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Global Tuna Alliance Statement to WCPFC22

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2025 WCPFC Position Statement

GLOBAL TUNA ALLIANCE

ABOUT US - GLOBAL TUNA ALLIANCE

Global Tuna Alliance (GTA) partners are an inclusive constituency of pre-competitive supply-chain companies and retailers with a substantial interest in improving the sustainability of the tuna sector and are actively committed to supporting GTA campaigns.

As the voice of the tuna market, the Global Tuna Alliance exists to hold decision-makers accountable to businesses, their customers, and all those whose livelihoods depend on a sustainable tuna industry.

OUR CURRENT PARTNERS



TOP LEVEL ASKS

1. Management Procedures and Reference Points

- Adopt the full FFA proposed management procedure and complementary implementing CMM for South Pacific albacore (SPA) tuna.
- Adopt Target Reference Points (TRPs) for bigeye tuna (BET) and yellowfin tuna (YFT).

2. Electronic Monitoring (EM) and Observer Coverage

- Mandate progressive targets towards 100% observer coverage (human and/or electronic) across all industrial tuna fisheries.

3. At-Sea Transshipment Regulation

- Strengthen CMM 2009-06 to eliminate un-monitored transshipment on the high seas by ensuring 100% monitoring coverage or prohibiting any transshipment on the high seas.

4. Bycatch & FAD Management

- Strengthen conservation measures for seabirds, including updating mitigation requirements in high-risk southern areas.
- Adopt measures ensuring all retained sharks are landed with fins naturally attached without exceptions.

MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

What is the issue?

Proactive management is necessary to maintain sustainable stock levels, even where tuna stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean are currently stable. The GTA strategy emphasises the need for precautionary management procedures, which are essential to sustainable sourcing.

What are we calling for?

- **South Pacific Albacore (SPA): We urge the Commission to adopt the proposed comprehensive package for SPA management submitted by FFA members.** This includes adopting the Management Procedure, and the associated Implementing CMM. This Management Procedure is intended to maintain the economic performance of dependent fisheries together with reasonable catch levels and ensure relative stability.
- **Bigeye and Yellowfin Tuna: The GTA calls for the adoption of binding Target Reference Points (TRPs) for bigeye and yellowfin tuna** to support the GTA's environmental sustainability goals.
- The Commission should continue to **accelerate the development and adoption of binding management procedure/s for bigeye and yellowfin tuna to maintain sustainable stock levels.** We support efforts to manage congestion in the workplan, such as aligning the running of the bigeye tuna Management Procedure with the Tropical Tuna Measure review cycle, anticipated to begin in 2027.



ELECTRONIC MONITORING (EM) & OBSERVER COVERAGE STANDARDS

What is the issue?

Observer coverage is crucial for effective fisheries management, compliance monitoring, and independent verification of catch. Limited observer coverage impacts data accuracy and the effectiveness of conservation measures. The GTA's strategic objective prioritises achieving 100% observer coverage. Currently, the WCPFC's minimum 5% observer coverage for longline vessels is inadequate for reliable monitoring and recording of bycatch estimates.

What are we calling for?

- **Set a progressive target to increase observer coverage on longline vessels beyond the minimum 5% requirement**, working towards 100% coverage across all industrial tuna fisheries (human and/or electronic).
- **We note and support the FFA proposal within the SPA Implementing CMM** which mandates minimum monitoring levels for ROP fishing trips in the South Pacific albacore area (south of 10°S). This proposal requires:
 - 10% human observer coverage from January 1, 2027.
 - 30% monitoring coverage (human observer or EM Installation Coverage) from January 1, 2030, provided that human observer coverage remains at a minimum of 10%.
- **Require timely reporting and sharing of EM data across Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs)** to promote greater integration and oversight.



AT-SEA TRANSSHIPMENT REGULATION

What is the issue?

Transshipment at sea can enable Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing if not closely monitored. Enhanced transshipment controls are necessary to improve traceability and accountability in tuna fisheries.

What are we calling for?

- **Eliminate un-monitored transshipment by mandating 100% observer coverage** (human or electronic) on transshipment vessels to independently verify activities and prevent IUU fishing.
- **Require near real-time reporting of transshipment activities**, including vessel details, location, and catch specifics.
- **Ensure that transshipment activities are tracked using AIS and VMS.** Monitoring must be strengthened by including provisions such as requiring continuous, tamper-resistant VMS operation on receiving (carrier) vessels and prior authorisation by the flag State of the offloading fishing vessel for high seas transshipment.
- **Significant improvements to CMM 2009-06 are overdue** to reflect the fundamental principle that un-monitored high seas transshipment must be eliminated. We urge the Commission to strengthen current regulation by treating high seas transshipment as a prohibited activity unless specific and restrictive criteria for determining "impracticability" are rigorously implemented.



BYCATCH & FAD MANAGEMENT

What is the issue?

The use of Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) contributes to bycatch risks and marine litter. Additionally, seabird species, particularly the endangered Antipodean albatross, face accelerating population declines in the WCPFC Convention Area due to fisheries bycatch.

What are we calling for?

- **Seabirds:** We support the strengthening of seabird mitigation measures to reflect up-to-date scientific advice. This includes efforts to extend the required use of at least two mitigation measures (weighted branch lines, night setting, tori lines, or hook-shielding devices) to the area 25° South – 30° South, reflecting that this is critical habitat for threatened species like the Antipodean albatross.
- **Sharks:** Adopt measures to substantially improve observer data collection in longline fisheries and amend CMM 2024-05 to require that all retained sharks be landed with fins naturally attached without exceptions.
- **FADs:** Improve bycatch mitigation by adopting science-based limits on FADs, establishing a timeline for transitioning to 100% biodegradable FADs, facilitating the tracking (and recovery) of abandoned FADs and implementing a FAD marking scheme.





CONTACT

Dr. Wetjens Dimmlich
Advocacy Lead
wetjens@globaltunaalliance.com

Daniel Sudabby
Executive Director
daniel@globaltunaalliance.com
