



TO ALL COMMISSION MEMBERS, COOPERATING NON-MEMBERS,
PARTICIPATING TERRITORIES AND OBSERVERS

Circular No.: 2026/04

Date: 27 January 2026

No. pages: 2

Subject: Informal Intersessional Working Group on the Review of WCPFC's Sea Turtle Measure (CMM 2018-04)

Dear All,

CCMs and Observers will recall that at WCPFC22, the Commission endorsed the formation of an informal intersessional working group to review CMM 2018-04 on sea turtles, and to report back to SC22, TCC22, and WCPFC23. The Commission also agreed that the United States would lead this work.

I draw your attention to the attached note from the two leads of the informal intersessional work and the proposed arrangements for a two-day virtual workshop on **8 and 10 April 2026 from 10am to 2pm (Pohnpei time)**. Further details about the review, including relevant documents and registration, will be available on the relevant webpage of the WCPFC website in due course.

Questions and requests for additional information can be directed to yonat.swimmer@noaa.gov and emily.crigler@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rhea'.

Rhea Moss-Christian
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Informal Intersessional Working Group to Review WCPFC Conservation and Management Measure for Sea Turtles (CMM 2018-04)

Two-Day Virtual Intersessional Workshop

- **Session 1: April 8th, 2026 - 10:00am to 2:00pm Pohnpei time**
- **Session 2: April 10th, 2026 - 10:00am to 2:00pm Pohnpei time**

At WCPFC21, the Commission agreed to review and revise the WCPFC Conservation and Management Measure for Sea Turtles (CMM, 2018-04) in 2026, to ensure that the reporting requirements are clearly defined and to consider expanding the scope of the measure for consideration by SC22, TCC22 and WCPFC23 (WCPFC21 Summary Report, Para. 204). At WCPFC22, the Commission endorsed the formation of an informal intersessional working group, led by the United States, to review CMM 2018-04 in 2026 and report back to SC22, TCC22, and WCPFC23 (WCPFC22 Provisional Meeting Outcomes, Para. 16).

To facilitate this review, the United States will lead a two-day virtual workshop to include presentations and discussions related to the following topics:

Session 1: April 8th, 2026 - 10:00am to 2:00pm Pohnpei time (with 30 min break)

- An overview of CMM-2018-04, including sea turtle measures within other tuna RFMOs;
- An overview of sea turtle population ranges and status within the WCPO, biological factors that render them vulnerable to various threats, including fisheries;
- Review of overlap between sea turtles and WCPFC fisheries in the WCPO, including fisheries effort by gear type;
- Review of sea turtle bycatch mitigation methods;
- Review of best handling and release practices on survival.

Session 2: April 10th, 2026 - 10:00am to 2:00pm Pohnpei time (with 30 min break)

- An overview of sea turtle bycatch mitigation methods, primarily in longline fisheries;
- Discussion of measures to further mitigate the impacts on sea turtles in the WCPO, including potential for break out groups to encourage wide participation;
- Discussion of current sea turtle data reporting requirements, including potential edits to ensure clear and consistent interpretation of those requirements.

Workshops will include presentations from invited experts as well as opportunities for CCMs to present their own work.

The outcomes of these workshops will be presented for consideration by SC22, TCC22 and WCPFC23. Other considerations, such as the potential cost to implement new or revised mitigation requirements, will be considered in association with any proposed revisions to CMM 2018-04 and in consultation with those CCMs that may be impacted.

If you are interested in presenting work, or if you have additional questions or requests, please reach out to yonat.swimmer@noaa.gov and emily.crigler@noaa.gov.