



November 23, 2022

ATTN: Heads of Delegation to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)

Leading Tuna NGOs Call on the WCPFC to Urgently Adopt and Implement Management Procedures (Harvest Strategies) Supported by Harvest Control Rules for Tuna Stocks

The upcoming Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) meeting, scheduled for 27 November - 3 December 2022, provides an important opportunity for the WCPFC to demonstrate its ongoing leadership and management to preserve the health of tuna fisheries that are a vital source of economic development and food security for the region.

As organizations focused on the sustainability of tuna stocks and their ecosystems, we urge the WCPFC to **accelerate the adoption and implementation of comprehensive precautionary management procedures** (i.e., harvest strategies). Specifically, we urge the Commission to:

- Adopt and implement without delay a management procedure for skipjack in 2022
- Adopt Target Reference Points and continue to develop management procedures for bigeye and yellowfin
- Agree to a revised workplan for setting a comprehensive, precautionary harvest strategy for South Pacific albacore in 2023

In addition, we urge WCPFC to take the following actions to improve the health of all Western and Central Pacific tuna stocks and their ecosystems, including:

- **Adopt EM Minimum Standards** (developed by the ER and EM Working Group) and a timeline for implementation by WCPFC by 2023. **Require 100% observer coverage (human and/or electronic)** in industrial tuna fisheries, including all those vessels engaged in at sea transshipment, by 2024.
- **Amend the current at-sea transshipment measure** (CMM 2009-06) to be in line with best practices, such as those recommended in the NGO Tuna Forum's Aligned Guidance on At-Sea Transshipment.
- **Adopt stronger FAD management measures** in line with the NGO Tuna Forum's Aligned Guidance on FAD Management.

Specifically in 2022, (in the FAD Management WG) develop recommendations on the implementation of biodegradable FADs, including a timeline for transitioning to 100% biodegradable FADs, and require the use of only fully non-entangling FAD designs without netting or other meshed materials. In 2023, require the provision of near real-time FAD position and acoustic records data for scientific use, develop a fully transparent FAD-recovery policy, a FAD marking scheme, clearer rules for FAD ownership and stronger rules for activation and deactivation of FAD buoys.

- **Strengthen WCPFC's existing shark finning measure** by revising CMM 2019-04 to require ALL sharks be landed with fins naturally attached without exceptions, thereby adopting the globally acknowledged best practice to prevent finning.

We the undersigned agree that these critical issues can and must be addressed during the Commission's upcoming meetings. We urge your government's delegation to WCPFC to support the adoption of the proposals and other actions outlined above.

Thank you in advance for your attention in this matter.

Kind regards,

