

### Agenda Item 6.3.1 Participatory Rights of CNMs

#### Panama Updated Statement on Expansion of Participatory Rights 5 December 2025

Distinguished Members,

Panama submits this updated informative document in light of the recent discussions held within the Small Working Group regarding its request to expand its participatory rights within the Commission.

Following the constructive engagement in the Working Group, Panama confirms that, for 2026, it is requesting approval to include one purse-seine vessel under the Panamanian flag. This vessel is already part of the WCPFC Record under the Ecuadorian flag and currently operates exclusively within the EEZs of PNA Members under days allocated by coastal States.

Panama respectfully emphasises that this request does not involve the introduction of new purse-seine capacity. The vessel concerned is already operating in the region under the same allocation framework and licensing conditions that would continue to apply after reflagging. Panama notes that the vessel to be included under its flag will correspond to an existing vessel already operating under these allocations, whether through the direct transfer of the current vessel or, if necessary, through a substitute vessel operating under the same allocation framework. In either case, there is no change to overall capacity, fishing effort, or fishing opportunities.

Should the request be approved, Ecuador will remove the vessel from its fleet, and it will be reflagged to Panama under the same fishing days, licensing terms, and coastal State regulatory conditions. In practical terms, this is not an increase from zero to one vessel; it is a transfer of existing capacity from one flag to another. For this reason, Panama understands that the principles in paragraph 11 of CMM 2019-01 and paragraph 43 of CMM 2023-01—intended to govern the introduction of new capacity—do not apply in this context.

Panama reiterates its full respect for coastal State licensing systems and confirms that all purse-seine activity under the Panamanian flag will remain wholly subject to the allocations, conditions, and national regulations established by the relevant PNA Member, without any modification to the TAE or to allocation frameworks. Throughout this process, Panama has engaged constructively with Ecuador, Kiribati, and other PNA Members to ensure full alignment with their existing arrangements, and Ecuador has formally acknowledged and agreed that the transfer will occur immediately upon approval of these participatory rights.

Panama further reaffirms its longstanding commitment to comply with all applicable conservation and management measures, including observer coverage, scientific data submissions, monitoring and reporting obligations, and the timely fulfillment of all financial contributions. The proposed transition is transparent, orderly, and fully consistent with the Commission's management framework, and it does not alter the balance of existing effort in the region.

In this cooperative spirit, Panama respectfully invites Members to approve the expansion of its participatory rights to include this vessel, enabling it to operate under a responsible, transparent, and fully compliant flag State.