- e. The limit does not apply to small island developing State and Territory CCMs in the Convention Area (paragraph 2).

Changes to CMM and reporting

- 5. Over time, the Commission has agreed to changes to the reporting requirements in the south Pacific Albacore CMM (now CMM 2015-02 paragraph 4). The changes were intended to ensure the Commission received information to clarify baselines and to support monitoring of compliance with the quantitative limits. Key points relating to changes are:
 - a. CMM 2005-02 did not include an annual reporting requirement.
 - b. CMM 2010-05 added a new annual reporting obligation intended to support monitoring and review of the quantitative limits.
 - c. CMM 2015-02 included changes to the reporting requirement to further clarify reporting requirements and ensure the monitoring and assessment of vessels and catches from vessels fishing for south Pacific albacore in waters south of 20S.
- 6. [Paragraph 4](#) of CMM 2015-02 requires that CCMs report the annual catch levels taken by each of their fishing vessels that have taken south Pacific albacore, as well as the number of vessels actively fishing for south Pacific albacore, in the Convention area south of 20°S. Catch by vessel is to be reported according to the following species groups: albacore tuna, bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, swordfish, other billfish, and sharks. Initially, this information was to be provided for the period 2006 - 2014 and then updated annually. CCMs are encouraged to provide data from periods prior to these dates.
- 7. In 2022, the Commission, at WCPFC19, adopted Audit Points for limit obligations in the south Pacific albacore CMM and for the annual reporting requirement obligation (CMM 2015-02 04). (Refer to **Annex 1**).
- 8. In 2023, the Commission, at WCPFC20, adopted the following definition of the term “actively fishing for”, based on the approach developed by the FFA Member CCMs:

The Commission agreed that the term “actively fishing for” used in CMM 2015-02 is applied to:
“Vessels fishing south of 20 degrees South with an annual catch of albacore in that area with South Pacific albacore greater than 50% of the catch of potential target tuna (albacore, yellowfin, bigeye, southern bluefin, skipjack) and swordfish.”

Ref: WCPFC20 Summary Report, paragraph 289

Review of TCC assessments of compliance with the CMM 2015-02

- 9. Since 2013, TCC has conducted assessments of the limit obligation in the south Pacific albacore CMM under the Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS) every year except 2023, when the assessments for RY 2021 and RY 2022 were not undertaken. A summary of the outcomes of annual CMS assessments of the limit obligation between 2013 - 2024 (covering RY 2012-2023) is provided in **Figure 1** (below).

¹ In early 2023, the Secretariat released an enhanced CMM page that includes Audit Points and Limits (<https://cmm.wcpfc.int/>)

Figure 1

Outcome of CMS assessment of limit obligations in South Pacific CMM 2013 - 2024

CMM 2010-05 para 1

To support assessments of the limit, CMM 2010-05 included a new annual reporting obligation by CCMs to ensure reporting of catches by vessels in areas south of 20S

CMM 2015-02 para 1

To further support assessments of the limit, CMM 2015-02 clarified that annual reporting should include catch composition at individual vessel level (for analysis of targeting by each vessel in area south of 20S)

Definition of “actively fishing for”

WCPFC20

Audit points

Evaluated	RY2012	RY2013	RY2014	RY2015	RY2016	RY2017	RY2018	RY2019	RY2020	RY2021	RY2022	RY2023
# Applicable CCMs	9	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	8 ** 2 not assessed	10	10	10
# Compliance issues	1	2						1		n/a	n/a	
% Compliance	89%	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	90%	80%			100%

Excerpts from the Adopted Final CMR Executive Summary

WCPFC13

CMM 2010-05 has been difficult to interpret and implement and warrants further consideration for improvement
| Para 19

WCPFC17

Noted concerns had been expressed by many CCMs over a number of years concerning SP albacore fishery and the desire to develop a new CMM. Some CCMs saw the issue as complicated and challenging, for reasons that included whether there were gaps in data which could be addressed, whether vessels were determined to be fishing south of 20S and whether there were catch attribution issues. Given the high interest in SP albacore fisheries, TCC16 recommended that priority be given by the Commission to this CMM
| Para 25

WCPFC18

Noted that there were ongoing difficulties related to interpretation of the term “actively fishing for” (and similar terms such as “directed at” and “targeting”) for this CMM which continue to present challenges and makes it difficult for TCC to complete the assessment some obligations during the CMR
| Para 31

10. Prior to 2015, TCC had acknowledged that there were challenges for TCC to complete assessments of compliance with the south Pacific albacore CMM limit (CMM 2010-05 para 1) e.g., see note from WCPFC13 final CMR in lower left side of **Figure 1**. The limitation at that time was that some CCMs had gaps in the complete operational catch and effort data set they provided. This meant the data available to the Secretariat when preparing the draft Compliance Monitoring Report (dCMR) tended to be based on the levels of longline activity derived from VMS analysis for relevant CCMs in the area where the limit applied. This was problematic because the information was not targeted to the vessels that each flag CCM considers to be “actively fishing for” South Pacific albacore in the area south of 20S.
11. Since the adoption by the Commission of CMM 2015-02, the SSP has had additional information reported in accordance with paragraph 4 to support their preparation of information for the Secretariat to use when preparing the dCMR. **Annex 2** collates information reported by CCMs to the Secretariat and/or the SSP in response to paragraph 1 of CMM 2010-05, paragraph 1 of CMM 2015-02, or paragraph 4 of CMM 2015-02.
12. In 2020 and 2021, TCC acknowledged there were ongoing difficulties with completing the assessment of the limit, e.g., see note from WCPFC17 and WCPFC18 final CMR in lower right side of **Figure 1**.
13. In 2023, at TCC19, no assessments of the limit were undertaken but TCC did use the agreed CMS audit point to assess the annual reporting requirement obligation (CMM 2015-02 04) in the south Pacific albacore CMM for RY 2021 and RY 2022. Noting that the information provided is self-reported and not independently verified, no compliance issues were raised by TCC. This outcome was endorsed by the Commission at WCPFC20 in its adoption of the Final Compliance Monitoring Report.
14. In 2024, TCC resumed the assessment of the limit obligation in the south Pacific albacore CMM and the annual reporting requirement obligation (CMM 2015-02 04) using the applying the definition of “actively fishing for”. Noting that the information provided is self-reported and not independently verified, and no compliance issues were raised by TCC. This outcome was endorsed by the Commission at WCPFC21 in its adoption of the Final Compliance Monitoring Report.
15. **Annex 2** summarizes CMM 2015-02 paragraph 4 reporting. Gaps in operational catch and effort data, the option for anonymized reporting under CMM 2015-02, and the 5% minimum ROP observer coverage mean the TCCs evaluation of the limit and the annual reporting relies largely on self-reported CCM data that is not independently verified.² This creates a significant data gap affecting the SSP and the Secretariat’s ability to validate compliance, per the audit point. **Annex 2** compiles CCM submissions under CMM 2010-05 and CMM 2015-02, applying the WCPFC20 definition of “vessels actively fishing for” to 2023 data. While self-reported data show some variation across years and CCMs from 2015–2024, overall trends in catches and vessel numbers fishing for South Pacific albacore south of 20°S have remained relatively stable.

Continuing efforts to strengthen management measures for south Pacific albacore, including through development of harvest strategies

16. The Commission, at WCPFC18, noted:
 - a. the ongoing work to review CMM 2015-02 through the SP Albacore Roadmap IWG (SPA-RM IWG);
 - b. concerns regarding the delayed process to implement an interim TRP adopted in 2018; and

² [TCC21-2025-15](#) Available data for verifying compliance in the Compliance Monitoring Scheme

- c. the need to take action to rebuild the stock to support the economic viability of fleets and to achieve a long-term TRP (WCPFC18, paragraphs 195 – 196).

17. Considering these concerns, the Commission agreed to the following interim arrangement for south Pacific albacore:

Given the urgency of these concerns, the Commission agreed that until a new CMM for south Pacific Albacore is adopted, each CCM is encouraged to take steps to implement interim controls on south Pacific albacore catch or effort across the convention area south of the equator.

- i. *CCMs are encouraged to limit commercial fishing of south Pacific albacore within EEZs to domestically applied catch or effort limits in recent years.*
- ii. *Each CCM is encouraged to ensure that its flagged vessels for this species shall not exceed the high seas catch or effort (such as number of vessels) of south Pacific albacore by its flagged vessels in recent years.*

These interim arrangements do not confer the allocation of rights to any CCM and are without prejudice to any future decisions of the Commission.

These interim arrangements shall not prejudice the legitimate rights and obligations under international law for small island developing State and Participating Territory CCMs in the Convention Area for whom south Pacific albacore is an important component of the domestic tuna fishery in waters under their national jurisdiction, and who may wish to pursue a responsible level of development of their fisheries for south Pacific albacore in their EEZs or adjacent high seas.

Ref: WCPFC20 Summary Report, paragraph 197 - 199

18. Reflecting the Commission's Harvest Strategy Workplan to develop management procedures and a management strategy evaluation framework for south Pacific albacore in 2025, the Commission agreed that in the 2025 intersessional period, the SPA-RM IWG would focus on preparations for adoption of a Management Procedure CMM for the south Pacific albacore at WCPFC22. In addition, the Commission adopted the SPA-RM IWG Workplan which aims for the adopted management procedure to be run for the first time in 2025.

19. To support these outcomes, the Commission agreed to hold a workshop or workshops dedicated to the management procedure, implementing arrangements, mixed fisheries issues as well as allocation of south Pacific albacore if appropriate. The Commission also tasked SC21 and TCC21 to provide advice on implementing a CMM and agreed to take note of discussions and progress on the management procedure, as well as other relevant considerations (including guidance from SC and TCC) to identify key elements for a new implementing CMM for south Pacific albacore.³

20. An online South Pacific Albacore Management Workshop (SPAMWS01) is scheduled for 11 – 12 September 2025, and will focus on:

- a. Candidate management procedures for South Pacific albacore;
- b. Arrangements for implementing the management procedure; and

³ See paragraphs 712-716 and Attachment 21 of the [WCPFC21 Summary Report](#).

- c. Consideration of mixed fishery issues, including ensuring compatibility between the BET and SPA management procedures.
- 21. In addition, in 2025, IATTC and WCPFC have been progressing the development of Terms of Reference to establish a Joint IATTC/WCPFC Working Group on the Management of South Pacific Albacore Tuna Fisheries (SPAJWG) through a series of informal, virtual meetings. The SPAJWG is expected to commence in 2026.

Recommendation

- 22. TCC21 is invited to note:
 - a. the progress to date in developing strengthened management arrangements for south Pacific albacore fisheries.
 - b. that gaps in catch and effort data, anonymized reporting, and limited observer coverage mean that compliance assessments are based on self-reported CCM data that is not independently verified, and
 - c. based on available data, overall catches and vessel numbers targeting South Pacific albacore south of 20°S have remained relatively stable from 2015–2024.

Annex 1: Audit Points for the south Pacific albacore CMM (CMM 2015-02)

The following CMS audit points for the south Pacific albacore CMM were adopted by the Commission at WCPFC19, in December 2022:

Obligation and brief description	Full text of obligation	Current Audit Point definition
<p><u>CMM 2015-02 01</u></p> <p>Limit on number of vessels actively fishing for SP ALB south of 20S above 2005 or 2000-2004 levels</p>	<p>1. Commission Members, Cooperating Non-Members, and participating Territories (CCMs) shall not increase the number of their fishing vessels actively fishing for South Pacific albacore in the Convention Area south of 20°S above 2005 levels or recent historical (2000-2004) levels.</p>	<p>CCM reported its number of flagged vessels actively fishing for SP Albacore south of 20S and the Secretariat can verify the CCM's reported information and confirm that the allowable limit has not been exceeded.</p>
<p><u>CMM 2015-02 04</u></p> <p>Annual report of SP ALB by vessel by species</p>	<p>4. CCMs shall report annually to the Commission the annual catch levels taken by each of their fishing vessels that has taken South Pacific albacore, as well as the number of vessels actively fishing for South Pacific albacore, in the Convention area south of 20°S. Catch by vessel shall be reported according to the following species groups: albacore tuna, bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, swordfish, other billfish, and sharks. Initially this information will be provided for the period 2006-2014 and then updated annually. CCMs are encouraged to provide data from periods prior to these dates.</p>	<p>The Secretariat confirms that the CCM submitted information on annual catch levels by its flagged vessels taking SP Albacore, as well as the number of CCM flagged vessels actively fishing for SP Albacore south of 20S, with catch levels reported by species groups.</p>

Annex 2: Reporting by CCMs against paragraphs 1 and 4 of CMM2015-02, and for 2023 has also applied the WCPFC20 definition of “vessels actively fishing for” (as at 3 September 2025)

		CMM 2015-02 Para. 4																			
		2006-2014		2015			2016			2017			2018			2019			2020		
	GEAR	Vessels	Catch	Vessels	Catch by vessel	Catch	Vessels	Catch by vessel	Catch	Vessels	Catch by vessel	Catch	Vessels	Catch by vessel	Catch	Vessels	Catch by vessel	Catch	Vessels	Catch by vessel	Catch
AUSTRALIA	LL	YES	YES	36	YES	585	34	YES	715	36	YES	687	53	YES	608	34	YES	646	34	YES	842
CHINA	LL	YES	YES	70	YES	6,504	76	YES	3,945	63	YES	6,676	37	YES	4,960	81	YES	4,464	35	YES	3,594
COOK ISLANDS	LL	YES	YES	2	YES	58	3	YES	81	11	YES	232	8	YES	371	7	YES	264	6	YES	286
EUROPEAN UNION	LL	YES	YES	4	YES	2	4	YES	0	3	YES	2	3	YES	2	3	YES	2	3	YES	4
FIJI	LL	YES	YES	49	YES	1,498	72	YES	2,572	65	YES	3,456	73	YES	3,538	61	YES	2,518	61	YES	3,083
FRENCH POLYNESIA	LL	YES	Partial	42	YES	518	73	YES	636	53	YES	561	42	YES	275	41	YES	229	48	YES	335
JAPAN	LL	YES	YES	NO	NO	851	2	YES	835	2	YES	974	27	YES	608	27	YES	567	21	YES	952
	PL	NO	NO	NO	YES	0	3	YES	7	2	YES	2	1	YES	39	1	YES	25	0	YES	0
KIRIBATI	LL	---	---	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	YES	16
NEW CALEDONIA	LL	YES	YES	26	YES	1,003	17	YES	1,527	16	YES	1,137	18	YES	1,271	19	YES	1,211	22	YES	1,472
NEW ZEALAND	LL	YES	YES	34	YES	207	32	YES	242	32	YES	189	34	YES	239	28	YES	650	28	YES	165
	TR	YES	YES	139	YES	2,425	137	YES	1,669	115	YES	1,952	148	YES	2,271	145	YES	2,320	142	YES	2,859
NIUE	LL	YES	YES	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
REPUBLIC OF KOREA	LL	NO	NO	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SOLOMON ISLANDS	LL	YES	YES	5	YES	49	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CHINESE TAIPEI	LL	YES	YES	YES	YES	3,264	44	YES	4,947	61	YES	7,517	65	YES	8,393	50	YES	6,057	102	YES	9,255
TONGA	LL	---	---	5	YES	31	4	YES	46	6	YES	22	5	YES	19	6	YES	22	5	YES	12
TUVALU	LL	---	---	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
USA	LL	YES	YES	3	YES	14	2	YES	3	3	YES	7	0	YES	0	0	YES	0	0	YES	0
	TR	YES	YES	7	YES	156	9	YES	300	15	YES	555	12	YES	433	9	YES	876	18	YES	1,912
VANUATU	LL	YES	YES	21	YES	3,132	16	YES	2,262	26	YES	3,792	24	YES	4,549	15	YES	3,449	26	YES	3,518

	CMM 2015-02 Para. 4														CMM 2015-02 Para.1		
	2021			2022			2023				2024						
	Vessels	Catch by vessel	Catch	Vessels	Catch by vessel	Catch	Vessels (actively fishing for)	Adjusted Vessels (NOTES 11)	Catch by vessel	Catch	Vessels (actively fishing for)	Adjusted Vessels (NOTES 11)	Catch by vessel	Catch	# Vessels (avg. 2000-2004)	# Vessels (2005)	NOTES
AUSTRALIA	32	YES	844	33	YES	852	0	18	YES	579	0	15	YES	496		132	5
CHINA	46	YES	2,156	64	YES	6,168	23	22	YES	3,425	53	53	YES	5,173		70	2, 10
COOK ISLANDS	3	YES	184	2	YES	44	2	2	YES	83	1	1	YES	41		n/a	4
EUROPEAN UNION	7	YES	4	7	YES	0	0	0	YES	7	0	0	YES	0		EU - not specified	5
FIJI	56	YES	2,571	45	YES	2,670	47	46	YES	3,135	43	44	YES	4063		n/a	4
FRENCH POLYNESIA	43	YES	292	42	YES	312	41	41	YES	607	27	30	YES	534		n/a	4
JAPAN	23	YES	694	22	YES	745	1	1	YES	682			YES	1070		31	1, 7, 12, 13
	1	YES	227	1	YES	48			-	-		-	-	-		not specified	1, 7
KIRIBATI	4	YES	285	3	YES	145	3	3	YES	38	6	6	YES	230		n/a	4
NEW CALEDONIA	18	YES	1,208	16	YES	1,575	16	16	YES	1,524	10	15	YES	1490		n/a	4
NEW ZEALAND	28	YES	78	22	YES	145	0	16	YES	114	1	2	YES	23		270	5
	151	YES	3,383	135	YES	4,147	92		YES	864	74	74	YES	1321		combined with LL	5
NIUE	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-		n/a	6
REPUBLIC OF KOREA	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-		not specified	6
SOLOMON ISLANDS	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	YES	68			YES	0		n/a	6
CHINESE TAIPEI	32	YES	2,569	27	YES	3,911	34	34	YES	2,610	26	26	YES	3810		81	9
TONGA	4	YES	8	6	YES	26		-	YES	19	0	-	YES	14		n/a	4
TUVALU	1	YES	60	0	YES	0		-	-	-		-	-	-		n/a	4
USA	0	YES	0	0	YES	0	0	-	-	-	0	0	-	-		not specified	3, 5
	21	YES	1,908	18	YES	1,401	10	-	YES	328	4	4	YES	165		not specified	3
VANUATU	30	YES	3,486	10	YES	1,446	10	10	YES	1,516	5	5	YES	1508		n/a	4

NOTES

- Japan provided 2006-2014 vessels and catch according to CMM 2015-02 Para 4. requirements on 31st October 2016. Japan provided 2015-2023 vessels and catch in their April 2024 data submission.
- China provided 2015 vessels and catch according to CMM 2015-02 Para 4. requirements on 4th November 2016.
- USA provided 2006-2014 vessels and catch according to CMM 2015-02 Para 4. requirements on 10th June 2017. USA also provided 2015-2023 vessel catch and vessel numbers.
- Operational data submitted to SPC (as a member country) on a regular basis since 2000 and therefore satisfies the requirement for producing breakdowns of catch and vessel numbers by year.
- Operational data submitted to WCPFC for years 2015-2023 and therefore satisfies the requirement for producing breakdowns of catch and vessel numbers by year.
- These fleets do not appear to have been active in the WCPFC Area south of 20°S for years 2015 onwards.
- Operational data submitted to WCPFC for 2016-2023 and therefore satisfies the requirement for producing breakdowns of catch and vessel numbers by year. Operational data provided for 2015 does not cover the area south of 20°S while there is evidence of catch.
- Cells with 'Partial' mean that coverage of the catch by vessel data was evaluated to be < 80% but > 40%. Cells with 'NO' mean that coverage of the catch by vessel data was evaluated to be < 40%.
- Chinese Taipei provided 2006-2014 vessels and catch according to CMM 2015-02 Para 4. requirements on 31st December 2016. Chinese Taipei also provided 2015 vessel catch and vessel numbers on this date. The 2016 catch has been determined from aggregate catch/effort data provided by Chinese Taipei. The 2017-2023 catch and vessels has been determined from operational data provided to the WCPFC by Chinese Taipei and coastal states.
- Operational data submitted to WCPFC for years 2015-2023, which would normally satisfy the requirement for producing breakdowns of catch and vessel numbers by year, but coverage is not 100%. However, China also provided separate summaries of annual catch by vessel for the WCPFC area south of 20°S (according to CMM 2015-02 Para 4.) which represents 100% coverage.
- WCPFC20 agreed that the term "actively fishing for" used in CMM 2015-02 is applied to: "Vessels fishing south of 20 degrees South with an annual catch of albacore in that area with South Pacific albacore greater than 50% of the catch of potential target tuna (albacore, yellowfin, bigeye, southern bluefin), skipjack and swordfish." The "adjusted vessels" figures consider that a vessel may conduct trip(s) in a certain season where ALB is the predominant part of the catch. In addition, for China and Chinese Taipei, the number of vessels reported as CMM 2015-02 04 were used for RY2023.
- Japan provided 2005 vessels and catch including SBT for 2005 (baseline year) and 2023 on the 27th September 2024. The estimated vessels fishing for albacore in 2005 is yet to be cross-checked.
- Japan does not submit catches of SBT to the WCPFC, and therefore, these figures rely on a separate submission related to this CMM since the definition of actively fishing for was implemented.