

NGO AND CIVIL SOCIETY WORKSHOP ON OCEANIC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT IN THE WESTERN & CENTRAL PACIFIC FISHERIES CONVENTION AREA

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 People 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	Worldwide Fund for Nature South Pacific Programme

SUMMARY RECORD AND OUTCOMES

1. Introductory remarks

Mr Josaia Navakalomana, participant from Fulton College, opened the meeting with a prayer. Louise Heaps, WWF SPP Conservation Director (East) 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 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; and
- 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.

Participants provided self introductions. A list of participants is provided as **Attachment 1** to this record. The Agenda, provided as **Attachment 2** was agreed by the workshop.

2. Understanding the resource and its habitat

Dr Brett Molony 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:

- *El Niño* (warming events) and *La Niña* oceanic conditions (as index 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). 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.
- Stocks of two species of tuna – skipjack and albacore are considered healthy, while stocks of bigeye and yellowfin are experiencing overfishing (i.e. too much fishing effort) and have a high risk of moving into an overfished condition (i.e. too few fish to maintain the biomass at a level that would produce maximum sustainable yield).

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 of 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.
- **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.
- **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.

- FAD fishing has strong implications for increased catches of bigeye, yellowfin and bycatch species.
- **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.
- 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.

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.

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 1.2 million mt across the entire WCPO 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** is experiencing overfishing and the scientific body of the Commission (i.e. the Scientific Committee) has recommended at least a 10% reduction in fishing mortality (effort), noting that fishing impacts in the equatorial WCPO have been increasing over recent years and more urgent management actions may be required for this area.
- **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** is generally considered to be healthy and is being fished at relatively low levels of exploitation relative to the stock's potential.

- However, albacore is targeted by longline in sub-equatorial regions of the WCPO, especially domestic fleets of Pacific Island Countries and Territories. These fisheries mainly capture 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.

Management actions

- It is clear that 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 likely to be focussed on addressing key problem areas – FAD fishing for juvenile bigeye and yellowfin; 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.
- It is clear however that immediate and effective action is needed, and the current measures proposed by the Commission fall short of what will ultimately be needed to ensure the long term sustainability of yellowfin and bigeye in the WCPO.
- There is also a need to continue to encourage the supply of logsheet data from all commercial fisheries in the WCPO. In addition, higher levels of observer coverage and port sampling would allow more robust estimates of the catches and interactions of all species with commercial fisheries in the WCPO.

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.

- Of the 2.1 million tonne catch in 2005, 68% was skipjack, 20% yellowfin, 7% bigeye and 5% albacore (2004 - 63%).
- In terms of fishing gears, purse seining dominates taking around 62% of the catch, longline 11% and pole and line 12%.
- 11 percent of the combined GDP in the region comes from tuna fishing;
- 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.

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) – 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.).

5. WCPF Convention and Commission

Quentin Hanich, Research Fellow at the Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS), provided an overview of the WCPF Convention and Commission. Attention was drawn to the following points:

- Oceans Governance is an umbrella of hard and soft law instruments, centred on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (LOSC).
- While the LOSC articulates broad principles on marine conservation and maritime exploitation multiple weaknesses allowed overfishing to increase and further instruments were created to elaborate and expand LOSC provisions.
- The United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA) was the response to shortcomings in the LOSC.
- UNFSA focused on migratory/straddling fish stocks creating tools and obligations that could be applied across the range (high seas and EEZs) of the stocks.
- UNFSA was a major step forward in that parties must apply all management measures adopted by all RFMOs in regard to straddling and highly migratory fish stocks (including tuna); even if not members of RFMOs, parties must implement all management and conservation measures agreed by the relevant RFMO.
- The WCPF Convention was the first post-UNFSA agreement establishing an RFMO and entered into force in 2004 – it is based on, among other things, precautionary and ecosystem approaches; the needs of developing State interests; and strong monitoring, control and surveillance arrangements.
- While nothing in the Convention is to impact on the existing rights of coastal states, there is also a requirement for ‘compatible arrangements’ between EEZs and high seas – this requirement is seen differently by coastal states (opportunity to strongly influence high seas arrangements) and DWFNs (opportunity to influence coastal state arrangements and allocation).
- The WCPF Commission, assisted by its three subsidiary bodies (Scientific, Technical and Compliance, and Northern Committees) has a role to determine conservation and management measures through out the range of the oceanic fish stocks in the WCPO.
- The Commission has 26 Members, 1 Co-operating Non-Member (Indonesia) and 4 Participating Territories (French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Wallis &

Futuna, Tokelau).

- The Commission binds members to implement Convention obligations and decisions, while Co-operating non-members voluntarily commit to implement.
- UNSFA and the WCPFC require the promotion of transparency – the WCPFC allow representatives from intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to participate in Commission and subsidiary bodies as observers, subject to a number of conditions.
- Among other entitlements, NGOs are able to sit at Commission and subsidiary body meetings and may make oral statements upon the invitation of the Chairman and subject to the approval of the meeting.
- Observer participation in RFMOs can be contentious and it is in the interests of NGOs that protocols are followed and reasonable approaches are taken, such as responding in a timely manner to communications from the Commission Secretariat.
- NGO observers to date have included: Greenpeace, Marine Stewardship Council, Pacific Islands Tuna Industry Association, Sea Turtle Restoration Project, WWF and the International Game Fishing Association.

The workshop discussed the issue of decision making in the Commission, noting that decisions were made by consensus if possible and if not, by voting in two chambers broadly comprising DWFN and Coastal states. A two thirds majority in each chamber is required. Decisions on allocation and new members can only be made by consensus.

It was agreed that one of the key challenges was to determine how to strengthen the capacity of the Pacific Island Countries to enable them to implement their obligations as part of their WCPFC commitments.

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.

So far the Commission has agreed on 5 Resolutions and 15 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. Where do NGOs fit in?

The last session of the first day 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 (both eNGOs and those with broader, but related community groups such as churches) clearly have a role and that day 2 would focus on the specifics of that role.

8. Current NGO Activity

A number of NGO participants to the workshop provided brief presentations of their work with the purpose of exploring their future involvement in oceanic tuna fisheries management in general, and the GEF project in particular.

Birdlife International

The goal of the region programme in respect of oceanic fisheries is through using and supporting RFMOs, to manage (reduce) fishing impacts on seabirds taken as bycatch. The area of the programme includes waters in the jurisdiction of the WCPFC and IATTC with particular attention to waters to the south of 30°S, where a number of threatened albatross species are taken by longline tuna fishing.

Among the activities of Birdlife has been promotion of the adoption of standardized methods for recording seabird bycatch in RFMOs.

It was noted that in the area North of 20°N – there are no provisions for vessels under 24 metres to manage seabird bycatch, and this is considered to provide a potential threat, particularly given the unacceptably low levels of observer coverage. This level of coverage needs to be increased. The use of the Cook Islands as a means to access the Northern Committee in respect to lobbying for action on this issue was noted.

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)

The WCS primarily works in tropical seas, focusing on coral reefs. It also has a number of other marine activities, including a program in Bangladesh regarding dolphins, and others focusing on whale species. Its interests are dictated by funding to some extent.

The WCS has two quite diverse components to its activities in the region – Aquarium, and International Conservation Programs. An ecosystem based management project - the ‘Sea and Sky’ initiative based in Argentina has some relevance to the WCPO.

The South Pacific Program is only based in Fiji and is currently undertaking a two year project funded by the Moore and Packard Foundations. The Program is working with the IUCN on marine protected areas (MPAs). The Program Leader is the regional coordinator for marine protected areas for the South Pacific Region, stretching from Fiji to Hawaii and including Palau. Work is in progress on promoting High Seas MPAs.

During and in discussions following the presentation, a number of suggestions for improving the management of oceanic species in the WCPO were made, that could be taken up by NGOs. These included:

- **ensuring foreign fishing (and where appropriate, domestic) fleets fishing remained outside 12 miles to support the establishment of inshore MPAs;**
- **wider use of FFA VMS as an effective tool to combat illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing in coastal waters, since the FFA can provide VMS data to member countries’;**
- **use of villagers as a valuable source of on-ground intelligence who should be trained and encouraged to report IUU activities;**
- **making greater use of inter-island ferries and other cargo boats which regularly observe IUU fishing and communicate with communities to gain a better understanding of the movements of foreign fishing fleets and to combating IUU fishing;**
- **community action to ensure IUU fishing reports are acted upon, given that in many PICs the capacity of the Departments of Fisheries and Enforcement agencies to respond to compliance issues is very limited, usually by a combination of lack of political will, financial resources and capacity; and**
- **the development of an accessible, centrally located database that would be available to ensure transparency of information concerning licensed vessels; currently it is difficult to access this information; the meeting noted the standard set by PNG in making their national register of fishing vessels available on the National Fisheries Authority (NFA) website.**

The meetings resolved that where possible NGOs in the region should coordinate positions on common issues to gain more traction at RFMO (WCPFC) and other forums.

Foundation for Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI)

FSPI coordinates the planning and design of regional development and capacity-building projects, based on the needs identified by the members and their constituencies. It also undertakes advocacy with the national partners

FSPI has four major Programmes: Communities and coasts, Disaster preparedness, Governance, and Health which it delivers through ten offices sited throughout the Pacific. Key themes pursued include equity, sustainable development and community participation.

A number of key challenges to the livelihoods of Pacific Communities were outlined, including:

- demographic growth and resource degradation;
- globalization and the impacts of free trade; and
- the existence of very few promising livelihood options.

In the context of the WCPO it was noted that in the future oceans will play a vital role

(cf. agriculture, tourism and logging), and for some PICs offer the only avenue of sustainable development. Currently, that role is not being recognised, with only around US\$70 million being earned directly (from access agreements) out of more than \$US 2 billion worth of tuna caught in the WCPO.

The workshop was invited to consider in more detail the considerable opportunities that the oceanic fisheries currently provide to the Pacific Islands. These centred on:

- the Commission which provided an opportunity to strengthen PIC positions and strengthen the results of coordinated negotiations on key issues;
- the size and value of the WCPFO tuna fishery, which makes the formation of a Pacific tuna cartel a possibility - this could drive the management (and development) process for tuna given enough time;
- taking timely and effective cooperative management measures which will reduce effort and reduce by-catch and ensure the health and prosperity of the resource; and
- increased jobs and services that will benefit Island populations.

In summary, the Pacific covers about half the world production of Tuna and it would seem reasonable to suggest that decreased production would affect the world price. A scenario where income is maintained with lower catches would seem to make sense. If in addition the reduced catches were caused by a transition from overseas fleets to domestic fleets then income might be maintained while value added and multiplier effects may significantly improve the benefits accruing to the countries. Reduced catches or efficiencies would also be expected to at least in part address environmental concerns regarding target and non-target species.

As a way forward it was proposed that a study of the current and possible future benefits under a cartel-type arrangement be undertaken. Such a study would include among others a SWOT analysis of tuna development opportunities, potential impacts of supply regulation of prices. The results of the study could be used to develop a simple guide to what was happening in terms of the current 'rip-off' tactics being employed that were depriving PICs of the full benefits from their tuna resources. The information would be useful for lobbying politicians to take action and the development of civil society in the region may now be at a stage where significant new leverage can be attained through civil society networks.

The proposal generated considerable discussion and a number of points were raised:

- **Efforts to increase benefits from tuna fisheries may best be achieved by directing effort at the National level.**
- **The sub-regional (e.g. PNA group) level provided a useful level to work.**
- **One option would be to go for more equitable access agreements rather than trying to develop a large, regional process to influence markets.**
- **There was strong agreement that it would be valuable to undertake an accurate analysis of DWFN payments to the PICs – currently access and**

other agreements were non-transparent and almost impossible to evaluate accurately.

- **In reviewing access agreements there was a need to determine: resource rent (potential profits) in the fishery, what fees were being paid, any additional financial and non-financial benefits; the costs (management etc) incurred by PICs as a result of foreign fishing.**
- **Consider building an element of cost recovery into access agreements, to ensure the full costs of fishing (compliance, research etc) were being paid.**
- **Current access agreements should contain, or have put in place standard 'conditions' such as certain % of observers. Raise the profile of fisheries and fisheries management at a political level.**
- **There was widespread agreement that there was need for more biological and economic information to be available for PIS to increase transparency, get community engagement and inform decision making at all levels.**

International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

The IUCN provides technical assistance, expert advice by bringing governments and NGOs together. Current membership comprises 800 NGO members and 100 Government members.

The IUCN has a global marine program based in Switzerland, with a variety of specific specialist groups. Last year, for instance, Pacific bigeye tuna was added to the IUCN red list under the 'endangered' category.

The IUCN Secretariat presence in the region is very new and is considering priority areas. One useful area is that the Commission of Environmental Law has an ocean governance programme in the region, and IUCN may be able to assist in building links between experts to develop a policy brief related to some of the access arrangement issues.

The other potential area of interest for the IUCN is in capacity building.

Pacific Concerns Resource Centre (PCRC)

The PCRC does not currently have an environment campaign desk and given the large number of eNGOs in the region does not intend to do so.

The PCRC Secretariat was established to work towards a nuclear free and independent Pacific in response to the atomic bomb tests by the UK, French and US. Work in this area is now focused on assisting victims seeking compensation,

However, the PCRC has extensive experience of working together with other NGOs and regional organisations and has been an effective lobby group on a range of key issues, including trade. Technical support from international organisations has been useful and necessary to identify the key issues associated with trade and other issues, and to support efforts to, share them with, and gather views from local stakeholders. The PCRC can be used as a regional platform to deliver international policies.

The workshop agreed with the PCRC position that there is a need to consider how to work together, as NGOs and thus to engage more effectively in related issues. To do

this it is necessary to make some investment in achieving solidarity, and to this end it may be useful for NGOs to develop a code of ethics in regards to how to work together.

Greenpeace

A major part of the marine programme is in supporting the establishment of marine reserves – Greenpeace currently has a global target of 40%. Greenpeace has identified the market based aspects of conservation as fairly critical, with a growing demand for need for ‘fair trade fish’. It was noted that a number of supermarkets, particularly in Europe and the US are starting to delist species that are known to come from unsustainable fisheries and in time, markets will be applying this logic to bigeye and yellowfin tuna. In this respect Greenpeace is supportive of the trade verification aspects of WWF’s work regarding tracking from the sea to the plate. There is likely to be some merits in engaging the broader community in DWFNs – do the people from these countries know what is happening, where the fish their fleets catch (or the fish they are eating) is coming from? Greenpeace and most other NGOs do not have a presence in the Asian countries and there is a current need to promote tuna conservation and management issues to the Asian region and to get engagement.

Much of the debate regarding fisheries in the Pacific occurs in the corridors, compromising collaboration, understanding, and awareness between concerned parties who are ‘outside’ the loop. Getting all these parties together in gatherings such as this workshop is important.

As with previous speakers Greenpeace supports the development of ‘joint messaging’ to link key conservation and management issues together (e.g. reduce capacity, reduce bycatch, increase profitability). Currently, Greenpeace believes there remain substantial problems with IUU activities. Currently it informally works with WWF on increasing the profile of IUU with the Government agencies in Fiji. It has been noted that illegal boats are coming in regularly and unloading in Suva Port. One Greenpeace action resulted in the apprehension of a pirate vessel – many others are considered to exist.

Last year Greenpeace used its vessel Esperanza to sail in the Pacific waters with the purpose of highlighting the level of IUU. Greenpeace negotiated with Kiribati and FSM to do some compliance patrols in their EEZs and found many concerning irregularities on just about all vessels boarded, including lack of valid licenses and non-operational VMS systems. One vessel was found that claimed, in its logbook, to have caught less than 200 tonnes in almost two year’s fishing – this was clearly incorrect. While a small sample size, this activity highlighted the fact that while a great deal of comfort is drawn from regional and national compliance arrangements, the reality on the water with respect to IUU may be something entirely different, and very much more concerning. Capacity to undertake surveillance is also a problem, highlighted by the fact that Kiribati has around 3 million square miles of ocean in its EEZ and 1 patrol boat, that goes out very infrequently to undertake compliance operations.

In Greenpeace’s opinion, permitting bunkering and refuelling at sea is a problem in that it provides DWFN vessels with no reason to enter port and come under scrutiny.

Fulton College

The workshop was considered to be a valuable chance to get together and learn about our fisheries. From what was learnt at the workshop and through other forms of support, the Church should be able to pass information to members of the wider community, and in so doing spread the word about the work of the WCPF Commission and that of national fisheries agencies.

Fulton College is involved with training teachers and theologians. The types of messages that are coming from the participants in terms of looking after our natural resources are very much in accordance with the role of the Church.

Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC)

The PCC works with 18 countries. It has 14 members with representation from around 80% of the churches in the region. It has considerable strength as a disseminator of information to its member churches, and through them to the communities. Promoting caring for marine environments is clearly within the remit of the Church, particularly in the area of ecumenical development and cooperation.

To be able to effectively deliver fisheries messages to communities, there is a need for capacity building - training at national levels. To achieve this it would be useful to inform Church leaders about the issues that the workshop has discussed.

Other Church associated programmes such as Partnerships in Missions, Women in Development and Youth Empowerment are relevant to fisheries.

There will be a PCC Assembly in American Samoa in September 2007, where a 5 year action plan will be delivered. About 90%, if not more, do not understand what is going on with our fisheries and through this assembly, church leaders can be provided with the opportunity to learn more. They need to know facts in order to be able to speak with some authority in a prophetic role regarding actions that should be taken on fisheries management.

To make the best use of PCC members there is a need to inform leaders at the regional meeting and then follow up at the national and ground level. It is important that clear, easily understood language is used throughout.

WWF South Pacific Programme (WWF SPP)

WWF South Pacific Programme has marine programmes in-country in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Fiji, and within its regional programme office based in Suva. The main focus for WWF SPP marine programmes, particularly in with the national programmes, are the establishment of marine protected areas following a process of stakeholder consultations and scientific assessments of selected areas. Consequently WWF SPP explores and encourages alternative and sustainable livelihoods as options.

Increasingly WWF SPP's role in sustainable fisheries management (tuna) and species conservation (turtles and whales) is growing in the region particularly at policy level. There is also recognition of cross-sectoral influences such as climate change impacts on the marine environment. WWF SPP plays a facilitative role in ensuring that national and regional capacities are enhanced.

9. Review of possible roles for NGOs and next steps

Following presentations by NGOs, participants worked on three key areas:

- possible roles for NGOs in awareness raising and engagement in oceanic fisheries management and development;
- gaps in tools needed by NGOs to perform their roles effectively and suggested actions; and
- suggested actions for the future.

Possible roles for NGOs

- Develop and disseminate non-technical summaries of the stock assessments, scientific committee and Commission.
- Provision/dissemination of information at a range of levels including public, policy, technical - special consideration to be given to reaching church groups.
- As independent ‘watch dogs’ able to provide free and frank comment on issues and increase accountability in the public sector.
- Reminding governments of national, regional and Commission level responsibilities to conserve and manage oceanic fisheries – especially focusing on why this is important – need to improve levels of observer coverage.
- ‘Ground truthing’ activities such as monitoring MCS (IUU fishing, illegal unloading, licensing).
- Coordination of views to develop a collective, more powerful voice wherever possible.
- Investigation and analysis of key areas such as: economic benefits to the community from access agreements; maintaining appropriate levels of fishing effort – taking a different and integrated approach.
- Facilitators/convenors of meetings, workshops, new initiatives etc.
- Lobbying – aid donors, Government, Industry and, through market based mechanisms, retailers and consumers.
- Campaigning using simple messages, e.g. there is a limit to fisheries and we must live within those limits.
- Capacity building and training (more detail required, possibly through a needs analysis).
- As a catalyst for change.
- Representation of constituents.

Gaps in tools needed by NGOs to perform their roles effectively and suggested actions

Gaps	Delivery
Reliable data with which to inform communities and lobby decision-makers	Extend Observer coverage; more ground truthing Establish target levels of coverage e.g. 100% log sheet coverage; 5% observer coverage of all fleets, all times all areas. Ensure log book programme maintained– timely collection, and submission.
Lack of transparency	Improved data availability Publication and monitoring of National fishery plans/policies Access Agreements – look at trying to get access to agreements before signed for input before they are finalised Access to Stock Assessment Workshops and other forums at which information is presented
Access to National and Regional Planning and Policy activities Coherence between development and conservation policies	Acceptance by, and engagement with appropriate government departments Recognition and active participation in regional political forums Promoting inter-government discussion Join national delegations
Lack of Pacific Island Forum Leaders involvement and engagement and low Prioritisation of fisheries issues	1. Work directly with the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat Direct to PIFs – accreditation methodology approved 2. Lobby FFC delegates 3. FFC Ministerial engagement 4. Link with coherence, see what benefit there is to get some form of accreditation by NGOs to link with PIFs
Technical information not presented in ‘plain’ English	Seek donor funding to develop non-technical summaries and documents covering major issues
Links to the US/French territories	Work through existing global NGOs with offices in terror ties
Lack of NGO capacity, including fisheries management skills	GEF funding – possible technical training workshop Gap Analysis to formulate a capacity building strategy
Lack of regular dialogue amongst NGOs	Regional NGO cohesiveness /marine meeting
Need to have more effective technical dialogue between NGOs with CROP agencies, particularly SPC and FFA	Some sort of protocol/MOU process to be explored
Inadequate engagement at WCPFC	Refer earlier
Data synthesis and strategy to inform NGO positions e.g. economic benefits of tuna	Project to be developed

Suggested actions for the future

- Regional review of Access Agreements to inform NGO understanding of tuna issues/current and potential economic benefits of the tuna industry to the Pacific Island Countries
- Use the information from the review (above) to develop strategies, including options for potential NGO engagement in Access Agreement discussions (These two actions are to be refined via email)
- Develop a NGO Oceanic Fisheries Website with links to FFA/SPC websites. The site should include access to existing reports, and be apolitical in nature
- Compile a distribution list of interested NGO contacts
- Prior to WCPFC meetings explore possibility of NGO observers to get local NGOs together to discuss forthcoming issues and provide debriefs after Commission meetings
- Develop a NGO regional media strategy including the preparation and distribution of a newsletter
- Develop some media that radio stations can play/print across the region regarding oceanic fisheries
- Continue to develop as an ‘informal’ working group and determine if longer term association/some form of more formal structure is productive
- Develop a mass networking strategy – identify which NGOs exist in different countries, and where best to focus NGO effort on local communities.
- Prepare simple, non technical fact sheets on various aspects of tuna status, WCPFC and other fisheries management issues –primarily targeted at NGOs
- Lobby for better observer coverage, including minimum target levels, through national and regional forums
- Lobby for better logsheet coverage rates (i.e. ensure submission of all logsheets) through national and regional forums
- Actively pursue positions on the range of issues to be considered at the Commission e.g. under 24 m exemption; observers; status of bigeye and yellowfin tuna
- Access information in relation to the ecosystem approach to inform understanding of their application in the region (EBFM; EAFM; EBM etc)
- Prepare some simple information about who NGOs are – and what they do, roles, profiles

10. Closing Remarks

The workshop agreed that the two days were well spent and that in addition to awareness raising, the list of actions would form a useful check list for NGOs. An evaluation questionnaire was handed to each participant to complete. Information from the questionnaires will assist in improving future meetings of NGOs and civil

society organizations. A copy of the evaluation questionnaire is provided as **Attachment 3**.

In addition, the GEF project would be able to use outcomes to help direct its programmes toward promoting the role of NGOs in oceanic fisheries and the work of the Commission. After a number of votes of appreciation to the organisers of the workshop, Mr Makoni Pulu closed the meeting with prayer.

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Attachment 2

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AGENDA

eNGO Workshop Regional Oceanic Fisheries Management in the WCPFC

24-25 April 2007, Suva, FIJI

Venue: Tanoa Plaza

Facilitator: Ian Cartwright

Workshop Objectives

- understanding of the current status of oceanic fisheries, with an emphasis on the four key tuna species and associated by-product and by-catch;
- appreciation of fisheries management issues, and the importance of maintaining healthy marine ecosystems, with an emphasis on fish stocks and habitats;
- awareness of the network of fisheries management arrangements in the Pacific, including national, sub-regional (PNA), regional (FFA) and multilateral (WCPFC) levels;
- understanding of the intended work of the Commission, emphasising the requirement for transparency, and engagement by Pacific Island nationals including NGOs;
- agreement on the potential areas of interest and involvement by Pacific NGOs in fisheries issues, with an emphasis on oceanic (tuna) fisheries;
- understanding of the WWF/GEF work programme and provision of feedback on intended activities; and
- identification of information gaps, effective communication methods and needs of NGOs to support involvement in fisheries management.

Workshop Strategy

As the title infers, the workshop is intended to provide an opportunity for learning and equally (or perhaps more) importantly, an exchange of views and ideas. It is a packed agenda and we are aware of the danger of participants being swamped with information. To avoid this, plenty of opportunity has been provided for questions, comments and additional input. A successful outcome will require participation by all.

Day 1: Primarily about getting an overview of the WCP oceanic fishery and its management. Rather a lot of talks, but each speaker session is divided into approximately 66% talk and 33% questions and interactions. The day will finish off with a preliminary exploration of where NGOs can fit into the overall picture to have maximum impact. This will help set the scene for the next day and get the thought process going during dinner and overnight.

Day 2: Looking at and discussing the current and activities of NGOs, regional organisations and others in respect of oceanic fisheries management. There will be a focus on potential future roles for NGOs in increasing the effectiveness of fisheries management initiatives. Advice will be sought from participants on means for improving communication, increasing information flows and achieving maximum impact. An action plan will be agreed.

Workshop Programme

Day 1: 0830 – 1700 Tuesday 24th April – Understanding the WCP oceanic fishery and its management

Time	Activity	Presenter/ Responsibility
0800-0830	Welcome refreshments	
0830-0845	Opening remarks and agreement of programme	WWF/Facilitator
1. Understanding the resource and its habitat		
0845-0925	The oceanic fisheries resources of the WCPO – target species and their stock status; by-product and bycatch	Brett Molony (SPC)
0925-1005	The WCPO oceanic environment, including the effects of el Niño/la Niña on tuna fisheries and their management; ecosystem considerations.	Brett Molony (SPC)
2. The tuna Fisheries		
1005-1040	Fishing methods, vessels and gear including FADs, key DWFN fleets, interactions between surface and longline (deeper water) fisheries	Brett Molony (SPC)
TEA 1040 – 1100		
1100-11.45	Commercial issues: bilateral and multilateral access agreements; onshore investment including processing; PIC involvement in the tuna fishery.	Steve Shanks (FFA)
3. Fisheries management		
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)
LUNCH 1300-1400		
1400-1445	The WCPF Convention and Commission; role and functions, funding, structure, committees and working groups	Quentin Hanich

4. Key issues facing the Commission/Fishery		
1445-1630 (Afternoon tea will be taken at a suitable point in proceedings)	<p>Conservation and management measures (target species); controlling effort/catch; in-zone vs high seas considerations; vessel days scheme and other catch/effort caps.</p> <p>Conservation and management measures (bycatch/ byproduct species, including non-target and dependent species)mitigating bycatch (sharks turtles, seabirds etc);</p> <p>MCS measures: vessel monitoring system, regional observer programme and High seas boarding and inspection procedures</p> <p>Monitoring compliance and sanctions: flag and port state measures; catch documentation scheme vs. statistical documentation schemes</p>	Steve Shanks (FFA) 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 Wednesday 25th April – 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
5. Current activities of NGOs		
0850-1015	Presentation by NGOs of their work and interest in relation to oceanic fisheries management	NGO participants
TEA 1015 – 1035		
1035-1140	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	Seremaia Tuqiri (WWF)
6. Role of regional fisheries organisations		
1215-1245	Forum Fisheries Agency and Secretariat of the Pacific Commission	FFA/SPC
LUNCH 1245-1345		
7. Potential role for NGOs in the context of the WCPFC		
1345-1445	Possible roles, activities and impacts including national and regional approaches.	Participants
8. Planning for the future		
1445-1530	Identification of information gaps, communication methods and other needs of NGOs to support involvement in fisheries management	Participants
TEA 1530-1545		
1545-1645	Agreement of an action plan	Participants
1645-1700	Concluding remarks	WWF/Facilitator

NGO Workshop on Oceanic Fisheries Management in the WCPFC Area

Evaluation Questionnaire

INSTRUCTIONS

Rate aspects of the Workshop on a 1 to 5 scale: 1 equals "strongly disagree", and 5 equals "strongly agree." 1 represents the lowest and most negative impression on the scale, 3 represents an adequate impression, and 5 represents the highest and most positive impression. Choose N/A if the item is not appropriate or not applicable to your involvement. We really need your feedback. Thank you.

NA=Not applicable, 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither agree/nor disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree

Question	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1. I had the right knowledge and skills to participate effectively in this workshop.						
2. I understood the objectives of the workshop						
3. The workshop met these objectives.						
4. The activities provided me with enough information to understand key issues in oceanic fisheries						
5. The presentations were clear and comprehensive						
6. I will use much of what I learned in my work						
7. It has been worthwhile attending this meeting						

How would you improve this type of workshop? (Check any that apply)

Reduce content covered.

Increase content covered.

Allow more time for discussion and feedback.

Provide more lecture content.

Provide less time in small group work sessions.

Provide more time in small group work sessions.

Make the contents less difficult.

Make the contents more difficult.

Slow down the pace.

Speed up the pace.

Allot more time for the workshop in general.

Shorten the time for the workshop in general.

Other:

OVERALL:

1. I wish you had spent more time on the following parts of the agenda?

I wish you had spent less time on the following parts of the agenda?

2. Should we organize the workshop like this again? If not, why not?

3. What did you like the most about this workshop?

4. What did you like least?

5. Anything else you would like to share?