



**FISHERIES MANAGEMENT IN THE WESTERN & CENTRAL  
PACIFIC FISHERIES CONVENTION AREA  
ROLES FOR ENGOs AND CSOs**

Quality Inn  
Honiara  
Solomon Islands  
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**SUMMARY RECORD AND OUTCOMES**

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## **Glossary of Acronyms**

ANCORS	Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security
CROP	Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific
DWFNs	Distant water fishing nations
EAFM	Ecosystem approach to fisheries management
EBFM	Ecosystem based fisheries management
EBM	Ecosystem based management
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
eNGO	Environmental non-government organization
FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
FFC	Forum Fisheries Committee
FFVs	Foreign fishing vessels
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
FSPI	Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GDP	Gross domestic product
IATTC	Inter American Tropical Tuna Commission
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
IUU	Illegal, unregulated, and unreported
LOSC	Law of the Sea Convention
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Marine protected area
NFA	National Fisheries Authority (PNG)
NGO	Non-government organisation
OFP	Oceanic Fisheries Programme
PCC	Pacific Conference of Churches
PCRC	Pacific Concerns Resource Centre
PETS	Protected, endangered, and threatened species
PICs	Pacific island countries
PNA	Parties to the Nauru Agreement
PNG	Papua New Guinea
RFMO	Regional Fishery Management Organizations
SDA	Seventh Day Adventist
SOI	Southern Oscillation Index
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community

SWOT	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
UNFSA	United Nations Fish Stock Agreement
US	United States
USP	The University of the South Pacific
VDS	Vessel day scheme
VMS	Vessel monitoring system
WCP	Western and Central Pacific
WCPF	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries
WCPO	Western and Central Pacific Ocean
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WWF SPP	World Wide Fund for Nature South Pacific Programme

## **SUMMARY RECORD AND OUTCOMES**

### **1. Introductory remarks**

Mrs Judith Siota opened the meeting with a prayer. Seremaia Tuqiri WWF SPP Fisheries Policy Officer welcomed participants, noting the significance of the meeting given the sustainability challenges currently facing the tuna industry in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO), and the potentially valuable role NGOs and CSOs could play in helping achieve effective management.

The workshop facilitator, Ian Cartwright, outlined some of the key objectives of the workshop, noting that:

- i. tuna resources in the WCPO were vital to the economies of a number of Pacific island countries (PICs), and of great significance to most others;
- ii. their sustainable use was vital to maintaining levels of benefits to communities at all levels, and that NGOs had a clear place in working towards ensuring that there was awareness within communities of the key issues associated with oceanic fisheries and their management;
- iii. the first key goal of the workshop was to provide baseline knowledge concerning oceanic tuna fisheries including: key tuna species, bycatch species and their place in the broader ecosystem; and current management arrangements, with an emphasis on the WCP Fisheries Commission;
- iv. the second goal was to identify what future roles NGOs could have in improving oceanic fisheries management and how best that role could be supported through effective channels of communication; and
- v. that it would be important for the workshop to ensure that ongoing action is taken and that it is not a 'one off' exercise in engaging NGOs and CSOs

Participants provided self introductions. A list of participants is provided at **Attachment 1** to this record. The agenda is provided as **Attachment 2**. During the course of the workshop the agenda was modified to meet the needs of participants.

### **2. Understanding the resource and its habitat**

Ian Cartwright provided a presentation on behalf of the Oceanic Fisheries Programme (OFP) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) provided a presentation on the biological/scientific aspects of the WCPO fishery. SPC provide technical support and expertise for fisheries (and other programmes) to 26 members and Donors in the WCPO. The talk was structured in three parts:

- i. The WCPO oceanographic environment
- ii. Oceanic fisheries resources and fisheries of the WCPO
- iii. Assessments, Fishing, Interactions and Issues

## 2.1 The WCPO oceanographic environment

The following key points were made:

- The region is subject to complex and broad-scale oceanographic processes incorporating both long and short term cycles. The impact of climate change on these processes is unclear.
- *El Niño* (warming events) and *La Niña* oceanic conditions (as indexed by the southern oscillation index, SOI) influence water temperature in the Pacific Ocean, which in turn influences the distribution and local abundances of tuna.
- *El Niño* events result in warm water from the ‘warm pool’ being located towards the centre of the Pacific, while *La Niña* events results in a contraction of the warm pool to western equatorial regions, and a westward extension of the ‘cold tongue’ (cooler water from the Eastern Pacific up-welling system). Changes in the oceanic environment as indexed by the SOI influence the distributions and local abundances of tunas in the WCPO.
- Since 1950 there have been 14 *El Niño* events and these have been shown to be closely related to tuna catches in the waters of PICs.
- The oceanic environment is far from just a uniform ocean – in addition to the dramatic changes driven by *El Niño* / *La Niña* events, there are also local upwellings, temperature anomalies and ecosystems associated with seamounts.
- While global climate and oceanographic change are beyond the control of fishery managers they can (and should) be taken into account in management and planning of WCPO oceanic fisheries.

## 2.2 Oceanic fisheries resources and fisheries of the WCPO

The following key points were made:

### *General*

- The species mix in the WCPO fishery is very diverse; observers have recorded 279 species and 79 species ‘groups’.
- The key target species of the commercial oceanic fisheries of the WCPO are the four key species of tuna (bigeye, yellowfin, skipjack, albacore), as key billfish species (e.g. swordfish, blue marlin, striped marlin). 2007 Provisional estimates of catches of tuna in the WCPO, by species, in 2007 were:
  - Skipjack : 1,726,702 mt (72%; record; ↑)
  - Yellowfin : 431,814 mt (18% ; stable )
  - Bigeye : 143,059 mt (6% ; ↑ 2<sup>nd</sup> highest)
  - Albacore : 95,240 mt (4%; ↓ )
- A range of other species also contributes to the retained commercial catches, including wahoo, mahimahi and opah. Some species of sharks are also targeted for meat and fins.

- A range of species captured by oceanic tuna fisheries are not retained (i.e. bycatch). Bycatch species include other species of fish, sharks and rays and some protected and endangered species including turtles, seabirds and mammals.
- Generally, fishers attempt to avoid bycatch for commercial reasons i.e. they have no wish to lose time, money (e.g. lost bait, lost opportunities to catch target species) and effort on a catch that has no commercial value. A range of bycatch mitigation strategies and technologies are being applied to commercial fishing vessels in the WCPO.

#### *Bycatch*

- Not much is known about billfish, but they are significant for game fishing and some commercial longlining. Many stocks are thought to be close to being fully exploited (e.g. south-west pacific swordfish and striped marlin; Pacific-wide blue marlin).
- Apart from north Pacific blue shark which is not thought to be overfished, the status of other shark stocks remains unknown. However, the biology of many species (e.g. they produce relatively few young (low fecundity), high age at first maturity, long-lived) makes them vulnerable to over-exploitation by commercial fisheries. In addition, shark fin is a highly valuable commodity and the demand for fins is increasing world-wide. Some licensed shark (longline) fisheries exist in some countries within the WCPO.
- Seabird-fisheries interactions and mortalities are a major issue for longline fisheries operating in latitudes north of 20°N and south of 30°S. However, since 1998 fewer than 100 seabird mortalities per year have been estimated for longline fisheries operating between 15°N and 30°S in the WCPO. There have been no observed mortalities of seabirds as a result of purse-seine fishing in the WCPO.
- There have been very few mortalities of marine mammals due to longline or purse-seine fishing activities in the WCPO, with less than 10 total mortalities estimated as a result of longline fishing since 1998. Depradation (whales taking hooked fish from longlines) is a perceived issue, especially in sub-equatorial countries of the WCPO.
- Due to their endangered status, turtles are an issue for longline fishing, but there have been declining mortalities in recent years due to efforts to increase awareness and promote better handling.
- Low levels of observer coverage of the longline fleet (less than 1% of all fishing activities are covered by an observer) is hampering efforts to get a better understanding of the impact of tuna fishing on bycatch species and other species in the WCPO.

#### *Fishing methods*

- There are three main methods of tuna fishing which together account for a catch of around 2 million tones per annum from the WCPO.
- In 2007 Provisional catch estimates, total and by gear, in the WCPFC were:
  - Total Catch – 2,396,815 mt (record; 5% ↑ )
  - Purse seine – 1,739,859 mt (73% ; record)

- Longline – 232,388 mt (10% ; ↓ )
  - Pole-and-line – 214,935 mt (9% ; provisional)
  - Other – (8%)
- **Purse seine fishing is** based on large (e.g. 1,500m long 200–400m deep) surrounding nets set on the surface to catch surface swimming, schooling tuna – most of which are skipjack. However, significant catches of mainly small, juvenile yellowfin and bigeye tunas are also made by this fishery in the WCPO.
  - Around 60% of the WCPO catch is taken by purse seines, which also take small yellowfin and bigeye that swim in schools with skipjack.
  - Purse seines are either used to surround schools of fish associated with floating objects (Fish Aggregating Devices – FADs, logs) or free swimming schools at the surface.
  - Purse seine fishing occurs mostly in equatorial waters (10°N-10°S) while longlining is carried out throughout the Pacific, with albacore targeted in higher latitudes.
  - FAD fishing has strong implications for increased catches of bigeye, yellowfin and bycatch species and management measures are being developed at the Commission to deal with this.
  - **Longline fishing** is based on individual hooks attached to long lines (up to typically greater than 30 km long) suspended from floats – it is an extensive method of fishing targeting large tuna (yellowfin, bigeye and albacore) below the surface.
  - Longlining is very significant for some Pacific Island countries, especially those in Polynesian states, and small-scale domestic longline fleets have developed in many countries of the WCPO since the mid 1990s.
  - **Pole and line fishing** uses bait and poles to take individual fish (skipjack and some yellowfin), one at a time from surface schools – it is not an efficient way of catching fish (relative to purse seines) and has declined as a fishing method in the WCPO. Many PICs had pole and line fleets, including Solomon Islands, but they now no longer operate. Japan maintains a major distant water pole and line fleet.

### 2.3 Assessments, Fishing, Interactions and Issues

#### *General*

- The big management issues are currently around the status of the target tuna species, especially the status of stocks of yellowfin and bigeye tunas, which support fisheries throughout the WCPO, and the development aspirations of PICs.
- Interactions with protected, endangered and threatened species (PETS) are also important and are currently being addressed at WCPFC and country levels.
- It should be noted that the Scientific Committee has recommended that the fishing effort on bigeye and yellowfin tunas needs to be reduced (by approximately 25% and 10%, respectively) to reduce effort to levels that would achieve a maximum sustainable yield into the future. If these reductions are achieved, there are likely

to be reduced fishery impacts on all other species that interact with commercial tuna fisheries in the WCPO, including reduced impacts on PETS.

- Recent agreements at the Commission (December 2009) to implement (or consider) key management measures including 100% observer coverage, a 3 month FAD closure, a ban on discarding and a series of high seas closure will made a significant contribution to reducing the impacts of fishing on bigeye tuna.

#### *Status of key stocks*

- The purpose of stock assessments is to determine the biological health of fish stocks and determine how much biomass can be removed without threatening its long-term sustainability.
- **Skipjack** is generally considered to be healthy with catches of 1.7 million mt across the entire WCPO. Fishing mortality levels have increased but still modest relative to the stock's biological potential. Recent catch levels are sustainable with continued high levels of recruitment
- A key issue is that the purse-seine fishery for skipjack also catches small and juvenile yellowfin and bigeye and large, adult yellowfin – both yellowfin and bigeye stocks are experiencing overfishing (too much effort).
- **Yellowfin** The WCPO yellowfin tuna fishery can be considered to be fully exploited. Both the 2006 and 2007 assessments indicate that there is a high probability that overfishing is occurring but the stock is not in an overfished state.
- **Bigeye** is also experiencing overfishing (too much effort) and the Scientific Committee has recommended a 25% reduction in fishing mortality, noting that as with yellowfin, fishing impacts in the equatorial WCPO have been increasing over recent years and more urgent management actions may be required for this area.
- **Albacore** was previously generally considered to be healthy and to be fished at relatively low levels of exploitation relative to the stock's potential. The southern albacore fishery mainly captures only the larger and older fish, which make up a minor proportion of the total stock. While removal of this proportion of the stock is *biological* sustainable, increased effort on this small proportion of the stock could result in local depletion reducing catch rates and resulting in *economic* problems.
- Very substantial structural changes made to the latest assessment (due to new information and data available to scientists) have resulted in significant changes to model outputs has resulted in lower levels of stock size and maximum sustainable
- Yield. Due to the uncertainty regarding the sustainability of the South Pacific albacore stock and the SC recommended that catches of South Pacific albacore remain at current levels

#### *Management actions*

- It is clear that continued management action needs to be taken now to reduce the current levels of fishing effort on yellowfin and bigeye (i.e. to reduce or eliminate overfishing).
- Management actions are focussed on addressing key problem areas – FAD fishing for juvenile bigeye and yellowfin and longline fishing for bigeye.

- Decisions on management measures will have clear implications for different fishing methods and will require careful balancing so as to not unduly disadvantage the various interested parties at the Commission, including the PICs.

### **3. The Tuna Fisheries – Commercial Issues**

Mr Steve Shanks of the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) provided a presentation on the commercial issues associated with the WCPO tuna fisheries. The following key points were made:

#### *Forum Fisheries Agency*

- The FFA, based in Honiara, Solomon Islands was established in 1979 and currently has 17 members – 15 Pacific PICs plus Australia and New Zealand.
- While FFA’s original role was in controlling the operations of Foreign Fishing Vessels (FFVs) and maximizing the benefits from these operations, over time greater emphasis has been placed on assisting members to develop their own oceanic fishing industries.
- FFA provides a range of services to its members, based on four key areas: economics and marketing (including advice on prices, markets etc); fisheries management (including assistance with fisheries management, advice on Commission issues etc); monitoring, control and surveillance (including running registers of the vessel monitoring system and vessels in ‘good standing’); and legal and treaty services (US and FSM Treaties and advice on national fisheries legislation).

#### *Commercial significance of tuna fisheries*

- The WCPO fishery is the most significant in the world with catches of around two million tonnes per annum, and accounting for around 50% of the global tuna catch.
- There are about 300 industrial-scale tuna vessels based in the region, including 26 purse seiners, 32 pole/ line vessels, and about 200 longliners - annual expenditures by these locally based vessels approach US\$150 million.

#### *Fishing agreements*

- Under the Law of the Sea Convention (LOSC) and the supplementary United Nations Fish Stocks agreement (UNFSA), coastal states, including the PICs were provided with a wide range of rights and obligations to explore, exploit, conserve and manage the living marine resources in their waters.
- Among the sovereign rights to manage living resources within 200nm awarded to PICs under the LOSC is the ability to bring in other Parties to harvest the resource where they are unable to harvest the resources themselves.
- As a result of the right to bring in other parties, fishing access agreements of two main types were developed - Government/industry agreements; and Government/enterprise agreements.
- These often operate in conjunction with the government to government arrangements that generally outline principles surrounding access (i.e. can board a vessel at any time, must operate consistent with the laws of that

country when fishing within the EEZ etc); while the Government to fishing industry agreements detail the specifics of access including fees, permitted gear and restrictions etc.

- The most common access agreements are bilateral agreements with the traditional Distant Water Fishing Nations (DWFNs) of Japan, China, Korea, Philippines and Taiwan.
- There is one major multilateral agreement between the US and FFA members (US Treaty) that allows access to the US fleet access to PICs waters, of up to 40 purse seine vessels for an annual fee of US\$21 million.
- One other form of access agreement exists – the Federated States of Micronesia Arrangement for Regional Fisheries Access (the FSM Arrangement) which was set up to enable locally based vessels to fish in the waters of parties to the agreement, thus creating employment and generating revenue for PICs instead of the income generated from fishing activities within PIC EEZs going offshore.

#### *Significance of fisheries to the region*

- Tuna fisheries are a major source of employment, with over 10,000 Pacific Islanders employed on vessels and in tuna processing plants. Total direct and in-direct tuna-related employment is estimated to be between 5-8% (21,000 – 31,000) of all wage employment in the region, and tuna canneries alone employ 5 percent of all formally employed women in the region.

#### *The future*

- For future development in the region – FFA members are generally looking at mechanisms to retain the revenue generated from tuna fishing operations in-country.
- The most obvious way to do this is to develop domestic fleets with local investment so the money generated remains within the region.
- The best example of where this has been done is with PNG where access to its EEZ is directly linked to onshore activity and investment, including processing (canneries).

#### **4. Fisheries Management**

The workshop facilitator, Ian Cartwright, provided an overview of the key principles of fisheries management.

It was noted that without management, fisheries will continue to experience overfishing (too much effort) and stocks would likely become overfished (reducing the biomass of fish below that needed to produce maximum catches) and depleted, as a result of their being a ‘common property’ asset. To deal with this concern, a range of fisheries management strategies were discussed based on either controlling inputs (e.g. the number of boats) or outputs (e.g. the amount of catch taken).

Steve Shanks then provided an overview of fisheries management issues in the WCPO, drawing attention to the following points:

- The WCPO fishery is very complex consisting of a large geographical area, and a fishery that is multi jurisdictional and multi-gear, targeting a number of highly migratory species.
- There is strong interaction between fishing gears, with a limited ability for fishing activities to discriminate between species – e.g. purse seiners taking large catches of small bigeye.
- It is estimated that 25% of the catch is taken in an area where limited ability exists to control and monitor fishing activities (e.g. Indonesia and Philippines).
- PICs have always had the right to manage the resources in their own EEZs and through sub-regional agreements such as the Palau Arrangement, cooperatively within the zones of parties to the agreements.
- Generally, management initiatives in PICs have two major purposes: to ensure the long term sustainability of the resource and maximise economic returns to the states in whose waters the fish are caught.
- In-zone management for the purse seine fishery is now moving to the control of the number of days spent fishing using the purse seine method – the so-called Vessel Days Scheme (VDS) which is currently under implementation—there is no PIC regional arrangement for managing longline effort.
- The VDS will control fishing, while creating a mechanism for potentially increasing the value of fishing opportunities in PICs waters (due to a limited available of days and tradability).
- Access arrangements, both bilateral and multilateral control fishing by DWFNs.
- With the establishment of the Commission under the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific, there is now a body whose responsibility is to ensure the sustainable management of oceanic resources throughout the WCPO, including areas of high seas.
- The Commission has already agreed to a number of resolutions and measures aimed at addressing key areas of conservation and management concern (bigeye and yellowfin, sharks, seabirds etc.).

### **Sub-regional management arrangements**

Mr Pio Manoa, Legal Officer at the FFA provided a brief overview of sub-regional arrangements and activities associated with the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) and raised a number of significant points of interest.

- The waters of the PNA Group, which include Papua New Guinea, dominate the area 10° N to 10° S, which is the equatorial area where 90% of the tuna in the WCPO are taken. This affords the group considerable political and economic influence over the tuna fishery, and in particular the purse seine sector.
- The Nauru Agreement Concerning Cooperation in the Management of Fisheries of Common Interest (Nauru Agreement) was established 1982 and

comprises eight member countries. These are: FSM, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu.

- The Nauru Agreement has been given effect through three implementing agreements (IAs):
  - 1983 IA – Regional Register and Licensing (Minimum) Terms and Conditions.
  - 1990 IA – Requirement for transshipment in port, high seas catch reports and logbooks, and requirements for observers.
  - 2008 IA – Major fisheries management initiatives – Catch retention, FAD closures, high pocket closures, 100% observer coverage and VMS on at all times.
- In November 1997 the PNA group established the Palau Arrangement which: regulates purse seine fishing effort, including vessel numbers by size, carrying capacity, operation type, fishing power, and technological capability; allocates licence limits for PS vessels; and establishes closed areas and closed seasons.
- The Palau Arrangement based on regulating vessel numbers was replaced by the Vessel Day Scheme (VDS) which came into operation on 1 December 2007. The VDS now into its second Management Year (1 January to 31 December 2009).
- Again in November 1997, the PNA group established the FSM Agreement which: promotes participation by nationals of the Parties in the PS fishery; assists the development of national fisheries industries of the Parties; provides a licensing regime which gives preferential treatment to PS vessels of the Parties; and establishes and enforces agreed criteria to ensure only those fishing operations which are genuine and quantifiable are eligible for a Regional Access Licence (RAL). A RAL allows vessels to freely move between the waters of FSM countries, paying a single agreed (preferential) rate of access fees.
- There are currently 25 FSM vessels (Jan.09)
  - 1 Kiribati flagged
  - 4 FSM flagged
  - 5 Marshall Islands flagged
  - 13 Vanuatu flagged, home Party PNG
  - 2 China flagged, home Party PNG

## **5. WCPF Convention and Commission**

Pio Manoa provided a background and overview of the WCPF Convention and Commission. Attention was drawn to the following points:

- The history of oceans governance goes back a considerable period of time. For many years the debate about the open or closed nature of the seas raged between the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. In addition, it was felt that the seas were inexhaustible in that they could withstand almost any level of fishing without having an impact on the sustainability of fisheries resources.

- A series of United Nations conferences on the law of the sea (UNCLOS I-III) were completed between 1958 and 1982. UNCLOS III is considered to have established the “Constitution” for the Ocean; by determining the breadth of territorial sea as 12 nautical miles; creating a regime for archipelagic States; creating Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs); and maintaining the freedom of fishing on the high seas.
- The Freedom of Fishing is enshrined in UNCLOS III, (Article 87(1)(e) LOSC) States have the right to fish on the high seas subject to: Treaty obligations and the rights, duties and interests of coastal States as provided for under the EEZ regime.
- A number of problems with the High Seas Provisions of UNCLOS III were identified including: The lack of cooperation among States whose nationals fish on the high seas; lack of control of nationals; no specific flag State responsibilities over fishing activities of its vessels; increased subsidies by fishing nations, over-reporting of high seas catch and increased high seas fishing at the edges (reported) of EEZs.
- After the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, states agreed to move to address these problems and negotiated and agreed the UN Implementing Agreement (UNIA or ‘Fish Stocks’ Agreement) which aimed to ensure the conservation and long term sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks such as tuna, and shared fish stocks, particularly on the high seas. Solomon Islands signed UNIA on 1999 and it entered into force in December 2001.
- UNIA contained a range of innovative themes designed to improve fisheries management including: increased flag State responsibility; increased international, regional and sub-regional cooperation through the establishment of Regional Fisheries management Organizations; Control of non-parties; port state enforcement; and recognition of ecosystem approaches to management.
- Following UNIA, the FFA members, DWFNs and other parties negotiated the WCPF Convention (adopted in September 2000) with the aim of ensure the long term conservation and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks in the western and central Pacific Ocean in accordance with the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea, and UNIA.
- Under the WCPF Convention a Commission was established which makes decisions on conservation and management relevant to the HMS stocks in the Convention area. As a general rule, decision-making in the Commission is by consensus, although a facility to use a system of voting is available if all efforts to reach consensus have been exhausted.
- In adopting conservation and management measures the Commission must consider a number of issues including the application of the precautionary approach; compatibility between EEZs and high seas; and recognition of the special requirements of developing States.
- Members, including Solomon Islands have a number of general obligations to fulfil under the convention, as do port states and flag states.
- The rights of observers, including NGOS, to attend Commission meetings and the procedure involved, are clearly laid out in the Convention. Essentially any NGO that can demonstrate their interest in matters under consideration by the Commission may attend, subject to notification and objection procedures.

## **6. Key issues facing the Commission**

Steve Shanks led a discussion by making a brief presentation on the key issues facing the Commission. It was noted that discussions at the Commission have led to agreement of a number of instruments in the form of resolutions and measures. These, records and papers from Commission meetings and other material, are available on the Commission website (<http://www.wcpfc.int>). The important difference between the two instruments is that measures are binding, while resolutions are non-binding.

Measures are interpreted, implemented and reported by members of the Commission but due to the newness of the Commission – the commitment of complying with measures that have been agreed to have not yet been extensively tested.

The Commission has agreed on a number of resolutions and measures, which effectively fit into three categories:

- i. Target species: measures to control effort on bigeye and yellowfin tuna by containing effort and catches.
- ii. Non-target species (by-catch): measures to mitigate catches of seabirds, non-target fish, sharks and turtles.
- iii. Monitoring, control and surveillance: measures to establish a Commission Vessel Monitoring System, a Commission Regional Observer Program; boarding and inspection procedures and an IUU vessel register.

## **7. Role of regional organisations**

The workshop discussed the roles of the two key regional organisations engaged in tuna fisheries.

### ***Secretariat to the Pacific Community (SPC) Oceanic Fisheries Programme [OFP]***

- Key role- provision of scientific advice to member countries, & the WCPF Commission.
- Provision of technical assistance to member countries.
- Undertake stock assessments and other research into issues including bycatch and ecosystems.
- Collection and processing of fisheries data.
- Training of observers.
- Capacity building of Pacific Islanders.

### ***South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)***

- Provision of technical advice to member countries on legal, economic, compliance and fisheries management issues.
- Administration of treaties, including the US Treaty and FSM Agreement.
- Support during regional (WCPFC) and other negotiations.
- Acts as a forum for the development of common positions in key issues.

## **8. Where do NGO and CSOs fit in?**

The last sessions of the workshop focused on the potential role of NGOs in the work of the Commission, and more generally in ensuring that the issue of oceanic fisheries management was kept firmly on the agenda of all sectors of the community. Participants agreed that NGOs CSOs, including those with broader, but related community groups such as churches) clearly have a role.

## **9. Key issues facing oceanic fisheries in Solomon Islands**

In order to focus the work of the workshop onto areas of particular relevance to Solomon Islands, workshop participants agreed a range of priority concerns where they felt that NGOs and CSOs could 'make a difference'. These areas were:

- i. Discarded/bycatch
- ii. Value of access/licence fees
- iii. Impact on women
- iv. Distribution of access fees
- v. Foreign direct investment
- vi. Ecolabeling
- vii. IUU fishing
- viii. Pollution from foreign fishing vessels
- ix. Fishing career opportunities and training
- x. Capacity building in government
- xi. Observer programmes
- xii. Domestic industry development

### **i) Discarded/bycatch**

#### **Issues:**

- Human health impacted by poor quality fish dumped on local markets.
- Removing potential income from local economies and communities by directly competing with local fishers and catches (lower prices and income).
- Lack of responsibility shown by Honiara Town Council.
- Legal issues surrounding the dumping of bycatch require clarification.
- Some benefits since provides an affordable source of fish protein for less well off households.

#### **Solutions:**

- Better catch storage and handling required if bycatch to be used for human consumption
- Consider use of bycatch to produce Fish meal or fish silage to support agriculture
- Commission to increase efforts on commission members to monitor bycatch and catch retention
- Stricter national measures and domestic legislation required

## **ii) Value of access/licence fees**

### **Issues:**

- Inadequate information to negotiate effectively and achieve optimal outcomes.
- Loss of national revenue due to poor negotiating outcomes and misreporting of catch and other data.
- Lack of transparency in bilateral negotiations and vessel licensing.
- Corruption and bribery

### **Solutions:**

- Develop more skilled negotiators and provide access to reliable and verified catch and market data.
- Increase fees.
- Use provision for observers on delegation.
- Improved enforcement to reduce IUU, including my licensed vessels.
- Increases penalties for IUU fishing.

## **iii) Impact on women**

### **Issues:**

- Prostitution, including the attraction of under-age girls onto foreign fishing boats.
- Unwanted pregnancy and related social impacts.
- Marital and family breakdowns (due to prostitution and SI crew doing long fishing trips).
- Increase in sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- Some beneficial impacts, e.g. Employment opportunities (e.g. observers, factory, government, fisheries managers).
- Reality of additional cash income for poor households – both through income from prostitution, providing transport to and from ships etc.

### **Solutions:**

- Tighten laws and regulations with regard to the sex trade.
- Increased penalties for all involved in sex trade
- Raise awareness in communities through a local campaign.
- Provide/promote alternative sources of income
- Monitoring mechanisms including port surveillance i.e., increased port security to prevent easy access to ships.
- Greater resources required to provide effective counselling and advice.
- Consider a shore based counselling facility close to the port/ships/
- Seek regional solutions (e.g. UNIFEM).

## **iv) Distribution of access fees**

### **Issues:**

- Lack of transparency and understanding on economics of tuna industry and distribution of access fees.

- Perception that little of the income from access fees finds its way to the Provinces/general community.
- Danger that reliance on fees could undermine existing development budget allocation for fisheries development.

**Solutions:**

- Reserve certain proportion of access fees for specific activities (e.g domestic industry development especially coastal fisheries)

**v) Foreign direct investment**

**Issues**

- Location of cannery important and need to consider viability/profitability (not every province can expect major onshore/processing developments).
- Business case for needed for all major future fishery development to prevent loss of government revenue, especially in joint venture situations.
- Lack of local community partners – joint ventures are often not meaningful, with local ‘partners’ more token than real.

**Solutions**

- Thorough transparent feasibility studies.
- Provide security for investor including clear title to land and water.
- Seek genuine long term investors, not short term exploiters.

**vi) Ecolabelling**

**Issues:**

- Increasing world demand for sustainable seafood.
- Lack of knowledge of certification processes and requirements.
- Threat of major negative impact of traditional dolphin hunt on future ‘eco-labelling’ of cannery/products for export markets.

**Solutions:**

- Make clear distinction between purse seine mortality (non existent in SI and WCPFC waters), traditional use and the commercial export of live animals (in doing so, beware of media sensitivities).

**vii) IUU fishing:**

**Issues:**

- Loss of revenue.
- Violation of sovereign rights.
- Lack of effective MCS and inadequate penalties
- Lack of adequate resources for MCS strategies involving communities and other alternative approaches
- Depletion of coastal stocks - especially sharks on reefs.
- Competition against local fishers.

- Shore incursions into villages (theft of food, introduction of disease, immigration issues).

**Solutions:**

- Build knowledge of local communities about IUU (capacity building – through NGO’s and Civil Society groups).
- Increase level of reporting from villages.
- Provide Incentives for local involvement.
- Ensure adequate collection of information for future legal action (including Commission)
- Expand joint regional surveillance exercises and approaches

**viii) Pollution from foreign fishing vessels**

**Issues:**

- Stranding and wrecking of vessels on reefs.
- Reef and beach pollution from oil and other discharges.
- Loss of fishing gear (ghost fishing).
- Lack of enforcement.
- Health issues through poisoning of fish.
- National government responsibility.

**Solutions:**

- Develop more effective legislation and enforcement.
- Server penalties.
- Flag state enforcement.
- Appropriate and effective reporting and follow-up following pollution events.
- Include education with IUU package (see above).

**ix) Fishing career opportunities and training**

**Issues:**

- Many opportunities in tuna fishing industry.
- Lack of capacity to take advantage of opportunities, especially those requiring skills.
- Lack of practical training for seamen to serve on fishing vessels
- Lack of training resources.
- Gender balance; women have proven capabilities in a range of fisheries roles.

**Solutions:**

- Identify and promote career opportunities at all levels.
- Include greater requirement for capacity building and technology transfer within access agreements.
- Training facilities (greater investment in existing SI Maritime School)
- Export of local trained fishers to other countries

- Greater inclusion of fishing as a subject in schools

#### **x) Capacity building in government**

##### **Issues**

- Lack of continuity due to high turnover of staff.
- Lack of knowledge and negotiating skills mean unbalanced negotiating and poor outcomes.
- Poor consultative processes; Government staff not taking advantage of advice from community.
- Inconsistent Government policies on fisheries development and related activities.
- Lack political will (to make tough decisions)
- Vested interests can influence decision making.

##### **Solutions**

- Improve consultation processes and increase public participation.
- Improve retention of corporate memory (less reliance on individuals) by developing processes and systems.
- increased public participation.

#### **xi) Observer programmes**

##### **Issues**

- Inefficient placement of observers by government.
- Call for up to 300 observers under the new PNA/Commission measure.
- FAD closure will require those who wish to fish during closures to carry an observer.
- Concern over effectiveness of some observers.
- Provides major employment opportunity for SI and the region as a whole.
- Easy transition from observer to crew positions, creating even more employment.
- Gender balance; women have proven track record and are generally treated with respect on foreign vessels.
- Resources issues (funding, training facilities, etc)

##### **Solutions**

- Major opportunity for NGO's to take greater role in observer programme and placement.
- Investigate private sector engagement in observer programme.

#### **xii) Domestic industry development**

##### **Issues**

- Lack of involvement by local industries, investors and workers,
- Problem with the high capital and technological expertise required to run industrial-scale fishing operations.

- Lack of land and secure tenure to encourage shore based processing facilities.
- Lack of viable market opportunities for small scale fishers.
- Lack of exposure to other ways of benefiting from tuna resources.
- Lack of transport and infrastructure.

#### **Solutions**

- Ensure policy prioritisation for domestic development, including strategies, timelines and responsibilities.
- Use access arrangements to leverage domestic development (PNG model)
- Undertake feasibility studies before investing.
- Ensure greater private sector engagement and participation in all tuna fisheries development.
- Follow up analysis of projects to determine what worked (and did not) and why.
- Continue to investigate small scale operations alongside commercial operations.
- Consider government start up grant assistance and incentives.

### **9. Role of NGOs and CSOs**

Workshop participants then participated in a discussion on the potential roles and activities for NGOs and CSOs.

#### **Roles**

- Advocacy and Lobbying for positive change in oceanic fisheries management and development across a wide range of community groups, with an emphasis on policy and decision makers.
- Coordination of community views and presentation to government of consolidated views.
- Information dissemination, including interpretation of technical issues and translating into plain English/Pidgin/Language.
- Actively engaging community on the need for resource management, and the actual and potential benefits to be derived from oceanic resources.
- Making government aware of priority/key issues within the wider community

#### **Actions**

- Design and implement an education awareness programme based on:
  - the use of Print media with explanations;
  - organising workshops for key government people to bring them up to speed;
  - establishing clearer linkages between oceanic fisheries and coastal fisheries and communities;
  - expand the knowledge of NGOs and CSOs on common regional issues, seeking common solutions rather than ‘reinventing the wheel’

- provision of public exhibitions/awareness; and
- establishment of schools initiatives e.g. getting school students engaged in essay competitions
- Promote a programme of Community watch to reduce IUU, report pollution incidents, monitor the dumping of bycatch on markets etc.
- Influence government policy through the development of clear and practical positions.

## **10. Next steps**

### **i. Improve coordination**

- Utilise Development Services Exchange (DSE) to continue initiatives and coordinate funding/assistance to support NGO/CSO initiatives.
- Workshop participants to develop a committee or contact group to drive initiatives to expand information dissemination, lobbying, increasing community engagement etc. The committee and contact group:
  - will meet every quarter;
  - requires ongoing WWF/OFM (GEF) support
  - will ensure DSE involvement and
  - learn from and build on other countries experiences (e.g. by sharing ways to address the outcomes of the various OFM workshops being held in the region).

### **ii) Continuity & follow up**

- WWF to provide workshop Report, Contact List, and resources i.e. Funds and support for subsequent initiatives.
- Utilise the power of coalitions and work together across all community groups
- Consider a follow-up meeting (WWF to host)
- Allocation of issues/tasks needed if results are to be achieved.

**Attachment 1**

<p align="center"><b>SOLOMON ISLANDS OFM WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS 26-27 January 2009 Quality Inn, Honiara</b></p>		
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## AGENDA

### ENGO and CSO IN-COUNTRY WORKSHOPS

Oceanic Fisheries Management in the Western & Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and the Possible Roles for Environmental NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

**26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

**Honiara, SOLOMON ISLANDS**

**29<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

**Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea**

### Purpose of the Workshop

This ENGO/CSO Oceanic Fisheries Management Workshop aims to:

- create awareness of fisheries management issues, and the importance of maintaining healthy marine ecosystems, with an emphasis on fish stocks and habitats;
- outline the current status of oceanic fisheries, with an emphasis on the four key tuna species and associated by-product and by-catch;
- outline the economic significance of tuna fisheries to the region and efforts to expand national involvement in tuna fishing and processing operations;
- briefly describe the network of fisheries management arrangements in the Pacific, including national, sub-regional e.g. Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) and multilateral (WCPFC) levels;
- map out the intended work of the Commission, emphasising the importance of transparency and engagement by Pacific Island nationals; workshop the potential areas of interest and involvement by Pacific eNGOs and CSOs in fisheries issues;

- discuss ongoing information and other needs of eNGOs and CSOs to support involvement in fisheries management; discuss interconnections between tuna fisheries and coastal fisheries, environments and communities;
- outline the WWF/OFM work programme and obtain feedback on intended activities

### **Benefits of ENGO/CSO participation in tuna fisheries**

Some of the benefits of increased ENGO and CSO involvement with respect to tuna fisheries include:

- Assisting engagement with the wider community, including coastal communities, on OFM issues that include the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Convention, and the work of the Commission;
- Improving the timeliness of decision making at the Commission by improving information flow and increasing political awareness of the national level of the social, economic, and environmental threats of poor fisheries management in the western and central Pacific;
- Provision of accountability of decision-making at the national level through public scrutiny e.g. on inadequate bilateral access licensing activities, to help ensure that Pacific Island countries take meaningful steps to discourage overcapacity and permit unsustainable fishing.

### **Desired Workshop Outcomes**

The Workshop is intended to focus specifically on issues relating to the conservation and management of tuna in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO). The planned outcomes are that ENGOs and CSOs:

- are informed about issues on and brought about by the development of the tuna industry in the Solomon Islands and regionally;
- are fully aware of the role and function of the WCPFC;
- network domestically and with partners from across the Pacific Islands region on relevant fisheries issues of concern.
- enhance NGO stakeholder participation in national and regional oceanic fisheries management processes, including the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission;
- enhance awareness of oceanic fisheries management issues leading to improvements in the legislation underpinning the WCPFC Convention;
- establish a discussion forum; and
- promote and raise awareness raising of national and regional development and economic priorities and how these are related to sustainable fisheries management.

### **Background Information**

In October 2006, the regional steering committee (RSC) for the Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project (OFM) coordinated through the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) endorsed a recommendation by an independent consultant that the WWF South Pacific Programme (WWF SPP) be the responsible agency to carry out **awareness and**

**advocacy on western and central Pacific tuna fisheries issues among ENGOs and CSOs in FFA member countries.** WWF is honoured and excited to be given this role and considers it an important responsibility in connecting ENGOs and CSOs with an issue that is very relevant and important to the economic survival of many Pacific Island countries.

### **Workshop Coordination and Funding**

Funded through the Oceanic Fisheries Management Project (OFMP), Forum Fisheries Agency, Solomon Islands, and facilitated by WWF South Pacific Programme Office, Suva, Fiji with assistance from the WWF SI and WWF PNG Programme Offices.

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## Workshop Programme

**Day 1: 0830 – 1700 Understanding the WCP oceanic fishery and its management**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Presenter/ Responsibility</b>
0830-0845	Opening remarks and agreement of programme  Prayer	WWF/Facilitator  Participant
<b>1. Understanding the resource and its habitat</b>		
0845-0925	The oceanic fisheries resources of the WCPO – target species and their stock status; by-product and bycatch	Ian Cartwright on behalf of (SPC)
0925-1005	The WCPO oceanic environment, including the effects of el Niño/la Niña on tuna fisheries and their management; ecosystem considerations.	As above
<b>2. The tuna Fisheries</b>		
1005-1040	Fishing methods, vessels and gear including FADs, key DWFN fleets, interactions between surface and longline (deeper water) fisheries	As above
<b>TEA 1040 – 1100</b>		
1100-11.45	Commercial issues: bilateral and multilateral access agreements; onshore investment including processing; PIC involvement in the tuna fishery.	Steve Shanks FFA
<b>3. Fisheries management</b>		
1145-1220	The need for fisheries management; basic principles, including ecosystem based fisheries management	Ian Cartwright
1220-1300	Fisheries management in the WCPO; national, regional and multilateral approaches	Steve Shanks FFA
<b>LUNCH 1300-1400</b>		
1400-1445	The WCPF Convention and Commission; role and functions, funding, structure, committees and working groups	Pio Mano FFA

<b>4. Key issues facing the Commission/Fishery</b>		
1445-1630 (Afternoon tea will be taken at a suitable point in proceedings)	<p><b>Conservation and management measures (target species);</b> controlling effort/catch; in-zone vs high seas considerations; vessel days scheme and other catch/effort caps.</p> <p><b>Conservation and management measures (bycatch/byproduct species, including non-target and dependent species)</b>mitigating bycatch (sharks turtles, seabirds etc);</p> <p><b>MCS measures:</b> vessel monitoring system, regional observer programme and High seas boarding and inspection procedures</p> <p><b>Monitoring compliance and sanctions:</b> flag and port state measures; catch documentation scheme vs. statistical documentation schemes</p>	Questions and answer sessions will be held after each topic is covered.
1630-1700	So, where do NGOs fit in all this? A preliminary consideration of the potential roles of NGOs in WCP oceanic fisheries management	Participants
1700	Close	

## Workshop Programme

### Day 2: 0830 – 1700 The Role of NGOs in Pacific Fisheries

Time	Activity	Presenter/ Responsibility
0800-0830	Welcome refreshments	
0830-0850	Summary of day one and overview of day two	Facilitator
<b>5. Current activities of NGOs</b>		
0850-1015	Brief presentation by NGOs of their work and interest in relation to oceanic fisheries management	NGO participants
<b>TEA 1015 – 1035</b>		
1035-1140	Brief presentation by NGOs of their work and interest in relation to oceanic fisheries management (continued)	NGO participants
1140-12.15	The OFM project and its purpose in respect of promoting NGO involvement in oceanic fisheries management	WWF
<b>6. Role of regional fisheries organisations</b>		
1215-1245	Forum Fisheries Agency and Secretariat of the Pacific Commission	Steve Shanks FFA
<b>LUNCH 1245-1345</b>		
<b>7. Potential role for NGOs in the context of the WCPFC</b>		
1345-1445	Possible roles, activities and impacts including national and regional approaches.	Participants
<b>8. Planning for the future</b>		
1445-1530	Identification of information gaps, communication methods and other needs of NGOs to support involvement in fisheries management	Participants
<b>TEA 1530-1545</b>		
1545-1645	Agreement of an action plan Workshop Evaluation	Participants
1645-1700	Concluding remarks Closing Prayer	WWF/Facilitator Participant