



**TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE
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Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia (Hybrid)**

STATEMENT TO TCC21

**WCPFC-TCC21-2025-OP03
21 September 2025**

Submitted by PEW Charitable Trusts



**Statement to the 21st Regular Session of the
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Technical and Compliance Committee
September 23-30, 2025
Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia**

The Pew Charitable Trusts welcomes the opportunity to participate as an observer to the 21st regular session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC). We appreciate the work of the Chair, Members and Secretariat to convene a hybrid meeting and we encourage Members to hasten the adoption of approaches that would provide greater resilience and stability to the region's fisheries. Specifically, we urge Members to:

Advance improvements to port State measures

Effective port State measures minimize the risk of illegally caught fish entering international markets. Since WCPFC adopted CMM 2017-02, more countries around the globe have joined the FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), including several WCPFC Members. However, the WCPFC scheme remains voluntary, and several aspects are not aligned with the effective practices of the PSMA. Only a small proportion of members (9 of 26¹) have designated ports to opt into the measure. **With a review of the measure underway, we ask TCC Members to recommend WCPFC adopt a revised CMM that aligns with the PSMA and:**

- Requires port designation and advance entry requests;
- Allows for authorization and denial of port entry; and
- Ensures effective national coordination and exchange of information to facilitate risk assessment in port.

Aligning the WCPFC measure with the already operational FFA regional electronic PSM framework or adapting the FAO's Global Information Exchange System to meet WCPFC's regional needs, including the requirements of small island developing States, will ensure that illegally caught fish does not reach the market. We also recognize the special requirements of developing States and urge Members to create a fund to assist all remaining Members to opt into the current measure or implement a revised measure as soon as possible.

Ensure that all observer data are used to monitor compliance with CMMs

The compliance monitoring scheme (CMS) is a vital part of the Commission's work to ensure that CMMs are complying with the WCPFC's measures. However, the CMS can only be effective if it is fully carried out each year and utilizes all available information, including VMS data, HSBI and port inspection reports, and data from onboard observers.

¹ <https://www.wcpfc.int/folder/designated-ports>

Recently, there has been discussion on how best to address the current imbalance in observer coverage between the purse seine and longline fleets when reviewing compliance within the CMS. Because of the inability of CCMs to agree on a methodology to sub-sample observer-initiated cases to address this imbalance last year, the aggregate tables, which are used to provide an indicator of potential anomalies in the implementation of obligations by a CCM and identify systemic failures to take flag State action in relation to alleged violations, were not reviewed at TCC20. **This failure to complete the full CMS undermines the Commission’s work, weakens its compliance process, and should not happen again this year.**

We urge TCC Members to:

- Note the concerns raised in [TCC20-2024-09](#) that modifying the CMS to just review a sub-sampled portion of the cases reported by observers would mean that a “substantial proportion of observer-initiated cases are excluded, and that outcomes can vary depending on the issue as well as the effects of random sampling”;
- Note the recommendation in [TCC21-2025-09](#) that “the sub-sampling approach should not be used for monitoring CCM compliance with the WCPFC CMMs”; and
- **Therefore, agree that all observer-related cases shall be utilized to develop the aggregate tables that are reviewed by CCMs during TCC21, ensuring full and accurate information on potential anomalies and compliance trends.**

Support the continued development of an electronic monitoring program

The Commission took an important first step towards improving data collection and transparency when it approved interim EM standards at WCPFC21. We look forward to the continued work of the ERandEM Working Group and its new chair as it carries out the remaining items in its [workplan](#).

We ask TCC Members to recommend that the Working Group prioritize the following items:

- Review and implement the recommendations from the recent [FAO Electronic Monitoring Minimum Standards Harmonization Workshop](#), including clarifying the objectives of the EM program; establishing clear guidelines for data management, security, and interoperability; and requiring annual reporting on domestic EM program implementation, coverage, and compliance;
- Develop an assurance and audit process for domestic EM programs; and
- Consider how the WCPFC Electronic Monitoring program could be best integrated into a comprehensive Commission Monitoring Program, including by working jointly with the IWG-ROP to develop a draft CMM for consideration by the Commission.

Improve the monitoring of transshipment

The large number of transshipments within the WCPFC Convention Area and the lack of updated reporting requirements creates opportunities for unreported and undetected transfers that could be used to launder Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) catch. Further, transfers between vessels that involve crew, bait, and other supplies currently do not have to be reported,

which hampers the ability of the Commission to effectively monitor and detect unauthorized transshipment of fish. **We urge TCC members to recommend that the CMM 2009-06 and the transshipment minimum data fields be amended to require:**

- Reporting on catch quantities on board prior to and post transshipment events to aid verification of catch data and transshipment quantities;
- Submission of information on non-fish transfers involving carrier vessels, such as bunkering, or crew/supply transfer;
- Inclusion of IMO numbers on transshipment observer forms and transshipment declarations; and
- Submission of observer reports on transshipments in the overlap area to both IATTC and WCPFC Secretariats.