



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

Circular No.: 2026/31

Date: 19 March 2026

No. pages: 4

Subject: Update on draft agenda for First informal intersessional meeting for the review of CMM 2018-04 Sea Turtles (STIIWG01)

Dear All,

Further to [Circular 2026-04](#) dated 27 January 2026, the attached annotated **draft** agenda is circulated at the request of the leads of the informal intersessional working group on the review of WCPFC's sea turtle measure ([CMM 2018-04](#)) (STIIWG01). The document is also available on the dedicated WCPFC [meeting webpage](#).

The draft annotated agenda will be further revised to include additional information on designated speakers and any further relevant references. Participants are encouraged to register as early as possible to receive updates and notifications regarding the [meeting](#).

For any questions, please direct them to yonat.swimmer@noaa.gov and emily.crigler@noaa.gov.

Yours Sincerely,

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

Rhea Moss-Christian
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



First Informal Intersessional Working Group Meeting (STIIWG01)

Review of CMM 2018-04 (Sea Turtles)

8 and 10 April 2026 (Pohnpei) | 10 AM-2PM

Virtual Meeting

Annotated *Draft* Agenda

STIIWG01-2026-01

19 March 2026

Session 1: April 8th, 2026

1. Meeting Objectives

Commission at WCPFC21 agreed to review & revise CMM 2018-04 (sea turtles) to:

- Consider expanding the scope / strengthen the measure (e.g., mitigation measures for deep-set longline fisheries);
- Ensure the reporting requirements for sea turtles are clearly defined to improve sea turtle bycatch estimates.

For consideration by SC22, TCC22, and WCPFC23.

[\[References: 2,3,12,13\]](#)

2. Summary of current sea turtle conservation measures

Current mitigation requirements in CMM-2018-04 and issues to be addressed during the current review, including discussion of similar measures within other tuna RFMOs.

[\[References: 2,3,5,8\]](#)

3. Overview of sea turtle population ranges and status within the WCPO

Review of sea turtle population ranges and status within the WCPO, discussion of biological factors that render them vulnerable to various threats, including fisheries.

[\[References: 2,11,15,17\]](#)

4. Overview of Sea turtle bycatch in WCPO fisheries

Knowledge of turtle bycatch in WCPO, including information on gear types, fisheries effort (deep and shallow sets), post release survival (mortality), impacts to populations, etc.

[References: 2,4,6,8,9,11,14]

5. Review of sea turtle bycatch mitigation methods and research

Review sea turtle bycatch mitigation methods and research related to bycatch mitigation methods in longline fisheries, including factors influencing post-release survival.

[References: 1,2,4,6,8,10,14,16,18]

Session 2: April 10th, 2026

6. Brief overview of discussion of Session 1

7. Review of sea turtle bycatch mitigation methods (continued)

Review sea turtle bycatch mitigation methods and research related to bycatch mitigation methods in longline fisheries, including factors influencing post-release survival.

[References: 1,2,4,6,8,10,14,16,18]

8. Review of best handling and release practices

Review of currently understood best handling and release practices to increase post-release survival of sea turtles.

[References:5,7,8]

9. Review current CMM 2018-04 data reporting requirements

Discuss current sea turtle data reporting requirements included in CMM 2018-04 and discuss potential modifications to ensure requirements are clearly defined.

(Note: At WCPFC20 the Commission recommended that SC20 and TCC20 review the SciData requirements to capture turtle interaction reporting requirements under CMM 2018-04, paragraphs 5c and 7e [WCPFC20 Summary Report, Para 753e.]. SC20 noted a lack of clarity whether the paragraphs require reporting through submission of operational level data or in a summary form, and suggested TCC and the Commission clarify these requirements).

[References: 3,12,13]

5. CCMs input on potential modifications to CMM 2018-04 and data reporting requirements
10. Concluding remarks and next steps

References for CMM 2018 Review
(*indicates directly relevant to workshop)

1. *Boggs, Swimmer 2007. [Developments \(2006-2007\) in scientific research on the use of modified fishing gear to reduce longline bycatch of sea turtles. | WCPFC Meetings.](#)
2. *Clark 2017. [Joint Analysis of Sea Turtle Mitigation Effectiveness.](#)
3. *CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF SEA TURTLES CMM 2018-04. <https://cmm.wcpfc.int/measure/cmm-2018-04>.
4. Dunn et al 2024. [Characterising surface longline fishing fleet behaviour in relation to leatherback bycatch: csp reports.](#)
5. FAO 2009. [Guidelines to reduce sea turtle mortality in fishing operations.](#)
6. Finucci, Dunn 2024. [AEBR 345 Post-release survival for leatherback turtles caught in New Zealand surface longline fisheries](#)
7. *Hutchinson et al. 2025. [Best-handling-and-release-practice-guidelines-\(BHRP\) for sea turtles IATTC -Doc EB-03-05 REV.](#)
8. *Langford et al 2025: [Sea turtle bycatch mitigation and circle hook workshop review paper.](#)
9. Lewison et al 2014. [Global patterns of marine mammal, seabird, and sea turtle bycatch reveal taxa-specific and cumulative megafauna hotspots.](#)
10. Peat et al 2024. [Literature Review of Soak Period Bycatch Mitigation Measures for New Zealand's Surface Longline Fleet New Zealand Department of Conservation](#)
11. *Pilcher 2021. [Review of the Status of Sea Turtles in the Pacific Ocean 2021.](#)
12. *SPC 2025. [Sea turtles data reporting req WCPFC-SC21-2025/ST-WP-05. SC21-ST-WP-05.pdf](#)
13. *SPC 2023. [An update on the status of aggregate catch/effort and size composition data available to the SCTB - WCPFC-SC19-ST-WP-01 Data Gaps \(FINAL - rev3\).pdf](#)
14. Swimmer et al 2017. [Sea Turtle Bycatch Mitigation in U.S. Longline Fisheries](#)
15. *SWOT REPORT VOLUME XXI. State of the World's Sea Turtles. Sea Turtles and Tradition in the Pacific Islands pages 16-28. [SWOT Report Vol XXI](#)
16. Van Wert et al 2025. [Hawai'i's pelagic longline fishery demonstrates the need to consider multispecies impacts in bluewater time-area closures.](#)
17. Wallace et al. 2023. [Marine turtle regional management units 2.0: an updated framework for conservation and research of wide-ranging megafauna species.](#)
18. *Yan, Zhou et al 2025. [A Meta-Analysis of Bycatch Mitigation Methods for Sea Turtles Vulnerable to Swordfish and Tuna Longline Fisheries - Yan - 2025](#)