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Updates to the Skipjack Monitoring Strategy from SC21 and TCC21

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Introduction

1. The skipjack management procedure (MP) was adopted by the Commission through [CMM 2022-01](#) and first implemented in 2024 under [CMM 2023-01](#), marking a milestone in the application of harvest strategies for the WCPO purse-seine fishery. As part of the harvest strategy framework, a dedicated *monitoring strategy* guides the regular review of the MP's performance, ensuring that it continues to meet management objectives and remains robust to changing fishery conditions. The monitoring strategy also provides for the identification of data and compliance issues, supports alignment between the MP and the Tropical Tuna CMM, and defines the respective review roles of the Scientific Committee (SC), Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC), and the Commission.
2. At SC21, the Committee reviewed analytical work on the representativeness of pole-and-line CPUE data and the impacts of changes to FAD closure periods. It concluded that the current MP remains valid for its second implementation period and that the 2025 skipjack stock assessment confirms stock depletion near the recalibrated TRP, consistent with MSE projections. SC21 highlighted, however, that the continuing decline in pole-and-line data poses a future risk to the estimation method which should be addressed before the third implementation of the MP. SC21 also recommended advancing work on climate-change scenarios.
3. TCC21, for its part, reviewed catch and effort levels relative to MP outputs and noted that 2024 fishing levels for all fisheries subject to the MP were below the maximum levels specified by the procedure. TCC21 endorsed corresponding updates to the monitoring strategy and emphasized the importance of continued collaboration with the Scientific Services Provider to track effort trends and data quality.
4. Outcomes from SC21 and TCC21 are reflected in **Attachment A** of this paper.

Recommendation

5. WCPFC22 is invited to review and endorse the consolidated updates to the skipjack monitoring strategy and to provide any further guidance or tasking to ensure its continued effectiveness. In particular, the Commission may wish to consider directions for strengthening data inputs to the estimation method, advancing integration of climate-related uncertainties, and maintaining consistency between the MP outputs and the implementation framework under the Tropical Tuna CMM.

Attachment A. Monitoring strategy for the skipjack Management Procedure (CMM 2022-01).

1. Review of MP performance	
a. Comparison of predicted MP performance against latest stock assessment outcomes	
SC	TCC
<p>Regularly review/check the performance and outputs of the MP, including the indicators set out in Annex III of CMM 2022-01 and provide advice to the Commission on:</p> <p>a) The performance of the MP in managing skipjack tuna to achieve defined objectives including the TRP. This includes the robustness of the MP to changes in the fishery and any exceptional circumstances consistent with Annex IV of CMM 2022-01.</p> <p>b) The application of the MP outputs to CMM 2023-01.</p> <p>SC21: The 2025 stock assessment (SC21-SA-WP-02) includes only one year of data (2024) under MP implementation and therefore provides a preliminary measure of the MP's performance. The 2025 stock assessment indicates the recent stock depletion is close to the recalibrated TRP and is within the range expected through the MSE testing of the adopted interim skipjack MP. Projections indicate relative stability of stock depletion in the future when recent (2024) conditions are assumed.</p>	<p>Regularly review/check the performance and outputs of the MP, including the indicators set out in Table 3, Annex III of CMM 2022-01 and provide advice to the Commission on:</p> <p>a) Catch and effort levels for all fisheries subject to the MP relative to maximum levels specified under the most recent output of the MP.</p> <p>b) Identify quality of information and gaps in available data that would affect ability to monitor the implementation of the MP relative to the MP outputs.</p> <p>TCC20: Additional information on relevant catch and effort for the fisheries subject to the MP's will be needed by TCC.</p> <p>TCC21: TCC21 reviewed information prepared by the Scientific Services Provider presenting information about the performance and outputs of the MP, compared to the 2024 levels for three fishery components: Purse seine (incl AW) effort, Pole and line effort, Domestic AW catch (ref: TCC21-2025-IP04_rev1 Table 16). TCC21 noted that the information indicated that in 2024 the catch or effort in the fisheries subject to the SKJ MP were below the levels specified by the MP for 2024-2026. Additional information on the trends between effort and catch in the PS fishery, including effort creep will be needed by TCC.</p>

b. Data availability to run the MP	
SC	TCC
<p>Check availability, quantity and quality of data necessary to run the MP (e.g. the estimation method)</p> <p>SC19: Sufficient data were available to run the MP. However, declining effort in the pole and line fishery in some regions (e.g. tropical region) and consequent reduction of informative CPUE data represents a risk to the future performance of the MP.</p> <p>SC20: The effect of changes made to the historical data is not known.</p> <p>SC21: Analyses (SC21-MI-WP-01) indicate that the current MP remains valid in the short-term, for at least the second implementation of the MP. In the longer-term, degradation of data used in the MP estimator remains a risk which should be addressed before the third implementation of the MP.</p>	<p>Check availability, quantity and quality of data necessary to run the MP (e.g. the estimation method)</p> <p>TCC20: No new information TCC21: No new information</p>
c. Other sources of data to monitor performance	
SC	TCC
<p>Identify any other data, as available, that might not be included in the MSE framework, that can inform on performance indicators (economic, social, ecosystem, etc.)</p> <p>SC21: No other sources of data have been identified.</p>	<p>Identify any other data, as available, that might not be included in the MSE framework, that can inform on performance indicators (economic, social, ecosystem, etc.)</p> <p>TCC20: No new information TCC21 No new information</p>
d. Performance of the estimation method (EM)	
SC	TCC
<p>Confirm the EM is performing well and not subject to estimation failure.</p> <p>SC19: Overall the EM performed well and provided estimates of stock status within the prediction range of the MSE.</p>	<p>No input anticipated.</p>

2. Review of the MP design	
a. Management objectives	
SC	TCC
No input anticipated.	No input anticipated.
b. Scope of the management procedure	
SC	TCC
Confirm the fisheries controlled by the MP, and the method of control, remains appropriate SC21: No new information	Confirm the fisheries controlled by the MP, and the method of control, remains appropriate TCC20 No new information TCC21: No new information
c. Exceptional circumstances	
SC	TCC
Provide technical advice to identify the occurrence of exceptional circumstances (see CMM 2022-01 Annex IV) and review, modify or replace the MP as appropriate. SC21: None identified.	Provide technical advice to identify exceptional circumstances (see CMM 2022-01 Annex IV) and recommend remedial action where necessary. TCC20: No new information TCC21: No new information
3. Review of MSE	
a. Operating model grid	
SC	TCC
Ensure the most important sources of uncertainty are included in the OM grid. SC19: OM grid to be extended to include climate change scenarios (robustness set). In particular the effects of warm pool expansion in the WCPO. This requires further analysis of SEAPODYM outputs and may occur over an extended time frame. Medium priority Further investigation of the OM grid is suggested to investigate the lack of overlap in estimates of stock status for the historical	No input anticipated.

<p>period. These issues will be considered for inclusion when the current MP is reviewed.</p> <p>Low priority</p> <p>SC21: The impact of changes to the FAD closure period on the expected performance of the WCPO skipjack tuna MP were evaluated (SC21-MI-WP-02). It was determined that the FAD closure period had very little impact on the performance of the skipjack MP.</p> <p>SC21: The ongoing need to consider climate change impacts within the Skipjack MP operating model set were noted.</p>	
b. Calculation of performance indicators	
SC	TCC
<p>Check that performance indicators adequately represent management objectives</p> <p>SC21: No new information at the time of SC21.</p>	No input anticipated.
c. Modelling assumptions	
SC	TCC
<p>Consider the technical details of the simulation and testing framework.</p> <p>SC21: No issues identified at the time of SC21.</p>	No input anticipated.
d. Data availability to support the MSE framework	
SC	TCC
Identify any improvements in data collection to either enhance the OM framework or reduce uncertainty included in the OM grid.	No input anticipated.