

**Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) Year 3 Surveillance Report**

**Walker Seafood albacore and yellowfin tuna and swordfish  
longline fishery**

**On behalf of Walker Seafood Pty Ltd**

**Prepared by**

**Control Union Pesca Ltd**

**April 2019**

**Authors:      Kat Collinson  
                     Kevin Stokes**

Control Union Pesca Ltd  
56 High Street, Lymington  
Hampshire, SO41 9AH  
United Kingdom  
Tel: 01590 613007  
Fax: 01590 671573  
E-mail: [infopesca@controlunion.com](mailto:infopesca@controlunion.com)  
Website: [www.cupesca.com](http://www.cupesca.com)

## Contents

<b>CONTENTS</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>GLOSSARY</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>1 GENERAL SUMMARY</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2 BACKGROUND</b> .....	<b>7</b>
2.1 Overall change .....	7
2.2 Principle 1 .....	10
2.2.1 Stock assessments and status .....	11
2.2.2 Harvest strategies.....	13
2.3 Principle 2 .....	14
2.4 Principle 3 .....	22
2.5 Traceability .....	22
2.6 Harmonisation .....	23
<b>3 ASSESSMENT PROCESS</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>4 RESULTS</b> .....	<b>27</b>
<b>5 CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>59</b>
<b>6 EVALUATION RESULTS</b> .....	<b>60</b>
6.1 Principle Level Scores .....	60
6.2 Summary of PI Level Scores .....	60
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>62</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	<b>64</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1. CAB-WIDE PRINCIPLE 1 VARIATION REQUEST AND MSC RESPONSE</b> .....	<b>65</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2. MEETING ATTENDANCE OF NATIONAL FISHING ADVISORY COUNCIL (30<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2018)</b> .....	<b>76</b>
<b>APPENDIX 3. REVISED SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMME</b> .....	<b>77</b>

## Glossary

Acronym	Definition
ABARES	Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics
ABNJ	Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (tuna project)
AFMA	Australian Fisheries Management Authority
AFZ	Australian Fishing Zone
ALB	Albacore tuna
bSAFE	base Sustainability Analysis for Fishing Effects
CPUE	Catch Per Unit Effort
CMM	Conservation Management Measure
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
DAWR	Department of Agriculture and Water Resources
DWT	Dressed Headless Without Tail
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EMS	Electronic Monitoring System
EPBC	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act
ERA	Ecological Risk Assessment
ERAEF	Environmental Risk Assessment for the Effects of Fishing
ETBF	Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery
EM	Electronic Monitoring
e-logbooks	Electronic logbooks
$F_{crash}$	Minimum unsustainable instantaneous fishing mortality rate that, in theory, will lead to population extinction in the long term
FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
$F_{lim}$	Fishing mortality limit reference point
FMS	Fisheries Management Strategies
$F_{MSM}$	Fishing Maximum Sustainable Mortality
LRP	Limit Reference Point
M	Natural Mortality
MEC	ME Certification Ltd
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
MSE	Management Strategy Evaluation
NFAC	National Fishing Advisory Council

Acronym	Definition
SC	Scientific Committee
SFR	Statutory Fishing Rights
SKJ	Skipjack tuna
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SWO	Swordfish
TA	Tuna Australia
TACC	Total Allowable Commercial Catch
TRP	Target Reference Point
TTMAC	Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee
TTRAG	Tropical Tuna Research Advisory Group
UoA	Unit of Assessment
UoC	Unit of Certification
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
WCPO	Western and Central Pacific Ocean
WSA	Walker Seafood Australia
WTO	World Trade Organisation
YFT	Yellowfin tuna

## 1 General summary

<b>Fishery name</b>	Walker Seafood albacore and yellowfin tuna and swordfish longline fishery	
<b>Units of assessment</b>	UoC 1	
	<b>Species</b>	Albacore tuna ( <i>Thunnus alalunga</i> )
	<b>Geographic range</b>	Central east coast of Australia, inside the Australian Fishery Zone (AFZ) between 3 and 200 nautical miles
	<b>Stock</b>	South Pacific albacore
	<b>Method of capture</b>	Pelagic mid-set longline
	<b>Management systems</b>	Australia: managed by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) as part of the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) Regional: managed by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)
	<b>Client group</b>	Walker Seafood Pty Ltd
	UoC 2	
	<b>Species</b>	Yellowfin tuna ( <i>Thunnus albacares</i> )
	<b>Geographic range</b>	Central east coast of Australia, inside the Australian Fishery Zone (AFZ) between 3 and 200 nautical miles
	<b>Stock</b>	Western Central Pacific yellowfin
	<b>Method of capture</b>	Pelagic mid-set longline
	<b>Management systems</b>	Australia: managed by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) as part of the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) Regional: managed by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)
	<b>Client group</b>	Walker Seafood Pty Ltd
	UoC 3	
	<b>Species</b>	Swordfish ( <i>Xiphias gladius</i> )
	<b>Geographic range</b>	Central east coast of Australia, inside the Australian Fishery Zone (AFZ) between 3 and 200 nautical miles
	<b>Stock</b>	Southwest Pacific swordfish

	<b>Method of capture</b>	Pelagic mid-set longline	
	<b>Management systems</b>	Australia: managed by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) as part of the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) Regional: managed by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)	
<b>Date certified</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> August 2015	<b>Date of expiry</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> August 2020
<b>Surveillance level and type</b>	Level 6, on-site audit  WCPFC15 was held at the beginning of December (9 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2018), with the understanding that significant changes could occur with regard to management of two of the three target stocks in this fishery. The assessment was therefore delayed to allow time for the outcome of WCPFC15 to be announced.  Please note this surveillance level was revised in line with the FCR v2.0 as the standard surveillance level stated in the Public Certification Report conformed to the CR v 1.3.		
<b>Date of surveillance audit</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> January 2019		
<b>Surveillance stage</b>	1st Surveillance		
	2nd Surveillance		
	3rd Surveillance		X
	4th Surveillance		
	Other (expedited etc.)		
<b>Surveillance team</b>	Lead assessor: Kat Collinson Assessor: Kevin Stokes		
<b>CAB name</b>	Control Union Pesca Ltd		
<b>CAB contact details</b>	<b>Address</b>	56 High Street, Lymington, Hampshire, SO41 9AH, UK	
	<b>Phone/Fax</b>	+44(0) 1590 613007	
	<b>Email</b>	kcollinson@controlunion.com	
	<b>Contact name</b>	Kat Collinson	
<b>Client contact details</b>	<b>Address</b>	23 Parkyn Parade, Mooloolaba, Queensland, QLD 4557, Australia	
	<b>Phone/Fax</b>	+61 409 331 044	
	<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:heidi@walkerseafoods.com.au">heidi@walkerseafoods.com.au</a>	

	Contact name	Heidi Walker
--	--------------	--------------

## 2 Background

### 2.1 Overall change

This report outlines the process and outcome of the year 3 surveillance audit for the Walker Seafood albacore and yellowfin tuna and swordfish longline fishery. The fishery is carried out by the vessels listed in Table 1. The certified fishery operates in the EEZ of Australia in the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) operating in the Australian Fishery Zone (AFZ) from Cape York Queensland, to the South Australian/Victorian border. No trips are conducted on the High Seas.

**Table 1. Vessels currently listed on the Walker Seafood fishery certificate (MEC-F-032)**

Vessel Name	Registration Number	Flag State	FFA VID
Assassin	LFB12904	Australia	9805
Sharp Shooter II	900769	Australia	11079
Santa Lucia	RFB13129	Australia	5084
Predator	LFB12876	Australia	4451
Comanche	O506	Australia	5125

This fishery was certified by MEC on the 27<sup>th</sup> August 2015 with nine conditions. As a result of several new MSC tuna longline certifications from the WCPO targeting albacore and ensuring harmonisation with those assessments, one new Condition (Condition 10) was raised with the fishery during the year 2 surveillance audit. Conditions of certification are summarised in Table 2.

Furthermore, several conditions and/or Client Action Plans (CAPs) were amended during the last surveillance audit in January 2018. The majority of these amendments were editorial to amend incorrect inclusion of an arrangement (Tokelau Arrangement) in the CAPs for tuna and billfish species (yellowfin tuna and swordfish) that were not relevant to the Arrangement.

The major condition amendment concerns condition 8 regarding sea turtles and the associated trigger level emphasised in the condition. As per 7.23.13.3 of the MSC FCRs (version 2.0) *“In the event that the requirements of any condition are changed, the CAB shall provide written justification for this in the Surveillance Report.”* As a result, condition 8 has been amended to omit the term “trigger level” as it is not used in the fishery and not relevant to the fishery management system for numerous years. The old, obsolete text is not repeated here. No recommendations were made by the team during the initial certification.

**Table 2. Summary of Assessment Conditions**

Condition number	Performance indicator (PI)	Status	PI original score	PI Yr1 SA score	PI Yr2 SA score	PI Yr3 SA score
1	1.1.2 (albacore)	Open	75	Not revised	Not revised	Not revised
2	1.2.1 (albacore)	Open	70	Not revised	Not revised	Not revised
3	1.2.2 (albacore)	Open	60	Not revised	Not revised	Not revised
4	1.2.1 (yellowfin)	Open	70	Not revised	Not revised	Not revised
5	1.2.2 (yellowfin)	Open	65	Not revised	Not revised	Not revised
6	1.1.2 (swordfish)	Open	75	Not revised	Not revised	Not revised

7	1.2.2 (swordfish)	Open	65	Not revised	Not revised	Not revised
8	2.3.1	Open	75	Not revised	Not revised	Not revised
9	2.3.3	Open	75	Not revised	Not revised	Not revised
10	3.2.2	Open	75	N/A	New	Not revised

The fishery is managed at both the regional level (through the WCPFC, via its Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs)) and at national level (through the Australian Fisheries Management Authority: AFMA). The WCPFC is responsible for management of tuna stocks in its area (as agreed by its member countries), while AFMA may also take additional measures to manage fisheries in its EEZ. Since the initial assessment, a number of new CMMs have come into force. As these are applicable across the three MSC Principles, the new CMMs have been added to the summarised list of current CMMs in Table 3 below.

**Table 3. List of current [Conservation and Management Measures](#) and Resolutions of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission relevant to this fishery (as of February 2018)**

CMM Reference	Title	Change from previous assessment?	Impact on scoring?
2004-03	Specifications for the Marking and Identification of Fishing Vessels	No	N/A
Res. 2005-03	Resolution on Non-Target Fish Species	No	N/A
2006-04	Conservation and Management Measure for Striped Marlin in the Southwest Pacific	No	N/A
2006-07, 2007-01	Conservation and Management Measure for the Regional Observer Programme	No	N/A
2006-08	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Boarding and Inspection Procedures	No	N/A
2008-03	Conservation And Management of Sea Turtles	No	N/A
Res. 2008-01	Resolution on Aspirations of SIDS and Territories	No	N/A
2009-03	Conservation and Management Measure for Swordfish	No	N/A
2009-06	Conservation and Management Measure on the Regulation of Trans shipment	No	N/A
2009-09	Conservation and Management Measure for Vessels without nationality	No	N/A
2010-06	Conservation and Management Measure to Establish a List of Vessels Presumed to have carried out Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing activities in the WCPO	No	N/A
2010-07	Conservation and Management Measure for Sharks	No	N/A
2011-04	Conservation and Management Measure for Oceanic Whitetip Sharks	No	N/A
Res. 2012-01	Resolution on the best available science	No	N/A
2013-04	Conservation and Management Measure for	No	N/A

	WCPFC Implementation of a Unique Vessel Identifier (UVI)		
2013-05	Conservation and Management Measure on daily catch and effort reporting	No	N/A
2013-07	Conservation and Management Measure on the special requirements of Small Island Developing States and Territories	No	N/A
2013-08	Conservation and Management Measure for Silky Sharks	No	N/A
2014-05	Conservation and Management Measures for Sharks ( <i>This CMM does not replace or prejudice any other existing shark CMM</i> )	No	N/A
2014-06	Conservation and Management Measures to develop and implement a harvest strategy approach for key fisheries and stocks in the WCPO	No	N/A
2015-02	Conservation and Management Measure for South Pacific Albacore	No	N/A
2015-07	Conservation and Management Measure on Compliance Monitoring Scheme	No	N/A
2017-01	Conservation and Management Measure for bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack tuna in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (Replaced CMM 2016-01 (2017), CMM 2015-01 (2016), CMM 2014-01 (2015), CMM 2013-01 (2014), CMM 2012-01 (2013), replaced CMM 2008-01/CMM 2011-01 (2009-2012), which replaced and CMM 2005-01, and CMM 2006-01.)	Yes	N/A
Res. 2017-01	Resolution on Provisional Application of CMM 2017-01	No	N/A
2017-02	Conservation and Management Measure on Minimum standards for Port State Measures	No	N/A
2017-03	Conservation and Management Measure for the protection of WCPFC Regional Observer Programme Observers ((Replaced CMM 2016-03 (2017))	No	N/A
2017-04	Conservation and Management Measure on Marine Pollution (effective 1 Jan 2019)	Yes	N/A
2017-05	WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels and Authorisation to Fish (Replaced CMM 2013-10, CMM 2004-01, and CMM 2009-01)	No	N/A
2017-06	Conservation and Management Measure for Mitigating Impacts of Fishing on Seabirds ( <i>replaced CMM 2015-03 (effective 1 Jan 2017), and CMM 2012-07, which replaced CMM 2007-04 on 1 July 2014</i> )	No	N/A
2017-07	Conservation and Management Measure for Compliance Monitoring Scheme	No	N/A

## 2.2 Principle 1

The fishery is managed under a Total Allowable Commercial Catches (TACC) management regime. The proposed TACCs have been approved by both the Tropical Tuna Research Advisory Group (TTRAG) and Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee TTMAC with subsequent advice provided to the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) Commission. 2019 sees the introduction of 12-month calendar quotas. This now mirrors the regional fisheries management organisation (RFMO), the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission's (WCPFC) practice, with catch limits and data collection collected and presented by calendar year. Please note that 2018 was a ten-month quota year as the fishery has moved from a fishery season of 1<sup>st</sup> March to 28<sup>th</sup> February in 2016/17, to January to December in 2019 (AFMA, 2018).

TACCs for all species for the fishing years 2015-16 through 2018-19 are listed by AFMA at <https://www.afma.gov.au/fisheries-services/catch-limits>. The 2018-19 column in that page being the transitional 2018-only fishing year for ETBF species. The 2019 ETBF TAC affirmed by the AFMA Commission and shown in Table 5 to Table 7, are as advised by the TTMAC in October 2018 (see: [https://afma.govcms.gov.au/sites/g/files/net5531/f/final\\_ttmac\\_19\\_meeting\\_minutes.pdf](https://afma.govcms.gov.au/sites/g/files/net5531/f/final_ttmac_19_meeting_minutes.pdf)).

**Table 4. Approved TACCs for 2019 fishing season.**

Quota Species	Total Allowable Commercial Catch
Albacore tuna	2,500 tonnes whole weight
Bigeye tuna	1,056 tonnes whole weight
Broadbill swordfish	1,250 tonnes whole weight
Striped marlin	351 tonnes whole weight
Yellowfin tuna	2,400 tonnes whole weight

**Table 5. Albacore TACC and catch data**

TACC	Year	2018	Amount	2,351 tonnes
UoA share of TACC	Year	2018	Amount	529.64 tonnes
UoC share of TACC	Year	2018	Amount	529.64 tonnes
Total green weight catch by UoC	Year (most recent)	2018	Amount	187.47 tonnes
	Year (second most recent)	2017	Amount	262.88 tonnes

**Table 6. Yellowfin TACC and catch data**

TACC	Year	2018	Amount	2,054 tonnes
UoA share of TACC	Year	2018	Amount	442.72 tonnes
UoC share of TACC	Year	2018	Amount	442.72 tonnes
Total green weight catch by UoC	Year (most recent)	2018	Amount	204.78 tonnes
	Year (second most recent)	2017	Amount	249.60 tonnes

**Table 7. Swordfish TACC and catch data**

<b>TACC</b>	Year	2018	Amount	960 tonnes
<b>UoA share of TACC</b>	Year	2018	Amount	355.03 tonnes
<b>UoC share of TACC</b>	Year	2018	Amount	355.03 tonnes
<b>Total green weight catch by UoC</b>	Year (most recent)	2018	Amount	257.97 tonnes
	Year (second most recent)	2017	Amount	384.26 tonnes

**Table 8. WSA vessel effort summary for 2016 – 2018**

Year	Number of longline shots	Number of hooks
2016	659	1,887,997
2017	974	2,618,598
2018	857	2,322,750

## 2.2.1 Stock assessments and status

### 2.2.1.1 Albacore tuna

Since the second surveillance, a new stock assessment has been reported (Tremblay-Boyer et al., 2018). In addition to updating data to the end of 2016, the key changes to the assessment were:

- Using standardised Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) indices based on operational longline data (including historical data) not available to previous assessments;
- Simplifying the regional structure;
- Standardisation of the CPUE time series using geostatistical methods instead of traditional GLM methods;
- The use of an ‘index fishery’ in each assessment region.

The conclusions of the assessment do not change the perception of stock status relative to reference points. The assessment estimates that both spawning potential and the biomass vulnerable to longline fisheries have been stable or perhaps slightly increasing over the last 20 years. This trend is largely driven in the model by recruitment which is estimated to have increased somewhat since around 2000 relative to previous decades. Adult fishing mortality has increased over most of the time series but has declined since the reduction of catches seen since 2010. Since albacore is taken mainly by longline fisheries, juvenile fishing mortality is estimated to be low throughout the time series.

The key uncertainties for the stock assessment remain assumptions around natural mortality,  $M$ , and growth. For  $M$ , the assessment used two alternative values (fixed across all age classes);  $M=0.3$  (consistent with the previous 2015 assessment) or  $M=0.4$  (giving more optimistic conclusions); age-dependent  $M$  was also evaluated as a one-off sensitivity. For growth, the outcome of studies of size/age for SP albacore (Farley et al., 2013) was incorporated into the reference case model, while the same growth model was used in the North Pacific albacore assessment (WCPFC, 2017a) as a sensitivity test. The stock assessment team identifies further work on age and growth (otolith analysis) as a key research priority. Overall, uncertainty remains high, although decreasing over time

at each assessment. Nevertheless, the estimates of stock status put the stock largely on the right side of biological reference points across the whole structural uncertainty grid explored, and on that basis there is reasonable confidence in the conclusions of the assessment.

Overall, the (surveillance assessment) team considered that the new stock assessment results do not constitute a material change requiring re-scoring of Principle 1 for this stock. The team further notes that this fishery is due to commence its reassessment in 2019, at which point, in line with the variation request response outlines at Section 2.6 (below), all of Principle 1 will re-scored against the MSC Fisheries Standard and Guidance v2.01.

#### 2.2.1.2 Yellowfin tuna

The last surveillance report presented the findings from the stock assessment completed by Pilling et al. (2016). There has subsequently been an updated assessment reported by Tremblay-Boyer et al (2017b). The new assessment does not make any major changes to the assessment structure or assumptions, except for aligning the regional structure with the new regional structure for bigeye (i.e. changing the boundary between equatorial regions (Regions 3 and 4) and northern sub-tropical regions (Regions 1 and 2) from 20°N to 10°N). The three additional years of data included in the assessment, however, cover a period of strong El Nino conditions and increasing catch levels.

SPC recommend that the stock status is evaluated and management advice formulated, not based directly on the reference case (diagnostic case) model, but rather on an overall structural uncertainty grid, which incorporates the conclusions of the one-off sensitivity analyses considered to be the most important.

SPC summarises the results of the stock assessment as follows (Tremblay-Boyer et al., 2017b):

- Spawner biomass is estimated to have declined across the whole model period for all models, and for most of the model regions;
- The median estimate of spawner depletion is similar to the previous assessment, and the probability of spawner biomass being below the LRP is estimated to be <5%; the same is true for  $F/F_{MSY}$ ;
- $F$  has increased continuously since the start of industrial fishing;  $F$  has in the past increased most rapidly on juveniles, but is also increasing on adults. A significant proportion of juvenile fishing mortality comes from surface fisheries in the Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam, from which data are uncertain;
- Recent recruitment is estimated to be relatively high; it is not known why this is, but good recruitment also estimated for skipjack and WCPO and EPO bigeye suggests it might be environmentally driven.

Table 9 shows summary statistics from the stock assessment structural uncertainty grid. Fishing mortality is estimated to be below  $F_{MSY}$  and spawning biomass, either as latest (2015) or recent (2011 - 2014) is estimated well above  $SB_{MSY}$ . As for albacore, the (surveillance assessment) team considers that the results of the new stock assessment do not constitute a material change in the fishery and no re-scoring was undertaken. Here also, as for albacore and noting the variation request reported in Section 2.6, it is worth noting that this fishery is due to commence its reassessment in 2019, at which point all of Principle 1 will re-scored against the MSC Fisheries Standard and Guidance v2.01.

**Table 9. Summary of stock status estimates relative to reference points, across all 72 models in the structural uncertainty grid used to characterise uncertainty; latest = 2015, recent = 2011-14;  $SB_{F=0}$  = average spawning potential in the absence of fishing for 2005-14, following the definition of the LRP agreed by the SC. Taken from Table A6 in Tremblay-Boyer et al. 2017b.**

Parameter	Min.	25%	Median	75%	Max.
$F_{\text{recent}} / F_{\text{MSY}}$	0.54	0.66	0.73	0.82	1.13
$SB_{\text{latest}} / SB_{F=0}$	0.16	0.30	0.39	0.43	0.50
$SB_{\text{latest}} / SB_{\text{MSY}}$	0.80	1.24	1.41	1.62	1.91
$SB_{\text{recent}} / SB_{F=0}$	0.15	0.27	0.35	0.39	0.45
$SB_{\text{recent}} / SB_{\text{MSY}}$	0.81	1.28	1.43	1.59	1.93
$SB_{\text{MSY}} / SB_{F=0}$	0.16	0.25	0.26	0.29	0.35

### 2.2.1.3 Swordfish

The second surveillance reported on the most recent stock assessment for swordfish (Takeuchi et al, 2017). There has been no update since that assessment and the (surveillance assessment) team considers that there is no material change in the fishery. No re-scoring was undertaken at this surveillance. As for albacore and yellowfin tuna, noting the variation request reported at Section 2.6, it is worth noting that this fishery is due to commence its reassessment in 2019, at which point all of Principle 1 will re-scored against the MSC Fisheries Standard and Guidance v2.01.

### 2.2.2 Harvest strategies

Harvest strategy development for south Pacific albacore and yellowfin tuna is outlined in the WCPFC Harvest Strategy Workplan (WCPFC, 2017b) as described fully at: <https://www.wcpfc.int/harvest-strategy>. The workplan covers developments since WCPFC8 and is current until the most recent Commission meeting, WCPFC15. The most recent update of the workplan, originally outlined as WCPFC CMM 2014-06, is suppl-CMM 2014-06, issued on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and available at: <https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/supplcmm-2014-06/workplan-adoption-harvest-strategies-updated-and-adopted-wcpfc15>.

For south Pacific albacore, progress is reported in the WCPFC Provisional Outcomes document (<https://www.wcpfc.int/node/33405>) at Section 6.2.2. Importantly, the Commission agreed to an interim target reference point (TRP) of 56 per cent of spawning stock biomass in the absence of fishing (i.e.,  $0.56 SB_{F=0}$ ). This value was chosen on advice from the Scientific Committee (SC) in order to achieve an eight per cent increase in CPUE for the southern longline fishery with agreement that should the desired CPUE increase not eventuate then the TRP will be revised. The Commission also agreed that CMM should be amended or developed to implement a harvest control rule developed in accordance with CMM 2014-06.

While the agreed interim TRP is not specified in a specific CMM, it is included explicitly in suppl-CMM 2014-06 in the Progress Summary for 2018 and together with specified timeframes provides a basis for the Science Provider (Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)) and the Scientific Committee to continue development of a harvest control rule using management strategy evaluation.

Of note also is that the Australian government, as a member of Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) proposed to WCPFC15 a TRP to achieve a higher (17% cf 2013 level) increase in south Pacific albacore CPUE (WCPFC15-2018-DP10).

For yellowfin tuna, a target reference point has yet to be agreed by the WCPFC. However, the general CMM for Tropical Tunas (CMM 2018-01) specifies at paragraph 14 that for YFT *“Pending agreement on a target reference point the spawning biomass depletion ratio ( $SB/SB_{F=0}$ ) is to be maintained at or above the average  $SB/SB_{F=0}$  for 2012-2015”* and at paragraph 15 *“The Commission at its 2019 annual session shall review and revise the aims set out in paragraphs 12 to 14 in light of advice from the Scientific Committee.”*

Unlike for south Pacific albacore, the implied yellowfin TRP is not referred to as *interim* and is not included in suppl-CMM 2014-06 and cannot yet be regarded as an adopted TRP.

As for south Pacific albacore, the FFA made proposals to WCPFC (WCPFC15-2018-DP08). In this case, however, the proposals were general for both bigeye and yellowfin related to achieving modest increases in  $SB/SB_{F=0}$  and did not specify implicit or explicit TRP.

Also of note is that the WCPFC Harvest Strategy workplan specifies agreement to be reached on yellowfin TRP in 2019.

Swordfish is not included in the WCPFC Harvest Strategy workplan. The TACC has been determined for the ETBF using nationally set Limit Reference Point (LRP), TRP and empirical decision rules as described in the 2015 certification assessment and tested using Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE). However, the empirical decision rules have not been applied to set a 2019 TACC as there is concern (following MSE testing) that its application will cut TACCs even while the stock is above its target level. AFMA is now undertaking a process to update and revise the ETBF Swordfish Harvest Strategy in 2019/20. In the meantime, an “indicators-based approach” is being used. Discussion is reflected in extensive minutes from the Tropical Tuna and Billfish Fisheries MAC (TTMAC) held on October 4<sup>th</sup> 2018 (see: [https://afma.govcms.gov.au/sites/g/files/net5531/f/final\\_ttmac\\_19\\_meeting\\_minutes.pdf](https://afma.govcms.gov.au/sites/g/files/net5531/f/final_ttmac_19_meeting_minutes.pdf)).

During the surveillance site visit, AFMA provided a note presented to WCPFC15 of the intention in 2019 to develop and have adopted a proposal for strengthening the management of South Pacific swordfish management. AFMA acknowledge it is unlikely that the WCPFC will consider development of a swordfish harvest strategy until the development of harvest strategies for tropical tunas is finalised and South Pacific swordfish is not currently on the WCPFC HS Work Plan (suppl-CMM 2014-06). Consequently, the main focus of management for the stock at the WCPFC level will likely be through strengthening of Conservation and Management Measures (CMM).

### **2.3 Principle 2**

As mentioned in Section 2.2, the catch for Principle 2 species are no longer presented in seasons which straddle two different calendar years, but instead constitute a whole calendar year. This has made comparisons with anything earlier than 2017 difficult, as the seasons are no longer comparable. The assessment team therefore present 2017 and 2018 catch data (Table 10).

To identify changing trends in retained and discarded catch data (for species other than albacore, yellowfin and swordfish), logbook catch and Electronic Monitoring (EM) reports for all vessels in 2017 and 2018 were requested and supplied by WSA and the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA).

The vessels in the fleet are subject to the Australia Commonwealth Electronic Monitoring Programme<sup>1</sup>. Electronic monitoring system (EMS) is in operation for all the fishing trips (100%) and independently verifies the catch landed by species and numbers. Ten per cent of the hauls are reviewed. It also records whether there are interactions with protected species. This is completed by a third party, Archipelago Asia Pacific (AAP), to analyse the data. They have reported a good level of agreement between the logbook data and AAP analysis. If more than a 20% inconsistency is found between EM and logbook reports, AFMA review this internally with the fishing company in question. If the inconsistencies continued, sanctions would be imposed. This issue has not arisen with WSA or any other fishing company operating in the ETBF (T.Timmis, AFMA, pers. comm.). An example of a 2018 verification report is seen below in Figure 1.

Catch Items	EM Event:			Fishing Log Event:		
	30 Jan 18 @ 02:38 AM			30 Jan 18 @ 02:37 AM		
	Retained	Released	Total	Retained	Released	Total
<b>Quota Species</b>						
Albacore	2	2	4	1	4	5
Bigeye Tuna	5	0	5	4	0	4
Yellowfin Tuna	6	1	7	6	8	14
Swordfish	4	0	4	3	1	4
Striped Marlin	1	0	1	1	0	1
<b>Nonquota Species</b>						
Whaler and Weasel Sharks	0	1	1	0	0	0
Bronze Whaler	0	0	0	0	11	11
Blue Shark	0	1	1	0	10	10
Unidentified Sharks	0	3	3	0	0	0
Marlin Species	0	1	1	0	0	0
Lancetfishes	0	1	1	0	1	1
Wahoo	1	0	1	0	1	1
Tuna Species	2	3	5	0	0	0
Sunfishes	0	1	1	0	2	2
Skates and Rays	0	0	0	0	2	2
<b>All Other Catch</b>						
Unidentified Catch Item	0	1	1	0	0	0

Figure 1. An example of output of an AAP vessel feedback summary

Table 10. Retained and discarded species for 2017 and 2018 from client logbooks. Target species are written in green text, 'main' retained species in bold text and ETP species are written in blue text.

Year	Species	Retained (kg)	Retained (numbers)	Discarded (numbers)	% Catch composition
2017	Albacore tuna	208,250	23,976	1,694	18.28
	Barracouta	0	0	98	0.0

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.afma.gov.au/monitoring-enforcement/electronic-monitoring-program/>

<b>Bigeye tuna</b>	<b>149,178</b>	<b>8,995</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>13.1</b>
Black marlin	0	0	126	0.0
Blacktip shark (mixed)	0	0	1	0.0
Blue marlin	0	0	289	0.0
Blue shark	0	0	3,748	0.0
Bronze whaler	5	1	2,077	0.0
Crocodile shark	0	0	68	0.0
Dusky whaler	0	0	224	0.0
Escolar	998	119	71	0.08
Fish (mixed)	2	1	3	0.0
Frostfish	0	0	3	0.0
Giant manta ray	0	0	90	0.0
Grey nurse shark	0	0	5	0.0
Hammerhead sharks	0	0	78	0.0
Lancetfish	10	1	145	0.0
Longfin mako	0	0	8	0.0
<b>Mahi mahi</b>	<b>33,830</b>	<b>3,037</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>29.69</b>
Moonfish (mixed)	510	22	2	0.04
Northern bluefin tuna	165	1	1	0.01
Ocean sunfish	0	0	797	0.0
Oceanic whitetip shark	0	0	418	0.0
Porbeagle	0	0	1	0.0
Oilfish	0	0	1	0.0
Rudderfish	0	0	2	0.0
Ray's bream	6,755	4,009	139	0.59
Rudderfish	15,063	1,390	56	1.3
Sailfish	960	26	5	0.08
Samson fish	0	0	4	0.0
Shortbill spearfish	2,946	140	10	0.26
S/F mako	9,690	243	498	0.86
Silver trevally	5	2	0	0.0
Skates and rays	0	0	13	0.0
Skipjack tuna	370	38	273	0.03
Snake mackerel	0	0	353	0.0
Southern bluefin tuna	0	0	2	0.0
Small tooth cookiecutter shark	0	0	4	0.0
Stingrays	0	0	210	0.0

	<b>Striped marlin</b>	<b>59,724</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>5.24</b>
	Swordfish	384,258	7,512	576	33.73
	Thresher sharks (mixed)	0	0	141	0.0
	Tiger shark	0	0	67	0.0
	Toadfish (unspecified)	0	0	92	0.0
	Trevallies and scads	0	0	14	0.0
	Wahoo	2,307	171	19	0.0
	Yellowtail kingfish	11	1	0	0.0
	Yellowfin tuna	262,882	7,974	1,116	23.60
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,139,138 kg</b>	<b>58398</b>	<b>14507</b>	<b>100 %</b>
2018	Albacore tuna	204,781	20,470	1,766	23.27
	Barracouta	0	0	58	0.0
	<b>Bigeye tuna</b>	<b>91,630</b>	<b>2,655</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>10.41</b>
	Black marlin	0	0	115	0.0
	Blue marlin	0	0	227	0.0
	Blue shark	0	0	4,248	0.0
	Broadnose shark	0	0	9	0.0
	Bronze whaler	0	0	1,389	0.0
	Bull shark	0	0	1	0.0
	Conger eel	0	0	3	0.0
	Crocodile shark	0	0	3	0.0
	Dusky whaler	0	0	144	0.0
	Escolar	10,832	1,187	148	1.23
	Fish (mixed)	0	0	3	0.0
	Frostfish	0	0	5	0.0
	Giant manta ray	0	0	65	0.0
	Grey nurse shark	0	0	3	0.0
	Hammerhead sharks	0	0	40	0.0
	Lancetfish	0	0	3,317	0.0
	Longfin mako	120	2	2	0.01
	Mahi mahi	24,940	2,462	116	2.83
	Moonfish (mixed)	10,548	408	3	1.20
	Northern bluefin tuna	33	1	0	0.0
	Ocean sunfish	0	0	1,044	0.0
	Oceanic whitetip shark	0	0	208	0.0
	Oilfish	0	0	2	0.0
	Ray's bream	5,722	3,353	65	0.65

Rudderfish	20,419	2,174	83	2.32
Sailfish	825	22	0	0.09
Sharks (mixed)	0	0	3	0.0
Shortbill spearfish	3,885	203	12	0.44
S/F mako	5,825	138	385	0.66
Silver warehou	0	0	1	0.0
Skates and rays	0	0	22	0.0
Skipjack tuna	0	0	146	0.0
Snake mackerel	0	0	196	0.0
Southern bluefin tuna	6,822	150	11	0.78
Small tooth cookiecutter shark	0	0	1	0.0
Stingrays	0	0	292	0.0
<b>Striped marlin</b>	<b>46,029</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>5.23</b>
Swordfish	257,974	4,993	548	29.31
Thresher sharks (mixed)	0	0	175	0.0
Tiger shark	50	1	260	0.01
Toadfish (unspecified)	0	0	28	0.00
Wahoo	2,264	141	7	0.23
Yellowtail kingfish	11	1	0	0.00
Yellowfin tuna	187,466	5,541	793	21.30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>880,176 kg</b>	<b>42065</b>	<b>16371</b>	<b>100</b>

Apart from the target species, albacore and yellowfin tuna and swordfish, the only ‘main’ species identified in Table 10 were bigeye tuna, mahi mahi and striped marlin. All of which were assessed as ‘main retained’ species in the initial assessment.

At the time of initial assessment (Gascoigne et al., 2015a) bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*), catches exceeded maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and fishing mortality exceeded  $F_{MSY}$ . Since then, a new stock assessment was carried out for bigeye in 2017, which provides a more optimistic view on stock status than was the case during the initial assessment of this fishery (Gascoigne et al., 2015b). Taking into consideration the additional work on the growth model carried out in 2018 (Project 81, Farley et al., 2018); there is now a high degree of certainty that this stock is above the point of recruitment impairment. Although this would result in a slightly higher overall score for this fishery, the team has not carried out a complete rescoring of the retained species PI. This information will instead be considered at the upcoming 2019 reassessment.

The striped marlin (*Makaira nigricans*) stock assessment (Davies et al., 2012) has not been updated since the time of the initial assessment. The outcome of which was that current spawner biomass was estimated to be above the inferred limit reference point (there is no agreed limit reference point, so the tuna limit reference point) with <95% probability. There was therefore no need to re-score this scoring element at this surveillance audit.

During the original assessment mahi mahi was scored using the Risk Based Framework (RBF). A Scale Intensity Consequence Analysis (SICA) was used to assess the outcome for this species.

**Table 11. Comparison of Walker Seafood vessels Electronic Monitoring (EM) review and vessel logbook records**

Year	Species	EM event			Fishing log event		
		Retained	Released	Total	Retained	Released	Total
2018	<b>Quota species</b>						
	Albacore tuna	486	21	507	558	55	613
	Bigeye tuna	86	2	88	87	6	93
	Yellowfin tuna	488	10	498	167	32	199
	Southern bluefin tuna	2	0	2	2	0	2
	Swordfish	174	15	189	166	20	186
	Striped marlin	28	0	28	30	1	31
	<b>Protected species</b>						
	Shortfin mako shark	3	3	6	3	5	8
	Manta ray	0	2	2	0	0	0
	Blue shark	0	13	13	0	201	201
	Oceanic whitetip shark	0	1	1	0	8	8
	Thresher shark	0	2	2	0	4	4
	<b>Non-quota species</b>						
	Bronze whaler	0	0	0	3	43	46
	Dusky shark	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Broadnose shark	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Escolar and oilfish	80	9	89	44	6	50
	Rudderfish	0	0	0	37	3	40
	Ray's bream	156	1	157	245	3	248
	Whaler and weasel sharks	0	4	4	0	0	0
	Tiger shark	1	0	1	1	0	1
	Unidentified shark	0	24	24	0	0	0
	Devil rays (Mobulidae)	0	1	1	0	0	0
	Black marlin	0	1	1	0	7	7
	Blue marlin	0	1	1	0	5	5
	Barracuda	0	1	1	0	0	0
Barracouta	0	0	0	0	2	2	

Marlin species	0	8	8	0	0	0
Moonfish	16	0	16	15	0	15
Lancetfish	0	24	24	0	76	76
Snake mackerel	0	2	2	0	1	1
Mahi mahi	103	12	115	111	13	124
Skipjack tuna	2	9	11	0	6	6
Tuna species	9	22	31	0	0	0
Sailfish	2	0	2	2	0	2
Skates and rays	0	1	1	0	12	12
Shortbill spearfish	6	0	6	8	1	9
Sunfish	0	11	11	0	33	33
Wahoo	8	0	8	5	1	6
Unidentified catch	1	107	108	0	0	0

**Table 12. Protected species interactions with the fishery from Walker Seafood vessel logbook data (2017 – 2018)**

Year	Species	Numbers	Fate
2017	Albatrosses	1	Dead
	Black marlin	126	Unknown
	Blue marlin	289	Unknown
	Dolphins (not species – specific)	3	Alive
	Dugong	1	Dead
	Green turtle	46	Alive
	Green turtle	10	Dead
	Green turtle	1	Unknown
	Grey nurse shark	5	Unknown
	Leatherback turtle	19	Alive
	Loggerhead turtle	7	Alive
	Loggerhead turtle	1	Dead
	Longfin mako shark	10	Unknown
	Olive ridley turtle	3	Alive
	Porbeagle shark	1	Unknown
	Shearwaters	1	Dead
	Shortfin pilot whale	4	Alive
	Shortfin mako shark	217	Dead
	Shortfin mako shark	419	Unknown
Whales (mixed)	2	Alive	
2018	Albatrosses	7	Dead

Black marlin	115	Unknown
Blue marlin	273	Unknown
Dolphins	1	Alive
Green turtle	16	Alive
Green turtle	6	Dead
Hawksbill turtle	1	Dead
Leatherback turtle	22	Alive
Leatherback turtle	1	Unknown
Loggerhead turtle	9	Alive
Loggerhead turtle	1	Unknown
Longfin mako shark	2	Dead
Longfin mako shark	2	Unknown
Olive ridley turtle	2	Alive
Seals	1	Alive
Shearwaters	2	Alive
Shearwaters	8	Dead
Shortfin mako shark	138	Dead
Shortfin mako shark	385	Unknown
Turtles (unidentified)	4	Alive
Turtles (unidentified)	1	Dead

Bait used in the fishery is Argentinian shortfin squid (*Illex argentinus*) and sardines from Japan and the US (*Sardinops melanostictus* and *S.sagax* respectively). According to WSA 150 tonnes of squid and 75 tonne of sardine is used annually. This constitutes 0.02 % of the total catch landed in the fishery. Bait species are therefore not 'main' and there has been no need to re-score these scoring elements.

With regard to other changes, the year 2 surveillance report noted that Tuna Australia were developing an industry Code of Practice, which would have a strong focus on releasing all sharks alive in the fishery. At the time of writing the year 2 report, the Code was under development but was expected to be finalised by this audit. At this year's surveillance site visit, the client informed the team that Walker Seafood (WSA) had subsequently left Tuna Australia. WSA is instead part of the National Fishing Advisory Council (NFAC), which is combination of members from different areas, such as government, NGOs, commercial and recreational sectors, which meet to discuss issues relevant to all parties, for example marine park conservation.

A follow-up from last year is the results of the amended ETBF Environmental Risk Assessment for the Effects of Fishing (ERAEF). In last year's report, it was noted by AFMA that CSIRO, the research provider, had made an error in the programming code, which caused the risk levels of some species in the ERA to be too low. The team contacted AFMA for this revised assessment to aid the conclusion on progress against the conditions on shortfin mako (see Table 21 and Table 22). The ERA

outcome for shortfin mako was provided (Table 21). The team were informed that the final report has not yet been published, but the team will be sent the full report in due course (Don Bromhead, AFMA 2019, pers. comm.).

Finally, there have been no changes in fishing footprint or in the fishing gear used. The areas covered by the fleet are the same.

## **2.4 Principle 3**

There have been no specific changes to the management of the fishery since the last surveillance audit. As mentioned in the last report, the way that fishing seasons are structured was changed on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2018, with the decision being made to change the fishing season to be inline with calendar years. This culminated with 2018 having a ten-month season. As of 2019, fishing seasons now run from 1<sup>st</sup> January through to the 31<sup>st</sup> December each year.

At the regional level, a new CMM (2017-04) for marine pollution became active on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019. This subject was raised with the client and AFMA during the surveillance visit. Australia are signatories to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), which is the main international convention for addressing ship sourced pollution. Australia implements MARPOL through the Protection of the Sea (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act 1982 and the Navigation Act 2012. The Protection of the Sea (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act 1983 includes a number of enforcement related provisions derived from the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea, including the application of the Act to the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Other Commonwealth legislation giving effect to MARPOL includes Marine Orders 91 – 97, which cover topics such as garbage (Order 95), noxious liquid substance (Order 93) and oil (Order 91).

## **2.5 Traceability**

There have been not been any changes to the traceability systems in place in the fishery. The audit confirmed that Walker Seafood do not purchase fish from any external suppliers, and only process their own fishery products at their facility, which is named on the fishery's active certificate. No increase in risk has been perceived to traceability system, with vessels landing directly at the facility in Mooloolaba, where they are then processed, sold and exported. These activities are therefore considered within the scope of the fishery certificate and separate chain of custody certification is not required.

The client also informed the team that one transshipment was completed for Walker Seafood in the last year, which had been authorised by AFMA prior to the event. This occurred 'in-zone', i.e. within the Australian Fishery Zone, which is the Australian EEZ. Historically transshipments were dealt with on a case-by-case basis. For example if a vessel had poor refrigeration, they would email AFMA to ask permission to conduct the transshipment, which would follow if a positive response from AFMA was provided. AFMA have now devised a protocol for in-zone transshipments, which is detailed in the Statutory Fishing Rights (SFR) conditions. Information is also contained within the [2018 ETBF management arrangements booklet](#). Transshipping may be permitted, however fish can only be transshipped to a vessel that has a carrier boat permit nominated to it. Carrier boat permits can be applied for from AFMA. To receive the transshipped fish, the carrier vessel must hold a Commonwealth Fish Receiver's Permit and issue a Catch Disposal Record at the point and time the transshipment occurs.

## 2.6 Harmonisation

This fishery overlaps with several MSC fisheries certifying or in assessment for WCPO yellowfin and south Pacific albacore. Walker Seafood is the only fishery certified for SW Pacific swordfish.

A Conformity Assessment Body (CAB)-wide Variation Request (VR) was submitted to the MSC in 2018 to help CABs align their assessments to aid harmonisation. The following text was submitted in the VR:

“The MSC requires overlapping fisheries to harmonize assessment outcomes, but not conditions timelines. There are currently 54 HMS fisheries (counting each stock per fishery in the case of multiple stocks in a single fishery, separately) in the MSC programme, 43 with outstanding conditions in relation to Reference Points, Harvest Control Rules and Harvest Strategies in Principle 1. While conditions have been harmonised (as per Annex PB of the FCRv2.0), the associated timelines have not. This lack of coherence amongst RFMO HMS fisheries and CABs has resulted in inconsistencies between in-assessment and certified fisheries and undermines the influence the MSC programme may have on mobilizing RFMOs toward developing harvest strategies for HMS stocks. To address this problem, the variation request below proposes a “hard deadline” approach to Principle 1 conditions timelines for highly migratory species stocks subject to harmonisation in the MSC program:

1. The hard deadline approach would make it transparent to all parties, including clients, what the expectations are for fulfilling these conditions at the RFMO level, and thus removes the inconsistency issue of new entrants having longer timeframes than current fisheries in the program.
2. The hard deadline approach creates incentives for MSC client fisheries to work together, instead of at cross-purposes, to encourage RFMOs to keep to the timelines as established in workplans which reflect their stock management priorities”.

The text referring to highly migratory species (HMS) in the context of this VR refers to swordfish as well as tuna.

This was accepted by the MSC on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2019. The overarching logic of the CAB’s joint proposal was as follows:

- All tuna and tuna-like fisheries certified against Certification Requirements v1.3 will be upgraded to v2.0 to foster harmonisation efforts. No suspension action will be undertaken for fisheries that are behind target on P1 conditions raised against v1.3;
- Timelines for P1 conditions (limited to those with respect to harvest strategies and harvest control rules) will be aligned for all fisheries on the same stock;
- These timelines will be based on the calendar year that RFMO workplans are due to be completed, for all stocks where relevant workplans exist;
- Fisheries currently in assessment and new fisheries are not directly covered under this variation request, but CABs have committed to apply the same logic with respect to harmonising condition timelines aligned against RFMO work plans.

The response to the VR can be found in the Appendix 1. The actions for this fishery are to re-score Principle 1 at the first opportunity following the result of the VR and condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadlines. This is further discussed in Section 3 below.

For the Walker Seafood Australia fishery, which was assessed against v1.3 of the MSC Standard, the acceptance of this variation request means that 1) no suspension action will be undertaken should conditions be found to be behind target for two consecutive years and 2) Principle 1 will be re-scored against version 2.01 of the MSC Standard at the next available opportunity. As the Year 3 surveillance audit was conducted in early January 2019, this will be at the Year 4 surveillance audit, due later in 2019 and likely to take place simultaneously with the fishery's reassessment site visit.

### 3 Assessment Process

Control Union Pesca confirms that the fishery under assessment is within the scope of the MSC Fisheries Standard (7.4 of the MSC Certification Requirements v2.0):

- The target species is not an amphibian, reptile, bird or mammal;
- The fishery does not use poisons or explosives;
- The fishery is not conducted under a controversial unilateral exemption to an international agreement;
- The client or client group does not include an entity that has been successfully prosecuted for a forced labour violation in the last two years;
- The fishery has in place a mechanism for resolving disputes, and disputes do not overwhelm the fishery;
- The fishery is not an enhanced fishery as per the MSC FCR 7.4.3; and
- The fishery is not an introduced species-based fishery as per the MSC FCR 7.4.4.
- There are no other eligible fishers. Therefore, the UoC is the same as the UoA described in Section 1 above.

The Walker Seafood Australian albacore, yellowfin tuna and swordfish longline fishery was certified on the 27th August 2015. The initial assessment team consisted of Dr Jo Gascoigne (team leader, P1), Robert O'Boyle (P1), Kat Collinson (P2) and Dr Tim Emery (P3). The site visit and Scale Intensity Consequence Analysis (SICA) took place in Mooloolaba, Queensland in August 2014, with participation from the client, de Bretts (processor), AFMA and WWF Australia, who also provided a written submission.

Originally assessed under version 1.3 of the MSC Certification Requirements, this fishery was awarded a normal surveillance level. This has now been updated to fall in line with current MSC Certification Requirements version 2.0. Based on the number and nature of conditions to which the certification is subject, a surveillance level of 6 was awarded in accordance with the MSC FCR v2.0 (7.23.2). Level 6 is the default and maximum level of surveillance, requiring four on-site annual audits over the life of the certificate.

The year 1 surveillance audit consisted of an on-site audit, held at the Mooloolaba Yacht Club, Mooloolaba, Queensland, Australia on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2017, with Peter Trott on-site and Kat Collinson taking part remotely in the audit.

The year 2 surveillance audit also took place on-site, at Pier 33 (formerly the Mooloolaba Yacht Club). The audit was held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2018, and was attended by Peter Trott and Kat Collinson. Both team members were on-site.

The audit this year for the year 3 surveillance took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2019 and was attended by the participants and stakeholders listed in Table 13. The audit took place at the same location as reported for the year 2 surveillance audit.

No written stakeholder comments or evidence was submitted to the team, either following the announcement or at the site visit. The fishery remains scored under v1.3 of the Fisheries Standard. Principle 1 will be re-scored at the next surveillance audit to be in alignment with the CAB-wide VR, which was accepted by the MSC. CU Pesca were informed by MSC on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2019 of the result. CU Pesca will therefore follow “Appendix B – Principle 1 v2.0 assessment upgrade process”.

**Table 13. Audit participants**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role / organisation</b>
Heidi Walker	Walker Seafood Australia
Pavo Walker	Walker Seafood Australia
Trent Timmis	AFMA
Bill Holden	MSC
Adrian Gutteridge	MSC
Kevin Stokes	CU Pesca assessor
Kat Collinson	CU Pesca assessor

## 4 Results

Progress against the conditions raised during the initial assessment is shown below. One new condition (Condition 10) was raised during the surveillance audit last year, as a result of several new MSC tuna longline certifications from the WCPO targeting albacore, and ensuring harmonisation with those assessments.

**Table 14. Condition 1 – UoA 1 (albacore)**

Performance Indicator & Score	PI number	Scoring guidepost	Score
	1.1.2	Limit and target reference points are appropriate for the stock	75
<b>Condition</b>	<p>The management system should formally adopt a target reference point for the South Pacific albacore stock, which is consistent with maintaining the stock at <math>B_{MSY}</math> or some other measure with similar intent or outcome. This target reference point should be used for management purposes.</p> <p>Note: This condition may be addressed jointly with conditions 2 and 3.</p>		
<b>Milestones</b>	<p>By the first annual surveillance audit, there shall be evidence that the client has started or joined a process of consultation and representation for the establishment of a precautionary target reference point with appropriate regional management bodies. Score 75.</p> <p>By the second annual surveillance audit, there shall be evidence of on-going representations to, and discussions in, appropriate regional management bodies, relating to a target reference point for South Pacific albacore. Score 75.</p> <p>By the third annual surveillance audit a target reference point for regional management of the south Pacific albacore stock should be formally adopted by the WCPFC or other appropriate regional management body with sufficient control over the fishery on the whole stock. Score 80.</p>		
<b>Client action plan</b>	<p>Walker Seafoods Australia notes the need of implementing stock-specific reference points and associated harvest control rules as part of the management of tuna stocks in the ETBF. To support the development of appropriate reference points for the South Pacific albacore stock, therefore, in the respective years the client will provide evidence of:</p> <p><u>Year 1</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engagement with the AFMA to promote the completion and adoption of a target reference point for the South Pacific albacore stock.</li> <li>2. Consultation with AFMA and where necessary FFA and FFA members through the Sub-Committee on South Pacific Tuna and Billfish Fisheries (SC-SPTBF) and Australian government delegates to WCPFC with the objective of establishing an agreed position on target reference points for the stock that is consistent with the MSC SG 80 standards.</li> <li>3. The provision of any requested practical support and data for SPC, FFA and WCPFC analyses on target reference points for albacore to support discussions at FFA SC-SPTBF meetings.</li> <li>4. Actions to raise awareness of the need for a South Pacific albacore management measure through the Tokelau Arrangement of which Australia is a signatory.</li> </ol>		

	<p><u>Year 2</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The provision of any requested support and data for SPC, FFA and WCPFC analyses on target reference points for albacore to support any further discussions at the FFA SC-SPTBF meetings, Tokelau Arrangement meetings and the WCPFC Scientific Committee.</li> <li>2. Engagement with AFMA government officials, and where necessary FFA and its members, and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock in advance of the Commission meeting to seek their support for the adoption of appropriate target reference points by the WCPFC and appropriately drafted WCPFC Resolutions.</li> <li>3. Collaboration with other industry sectors and NGOs in order to continue to raise awareness of the need for WCPFC to adopt appropriate reference points for the South Pacific albacore stock.</li> <li>4. Actions to raise awareness of the need for a South Pacific albacore management measure through the Tokelau Arrangement of which Australia is a signatory.</li> </ol> <p><u>Year 3</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engagement with AFMA government officials, and where necessary FFA and its members, and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock in advance of the Commission meeting to ensure appropriately drafted WCPFC Resolutions on the adoption of target reference points for the stock, for the WCPFC annual meeting, for consideration by the Commission.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Progress on Condition Year 1</b></p>	<p>Walker Seafood Australia (WSA) have a history of being actively engaged with numerous bodies concerning the sustainable management of tuna within the WCPO region, specifically albacore tuna. This has continued since WSA were first certified in 2015.</p> <p>WSA was an active member of the International MSC tuna alignment group (<b>now disbanded</b>) for several years prior to being certified, and most recently signed on to the alignment groups letter to WCPFC and other associated organisations regarding the sustainable management of tropical tunas in the WCPO outlining the groups priorities and asks for 2016 and also 2017 (Appendix 3.2 and 3.3 respectively).</p> <p>WSA maintains its role as an industry member on the Australian Commonwealth Governments Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee (TTMAC)<sup>2</sup> and the Tropical Tuna Resource Advisory Group (TTRAG)<sup>3</sup> where WSA advocates for continued sustainable management of the tuna resource, including albacore tuna. The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) also attend TTMAC meetings where they provide an update on WCPFC matters, usually leading up to the main Commission meeting. DAFF is the lead Department for the Australian Government regarding WCPFC matters. This provides the opportunity for industry members, including WSA, to engage and provide DAFF with advice regarding management matters. WSA continue to engage directly with AFMA regarding the completion and adoption of a target reference point for the South Pacific albacore stock.</p> <p>Since being certified, the Australian Tropical Tuna industry have formed an association called Tuna Australia (TA). Tuna Australia (TA) has developed a set of by-laws (Tuna Australia 2016)</p>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.afma.gov.au/fisheries/committees/tropical-tuna-management-advisory-committee-tropical-tuna-mac/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.afma.gov.au/fisheries/committees/tropical-tuna-resource-assessment-group/>

	<p>which stipulate, among other matters, its membership, goals and objectives, governance, communications, strategic context and monitoring and evaluation.</p> <p>TA represents statutory fishing right owners, holders, fish processors and sellers, and associate members associated with the ETBF. As stated in the by-laws, the goal of TA is to plan, invest and manage the association to improve representation of the fishery. The objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure ecological sustainable development of the industry;</li> <li>• To improve resource access and property rights;</li> <li>• To improve profitability;</li> <li>• To extend and market industry practices to stakeholders and the general public;</li> <li>• To enhance market opportunity; and</li> <li>• To improve safety and workforce development.</li> </ul> <p>Advance, promote and represent the industry’s views in dealings with governments of state and commonwealth, media, corporations and organisations, and all persons nationally and internationally (Tuna Australia 2016). TA are currently developing its strategic workplan and Code of Conduct.</p> <p>WSA are active members of TA. TA engage and consult with all parties involved in tropical tuna fisheries including AFMA, DAFF, MSC Tuna Alignment group, and attendance at the WCPFC meetings. TA recently attended the last WCPFC meeting in Fiji as part of the Australian Government delegation as an observer. It is important to note that TA is a new entity, only formed in 2016 with full support from WSA.</p> <p>WSA continue to provide all data to officials that is requested of them and AFMA through DAFF continue to provide all data to SPC and WCPFC processes as required. Recently logbook data and other fishery data has increased in confidence due to the implementation of electronic monitoring (EM) across the entire fishery since mid-2015, and with the eventual implementation of electronic logbooks (e-logbooks). WSA are currently considering migrating over to e-logbooks for all five of its vessels in late 2017.</p> <p>There is clear evidence that WSA has started and joined several processes of consultation and representation for the establishment of a precautionary target reference point with appropriate national and regional management bodies and industry associations.</p>
<p><b>Progress on Condition Year 2</b></p>	<p>Walker Seafood Australia (WSA) continue to have a history of being actively engaged with numerous bodies concerning the sustainable management of tuna within the WCPO region, specifically albacore tuna.</p> <p>As an example of WSA direct involvement in engagement and discussion with government officials, research bodies, WCPFC and its subsidiary bodies (i.e., FFA, etc.), regarding tuna fisheries and sustainability, WSA wrote directly to the Australian Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources on 18 October 2017 (Appendix 3). This letter clearly and concisely outlined WSA priorities for tuna fisheries and asks for the 2017 WCPFC and FFA meetings.</p> <p>The WSA letter also requested to be an Australian representative at the tuna meetings and requested to attend both the WCPFC Commission meeting in December 2017 and the FFA pre meeting. The Assistant Ministers response to WSA is presented in Appendix 4.</p>

Both WSA and Tuna Australia (TA) were heavily engaged and involved in the development of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR) WCPFC engagement strategy and WSA priorities were included in that strategy for the WCPFC14 meeting. WSA and TA attended both the WCPFC 14 and FFA pre meetings as part of the Australian delegation.

Tuna Australia (TA) has been in operation for two years and represents over 85% of the Australian tuna industry. TA holds three to four meetings annually and has recently developed its strategic plan 2017 (Appendix 5), and a set of by-laws (Tuna Australia 2017). The by-laws stipulate, among other matters, its membership, goals and objectives, governance, communications, strategic context and monitoring and evaluation.

WSA are active members of TA and are one of seven directors. TA engage and consult with all parties involved in tropical tuna fisheries including AFMA, DAWR, and attendance at the WCPFC meetings.

TA plays an active role in engaging with AFMA and DAWR regarding Australia's contribution to, and involvement in, the Tokelau Arrangement (TKA) concerning albacore tuna and setting of appropriate reference points and harvest strategies. The audit team was informed that the WCPFC is looking toward alternative measures for albacore tuna rather than setting a traditional  $B_{MSY}$ . DAWR, supported by AFMA, TA and WSA, are advocating and supporting albacore reference points and playing a major role in the international negotiations to ensure that this is set not just for environmental sustainability, but encompasses economic sustainability, which is considered to be higher level and more precautionary than  $B_{MSY}$ .

The last TKA meeting was held in late October 2017. This meeting was making good progress toward setting a combined limit for albacore tuna for its members and establishing an "in zone" measure which would subsequently compulsory require all distant water fleets to implement compatible measures. However, the largest albacore catching nation, the Solomon Islands who are also a PNA member country, removed itself from the Arrangement citing that the measure could in fact be incompatible with the future planned PNA vessel day scheme for longline operations. It is hoped that the Solomon Islands will re-join the TKA and attend the next scheduled meeting to be held in May 2018, where it is hoped that the group will set limits, but unlikely to set any allocations.

DAWR represents Australia in meetings of the Participants to the TKA. Australia continues to strongly advocate for full implementation of the WCPFC Harvest Strategy Workplan, including adoption of a Target Reference Point and subsequent development and adoption of Harvest Control Rules for south Pacific albacore. DAWR continues to liaise with TA on developing strategic priorities for engagement in the TKA and WCPFC meetings. As part of this, TA has advocated on behalf of WSA regarding the importance of implementing harvest strategies for south Pacific albacore and other WCPFC-managed stocks. Under the TKA, Australia (and other TKA Participants) have declared and have implemented catch limits for south Pacific albacore. In 2017, TKA Participants agreed not to pursue development of the proposed Catch Management Agreement for south Pacific albacore; TKA Participants have agreed to focus efforts on achieving progress on management of south Pacific albacore at the WCPFC level (including development of a harvest strategy and resolving allocation at a whole-of-fishery level). Participants to the TKA will meet in early May 2018 to consider how to best work collectively to achieve progress on south Pacific albacore management (including at WCPFC

	<p>and sub-regional levels) (DAWR 2018, Appendix 6).</p> <p>At its 2017 meeting, despite several discussions and working group sessions on this topic, the WCPFC still did not make any decision on this matter, with China blocking progress. However, China did inform the meeting that they will engage and support such moves at next years' WCPFC meeting. WSA and TA were informed by the audit team that unless there was significant progress at the next WCPFC meeting and action implemented by the Commission for albacore, then there was a high probability that this Condition along with Condition 2 and 3 would fall behind.</p> <p>TA are currently holding discussions with an independent consultant with expertise in albacore tuna and regional politics, to help develop a regional engagement and consultation strategy with key regional countries.</p> <p>WSA continue to provide all data to officials that is requested of them and AFMA through DAWR continue to provide all data to SPC and WCPFC processes as required. Recently logbook data and other fishery data has increased in confidence due to the implementation of electronic monitoring (EM) across the entire fishery since mid-2015, and with the eventual implementation of electronic logbooks (e-logbooks). WSA are currently considering migrating over to e-logbooks for all five of its vessels in late 2017.</p> <p>There is clear evidence that WSA has started and joined several processes of consultation and representation for the establishment of a precautionary target reference point with appropriate national and regional management bodies and industry associations.</p>
<p><b>Progress on Condition Year 3</b></p>	<p>WCPFC15 agreed <i>“an interim target reference point (TRP) for south Pacific albacore at 56 per cent of spawning stock biomass in the absence of fishing (<math>0.56 SB_{F=0}</math>) 1 with the objective of achieving an eight per cent increase in catch per unit of effort (CPUE) for the southern longline fishery as compared to 2013 levels. 2 If a future stock assessment indicates that this interim TRP will not result in the desired longline CPUE, then the interim TRP will be revised in order to meet this objective. The TRP shall be reviewed every three years, consistent with the south Pacific albacore assessment schedule.</i></p> <p><i>The Commission shall amend or develop appropriate conservation and management measures to implement a harvest control rule, developed in accordance with CMM 2014-06, with the objective of maintaining the south Pacific albacore spawning stock biomass at the target level on average and according to the timeframes specified in paragraph 29 (...) In order to manage the required reduction in catches, the timeline for achieving the interim target reference point shall be no later than 20 years.”</i></p> <p>The agreed TRP is included in the updated 2018 Harvest Strategy workplan (suppl-CMM 2014-06) and provides a basis for the planned development of harvest control rules using management strategy evaluation.</p>
<p><b>Status of condition</b></p>	<p>The condition calls for adoption of a target reference point consistent with maintaining the stock at <math>B_{MSY}</math> or some other measure with similar intent or outcome. The interim TRP agreed on above is well above the default reference point of <math>B_{MSY}=40\%B_0</math> specified in MSC guidance (GSA2.2.3.1). The condition also states that the TRP should be used for management purposes. The WCPFC-agreed use of the TRP in development of HCR clearly constitutes such purpose.</p>

	<p>While the interim TRP is not specified in a separate CMM, it is explicit in suppl-CMM 2014-06. It is moot as to whether this constitutes <i>formal adoption</i> of the TRP and whether the condition is therefore behind target or can be closed and re-scored.</p> <p>Given, however, that a CAB-wide Variation Request was recently accepted by the MSC for this and other tuna and swordfish fisheries (see Section 2.6), and the fishery will be re-scored in 2019 using FCR v2.0, for which there is no corresponding PI, there is little purpose in re-scoring at this stage.</p> <p>Without closing the condition, which would be inconsistent with the recent surveillance of the SZLC, CFSC &amp; FZLC Cook Islands EEZ Pacific albacore &amp; yellowfin longline fishery, it must be regarded as behind target. In such circumstances, FCR v2.0 7.23.13.1(i) requires specification of remedial action and milestones.</p> <p>However, again noting the Variation Request and intended re-scoring in 2019, which will remove this condition, no remedial action or milestone is considered necessary in this case.</p>
--	---

**Table 15. Condition 2. UoA 1 - albacore**

Performance Indicator & Score	PI number	Scoring Guidepost	Score
	<b>1.2.1</b>	<b>There is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Condition</b>	<p>The fishery management system should put in place a regional harvest strategy, incorporating limit and target reference points (management objectives), a harvest control rule and management actions, such that the strategy is responsive to the status of the stock and the elements of the strategy work together to maintain the stock at or around the target level.</p> <p>The key missing elements of the harvest strategy at present are 1. A target reference point formally adopted by the regional management system, and 2. A well-defined harvest control rule with associated management actions. These issues are also addressed specifically in conditions 1 and 3.</p>		
<b>Milestones</b>	<p>By the first, second and third annual surveillance audits, there will be evidence that work is on-going on a target reference point and harvest control rule as required under Conditions 1 and 3. Score 70</p> <p>By the fourth annual surveillance audit the client should provide evidence that the key missing elements of the harvest strategy (as covered by conditions 1 and 3) are put in place. Score 80.</p>		
<b>Client action plan</b>	<p>In order to ensure that WCPFC implement a harvest strategy for South Pacific albacore which is responsive to the state of the stock and the elements of the harvest strategy work together towards achieving management objectives reflected in the target and limit reference points, the client will:</p> <p><u>Year 1</u></p> <p>1. Undertake activities to ensure appropriate focus is given to albacore tuna management at</p>		

	<p>the Twelfth Session of the Commission (December 2015). In particular seek Tokelau Arrangement support for potential management measures resulting from development of harvest control rules and reference points as per Condition 1 and Condition 3.</p> <p>2. Ensure the work plan of AFMA in 2015 includes an examination of the integrated harvest strategies needed to achieve management objectives</p> <p><u>Year 2</u></p> <p>1. In consultation with AFMA, provide an assessment of how the elements of the enhanced management strategy work together to achieve the management objectives for this fishery.</p> <p><u>Year 3</u></p> <p>1. Engagement with AFMA officials, and where necessary FFA and its members, and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock in advance of the Commission meeting to ensure an appropriately drafted CMM is prepared, for the WCPFC annual meeting, for consideration by the Commission.</p> <p><u>Year 4</u></p> <p>The client will provide evidence that key elements of the harvest strategy are in place by the regional management organization that ensure that the elements of the harvest strategy work together towards achieving management objectives reflected in the target and limit reference points is in place.</p>
<p><b>Progress on Condition Year 1</b></p>	<p>WSA informed the audit that the dates expressed in the above client action plan (i.e., “2015”) were actually incorrect as the action plan was written prior to the fishery actually gaining certification and therefore it would be more appropriate for the dates to be 2016, rather than 2015 and hence the WCPFC session should have been the thirteenth session in December 2016.</p> <p>In addition to the information provided in Condition 1 above:</p> <p>Australia continues to be one of the leading countries at WCPFC, and the Tokelau Arrangement continually supporting and driving its members to develop and adopt harvest control rules and reference points for the albacore tuna fishery. Several achievements at the last WCPFC meeting include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement in determining acceptable levels of risk (interim 0 to 20 but not above) with harvest strategy for albacore, yellowfin and skipjack;</li> <li>• Agreement to explore levels of risk, and development of performance indicators for albacore tuna in 2017.</li> </ul> <p>However, there was no such agreement regarding developing a target reference point. Australia continues its strong engagement in the Tokelau Arrangement and work is on-going with all parties.</p> <p>WSA recently signed onto the MSC Tuna Alignment Groups letter to the WCPFC and other parties, outlining the goals and objectives of the group for both 2016 and 2017 (Appendix 3.2 and 3.3 respectively), including among other matters, advocating for the development and adoption of robust harvest strategies.</p> <p>TA recently attended the last WCPFC meeting in Fiji as part of the Australian Government</p>

	<p>delegation as an observer. TA continues to be active and attending all tuna meetings and engaging and advocating for progress both nationally with DAFF and AFMA but also internationally at the WCPFC meetings.</p> <p>WSA maintains its role as an industry member on the Australian Commonwealth Governments Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee (TTMAC) and the Tropical Tuna Resource Advisory Group (TTRAG), where WSA advocates for continued sustainable management of the tuna resource, including albacore tuna and the development and implementation of robust harvest strategy and control rules at international meetings.</p> <p>There is clear evidence that WSA continues to engage, advocate and communicate with all parties for the development and implementation of robust target reference points and harvest control rules for key tuna species in the WCPO, with particular emphasis on South Pacific albacore.</p>
<b>Progress on Condition Year 2</b>	<p>Please refer to information provided for Condition 1 above.</p> <p>There is clear evidence that WSA has started a process of consultation and representation for the establishment of a precautionary and robust harvest control rule with appropriate national and regional management bodies and industry associations.</p>
<b>Progress on Condition Year 3</b>	<p>See also progress on Condition 1. In addition to adoption of an interim TRP, the WCPFC15 updated Harvest Strategy Workplan (suppl-CMM 2014-06) lays out the timeline for development of harvest control rules using management strategy evaluation. It is noted that the workplan includes scheduled adoption of HCR in 2021 and that with rescoring of the fishery using FCR v2.0 in 2019, and harmonisation with overlapping fisheries, the milestones for this condition would in any case be extended.</p> <p>Walker Seafood Australia clearly engages with AFMA officials and through AFMA where necessary with FFA and its members, and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock in advance of the Commission meeting to ensure appropriately drafted proposals for consideration by the Commission (e.g. WCPFC15-2018-DP10). WSA personnel are also active members of the AFMA TTRAG and TTMAC.</p>
<b>Status of condition</b>	On target

**Table 16. Condition 3. UoA 1 – albacore**

<b>Performance Indicator &amp; Score</b>	<b>PI number</b>	<b>Scoring Guidepost</b>	<b>Score</b>
	1.2.2	There are well-defined and effective harvest control rules in place	60
<b>Condition</b>	<p>A well-defined regional-level harvest control rule should be put in place, with associated management actions (in the form of a WCPFC CMM or another form as appropriate) which together act effectively to reduce exploitation rates as the limit reference point is approached. The selection of the harvest control rule should take into account the main uncertainties regarding the status of the stock or the impact of the fishery (or other uncertainties if considered important).</p> <p>Note: This condition can be addressed together with conditions 1 and 2.</p>		

<b>Milestones</b>	<p>By the first annual surveillance audit, there shall be evidence that the client has started a process of consultation and representation for the establishment of a precautionary and robust harvest control rule with appropriate regional management bodies. Score 60.</p> <p>By the second and third annual surveillance audits, there shall be evidence of on-going representations to, and discussions in, appropriate regional management bodies, relating to a robust harvest control rule for South Pacific albacore. Score 60.</p> <p>By the fourth annual surveillance audit, the client should provide evidence that the harvest control rule and associated management actions are put in place. Score 80.</p>
<b>Client action plan</b>	<p>To support the development of appropriate harvest control rules for the South Pacific albacore stock the respective years the client will provide evidence of:</p> <p><u>Year 1</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engagement with the AFMA officials to promote the completion and adoption of Harvest Control Rules for South Pacific albacore.</li> <li>2. Consultation with AFMA and where necessary FFA and FFA members through the Sub-Committee on South Pacific Tuna and Billfish Fisheries (SC-SPTBF) and Australian government delegates to WCPFC with the objective of establishing an agreed position on harvest control rules for the stock that is consistent with the MSC SG 80 standards.</li> <li>3. The provision of any requested practical support and data for SPC, FFA and WCPFC analyses of harvest control rules consistent with candidate reference points.</li> <li>4. Engagement with AFMA officials and Australian delegates to WCPFC to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Promote the tabling of a statement to WCPFC at its Twelfth Session (December 2015), urging other members to work diligently to adopt formal harvest control rules for all tuna stocks, as required by the WCPFC Convention.</li> <li>b. Engagement with high-level contacts between AFMA officials, FFA and its members, and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock in advance of the Commission meeting to seek their support for the adoption of appropriate harvest control rules by the WCPFC.</li> <li>c. Ensure the work plan of the WCPFC Scientific Committee, members of the Tokelau Arrangement and FFA SC-SPTBF in 2015 will include analyses of candidate harvest control rules for albacore.</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. Actions to raise awareness of the need for a WCPFC albacore management measure through the Tokelau Arrangement.</li> </ol> <p><u>Year 2</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engagement with the AFMA to consolidate the Australian position on harvest control rules for the South Pacific albacore stock at subsequent FFA, Tokelau Arrangement and WCPFC meetings and workshops and encourage delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock to support the Australian position. This shall be undertaken in conjunction with any deliberations on appropriate reference points.</li> <li>2. Provision of any requested support and data for SPC, FFA and WCPFC analyses on HCRs for albacore to support any further discussions at the FFA SC-SPTBF meetings, Tokelau Arrangement meetings and the WCPFC Scientific Committee.</li> <li>3. Collaboration with other industry sectors and NGOs in order to raise awareness of the need for WCPFC to adopt well-defined harvest control rules for the South Pacific albacore stock.</li> <li>4. Support and data as requested for the activities of the FFA SC-SPTBF in the analysis of harvest control rules consistent with candidate reference points.</li> </ol>

	<p>5. Actions to raise awareness of the need for a WCPFC albacore management measure through the Tokelau Arrangement</p> <p><u>Year 3</u></p> <p>1. Practical support and data as requested to AFMA and other regional meetings and workshops with the objective of achieving the adoption of harvest control rules for the South Pacific albacore stock by WCPFC.</p> <p>2. Engagement with AFMA officials, and as required FFA and its members, and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock in advance of the Commission meeting to ensure appropriately drafted WCPFC Resolutions on well-defined harvest control rules for the stock, to be tabled by Australia or other countries fishing on the stock) at the 2017 (or 2018 if necessary) WCPFC annual meeting for consideration by the Commission.</p> <p>3. Liaison with the AFMA officials to ensure relevant supporting research is planned both within the FFA SC-SPTBF and the WCPFC Science Committee.</p> <p>4. Actions to raise awareness of the need for a WCPFC albacore management measure through the Tokelau Arrangement.</p>
<b>Progress on Condition Year 1</b>	<p>Please refer to information provided for Condition 1 and 2 above.</p> <p>There is clear evidence that WSA has started a process of consultation and representation for the establishment of a precautionary and robust harvest control rule with appropriate national and regional management bodies and industry associations.</p>
<b>Progress on Condition Year 2</b>	<p>Please refer to information provided for Condition 1 above.</p> <p>There is clear evidence that WSA has started a process of consultation and representation for the establishment of a precautionary and robust harvest control rule with appropriate national and regional management bodies and industry associations.</p>
<b>Progress on Condition Year 3</b>	<p>See also progress on Condition 1. In addition to adoption of an interim TRP, and With general guidance on LRP and risks as summarised in the WCPFC Harvest Strategy and Reference Points page (<a href="https://www.wcpfc.int/harvest-strategy">https://www.wcpfc.int/harvest-strategy</a>) it is clear that the research provider (SPC) and Scientific Committee are well placed to undertake HCR development and testing as outlined in the workplan. The WCPFC1 adopted update to the workplan (suppl-CMM 2014-06) lays out the timeline for development of HCR using management strategy evaluation. It is noted that the workplan includes scheduled adoption of HCR in 2021 and that with rescoring of the fishery using FCR v2 in 2019, and harmonisation with overlapping fisheries, the milestones for this condition will need to be extended when rescoring occurs.</p> <p>Walker Seafood Australia clearly engages with AFMA officials and through AFMA where necessary with FFA and its members, and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock in advance of the Commission meeting to ensure appropriately drafted proposals for consideration by the (e.g. WCPFC15-2018-DP10). WSA personnel are also active members of the AFMA TTRAG and TTMAC.</p>
<b>Status of condition</b>	On target

**Table 17. Condition 4. UoA 2 – yellowfin**

	<b>PI number</b>	<b>Scoring Guidepost</b>	<b>Score</b>
--	------------------	--------------------------	--------------

<b>Performance Indicator &amp; Score</b>	1.2.1	There is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place	70
<b>Condition</b>	<p>The fishery management system should put in place a regional harvest strategy, incorporating limit and target reference points (management objectives), a harvest control rule and management actions, such that the strategy is responsive to the status of the stock and the elements of the strategy work together to maintain the stock at or around the target level.</p> <p>The key missing element of the harvest strategy at present is a well-defined harvest control rule with associated management actions. This issue is also addressed specifically in Condition 5.</p>		
<b>Milestones</b>	<p>By the first, second and third annual surveillance audits, there will be evidence that work is on-going on a harvest control rule as required under Condition 5. Score 70</p> <p>By the fourth annual surveillance audit the client should provide evidence that the key, missing element of the harvest strategy (as covered by Condition 5) is in place. Score 80.</p>		
<b>Client action plan</b>	<p>In order to ensure that WCPFC implement a harvest strategy for WCPO yellowfin which is responsive to the state of the stock and the elements of the harvest strategy work together towards achieving management objectives reflected in the target and limit reference points. The client will:</p> <p><u>Year 1</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake activities to ensure appropriate focus is given to yellowfin tuna management at the Twelfth Session of the Commission (December 2015). In particular seek Tokelau Arrangement support for potential management measures resulting from development of harvest control rules and reference points as per Condition 5.</li> <li>Ensure the work plan of AFMA in 2015 includes an examination of the integrated harvest strategies needed to achieve management objectives</li> </ol> <p><u>Year 2</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In consultation with AFMA, provide an assessment of how the elements of the enhanced management strategy work together to achieve the management objectives for this fishery.</li> </ol> <p><u>Year 3</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement with AFMA officials, and where necessary FFA and its members, and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock in advance of the Commission meeting to ensure an appropriately drafted CMM is prepared, for the WCPFC annual meeting, for consideration by the Commission.</li> </ol> <p><u>Year 4</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The client will provide evidence that key elements of the harvest strategy are in place by the regional management organisation that ensure that the elements of the harvest strategy work together towards achieving management objectives reflected in the target and limit reference points is in place.</li> </ol>		
<b>Progress on Condition Year 1</b>	<p>Please refer to information provided for Condition 1 and 2 above.</p> <p>There is clear evidence that WSA continues to engage, advocate and communicate with all parties for the development and implementation of robust target reference points and harvest control rules for key tuna species in the WCPO.</p>		
<b>Progress on Condition Year 2</b>	<p>Please refer to information provided for Condition 1 above.</p> <p>The audit team contacted the DAWR with regard to clarifying Australia's position concerning harvest strategies and control rules for yellowfin tuna. The DAWR responded that "<i>Australia</i></p>		

	<p><i>views the implementation of harvest strategies as the key to ensuring the long term sustainability of WCPFC managed stocks. Australia's primary focus with regard to the WCPO yellowfin stock is to progress implementation of the harvest strategy workplan, including advocating for adoption of a TRP for YFT in 2019 and development and adoption of a harvest control rule in 2021".</i></p> <p>Furthermore, DAWR is of the view that the current management arrangements to manage other tuna species (i.e., bigeye tuna) for purse seine and longline fisheries, is effectively managing the mortality of yellowfin tuna. However, DAWR also recognise the need to control the take of such species by other gear types. DAWR is pleased to see continuing efforts on the Commission's part to increase information availability and controls on these fisheries (DAWR, 2018 – Appendix 6).</p> <p>There is clear evidence that WSA has started a process of consultation and representation for the establishment of a precautionary and robust harvest control rule with appropriate national and regional management bodies and industry associations.</p>
<p><b>Progress on Condition Year 3</b></p>	<p>For yellowfin tuna, a target reference point has yet to be agreed by the WCPFC. However, the WCPFC15-adopted general CMM for Tropical Tunas (CMM 2018-01) specifies at paragraph 14 that for YFT <i>"Pending agreement on a target reference point the spawning biomass depletion ratio (SB/SBF=0) is to be maintained at or above the average SB/SBF=0 for 2012-2015"</i> and at paragraph 15 <i>"The Commission at its 2019 annual session shall review and revise the aims set out in paragraphs 12 to 14 in light of advice from the Scientific Committee."</i></p> <p>The spawning ratio to be used for management is not a TRP and is not included in suppl-CMM 2014-06. Nevertheless, it is sufficient to allow continuation of management advice from the Scientific Committee and provides some basis for confidence that a TRP can be agreed in 2019 as specified in the Harvest Strategy workplan.</p> <p>Progress on HCR development as part of the WCPFC15-updated Harvest Strategy Workplan (suppl-CMM 2014-06) lays out the timeline for development of harvest control rules using management strategy evaluation. TRP adoption is anticipated in 2019 and MSE/HCR development in 2020 and 2021. It is noted that the workplan includes scheduled adoption of HCR in 2021 and that with rescoring of the fishery using FCR v2 in 2019, and harmonization with overlapping fisheries, the milestones for this condition will need to be extended.</p> <p>As for south Pacific albacore, the FFA made proposals to WCPFC (WCPFC15-2018-DP08). In this case, however, the proposals were general for both BET and YFT, related to achieving modest increases in SB/SBF=0, and did not specify implicit or explicit TRP.</p>
<p><b>Status of condition</b></p>	<p>On target</p>

**Table 18. Condition 5. UoA 2 - yellowfin**

<p><b>Performance Indicator &amp; Score</b></p>	<p><b>PI number</b></p>	<p><b>Scoring Guidepost</b></p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>
	<p><b>1.2.2</b></p>	<p><b>There are well-defined and effective harvest control rules in place</b></p>	<p><b>65</b></p>
<p><b>Condition</b></p>	<p>A well-defined regional-level harvest control rule should be put in place, with associated management actions (in the form of a WCPFC CMM or another form as appropriate) which together act effectively to reduce exploitation rates as the limit reference point is approached. The selection of the harvest control rule should take into account the main uncertainties</p>		

	<p>regarding the status of the stock or the impact of the fishery (or other uncertainties if considered important).</p> <p>Note: This condition can be addressed together with Condition 4.</p>
<b>Milestones</b>	<p>By the first annual surveillance audit, there shall be evidence that the client has started a process of consultation and representation for the establishment of a precautionary and robust harvest control rule with appropriate regional management bodies. Score 65.</p> <p>By the second and third annual surveillance audits, there shall be evidence of on-going representations to, and discussions in, appropriate regional management bodies, relating to a robust harvest control rule for western central Pacific yellowfin. Score 65.</p> <p>By the fourth annual surveillance audit, the client should provide evidence that the harvest control rule and associated management actions are put in place. Score 80.</p>
<b>Client action plan</b>	<p>To support the development of appropriate harvest control rules for the WCPO yellowfin tuna stock the respective years the client will provide evidence of:</p> <p><u>Year 1</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engagement with the AFMA officials to promote the completion and adoption of Harvest Control Rules for WCPO yellowfin.</li> <li>2. Consultation with AFMA and where necessary FFA and FFA members through the Sub-Committee on South Pacific Tuna and Billfish Fisheries (SC-SPTBF) and Australian government delegates to WCPFC with the objective of establishing an agreed position on harvest control rules for the stock that is consistent with the MSC SG 80 standards.</li> <li>3. The provision of any requested practical support and data for SPC, FFA and WCPFC analyses of harvest control rules consistent with candidate reference points.</li> <li>4. Engagement with AFMA officials and Australian delegates to WCPFC to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Promote the tabling of a statement to WCPFC at its Twelfth Session (December 2015), urging other members to work diligently to adopt formal harvest control rules for all tuna stocks, as required by the WCPFC Convention.</li> <li>b. Engagement with high-level contacts between AFMA officials, FFA and its members, and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock in advance of the Commission meeting to seek their support for the adoption of appropriate harvest control rules by the WCPFC.</li> <li>c. Ensure the work plan of the WCPFC Scientific Committee and FFA SC-SPTBF in 2015 will include analyses of candidate harvest control rules for yellowfin.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p><u>Year 2</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engagement with the AFMA to consolidate the Australian position on harvest control rules for the WCPO yellowfin stock at subsequent FFA and WCPFC meetings and workshops and encourage delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock to support the Australian position. This shall be undertaken in conjunction with any deliberations on appropriate</li> </ol>

	<p>reference points.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Provision of any requested support and data for SPC, FFA and WCPFC analyses on HCRs for yellowfin to support any further discussions at the FFA SC-SPTBF meetings and the WCPFC Scientific Committee.</li> <li>3. Collaboration with other industry sectors and NGOs in order to raise awareness of the need for WCPFC to adopt well-defined harvest control rules for the WCPO yellowfin stock.</li> <li>4. Support and data as requested for the activities of the FFA SC-SPTBF in the analysis of harvest control rules consistent with candidate reference points.</li> </ol> <p><u>Year 3</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Practical support and data as requested to AFMA and other regional meetings and workshops with the objective of achieving the adoption of harvest control rules for the WCPO yellowfin stock by WCPFC.</li> <li>2. Engagement with AFMA officials, and as required FFA and its members, and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock in advance of the Commission meeting to ensure appropriately drafted WCPFC Resolutions on well-defined harvest control rules for the stock, to be tabled by Australia or other countries fishing on the stock) at the 2017 (or 2018 if necessary) WCPFC annual meeting for consideration by the Commission.</li> <li>3. Liaison with the AFMA officials to ensure relevant supporting research is planned both within the FFA SC-SPTBF and the WCPFC Science Committee.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Progress on Condition Year 1</b></p>	<p>Please refer to information provided for Condition 1 and 2 above.</p> <p>There is clear evidence that WSA has started and joined several processes of consultation and representation for the establishment of a precautionary target reference point with appropriate national and regional management bodies and industry associations.</p>
<p><b>Progress on Condition Year 2</b></p>	<p>Please refer to information provided for Condition 1 &amp; 4 above.</p> <p>There is clear evidence that WSA has started a process of consultation and representation for the establishment of a precautionary and robust harvest control rule with appropriate national and regional management bodies and industry associations.</p>
<p><b>Progress on Condition Year 3</b></p>	<p>The milestone for this condition is that: By the second and third annual surveillance audits, there shall be evidence of on-going representations to, and discussions in, appropriate regional management bodies, relating to a robust harvest control rule for western central Pacific yellowfin. The Year 3 CAP includes engagement with AFMA and other bodies (such as FFA).</p> <p>The WCPFC-adopted Harvest Strategy Workplan (suppl-CMM 2014-06) includes in 2018 for YFT: SC and Commission discussion of management objectives for fisheries and/or stocks, and subsequent development of candidate TRPs for BET and YFT. Adoption of a TRP is expected in 2019 with work to develop HCR in 2020 and 2021, and HCR adoption in December 2021.</p> <p>Walker Seafood Australia clearly engages with AFMA officials and through AFMA where necessary with FFA and its members, and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries</p>

	<p>fishing the stock in advance of the Commission meeting to ensure appropriately drafted proposals for consideration by the (e.g. WCPFC15-2018-DP08 and DP10). WSA personnel are also active members of the AFMA TTRAG and TTMAC.</p> <p>The FFA made proposals to WCPFC (WCPFC15-2018-DP08) for both bigeye and yellowfin tuna, related to achieving modest increases in <math>SB/SB_{F=0}</math>, though did not specify implicit or explicit TRP. This is evidence of discussion leading to TRP consideration in 2019, as planned.</p> <p>It is noted that the workplan includes scheduled adoption of HCR in 2021 and that with re-scoring of the fishery using FCR v2.0 in 2019, and harmonisation with overlapping fisheries, the milestones for this condition will need to be extended when re-scoring occurs.</p>
<b>Status of condition</b>	On target

**Table 19. Condition 6. UoA 3 – swordfish**

Performance Indicator & Score	PI number	Scoring Guidepost	Score
	1.1.2	Limit and target reference points are appropriate for the stock	75
<b>Condition</b>	A limit reference point needs to be defined for the total stock area (WCPFC). This is to ensure that the stock does not fall below a level at which there is an appreciable risk to impairing reproductive capacity.		
<b>Milestones</b>	<p>By the first annual surveillance audit, there shall be evidence that the client has started or joined a process of consultation and representation for the establishment of a precautionary target reference point with appropriate regional management bodies. Score 75.</p> <p>By the second annual surveillance audit, there shall be evidence of on-going representations to, and discussions in, appropriate regional management bodies, relating to a target reference point for South West Pacific swordfish. Score 75.</p> <p>By the third annual surveillance audit a target reference point for regional management of the South West Pacific swordfish stock should be formally adopted by the WCPFC or other appropriate regional management</p>		
<b>Client action plan</b>	<p>Walker Seafood Australia notes the need of implementing stock-specific reference points and associated harvest control rules as part of the management of stocks in the ETBF. To support the development of appropriate reference points for the South West Pacific swordfish, therefore, in the respective years the client will provide evidence of:</p> <p><u>Year 1</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engagement with the AFMA to promote the completion and adoption of a limit reference point for the southwest Pacific swordfish stock.</li> <li>2. Consultation with AFMA and where necessary FFA and FFA members through the Sub-Committee on South Pacific Tuna and Billfish Fisheries (SC-SPTBF) and Australian government delegates to WCPFC with the objective of establishing an agreed position on limit reference points for the stock that is consistent with the MSC SG80 standards.</li> <li>3. The provision of any requested practical support and data for SPC, FFA and WCPFC analyses on limit reference points for swordfish to support discussions at FFA SC-SPTBF meetings.</li> <li>4. Actions to raise awareness of the need for a South West Pacific Swordfish management measure through the Tokelau Arrangement of which Australia is a signatory.</li> </ol>		

	<p><u>Year 2</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The provision of any requested support and data for SPC, FFA and WCPFC analyses on limit reference points for swordfish to support any further discussions at the FFA SC-SPTBF meetings, Tokelau Arrangement meetings and the WCPFC Scientific Committee.</li> <li>2. Engagement with AFMA government officials, and where necessary FFA and its members, and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock in advance of the Commission meeting to seek their support for the adoption of appropriate limit reference points by the WCPFC and appropriately drafted WCPFC Resolutions.</li> <li>3. Collaboration with other industry sectors and NGOs in order to continue to raise awareness of the need for WCPFC to adopt appropriate reference points for the South West Pacific swordfish stock.</li> <li>4. Actions to raise awareness of the need for a South West Pacific swordfish management measure through the Tokelau Arrangement of which Australia is a signatory.</li> </ol> <p><u>Year 3</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engagement with AFMA government officials, and where necessary FFA and its members, and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock in advance of the Commission meeting to ensure appropriately drafted WCPFC Resolutions on the adoption of target reference points for the stock, for the WCPFC annual meeting, for consideration by the Commission.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Progress on Condition Year 1</b></p>	<p>Please refer to information provided for Condition 1 and 2 above.</p> <p>Australia is the leading country regarding catches of swordfish in the WCPO, with catches representing 65-70% of the total WCPO take of swordfish. Australia does have a robust implemented harvest strategy and harvest control rules for swordfish, which industry and stakeholders have been supportive of and adhered to over many years. However, it should be noted that swordfish are only currently considered on the working agenda's of TA, TTMAC and TTRAG. Other bodies, such as WCPFC, currently do not consider or address any matters relating to this species.</p> <p>It is noted by the audit team that given that Australia has a controlling share of the SW Pacific swordfish catch and already has in place robust harvest strategies and harvest control rules, Australia and WSA should make significantly greater efforts to advocate and lobby for stronger management arrangements regarding this species, including the adoption of a robust harvest strategy with appropriate limit and target reference points and harvest control rules at the WCPFC level. It is considered by the audit team that while WSA and AFMA have been engaged and communicating as per the client action plan and satisfying the milestones of the condition, it is recommended that WSA could improve on this between now and the next annual audit, through greater advocacy and lobbying of parties internationally to ensure that swordfish are placed on the WCPFC working agenda and that progress is made on development and adoption of reference points at the international level occurs.</p> <p>There is clear evidence that WSA has started and joined several processes of consultation and representation for the establishment of a precautionary target reference point with appropriate national and regional management bodies and industry associations.</p>
<p><b>Progress on Condition Year 2</b></p>	<p>Please refer to information provided for Condition 1 above.</p> <p>As year 1, swordfish is still only currently considered on the working agendas of TA, TTMAC and TTRAG. Other bodies, such as WCPFC, currently do not consider or address any matters relating to this species. However, DAWR have begun discussions with other regional countries (New Zealand, and some limited discussions with PNA members (and the PNA Office) regarding adding swordfish to the WCPFC Harvest Strategy Workplan) and the WCPFC members regarding the potential to have swordfish added to the workplan of the WCPFC. DAWR continue to engage on this matter and as such, are considering advocating at the WCPFC for the inclusion of Swordfish on the working agenda. However, DAWR do not want to</p>

	<p>undermine the support for the current workplan by distant water nations and therefore did not advocate for this to occur in 2017. Currently the WCPFC Scientific Committee considers and discusses assessments and develops recommendations to the Commission for swordfish using a 20% limit reference point. This approach had been accepted by WCPFC members and therefore, it is considered that a measure for swordfish in setting reference points and harvest strategies will be likely in the near future. These discussions also involve the use of <math>B_{MSY}</math> and considered highly unlikely that anything below 20% would be adopted by the Commission members.</p> <p>DAWR considers the current WCPFC management arrangements for southwest Pacific swordfish to be several years old and should be reviewed. Similar to yellowfin tuna, the DAWR are progressing its strategy on swordfish and currently considering how to best get these species (and all target species) in the harvest strategy workplan of the WCPFC, without losing support from other countries for the current workplan.</p> <p>WSA made swordfish one of its clear priorities in its letter to the Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources. The Australian Government also consider swordfish a priority, with two research projects underway to investigate genetic links between populations and to gain a better understanding of how swordfish interact with oceanographic conditions.</p>
<p><b>Progress on Condition Year 3</b></p>	<p>SW Pacific swordfish is not included in the WCPFC Harvest Strategy workplan (suppl-CMM 2014-06).</p> <p>We note some confusion between the Condition, which refers to LRP only, Milestones which refer only to TRP, and the CAP which refers to both.</p> <p>During the surveillance site visit, AFMA provided a note presented to WCPFC15 of the intention in 2019 to develop and have adopted a proposal for strengthening the management of South Pacific SWO management. The note does not specifically mention reference points. AFMA also acknowledge It is unlikely that the WCPFC will consider development of a SWO harvest strategy until the development of harvest strategies for tropical tunas is finalised and South Pacific SWO is not currently on the WCPFC HS Work Plan. There have therefore been no SWO LRP and TRP adopted.</p> <p>The condition is technically behind target. In such circumstances, FCR v2.0 7.23.13.1(i) requires specification of remedial action and milestones and given the lack of WCPFC plans related to SWO it is hard to determine what those would be.</p> <p>Given, however, that a CAB-wide variation request was recently accepted by the MSC for this and other tuna and swordfish fisheries (see Section 2.6), the fishery will be rescored in 2019 using FCR v2.0, for which there is no corresponding PI that requires LRP and TRP. Further, the MSC' acceptance of the Variation request includes that no suspension action will be undertaken should conditions be found to be behind target for two consecutive years.</p> <p>Given that the Variation Request and intended rescored in 2019 will obviate this condition, no remedial action or milestone is considered necessary in this case.</p>
<p><b>Status of condition</b></p>	<p>Behind target but no remedial action required (see above).</p>

**Table 20. Condition 7. UoA 3 - swordfish**

<b>Performance Indicator &amp;</b>	<b>PI number</b>	<b>Scoring Guidepost</b>	<b>Score</b>
	1.2.2	There are well-defined and effective harvest control rules in place	65

Score			
<b>Condition</b>	<p>A well-defined regional-level harvest control rule should be put in place; with associated management actions (in the form of a WCPFC CMM or another form as appropriate) which together act effectively to reduce exploitation rates as the limit reference point is approached. The selection of the harvest control rule should take into account the main uncertainties regarding the status of the stock or the impact of the fishery (or other uncertainties if considered important).</p>		
<b>Milestones</b>	<p>By the first annual surveillance audit, there shall be evidence that the client has started a process of consultation and representation for the establishment of a precautionary and robust harvest control rule with appropriate regional management bodies. Score 65.</p> <p>By the second and third annual surveillance audits, there shall be evidence of on-going representations to, and discussions in, appropriate regional management bodies, relating to a robust harvest control rule for South West Pacific swordfish. Score 65.</p> <p>By the fourth annual surveillance audit, the client should provide evidence that the harvest control rule and associated management actions are put in place. Score 80.</p> <p>Year 1: Collate and analyse data, in consultation with AFMA or any other appropriate organisation or expert.</p> <p>Year 2: Provide assessment of the impact of the fishery in relation to the population size, and/or evidence of trends in the population in the area of the fishery over a recent period, and/or other data, which allow the impacts of the fishery on the stock to be approximately quantified.</p>		
<b>Client action plan</b>	<p>To support the development of appropriate harvest control rules for the South West Pacific swordfish the respective years the client will provide evidence of:</p> <p><u>Year 1</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engagement with the AFMA officials to promote the completion and adoption of Harvest Control Rules for South West Pacific swordfish.</li> <li>2. Consultation with AFMA and where necessary FFA and FFA members through the Sub-Committee on South Pacific Tuna and Billfish Fisheries (SC-SPTBF) and Australian government delegates to WCPFC with the objective of establishing an agreed position on harvest control rules for the stock that is consistent with the MSC SG 80 standards.</li> <li>3. The provision of any requested practical support and data for SPC, FFA and WCPFC analyses of harvest control rules consistent with candidate reference points.</li> <li>4. Engagement with AFMA officials and Australian delegates to WCPFC to:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Promote the tabling of a statement to WCPFC at its Twelfth Session (December 2015); urging other members to work diligently to adopt formal harvest control rules for all tuna stocks, as required by the WCPFC Convention.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p><u>Year 2 &amp; 3</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engagement with the AFMA to consolidate the Australian position on harvest control rules for the South West Pacific swordfish stock at subsequent FFA and WCPFC meetings and workshops and encourage delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock to support the Australian position. This shall be undertaken in conjunction with any deliberations on appropriate reference points.</li> <li>2. Provision of any requested support and data for SPC, FFA and WCPFC analyses on HCRs for albacore to support any further discussions at the FFA SC-SPTBF meetings and the WCPFC Scientific Committee.</li> </ol>		

	<p>3. Collaboration with other industry sectors and NGOs in order to raise awareness of the need for WCPFC to adopt well-defined harvest control rules for the South West Pacific swordfish stock.</p> <p>4. Support and data as requested for the activities of the FFA SC-SPTBF in the analysis of harvest control rules consistent with candidate reference points.</p> <p><u>Year 4</u></p> <p>1. Practical support and data as requested to AFMA and other regional meetings and workshops with the objective of achieving the adoption of harvest control rules for the South West Pacific stock by WCPFC.</p> <p>2. Engagement with AFMA officials, and as required FFA and its members, and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock in advance of the Commission meeting to ensure appropriately drafted WCPFC Resolutions on well-defined harvest control rules for the stock, to be tabled by Australia or other countries fishing on the stock) at the 2018 (or 2019 if necessary) WCPFC annual meeting for consideration by the Commission.</p> <p>3. Liaison with the AFMA officials to ensure relevant supporting research is planned both within the FFA SC-SPTBF and the WCPFC Science Committee.</p>
<p><b>Progress on Condition Year 1</b></p>	<p>Please refer to information provided for Condition 1, 2 and 6 above.</p> <p>There is clear evidence that WSA has started and joined several processes of consultation and representation for the establishment of a precautionary target reference point with appropriate national and regional management bodies and industry associations.</p>
<p><b>Progress on Condition Year 2</b></p>	<p>Please refer to information provided for Condition 1 and 6 above.</p> <p>There is clear evidence that WSA has started and joined several processes of consultation and representation for the establishment of a precautionary target reference point with appropriate national and regional management bodies and industry associations.</p>
<p><b>Progress on Condition Year 3</b></p>	<p>The milestone for this condition is that: <i>By the second and third annual surveillance audits, there shall be evidence of on-going representations to, and discussions in, appropriate regional management bodies, relating to a robust harvest control rule for South West Pacific swordfish.</i> The Year 3 CAP includes engagement with AFMA and other bodies (such as FFA).</p> <p>The WCPFC-adopted Harvest Strategy Workplan (suppl-CMM 2014-06) does not include SWO and there are no clear plans for it to do so. During the surveillance site visit, AFMA provided a note presented to WCPFC15 of the intention in 2019 to develop and have adopted a proposal for strengthening the management of South Pacific SWO management. The note does not specifically mention harvest control rule development. AFMA also acknowledge It is unlikely that the WCPFC will consider development of a SWO harvest strategy until the development of harvest strategies for tropical tunas is finalised and South Pacific SWO is not currently on the WCPFC HS Work Plan. There have therefore been no SWO LRP and TRP adopted.</p> <p>Walker Seafood Australia clearly engages with AFMA officials and through AFMA where necessary with FFA and its members, and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock in advance of the Commission meeting to ensure appropriately drafted proposals for consideration by the (e.g. WCPFC15-2018-DP08 and DP10). WSA personnel are also active members of the AFMA TTRAG and TTMAC.</p> <p>As noted above, the Australian government has signalled intentions regarding strengthening SWO management arrangements in 2019. WCPFC16 takes place in December 2019 while the fourth surveillance and reassessment using FCR v2.0 is likely to take place earlier. It is very</p>

	<p>difficult to see, therefore, how the fourth milestone (... <i>the client should provide evidence that the harvest control rule and associated management actions are put in place</i>) might be met.</p> <p>Despite these difficulties, there is evidence on on-going representations at the regional level and of client engagement with AFMA and through AFMA with other bodies.</p>
<b>Status of condition</b>	On target

**Table 21. Condition 8. All UoAs.**

Performance Indicator & Score	PI number	Scoring Guidepost	Score
	2.3.1	<b>Direct effects are highly unlikely to create unacceptable impacts to ETP species.</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Condition</b>	<p><b>Turtles:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to collect data;</li> <li>If data show that interactions have reduced from historical trends, no further action is required;</li> <li>If data show that there remains a significant risk of interactions above the historical trend, investigation must be undertaken and if warranted, further management measures should be implemented, either by Walker Seafood Australia or by the ETBF as a whole.</li> </ul> <p><b>Shortfin mako:</b></p> <p>The fishery may show that it is not having an unacceptable impact on this species by various means: i) further reducing the mortality of this species from the fishery such that impacts are highly unlikely; and/or ii) providing an estimate of the total population size of shortfin mako against which the existing catch rate can be compared and shown to be acceptable; and/or iii) providing evidence on trends in shortfin mako population in the area of the fishery, to show that there is no evidence of any reduction in the population in the area associated with the fishery; and/or iv) any other appropriate method.</p>		
<b>Milestones</b>	<p><b>Turtles:</b></p> <p>Year 1: Collect and analyse data, assess whether historical trends are exceeded.</p> <p>Year 2: If historical trends exceeded, discuss appropriate management measures. Continue to collect and analyse data.</p> <p>Year 3: If historical trends exceeded in Year 1, implement agreed management measures. If historical trends exceeded in Year 2, discuss appropriate management measures. Continue to collect and analyse data.</p> <p>Year 4: If historical trends exceeded in Years 1 or 2, implement agreed management measures. If historical trends exceeded in Year 3, discuss appropriate management measures. If historical trends are not exceeded in any of the first three years, no further management action is required.</p> <p><b>Shortfin mako:</b></p> <p>For approach i) above:</p> <p>Year 1: Discuss further possible measures to reduce shortfin mako catch with AFMA and/or other organisations as appropriate. Client to develop draft mitigation plan for shortfin mako with AFMA. Performance of fishery is expected to be improved by the volume of landed shortfin mako being reduced (more live releases, improving outcome score)</p>		

	<p>Year 2: AFMA to review, revise, finalise and implement mitigation plan for shortfin mako with client and stakeholder input.</p> <p>Year 3: AFMA is to provide before and after data to show whether mitigation plan is working. Client to engage with scientists to undertake analysis of before and after implementation of mitigation plan. Year 4: If the percentage reduction in catch is insufficient, client and AFMA to review and strengthen mitigation plan.</p> <p>For approaches ii) and/or iii) above:</p> <p>Year 1: Collate and analyse data, in consultation with AFMA or any other appropriate organisation or expert.</p> <p>Year 2: Provide assessment of the impact of the fishery in relation to the population size, and/or evidence of trends in the population in the area of the fishery over a recent period, and/or other data, which allow the impacts of the fishery on the stock to be approximately quantified.</p> <p>Year 3: If the assessment does not suggest that impacts are highly unlikely to be unacceptable, implement further management measures to reduce impact.</p> <p>Year 4: If necessary, show that the additional management measures put in place have reduced or are likely to reduce the impact of the fishery to acceptable levels.</p>
	<p><b>Turtles:</b></p> <p>Year 1 Collect and analyse data from Walker Seafood vessel logbooks and AFMA logbook summaries of ETBF that can be used to estimate turtle interactions. Data to be made available for 1<sup>st</sup> surveillance audit in 2016 to assess whether historical trends are exceeded.</p> <p>Year 2 Continue to collect and analyse data from company and AFMA collated logbooks to determine the direct effects of this fishery. In the event that historical trends for turtle interactions were found to have been exceeded in year 1; show evidence of consultations with AFMA for appropriate management measures.</p> <p>Year 3 Continue to collect and analyse data from company and AFMA collated logbooks to determine the direct effects of this fishery. In the event that historical trends for turtle interactions were found to have been exceeded in year 2; implement agreed management measures with AFMA.</p> <p>Year 4 Continue to collect and analyse data from company and AFMA collated logbooks to determine the direct effects of this fishery. In the event that historical trends for turtle interactions were found to have been exceeded in years 1 or 2; implement agreed management measures with AFMA. If historical trends for turtle interactions were found to have been exceeded in year 3, consult with AFMA on strengthened management measures to be implemented.</p> <p><b>Shortfin mako sharks</b></p> <p>Year 1 Collect and analyse data from Walker Seafood vessel logbooks and AFMA logbook summaries of ETBF that can be used to record existing catch rates. Consult with AFMA on a draft mitigation plan to be developed for vessels fishing in the ETBF. Progress to be reported during 1<sup>st</sup> surveillance audit with supporting documents from AFMA.</p> <p>Year 2 Continue to collect and analyse data from Walker Seafood vessels and AFMA logbook summaries of ETBF of catches of shortfin mako. In consultation with AFMA review and discuss need to implement a mitigation plan for shortfin mako in the ETBF. Discuss with AFMA the</p>

	<p>timetable for a stock assessment of shortfin mako by scientists working with WCPFC.</p> <p><b>Year 3</b> In consultation with AFMA, implement management measures in the ETBF to reduce existing catch rates. Also consult with AFMA on progress on stock assessment of shortfin mako in wider WCP convention area. Provide evidence of progress made on this front.</p> <p><b>Year 4</b> Provide catch data post management measure implementation to analyse effectiveness of measures. Consult with AFMA on effectiveness of measures in ETBF. Also consult with AFMA on progress on stock assessment of shortfin mako in wider WCP convention area. Provide evidence of progress made on this front.</p> <p>If data suggest an issue with ETP interactions (such that PI 2.3.1 is not being met at the 80 level) then the fishery will develop and implement further management actions to address the issue(s) identified.</p>												
<p><b>Progress on Condition Year 1</b></p>	<p>In the ETBF the majority of interactions in the second half of 2015 have been with shortfin mako sharks (1,278 interactions) majority listed as “dead”. There have been 16 interactions with turtles, and all but two were released alive (AFMA, 2016b). Interaction data for 2016 was not available at time of audit.</p> <p>It is mandatory for all vessels in the ETBF to collect data and report any ETP interactions to AFMA. AFMA provides the Department of the Environment with quarterly reports that summarise protected species interaction information reported through AFMA logbook submissions. All quarterly summary interaction reports provided to the Department of the Environment are posted on the AFMA website at <a href="http://www.afma.gov.au/managing-our-fisheries/environment-and-sustainability/protected-species/">http://www.afma.gov.au/managing-our-fisheries/environment-and-sustainability/protected-species/</a>.</p> <p><b>Turtles:</b> The audit team was informed by AFMA that the trigger stated in the above condition (i.e., number of turtles per 1000 hooks) that was contained in the ETBF sea turtle mitigation plan (TMP<sup>4</sup>) has been superseded by the introduction of circle hooks into the fishery and regulations that make circle hooks compulsory for all operations setting eight hooks or less per bubble. However, this is despite that majority if not all vessels operating in the ETBF, including the WSA vessels, set a much greater number of hooks (&gt;16 hooks/bubble) than eight per bubble. The circle hook regulation came into effect on 1 March 2013. Therefore, there is currently no trigger in place in the fishery for turtles and hasn't been since March 2013.</p> <p>The superseded TMP trigger interaction rates for each sea turtle species in the ETBF is presented in the below table.</p> <p>Trigger interaction rates for sea turtle species and the ETBF.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="375 1585 1305 1792"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Interaction rate (per 1,000 observed hooks set)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><b>Green</b></td> <td>0.0048</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Leatherback</b></td> <td>0.0040</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Loggerhead</b></td> <td>0.0040</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Other: combination of Hawksbill, Flatback, Pacific (olive) Ridley</b></td> <td>0.0040</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>TOTAL</b></td> <td>0.0168</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>WSA collects all ETP interaction data through the use of its logbooks and with the introduction,</p>		Interaction rate (per 1,000 observed hooks set)	<b>Green</b>	0.0048	<b>Leatherback</b>	0.0040	<b>Loggerhead</b>	0.0040	<b>Other: combination of Hawksbill, Flatback, Pacific (olive) Ridley</b>	0.0040	<b>TOTAL</b>	0.0168
	Interaction rate (per 1,000 observed hooks set)												
<b>Green</b>	0.0048												
<b>Leatherback</b>	0.0040												
<b>Loggerhead</b>	0.0040												
<b>Other: combination of Hawksbill, Flatback, Pacific (olive) Ridley</b>	0.0040												
<b>TOTAL</b>	0.0168												

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/pages/b750620c-5865-4651-923b-7b94768b8dde/files/att6-turtle-mitigation-plan.pdf>

since mid-2015; of EM there is high confidence within the data being collected. All data collected by WSA are provided to AFMA for analysis.

WSA turtle interactions for 2015/16 are presented below. The total turtle interaction rate per 1000 hooks (0.014) by all WSA vessels is below that of the superseded trigger from the TMP (0.0168). However, green and leatherback turtle interaction rates are slightly higher than that stated in the TMP.

WSA turtle interactions and status for 2015/16 per 1000 hooks (Source AFMA logbook data for Walker Seafood Australia vessels).

Species	Number	Status		Rate per 1000 hooks
		Alive	Dead	
Green Turtle	20	18	2	0.007
Hawksbill Turtle	1	1	0	0.0003
Leatherback Turtle	15	15	0	0.005
Turtle (unspecified)	4	2	2	0.001
Total	40	36	4	0.014

It should be noted that all sea turtles and their interaction with the ETBF were analysed and assessed by AFMA and CSIRO through the use of an Ecological Risk Assessment in 2006/07 (AFMA 2007). As a result of the ERA assessment, green turtles, leatherback turtles and loggerhead sea turtles were assessed as medium risk from the ETBF fishery. In 2009, AFMA and CSIRO carried out another level 2 PSA assessment which was further refined. As a result of this process only one marine sea turtle species, leatherback turtle, was found to be of high risk from the ETBF fishery (AFMA, 2009).

However, given that this ERA is now over ten years old and there have been several significant changes in the fishery (introduction of quota, reduced vessels, fishing practices, introduction of circle hooks, other turtle mitigation tools such as de-hookers, line cutters, etc. and the introduction of EM, etc.) AFMA are currently finalising a new revision of the ERA. It is hoped that the new ERA will be available in March 2017. While the ERA is still in draft form, AFMA informed the audit that sea turtles had been fully analysed and considered in the latest version and preliminary findings in the draft indicate that sea turtles in the ETBF are not considered to be of high risk. WSA has been engaged and involved in the new ERA development. The new ERA provides for a robust analysis of the data from the fishery and then peer reviewed by experts from industry, government, science and across other fields. Given that sea turtles have been fully assessed and analysed by the ERA process and found not to be high risk, it could be considered that the interaction rates within the fishery are below that of historical numbers and not considered to be above the trigger rate expressed in the now superseded Turtle Management Plan and therefore not a sustainability issue for the fishery.

The same data are used to apply for World Trade Organisation (WTO) accreditation under the Environmental Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act) to allow exports of fishery product to other countries. The ETBF has successfully achieved its WTO accreditation in 2014 for five years (until 2019). One of the recommendations of the WTO accreditation is monitoring of protected species under the EPBC Act.

**Shortfin mako sharks:**

WSA collects all catch and fishery data through the use of its logbooks and since mid-2015, with the introduction of an electronic monitoring system (EMS) there is a high degree of confidence within the data being collected. All data collected by WSA are provided to AFMA for analysis.

WSA shortfin mako shark catch for 2015/16 is presented below.

WSA shortfin mako shark catch and status for 2015/16 (Source AFMA logbook data for Walker Seafoods Australia vessels).

Species	Number	Status		Rate per 1000 hooks
		Unknown	Dead	
Shortfin Mako Shark	842	584	258	0.29

It should be noted that all shark species interacting with the ETBF was analysed and assessed by AFMA and CSIRO through the use of an Ecological Risk Assessment in 2006/07 (AFMA, 2007). As a result of the ERA assessment, shortfin mako sharks were rated as medium risk. In 2009, AFMA and CSIRO conducted a more refined level 2 PSA ERA assessment process in which shortfin mako sharks were not considered (AFMA, 2009).

However, given that this ERA is now over ten years old and there have been several significant changes in the fishery (introduction of quota, reduced vessels, fishing practices and the introduction of EM, etc.) AFMA are currently finalising a new revision of the ERA. It is hoped that the new ERA will be available in March 2017. While the ERA is still in draft form, AFMA informed the audit that shortfin mako sharks had been fully analysed and considered in the latest version and preliminary findings in the draft indicate that at level 1 SICA assessment, shortfin mako sharks in the ETBF are considered to be of the highest potential risk. This draft result had also been communicated to TTMAC 15 (AFMA, 2016a). WSA has been engaged and involved in the new ERA development. The new ERA provides for a robust analysis of the data from the fishery and then peer reviewed by experts from industry, government, science and across other fields.

The same data are used to apply for World Trade Organisation (WTO) accreditation under the Environmental Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act) to allow exports of fishery product to other countries. The ETBF has successfully achieved its WTO accreditation in 2014 for five years (until 2019). One of the recommendations of the WTO accreditation is to continue to determine the impact of the fishery on sharks and cooperate with other relevant jurisdictions to pursue increased knowledge and complementary management of sharks.

Furthermore, with the introduction of EMS across the fishery, this has increased the level of confidence of compliance of fishers to the mako shark measure of having to release all live shortfin mako sharks back to the water. EMS has improved the reporting of the number of shortfin mako sharks being caught, this may have resulted in a jump in numbers, but may not actually represent an actual increase in catch due to better reporting and verification processes through EMS.

AFMA provided compliance data on the illegal take of shortfin mako shark. Mako sharks are protected under the EPBC Act (1999) but due to an amendment in the legislation in July 2010, are allowed to be retained by the fishery if dead upon hauling, as long as the total retained doesn't exceed the ETBF 20 shark per trip limit. Only one instance was found, through EMS, that live shortfin mako were taken in the ETBF, but this was not one of the client vessels. This case has been taken up by the Department of Environment, due to its protected status and is yet to be resolved.

**Progress on** The audit team was informed by AFMA that the trigger stated in the above condition (i.e.,

**Condition  
Year 2**

number of turtles per 1000 hooks) that was contained in the ETBF sea turtle mitigation plan (TMP<sup>5</sup>) has been superseded by the introduction of circle hooks into the fishery and regulations that make circle hooks compulsory for all operations setting eight hooks or less per bubble. However, this is despite that the majority if not all vessels operating in the ETBF, including the WSA vessels, set a much greater number of hooks (>16 hooks/bubble) than eight per bubble. The circle hook regulation came into effect on 1 March 2013. Therefore, there is currently no trigger in place in the fishery for turtles and hasn't been since March 2013.

In accordance with Section 7.23.13.3 of the MSC Fisheries Certification Requirements v2.0, in discussions with TA, AFMA, WSA and based on the above information, the audit team believes that there is clear justification to amend the wording of the current condition with regard to turtles and associated trigger levels. Therefore, the team amended the condition and milestones to that stated above in this table.

**Turtles:**

As stated in the introductory section of the year 2 surveillance report, there was a significant increase in the number of sea turtle interactions in the fishery overall over the past years. AFMA, as a result of this increase, wrote to all industry operators informing them of these increases and reiterating the fishers obligations to continue reporting interactions and that crews should maintain releasing turtles in a way that minimises harm or injury to the animal. The WSA vessels are not exempt from this increase in interactions.

WSA turtle interactions for 2016/17 are presented below. The WSA operations witnessed an increase in sea turtle interactions by 71 additional turtles in 2016/17. The release and survival rate was at 85% (2016/17) compared to 90% in 2015/16. The increase is being investigated by AFMA to understand the circumstances. The investigations are looking at whether there are hotspots for interactions, as well as further analysis on trends within the reported interactions will be followed up with the TTRAG in 2018. The majority of the turtles have been cut off alive and vigorous, and are rarely handled by crew, making species identifications difficult. Interactions where EM footage has been available have showed effective handling techniques from crew to increase the probability of survival. The ERAEF in the fishery looks at long-term trends for the survivability of all species and suggests management intervention when there is a need for an action. The current ERAEF did not rank sea turtles as high risk in the fishery.

WSA turtle interactions and status for 2016/17 (Source AFMA logbook data for Walker Seafood Australia vessels).

Species	Number	Status		Compare 2015/16 season
		Alive	Dead	
Green Turtle	72	58	14	Increase by 52 turtles
Hawksbill Turtle	1	1	0	No change
Leatherback Turtle	31	31	0	Decrease by 16 turtles
Loggerhead Turtle	4	3	1	Not recorded last season
Turtle (unspecified)	3	1	2	Decrease by 1 turtle
Total	111	94	17	Increase by 71 turtles

WSA and AFMA continue to collect and analyse data from the company and AFMA collated logbooks to determine the direct effects of this fishery. As stated above the most recent ERA

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/pages/b750620c-5865-4651-923b-7b94768b8dde/files/att6-turtle-mitigation-plan.pdf>

does not indicate sea turtles as being at risk from this fishery.

Given the removal of the turtle trigger level as explained above, the trigger no longer the platform for action, rather management response is more reliant upon data anomalies and spikes in trends which trigger an investigation into understanding why such increases are occurring and whether any action is actually required. As such, AFMA in collaboration with ABARES, are currently investigating the increase in interactions across the fishery as well as the WSA operations in consultation with industry. If the analysis identifies an issue within the fishery, then the need for further appropriate management measures will be discussed and consulted on with the fishery and other stakeholders.

**Shortfin mako sharks:**

WSA collects all catch and fishery data through the use of its logbooks and since mid-2015, with the introduction of an electronic monitoring system (EMS) there is a high degree of confidence within the data being collected. All data collected by WSA are provided to AFMA for analysis.

WSA shortfin mako shark catch for 2016/17 is presented below. WSA operations caught 263 more shortfin mako sharks in the 2016/17 season compared to the previous fishing year. This increase is not considered to be out of the ordinary, but rather is in line with historical catch trend levels within the fishery. AFMA, ABARES, CSIRO and WSA continue to collect and analysis data on this species. AFMA considers that there is no major variability within the shortfin mako shark catch for the fishery.

WSA shortfin mako shark catch and status for 2016/17 (Source AFMA logbook data for Walker Seafoods Australia vessels).

Species	Number	Status		Compared 2015/16 season
		Unknown	Dead	
Shortfin mako shark	1105	766	339	Increase by 263 sharks

The fishery is still subject to a 20 shark per trip limit. According to the catch data, shortfin mako sharks work out to be averaging around three shark per trip, well under the current limit. Furthermore, Tuna Australia are currently developing an industry Code of Conduct which will have a heavy focus on releasing all sharks alive.

Another factor in the fishery and globally, is that the economic incentive to keep sharks or their fins, as the once lucrative market for fins is no longer present.

The recent finalised ERA outcome for shortfin mako sharks was low risk.

The Department of Environment and Energy is informed regularly regarding ETP interactions and capture of shark species in the ETBF, the Department to date has not expressed concern with these numbers and the fishery remains (World Trade Organisation (WTO) accredited until 2019. There are no plans to conduct a stock assessment for this species in this fishery or to review the CSIRO report on mako sharks presented several years ago. However, at the international level, under the WCPFC, there are future plans to potentially conduct an assessment for this species across its range. DAWR informed the audit that there was some work being carried out in 2018 under the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) Tuna Project to collate and prepare data with a view to undertake a stock assessment for shortfin mako in 2019, contingent on adequate data being available. While Australia is not directly involved in this work, Australia will provide any data requested and will engage in discussions on this through the WCPFC Scientific Committee.

This could have implications for the WSA fishery, dependent upon outcome of any such

	assessment in the future. The ETBF, through AFMA, will provide any required data or information to assist with any such assessment. The level of catch taken by the WSA operation is highly unlikely to be having any impact on the shortfin mako shark population.								
<b>Progress on Condition Year 3</b>	<b>Turtles:</b>								
	<b>Species</b>	<b>Status 2017</b>			<b>Status 2018</b>			<b>Rate per 1000 hooks</b>	
		<b>Alive</b>	<b>Dead</b>	<b>Unkn-own</b>	<b>Rate per 1000 hooks</b>	<b>Dead</b>	<b>Unkn-own</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
	Green Turtle	46	10	1	16	6	0	0.02	0.009
	Hawksbill Turtle	0	0	0	0	1	0	0.00	0.0004
	Leatherback Turtle	19	0	0	22	0	1	0.007	0.009
	Loggerhead Turtle	7	1	0	9	0	1	0.003	0.004
	Olive ridley	3	0	0	2	0	0	0.0001	0.0008
	Unidentified	0	0	0	4	1	0	0.00	0.002
	<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>		
	<p>There has not been a significant increase in turtle interactions in the fishery, if anything a reduction has been seen. It should be noted that the assessment team took the logbook data and evaluated it by full calendar year, not by TACC/fishing season year, due to the change from fishing seasons (March to February) to calendar years. 2017 and 2018 are therefore not directly comparable to 2016/17 data presented in the year 2 surveillance audit report.</p> <p>WSA and AFMA continue to collect and analyse data from the company and AFMA collated logbooks to determine the direct effects of this fishery. Given the removal of the turtle trigger level, management response is more reliant upon data anomalies and spikes in trends which trigger an investigation into understanding why such increases are occurring and whether any action is actually required. It was noted in the year 2 report that there has been an increase in ETP interactions since certification. AFMA have attributed this to “reporting of interactions has improved since the introduction of electronic monitoring in the ETBF since mid 2015, hence the total interactions reported on logbooks since 2015 is higher than was reported prior to 2015. However, the rate of interactions with turtles as reported on logbooks in the ETBF post EM (post 2015) is equivalent to the rate of interactions recorded by ETBF observers prior to 2015, suggesting interaction rates have been similar over time (Don Bromhead, AFMA Fisheries Management Officer)”.</p> <p>Given AFMA’s input on this matter, the team consider that as historical trends have not been exceeded, and additional management measures for turtles are currently not necessary.</p>								
	<b>Shortfin mako sharks</b>								
	<b>Species</b>	<b>Status 2017</b>			<b>Status 2018</b>			<b>Compared</b>	

	Unknown	Dead	Total	Unknown	Dead	Total	2016/17 season
Shortfin mako shark	419	217	636	385	138	908	-469 in 2017 and 197 in 2018

2017 rate per 1000 hook: 0.24, 2018 rate per 1000 hook: 0.39

As with turtles, WSA continues to collect catch and fishery data through logbooks and through electronic monitoring, which is employed on all vessels operating in the ETBF. Interaction rates remain stable. With regard to progress on the condition, the latest ERA was completed last year by CSIRO. The final report is not yet published, but AFMA provided the results output for this report (see below):

**Table 2.31. bSAFE risk categories for protected species ecological component for F\_MSM, F\_Lim and F\_crash and overall risk.**

CAAB code	Scientific name	Common name	Susceptibility	F MSM	F MSM risk	F Lim	F Lim risk	F Crash	F Crash risk	F Overall risk
37008001	<i>Carcharias taurus</i>	Grey Nurse Shark	0.002	0.09	Below	0.13	Below	0.18	Below	Low
37010001	<i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i>	Shortfin Mako	0.048	0.06	Below	0.08	Below	0.11	Below	Low
37010002	<i>Isurus paucus</i>	Longfin Mako	0.033	0.06	Below	0.09	Below	0.12	Below	Low
37010003	<i>Carcharodon carcharias</i>	White Shark	0.012	0.05	Below	0.07	Below	0.1	Below	Low
37010004	<i>Lamna nasus</i>	Porbeagle	0.004	0.06	Below	0.08	Below	0.11	Below	Low
37011001	<i>Cetorhinus maximus</i>	Basking Shark	0.008	0.03	Below	0.04	Below	0.06	Below	Low
37017008	<i>Galeorhinus galeus</i>	School Shark	0.016	0.07	Below	0.1	Below	0.13	Below	Low
37020010	<i>Centrophorus harrisoni</i>	Harrison's Dogfish	0.042	0.05	Below	0.08	Below	0.11	Below	Low
37041004	<i>Manta</i>	(Giant) Manta	0.01	0.13	Below	0.19	Below	0.25	Below	Low

The overall result for the risk to shortfin mako sharks populations from the ETBF was calculated at low risk using CSIRO's base Sustainability Analysis for Fishing Effects (bSAFE). Importantly, the analysis of the shortfin mako populations are below the levels of Minimum unsustainable instantaneous fishing mortality rate that, in theory, will lead to population extinction in the long term ( $F_{crash}$ ),  $F_{LIM}$  and Fishing Maximum Sustainable Mortality ( $F_{MSM}$ ).  $F_{crash}$ ,  $F_{LIM}$  and  $F_{MSM}$  are biological reference points based on a simple surplus production model. bSAFE utilises much of the same information as a Productivity Susceptibility Analysis (PSA) to estimate the following:

- Spatial overlap between species distribution and fishing effort distribution.
- Catchability resulting from the probability of encountering the gear and size-dependent selectivity.
- Post-capture mortality.

Further information is provided in the 2017 [Ecological Risk Management Guide](#).

For progress against this condition for shortfin mako, the team evaluated the intent of the condition and the action that WSA has followed: "providing evidence on trends in shortfin mako population in the area of the fishery, to show that there is no evidence of any reduction in the population in the area associated with the fishery; and/or any other appropriate method". To date, AFMA have not found it necessary to implement further management measures to reduce shortfin mako shark catch other than the implementation of 100% EM on

	<p>vessels operating in the ETBF. Its implementation has provided confidence in vessels releasing live makos from longline gear and therefore in gathering more robust information on interaction rates in the fishery. The continued data collection has allowed for the updated ERAEF to be finalised, providing the determination of biological reference points for shortfin mako shark in this fishery.</p> <p>AFMA still do not hold data on WCPO mako shark catches and are not aware/involved in any stock assessments for this species. The Common Oceans Tuna Project, also known as “Sustainable Management of Tuna Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)”, a project implemented by FAO and 19 partners, including all tuna Regional Fishery Management Organisations (RFMOs), NGOs and governments, is in the process of completing a post release mortality study, with prioritisation for tagging shortfin mako (and silky sharks), as part of their shark data improvement activities. All tagging (in New Zealand, Fiji and New Caledonia) was due to be completed in February 2019, with the results to be discussed at WCPFC SC15 in August 2019. The SC14 update on the WCPFC shark research plan outlines a plan to complete data preparation in 2020 for an assessment (intended approach is a integrated or surplus production stock assessment (F+B)), for the SW Pacific (or possibly wider), in 2021 if there is data to support it (see Table 1 in WCPFC, 2018). Further progress is yet to be seen on an international level.</p>
<b>Status of condition</b>	On target

**Table 22. Condition 9. All UoAs.**

	<b>PI number</b>	<b>Scoring Guidepost</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Performance Indicator &amp; Score</b>	2.3.3	Information is sufficient to determine whether the fishery may be a threat to protection and recovery of the ETP species.	75
<b>Condition</b>	Collect and analyse data to provide an estimate of the total population size of shortfin mako against which the existing catch rate can be compared, and/or provide evidence on trends in shortfin mako population in the area of the fishery, in relation to the activity of the fishery.		
<b>Milestones</b>	<p>Year 1: Collate and analyse data, in consultation with AFMA or any other appropriate organisation or expert.</p> <p>Year 2: Provide assessment of the impact of the fishery in relation to the population size, and/or evidence of trends in the population in the area of the fishery over a recent period, and/or other data, which allow the impacts of the fishery on the stock to be approximately quantified.</p>		
<b>Client action plan</b>	<p>Year 1 Collect and analyse data from Walker Seafood vessel logbooks and AFMA logbook summaries of ETBF that can be used to record existing catch rates and estimate population size. Progress to be reported during 1<sup>st</sup> surveillance audit with supporting documents from AFMA.</p> <p>Year 2 Continue to collect and analyse data from Walker Seafood vessels and AFMA logbook summaries of ETBF of catches of shortfin mako. In consultation with AFMA, provide an assessment of the impact of the fishery in relation to the population size. Discuss with AFMA the timetable for a stock assessment of shortfin mako by scientists working with WCPFC.</p> <p>Year 3 Consult with AFMA on progress on stock assessment of shortfin mako in wider WCP</p>		

	convention area. Provide evidence of progress made on this front. Continue to supply data to AFMA which allows the impact of the fishery on the stock to be approximately quantified.
<b>Progress on Condition – Year 1</b>	Please refer to information provided for Condition 8 above.
<b>Progress on Condition Year 2</b>	Please refer to information provided for Condition 8 above.
<b>Progress on Condition Year 3</b>	Please refer to the information provided for Condition 8 above.
<b>Status of condition</b>	On target

**Table 23. Condition 10. UoA 1 (albacore)**

	<b>PI number</b>	<b>Scoring Guidepost</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Performance Indicator &amp; Score</b>	3.2.2	Decision-making processes respond to serious and other important issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions.	75
<b>Rationale</b>	While it is clear that the Australian management system and governance have well understood and clear decision-making processes that respond to serious and other important issues identified, unfortunately, the Commission does not. The Commission's decision-making processes are based heavily on Scientific Committee reports on the status of target and non-target species and respond to serious issues, such as overfishing, and suspected overfished (e.g. status of bigeye). However, at the Thirteenth Regular Session of the WCPFC, December 2016, the Ocean Fisheries Programme of SPC reported that although the South Pacific Albacore stocks were not overfished, the decline in CPUE since 1992 has raised concerns over the economic viability of the fishery. The SPC projections suggest that current catch and effort is not sustainable and the SPC bio-economic analysis suggests that consideration should be given for the implementation of alternative management measures as the CMM for South Pacific Albacore (CMM 2010-5) appears to not be effective in constraining effort. Therefore, the decision-making process has not responded effectively. The team decided to treat this issue as 'important' (based on its impact on many WCPFC CCMs), although not (as yet) 'serious' (based on the stock status). Therefore, for regional-level decision-making processes, the team concluded that SG60 is met, but SG80 is not yet met.		
<b>Condition</b>	At the Commission level, decision-making processes should respond to important issues, and specifically to the declining catch rates of South Pacific albacore, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner by the end of Year 4. It should also take account of wider implications of decisions.		
<b>Milestones</b>	Year 1: Some evidence that the Commission is responding to the issue of SP albacore catch rates, e.g. by progressing with the harvest strategy as per the agreed workplan, or some other evidence. (Score: 75)		

	<p>Year 2: As per year 1 (Score: 75)  Year 3: As per year 1 (Score: 75)  Year 4: Decision-making processes have responded to the albacore catch rate issues as identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation. (Score: 80)</p>
<b>Client action plan</b>	<p>In 2017 the Commission agreed to move towards a harvest strategy for South Pacific albacore in 2018, and is expected to adopt a South Pacific albacore Target Reference Point (TRP). This will require lengthy discussion to determine allocation of the resource between participating countries and may result in a reduction of total catch. The TRP should address the serious economic conditions facing the fishery.</p> <p>In 2018, FFA members are expected to introduce a new South Pacific albacore proposal through the Tokelau arrangement to establish a South Pacific albacore TAC, allocated between EEZs and the high seas. This proposal will face the same challenges as highlighted in the previous point.</p> <p>Walker Seafood and Tuna Australia will emphasise the need for a TRP for South Pacific Albacore to the Australian Government to be expressed at international meetings including:  Tokelau Arrangement  Forum Fisheries Commission  Western &amp; Central Pacific Fisheries Commission</p> <p>Emphasising the need for a TRP will occur at the following meetings:  Tropical Tuna Research Advisory Group;  Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee;  Meetings and Correspondence with Commonwealth Fisheries Minister;  Meetings with the Australian Fisheries Management Authority Executive staff;  Meetings with Commonwealth Dept. of Agriculture (Sustainable Fisheries) staff during pre-meetings for international Tropical Tuna Meetings.</p> <p>Walker Seafood with support from Tuna Australia will address the conditions and meet milestones. The planned timeframe for this work is found below:  Tropical Tuna meetings (TTRAG &amp; TTMAC) occur in March, April, July and August annually;  Meetings with AFMA and DoA staff occur in the lead up to international meetings.  International meeting schedules can be found here - <a href="http://www.ffa.int/calendar">http://www.ffa.int/calendar</a>;  Discussions and correspondence will occur with the Minister in the lead up to the WCPFC meeting 3-7 December 2018, Pohnpei, FSM.</p> <p>These actions are the extent of how Walker Seafood can express the need to Australian government delegates to influence the setting of TRPs for South Pacific Albacore leading towards a harvest strategy. It is clear the setting of a TRP and harvest strategy for South Pacific Albacore is a priority for the Australian government.</p> <p>Walker Seafood will provide written evidence of how they are meeting outcomes and milestones in this client action plan. This will be achieved by:  Providing a record of meetings attended;  Excerpts from meeting minutes where South Pacific Albacore has been discussed including the setting of TACs in Australia's EEZ;  Provide evidence of high-level discussions and correspondence with the Australian government.</p>
<b>Progress on Condition – Year 1</b>	Not applicable as new Condition set after 2nd year audit.
<b>Progress on</b>	Not applicable as new Condition set after 2nd year audit.

<b>Condition Year 2</b>	
<b>Progress on Condition Year 3</b>	<p>The milestone at year 3 asks for some evidence that the WCPFC is responding to the issue of SP albacore catch rates, by for example, progressing with a harvest strategy. The team deems sufficient progress to have been deemed to be made to warrant staying on target for this condition. At the 15<sup>th</sup> WCPFC Regular Session meeting in Hawaii, USA in December 2018, an interim target reference point was agreed. This is as per the <a href="#">2017 revised harvest strategy workplan</a>. Specifically:</p> <p>An interim target reference point (TRP) for south Pacific albacore at 56 per cent of spawning stock biomass in the absence of fishing (<math>0.56 SB_{F=0}</math>)<sup>6</sup> with the objective of achieving an 8 per cent increase in catch per unit of effort (CPUE) for the southern longline fishery as compared to 2013 levels.<sup>7</sup> If a future stock assessment indicates that this interim TRP will not result in the desired longline CPUE, then the interim TRP will be revised in order to meet this objective. The TRP shall be reviewed every 3 years, consistent with the SP albacore assessment schedule (WCPFC, 2019).</p> <p>The workplan further states that further work will be completed in the coming years with regard to the development of harvest control rules (HCRs) and management strategy evaluation (MSE). If work progresses as scheduled, then HCRs should be adopted by 2022.</p>
<b>Status of condition</b>	On target

---

<sup>6</sup> The method to be used in estimating the recent average spawning biomass in the absence of fishing shall be the same as that adopted by the Commission for the limit reference point, as described in paragraph 3 of CMM 2015-06.

<sup>7</sup> The proxy for CPUE will be the southern longline vulnerable biomass as estimated within the stock assessment.

## 5 Conclusion

The audit team confirms that this fishery continues to conform to the MSC Principles and Criteria for sustainable fishing. A CAB-wide variation request was recently approved by MSC, requiring the alignment of this fishery's condition milestones with those of overlapping fisheries in the MSC programme. This affects all Principle 1 conditions. The fishery is behind on one condition for swordfish (PI 1.1.2). No remedial action is necessary as swordfish will be re-scored at the next surveillance, which will remove this condition (see Section 2.6 and Appendix 1).

There have been no changes to how and where the fishery operates, nor the traceability system in place in the fishery, which only processes its own products, meaning separate MSC chain of custody certification is still not required. Coff's Harbour has however been noted as a potential additional landing port. The fishery predominantly lands directly in Mooloolaba.

The surveillance level remains at 6.

The audit team recommends that this fishery should remain certified and that product remains eligible to enter further chains of custody.

## 6 Evaluation Results

The final Principle level scores are provided in

### 6.1 Principle Level Scores

The final Principle scores are provided in Table 24.

**Table 24. Final Principle Scores**

Final Principle Scores			
Principle	UoC 1 (albacore)	UoC 2 (yellowfin)	UoC 3 (swordfish)
Principle 1 – Target Species	81.9	85.0	80.6
Principle 2 – Ecosystem	87.3		
Principle 3 – Management System	86.3		

### 6.2 Summary of PI Level Scores

Principle	Component	Weighting	Weighting by PI	PI number	Performance Indicator	UoC 1	UoC 2	UoC 3
1	Outcome	0.5	0.25	1.1.1	Stock status	100	90	90
			0.25	1.1.2	Reference points	75	90	75
				1.1.3	Stock rebuilding	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Management	0.5	0.125	1.2.1	Harvest Strategy	70	70	80
			0.125	1.2.2	Harvest control rules and tools	60	65	65
			0.125	1.2.3	Information and monitoring	80	80	80
			0.125	1.2.4	Assessment of stock status	95	100	90
2	Retained species	0.2	0.067	2.1.1	Outcome	80		
			0.067	2.1.2	Management	100		
			0.067	2.1.3	Information	80		
	Bycatch species	0.2	0.067	2.2.1	Outcome	100		
			0.067	2.2.2	Management	80		
			0.067	2.2.3	Information	80		
	ETP species	0.2	0.067	2.3.1	Outcome	75		
			0.067	2.3.2	Management	90		
			0.067	2.3.3	Information	75		

	Habitats	0.2	0.067	2.4.1	Outcome	100
			0.067	2.4.2	Management	80
			0.067	2.4.3	Information	100
	Ecosystem	0.2	0.067	2.5.1	Outcome	80
			0.067	2.5.2	Management	90
			0.067	2.5.3	Information	100
3	Governance and Policy	0.5	0.125	3.1.1	Legal and customary framework	85
			0.125	3.1.2	Consultation, roles and responsibilities	85
			0.125	3.1.3	Long term objectives	90
			0.125	3.1.4	Incentives for sustainability	90
	Fishery-specific management system	0.5	0.1	3.2.1	Fishery specific objectives	90
			0.1	3.2.2	Decision making processes	75
			0.1	3.2.3	Compliance and enforcement	100
			0.1	3.2.4	Research plan	80
			0.1	3.2.5	Management performance evaluation	80

## References

AFMA. 2018. Explanatory Statement. Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (Total Allowable Commercial Catch) (Undercatch and Overcatch) Determination 2018. Fisheries Management Act 1991. Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery Management Plan 2010. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2018L01554/Explanatory%20Statement/Text>

Davies, N., Hoyle, S., Hampton, J. 2012. Stock assessment of striped marlin (*Kajikia audax*) in the southwest Pacific Ocean. Scientific Committee Eighth Regular Session, 7-15 August 2012. Busan, Republic of Korea. WCPFC-SC8-2012/SA-WP-05

Farley, J.H., Williams, A.J., Clear, N.P., Davies, C.R., Nicol, S.J., 2013. Age estimation and validation for South Pacific albacore *Thunnus alalunga*. Journal of Fish Biology 82, 1523-1544. Journal of Fish Biology.

Farley, J., Eveson, P., Krusic-Golub, K., Clear, N., Sanchez, C., Roupsard, F., Satoh, K., Smith, N., Hampton, J., 2018. Update on age and growth of bigeye tuna in the WCPO: WCPFC Project 81. CSIRO Oceans and Atmosphere; WCPFC-SC14-2018/ SA-WP-01.

Gascoigne, J., Collinson, K., Emery, T., O'Boyle, R. 2015. MSC Public Certification Report – Walker Seafoods Australian albacore, yellowfin tuna and swordfish longline fishery. ME Certification Ltd.

Gascoigne, J., Kolody, D., Sieben, C., Cartwright, I., 2015b. MSC Public Certification Report - The SZLC, HNSFC & CFA Cook Islands EEZ south Pacific albacore longline fishery. ME Certification Ltd.

Pilling, G., Scott, R., Williams, P., Hampton, J., 2016. A compendium of fisheries indicators for tuna stocks not assessed in 2016 (bigeye and yellowfin tuna). Scientific Committee, 12th Regular Session, Bali, Indonesia, 3-11 August 2016. WCPFC-SC12-2016/SA-WP-03.

Tremblay-Boyer, J., H., S., M., G., P., 2018. Stock assessment of South Pacific albacore tuna. Scientific Committee 14th Regular Session, Busan, Korea, 8-16 August 2018. WCPFC-SC14-2018/SA-WP-05 (rev2). WCPFC.

Takeuchi, Y., Pilling, Hampton, J. 2017. Stock assessment of swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*) in the southwest Pacific Ocean. WCPFC-SC13-2017/SA-WP-13

Tremblay-Boyer, S., McKechnie, S., Pilling, G., Hampton, J., 2017b. Stock assessment of yellowfin tuna in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. WCPFC-SC13-2017/SA-WP-06.

WCPFC, 2017a. Stock assessment of albacore in the North Pacific Ocean in 2017. Scientific Committee 13th Regular Session, Rarotonga, Cook Islands, 9-17 August 2017. WCPFC-SC13-2017/SA-WP-09 Rev 2 (15 August 2017). Albacore Working Group, WCPFC.

WCPFC. 2017b. Work plan for the adoption of harvest strategies under CMM 2014-06. Commission Fourteenth Regular Session. Manila, Philippines. 3-7 December 2017. Available at: <https://www.wcpfc.int/system/files/2017%20revised%20Harvest%20Strategy%20Workplan.pdf>

WCPFC. 2018. Outcomes Document. Fourteenth Regular Session of the Scientific Committee. Busan, South Korea, 8 – 16 August 2018. The Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. Available at: <https://www.wcpfc.int/meetings/14th-regular-session-scientific-committee>

WCPFC. 2019. Draft Summary Report as at 31 January 2019. Fifteenth Regular Session of the Commission, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA. 10- 14 December 2018. The Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. Available at: <https://www.wcpfc.int/meetings/15th-regular-session-wcpfc>

## Appendices

## Appendix 1. CAB-wide Principle 1 Variation Request and MSC Response

### Marine Stewardship Council - Variation Request

**Problem statement:**

The MSC requires overlapping fisheries to harmonize assessment outcomes, but not conditions timelines. There are currently 54 HMS<sup>1</sup> fisheries (counting each stock per fishery in the case of multiple stocks in a single fishery, separately) in the MSC programme, 43 with outstanding conditions in relation to Reference Points, Harvest Control Rules and Harvest Strategies in Principle 1. While conditions have been harmonised (as per Annex PB of the FCRv2.0), the associated timelines have not. This lack of coherence amongst RFMO<sup>2</sup> HMS fisheries and CABs has resulted in inconsistencies between in-assessment and certified fisheries and undermines the influence the MSC programme may have on mobilizing RFMOs toward developing harvest strategies for HMS stocks. To address this problem, the variation request below proposes a “hard deadline” approach to Principle 1 conditions timelines for highly migratory species stocks subject to harmonisation in the MSC program:

1. The hard deadline approach would make it transparent to all parties, including clients, what the expectations are for fulfilling these conditions at the RFMO level, and thus removes the inconsistency issue of new entrants having longer timeframes than current fisheries in the program.
2. The hard deadline approach creates incentives for MSC client fisheries to work together, instead of at cross-purposes, to encourage RFMOs to keep to the timelines as established in workplans which reflect their stock management priorities.

<b>Date submitted to MSC</b>	11 December, 2018
<b>Name of CAB</b>	All CABs accredited to undertake MSC fishery assessments
<b>Fishery Name/CoC Certificate Number</b>	See Appendix 1
<b>Lead Auditor/Programme Manager</b>	Chrissie Sieben (CU Pesca), Amanda Stern-Pirlot (MRAG Americas), Sian Morgan (SCS), Geraldine Criquet (SAI Global), Polly Burns (Lloyds Register-Acouira), Anna Kiseleva/Sandhya Chaudhury (DNV), Macarena García (BV), Louise Le Roux (TUN), Carolina Medina Foucher (OIA), Julia Nebolsina (Marine Certification)
<b>Scheme requirement(s) for which variation requested</b>	1. Fisheries scored against v1.3:  <i>Implementation timeframes: Existing fisheries (in assessment or certified) shall apply the new standard requirements (...) at their first reassessment commencing after 1st October 2017. (FCR V2.0 p. 9)</i>

<sup>1</sup> HMS: highly migratory species. In the context of this variation request, we refer to the tuna and swordfish stocks listed in Appendix 2.

<sup>2</sup> RFMO: Regional Fisheries Management Organisation. In the context of this variation request, we refer to the organizations involvement in the management of HSM stocks in the MSC program: WCPFC, IATTC, ICCAT and IOTC.

Document : MSC Variation Request Form v2.1	Page 1
Date of issue: 4 October 2016	© Marine Stewardship Council, 2016

	<p>(Note: the 'new standard requirements' referred to in this clause are the FCRv2.0, though the Fisheries Certification Process v2.1 can also be used.)</p> <p>FCR V.2.0 7.23.13.1.b.i. <i>If the progress against the measurable outcomes, expected results or (interim) milestones specified when setting the condition is judged to be behind target, the CAB shall specify the remedial action, and any revised milestones, that are required to bring process back on track within 12 months to achieve the original condition by the original deadline.</i></p> <p>FCRv2.0 7.23.13.2: <i>In the event that the CAB determines that progress against a condition is not back 'on target' within 12 months of falling 'behind target', the CAB shall:</i></p> <p><i>a. Consider progress as inadequate.</i></p> <p><i>b. Apply the requirements of GCR 7.4 (suspension or withdrawal).</i></p> <p>2. All fisheries listed in Appendix 1:</p> <p>FCRv2.0 7.11.1.3 (and subclauses): <i>The CAB shall draft conditions to result in improved performance to at least the 80 level within a period set by the CAB but no longer than the term of the certification unless: a. There are exceptional circumstances, and the CAB determines that achieving a performance level of 80 may take longer than the period of certification. The CAB shall interpret exceptional circumstances in 7.11.1.3.a to refer to situations in which, even with perfect implementation, achieving the 80 level of performance may take longer than the certification period.</i></p> <p>FCRv2.0 7.24.2 (and subclauses): <i>When conducting a re-assessment of a certified fishery, the CAB shall (...) evaluate progress against certification conditions. Unless exceptional circumstances apply (7.11.1.3) or paragraph (b) applies, the fishery shall have met all conditions and milestones. (...) In the event that there are unmet conditions, the CAB shall apply 7.23.13.1 and 7.23.13.2 (except 7.23.13.2.b.) in determining the adequacy of progress against those conditions and milestones. If the CAB concludes that the client has made inadequate progress, it shall not grant a new fishery certificate.</i></p>
<p><b>Is this variation sought in order to fulfil IPI requirements (FCR 7.4.14)?</b></p>	<p>No.</p>

### **1. Proposed variation**

In order to achieve the result needed as described in the problem statement above, this variation request has two parts:

#### 1. For fisheries scored against v1.3:

Thirty-six of the 54 fisheries listed in Appendix 1 are currently scored against Annex CB of the MSC Certification Requirements v1.3 resulting in conditions against Principle 1 performance indicators (PIs) that are no longer applicable under the FCRv2.0 (e.g. PI 1.1.2 on Reference Points). To facilitate harmonisation between RFMO HMS fisheries, it is proposed the Principle 1 components of these fisheries are rescored at the next available opportunity (which may be ahead of reassessment) to bring them in line with other tuna fisheries assessed against the FCRv2.0. This variation would mean:

- No suspension action would be undertaken for fisheries that are behind target on conditions raised against CRv1.3 Principle 1 performance indicators.
- Any new conditions raised as a result of the Principle 1 rescoring would be harmonised with other RFMO HMS fisheries and be brought in line with the most recent RFMO workplan and associated hard deadline as per Appendix 2 where applicable (see below).
- Even Appendix 1 fisheries with no conditions in P1 that are currently scored against v1.3 would be rescored against 2.0 under this variation.
- Principle 1 rescoring as described would take place as part of normal surveillance activities; there is no expectation that a more elaborate process (such as an expedited assessment) would be needed.

#### 2. For fisheries listed in Appendix 1 with conditions under Principle 1 subject to harmonization (indicated in Appendix 1 with green highlight):

For these fisheries, the specific proposed condition closure dates by stock and matched to current fisheries in the program are given in Appendix 2. These are not based on the “term of certification” as required by FCR 7.11.1.3. Rather they are based on the respective RFMO workplans for each stock with respect to development of harvest control rules and reference points. This variation will result in some fisheries entering reassessment with open Principle 1 conditions, albeit with an aligned deadline respective to the stock in question by which these conditions will be achieved. It will also result in some certified fisheries having condition closure deadlines ahead of their current certificate expiration dates.

Note, as the deadlines are given as a calendar year only, there may be cases where the respective annual surveillance audit would due before the RFMO meeting during which the relevant HCR is due to be adopted. In such cases, we expect the flexibility afforded by MSC regarding surveillance audit timing would be sufficient to enable CABs to delay these audits until after such RFMO

meetings/decisions. However, this may not always be possible, in which cases CABs may request variations on a case-by-case basis to enable the RFMO decision to take place before the respective MSC surveillance audit.

## 2. Rationale/Justification

There are currently 54 HMS fisheries (counting each stock per fishery in the case of multiple stocks in a single fishery, separately) in the MSC programme, 43 with outstanding conditions in relation to Reference Points, Harvest Control Rules and Harvest Strategies in Principle 1. While conditions have been harmonised (as per Annex PB of the FCRv2.0), the associated timelines have not. This lack of coherence amongst RFMO HMS fisheries and CABs has resulted in inconsistencies between in-assessment and certified fisheries and undermines the influence the MSC programme may have on mobilizing RFMOs toward developing harvest strategies for HMS stocks.

This problem has arisen in part because of shifting MSC requirements and standards for Principle 1 and for harmonization at the same time as many tuna fisheries have been entering the MSC program and becoming certified on staggered timelines. The proposed variations in Section 1 therefore all contribute to a one-off Principle 1 alignment between RFMO HMS fisheries, to which all CABs and all certified, in-assessment and applicant RFMO HMS fisheries will be subject for the stocks in Appendix 2:

- Fisheries currently scored against CRv1.3 will be rescored against FCRv2.0 for Principle 1 at the next available opportunity and resulting conditions will be harmonized with other relevant RFMO HMS fisheries. It is noted that this rescoring would have to take place at reassessment anyway.
- Principle 1 conditions that relate to HCRs and HSs and their associated timelines will be harmonized between all relevant RFMO HMS fisheries. A hard deadline for achievement of the conditions will be set in line with the most recent RFMO workplan as per Appendix 2. It is believed this approach will remove any ambiguity in the condition timelines and enable CABs to measure and assess progress in a meaningful manner.
- To facilitate harmonization efforts between CABs, surveillance schedules of the relevant RFMO HMS fisheries will be aligned (to the extent that is practical) so that annual progress can be assessed collectively by CABs.
- This variation request does not need to extend to stocks in the program not currently subject to harmonization (i.e. it does not have to be ‘future proof’) because:
  - a. the FCP v2.1 explicitly allows for ‘exceptional circumstances’ when establishing condition timelines at the point of certification that may be longer than one certification period to apply in these cases; and
  - b. new guidance in the FCP (GBP 1.3) clearly states a preference for harmonization of condition timelines.

Therefore this mechanism can be carried forward when new timeline harmonization needs arise without the need to vary from MSC requirements.

Regarding the sustainability status of the fisheries concerned, it is noted that clients will still be required to fulfill all actions required by client action plans and continue to actively work toward having RFMOs adopting appropriate reference points and associated harvest control rules for tuna stocks. This variation will only serve to improve the collective ability of MSC fisheries to work with RFMOs that have a clear commitment through their workplans to establish HCRs and reference points in a reasonable way. It will also create consistency and fairness in the application of the MSC requirements with respect to fulfilment of conditions and consequences for falling behind, thereby improving accountability of all concerned.

As per the overview in Appendix 1 none of the relevant RFMO HSM stocks are considered overfished or with overfishing occurring. The only stock currently in the MSC program with a condition on PI 1.1.1 regarding stock status is Atlantic yellowfin tuna, which has been steadily rebuilding and is at 95% of Bmsy as of the most recent stock assessment.

The hard deadline approach proposed in this variation request would make it transparent to all parties, including clients, what the expectations are for fulfilling these conditions at the RFMO level, and thus removes the inconsistency issue of new entrants having longer timeframes than current fisheries in the program.

### **3. Implications for assessment (required for fisheries assessment variations only)**

Harmonisation is one of the MSC's main priorities in ensuring the credibility of the standard. The approach to harmonisation in RFMO HMS fisheries up until now has not been efficient for any of the parties involved and has undermined MSC program requirements. This approach will remedy that, reducing the number of variations requested by CABs, whilst ensuring that all fisheries and clients are treated consistently and fairly.

The alignment with RFMO plans will encourage the MSC's Theory of Change by influencing RFMO actions working together. Appendix 1 provides an overview of the stocks concerned and their current performance in relation to stock status. None of the currently certified stocks are overfished nor is overfishing occurring (noting Atlantic yellowfin at 95% of Bmsy). Overall, the acceptance of this variation request will have no negative impact on the sustainability of the fisheries and will instead ensure that conditions related to harvest control rules and harvest strategies are addressed in a uniform and timely manner, and that RFMO fishery clients have an incentive to work together toward achievement of conditions according to reasonable fixed deadlines.

#### **4. Have the stakeholders of this fishery assessment been informed of this request? (required for fisheries assessment variations only)**

Yes, some key stakeholders have been approached, including the MSC STAC, and representatives from Pew, WWF, and ISSF. The purpose of these interactions was to inform stakeholders of this initiative, the process and its implications, and to seek initial impressions. Stakeholders have been broadly supportive of this initiative, with some reflection on whether an impact assessment would be needed. It is anticipated that MSC will draw on stakeholder sentiment during the formal process of responding to this request.

### **5. Further Comments**

Other attempts to address the harmonisation for HMS harmonisation have been made including RFMO harmonisation meetings and so far they have not achieved the desired outcome. This collaborative approach has been designed and approved by all fishery accredited CABs (including those currently not involved with HMS fisheries) and we believe the outcome will be successful.

**Appendix 1 – Overview of RFMO HMS fisheries in the MSC programme with those subject to the proposed Appendix 2 deadlines highlighted in green.**

Fishery name	RFMO	Relevant stocks	CAB	Certificate expiry dates	Rescoring against 2.0 needed?	overfishing?	overfished?	1.1.1 score
Pan Pacific yellowfin, bigeye and albacore longline fishery	IATTC	EPO-BET	CU Pesca	In assessment	No	In assessment	In assessment	In assessment
Northeastern Tropical Pacific Purse Seine SKJ and YFT	IATTC	EPO-SKJ	SCS	06-Sep-22	Yes	No	No	90
Panama tropical Pacific yellowfin and skipjack purse seine tuna fishery	IATTC	EPO-SKJ	Acoura/LR	In assessment	No	In assessment	In assessment	In assessment
Panama tropical Pacific yellowfin and skipjack purse seine tuna fishery	IATTC	EPO-YFT	Acoura/LR	In assessment	No	In assessment	In assessment	In assessment
French Polynesia albacore and yellowfin longline fishery	IATTC	EPO-YFT	CU Pesca	18-Jun-23	No	No	No	90
Pan Pacific yellowfin, bigeye and albacore longline fishery	IATTC	EPO-YFT	CU Pesca	In assessment	No	In assessment	In assessment	In assessment
Northeastern Tropical Pacific Purse Seine SKJ and YFT	IATTC	EPO-YFT	SCS	06-Sep-22	Yes	No	No	90
US North Atlantic swordfish, yellowfin and albacore	ICCAT	AO-ALB-N	MRAG	In assessment	Yes	No	No	100
North Atlantic albacore artisanal fishery	ICCAT	AO-ALB-N	BV	06-Jun-21	No	No	No	90
North West Atlantic Canada Harpoon swordfish	ICCAT	AO-SWO-N	Acoura/LR	11-Dec-22	Yes	No	No	90
North West Atlantic Canada Longline swordfish	ICCAT	AO-SWO-N	Acoura/LR	11-Dec-22	Yes	No	No	90
US North Atlantic swordfish, yellowfin and albacore	ICCAT	AO-SWO-N	MRAG	06-Mar-23	Yes	No	No	90
ACTEMSA-LEAL SANTOS pole and line West Atlantic skipjack fishery	ICCAT	AO-SKJ-W	BV	in assessment	No	No	No	100
Sant Yago TF Unassociated purse seine Atlantic yellowfin tuna fishery	ICCAT	AO-YFT	BV	in assessment	No	No	Yes (around 95% of Bmsy but clear evidence of rebuilding)	70
US North Atlantic swordfish, yellowfin and albacore	ICCAT	AO-YFT	MRAG	In assessment	Yes	No	Yes (around 95% of Bmsy but clear evidence of rebuilding)	70
Echegaray Indian Ocean Purse Seine Skipjack Tuna	IOTC	IO-SKJ	Acoura/LR	In assessment	No	No	No	In assessment
Maldives Pole and Line Tuna Skipjack	IOTC	IO-SKJ	DNV GL	28-Nov-22	No	No	No	100
American Samoa EEZ Albacore and Yellowfin Longline Fishery	WCPFC	PO-ALB-S	CU Pesca	23-Nov-22	No	No	No	100
AAFA and WFOA South Pacific albacore tuna	WCPFC/IATTC	PO-ALB-S	MRAG	In assessment	No	No	No	100
French Polynesia albacore and yellowfin longline fishery	WCPFC	PO-ALB-S	CU Pesca	18-Jun-23	No	No	No	100
Pan Pacific yellowfin, bigeye and albacore longline fishery	WCPFC	PO-ALB-S	CU Pesca	In assessment	No	No	No	In assessment

SZLC, CSFC & FZLC Cook Islands EEZ South Pacific albacore & yellowfin longline	WCPFC	PO-ALB-S	CU Pesca	08-Jun-20	Yes	No	No	100
Walker Seafood Australian albacore, yellowfin tuna, and swordfish longline	WCPFC	PO-ALB-S	CU Pesca	26-Aug-20	Yes	No	No	100
PT Citraraja Ampat, Sorong pole and line Skipjack and Yellowfin Tuna	WCPFC	WPO-SKJ	DNV GL	In assessment	No	In assessment	In assessment	In assessment
Solomon Islands skipjack and yellowfin tuna	WCPFC	WPO-SKJ	MRAG	11-Jul-21	Yes	No	No	100
PT Citraraja Ampat, Sorong pole and line Skipjack and Yellowfin Tuna	WCPFC	WPO-YFT	DNV GL	In assessment	No	In assessment	In assessment	In assessment
Solomon Islands skipjack and yellowfin tuna	WCPFC	WPO-YFT	MRAG	11-Jul-21	Yes	No	No	90
Pan Pacific yellowfin, bigeye and albacore longline fishery	WCPFC	WPO-BET	CU Pesca	In assessment	No	In assessment	In assessment	In assessment
SZLC CSFC & FZLC FSM EEZ Longline Yellowfin and Bigeye Tuna	WCPFC	WPO-BET	CU Pesca	In assessment	No	In assessment	In assessment	In assessment
Japanese skipjack and albacore pole and line	WCPFC	WPO-SKJ	Acoura/LR	16-Oct-21	yes	No	No	100
New Zealand Talley's skipjack	WCPFC	WPO-SKJ	Acoura/LR	16-Aug-22	No	No	No	100
Ishihara Marine Products albacore and skipjack pole and line fishery	WCPFC	WPO-SKJ	CU Pesca	In assessment	No	In assessment	In assessment	In assessment
Tropical Pacific yellowfin and skipjack free-school purse seine fishery	WCPFC	WPO-SKJ	CU Pesca	In assessment	No	In assessment	In assessment	In assessment
TriMarine Western and Central Pacific Skipjack and Yellowfin Tuna	WCPFC	WPO-SKJ	SCS	02-Jun-21	Yes	No	No	100
WPSTA purse seine free school yellowfin and skipjack	WCPFC	WPO-SKJ	SCS	20-Jun-23	No	No	No	100
American Samoa EEZ Albacore and Yellowfin Longline Fishery	WCPFC	WPO-YFT	CU Pesca	23-Nov-22	No	No	No	90
French Polynesia albacore and yellowfin longline fishery	WCPFC	WPO-YFT	CU Pesca	18-Jun-23	No	No	No	90
Pan Pacific yellowfin, bigeye and albacore longline fishery	WCPFC	WPO-YFT	CU Pesca	In assessment	No	No	No	90
SZLC CSFC & FZLC FSM EEZ Longline Yellowfin and Bigeye Tuna	WCPFC	WPO-YFT	CU Pesca	In assessment	No	No	No	90
SZLC, CSFC & FZLC Cook Islands EEZ South Pacific albacore & yellowfin longline	WCPFC	WPO-YFT	CU Pesca	08-Jun-20	Yes	No	No	90
Tropical Pacific yellowfin and skipjack free-school purse seine fishery	WCPFC	WPO-YFT	CU Pesca	In assessment	No	No	No	90
Walker Seafood Australian albacore, yellowfin tuna, and swordfish longline	WCPFC	WPO-YFT	CU Pesca	26-Aug-20	Yes	No	No	90
TriMarine Western and Central Pacific Skipjack and Yellowfin Tuna	WCPFC	WPO-YFT	SCS	02-Jun-21	Yes	No	No	90
WPSTA purse seine free school yellowfin and skipjack	WCPFC	WPO-YFT	SCS	20-Jun-23	No	No	No	90
Japanese skipjack and albacore pole and line	WCPFC	PO-ALB-N	Acoura/LR	16-Oct-21	yes	No	No	100

Fiji albacore and yellowfin longline	WCPFC	PO-ALB-S	Acoura/LR	22-Jan-23	No	No	No	100
New Zealand Albacore Troll Fishery	WCPFC	PO-ALB-S	Acoura/LR	12-Feb-22	No	No	No	100
PNA skipjack and yellowfin tuna	WCPFC	WPO-SKJ	Acoura/LR	21-Mar-23	No	No	No	100
Fiji albacore and yellowfin longline	WCPFC	WPO-YFT	Acoura/LR	22-Jan-23	No	No	No	90
PNA skipjack and yellowfin tuna	WCPFC	WPO-YFT	Acoura/LR	21-Mar-23	No	No	No	90
Ishihara Marine Products albacore and skipjack pole and line fishery	WCPFC/IATTC	PO-ALB-N	CU Pesca	In assessment	No	In assessment	In assessment	In assessment
Pan Pacific yellowfin, bigeye and albacore longline fishery	WCPFC/IATTC	PO-ALB-N	CU Pesca	In assessment	No	In assessment	In assessment	In assessment
AAFA and WFOA North Pacific albacore tuna	WCPFC/IATTC	PO-ALB-N	MRAG	20-Jul-23	No	No	No	100
CHMSF British Columbia albacore tuna North Pacific	WCPFC/IATTC	PO-ALB-N	SAIG	09-Jun-20	Yes	No	No	100

**Appendix 2 – Overview of RFMO workplan deadlines for HMS stocks (note: for certified stocks only for which a RFMO workplan is in place to address RPs and HCRs)**

RFMO	Stock	RFMO workplan completion date	Notes/current status of RFMO workplan (on target, behind target, etc)	proposed condition end date	Reference
ICCAT	AO-ALB-N	2018	On target. ICCAT Rec 17-04 in force since 11 June 2018 established RFP and HCR for this stock	2018 (already re-scored during the 2nd Surveillance audit. HCR adopted through Rec 17-04)	Rec 17-04 by ICCAT on a HCR for the North Atlantic Albacore Supplementing the Multiannual Conservation and Management Program, Rec 16-06 ( <a href="https://www.iccat.int/en/RecRes.asp">https://www.iccat.int/en/RecRes.asp</a> )
ICCAT	AO-SKJ-W	2020	The SCRS workplan establishes that MSE will be implemented by 2020. However, the multispecies nature of the tropical tunas fishery is posing a challenge. No interim or agreed RFP so far and next SKJ stock assessment will take place in 2019 (and YFT in 2020). It is very likely they do not meet their deadline	2022 (HCR adopted)	SCRS Science Strategic Plan for 2015-2020
ICCAT	AO-YFT	2020	The SCRS workplan establishes that MSE will be implemented by 2020. However, the multispecies nature of the tropical tunas fishery is posing a challenge. No interim or agreed RFP so far and next YFT stock assessment will take place in 2020. It is very likely they do not meet their deadline.	2022 (HCR adopted)	Rec 15-07 by ICCAT on the Development of HCRs and of MSE ( <a href="https://www.iccat.int/en/RecRes.asp">https://www.iccat.int/en/RecRes.asp</a> ) Rec 16-01 by ICCAT on a Multiannual Conservation and Management Program for Tropical Tunas SCRS Science Strategic Plan for 2015-2020
IATTC/WCPFC	PO-ALB-N		On target. MSE Workshops and activities scheduled have been held and conducted. There is a clear commitment to adopt HCRs and target ref point. Although the workplan is on target, there is no set date for completion of the MSE work and adoption on HCR and ref point, likely due to the health of the stock relative to others in this RFMO and hence lower priority. ISC 2018 report of the ALWG states that the first round of the MSE results will be presented in 2019. A science workshop on the MSE research work progress is scheduled for Jan 2019 and will be followed by another MSE workshop for managers, scientists and stakeholders. The progress of and outputs from the MSE work will be presented at the ISC plenary meeting in July 2019, where it will be decided how to proceed, the workplan will likely be refined. CABs therefore propose 2023 as the condition deadline based on the most recently recertified fishery for this stock (AAFA/WFOA Albacore).	2023 (HCR adopted)	ISC 2018 report of the ALWG <a href="http://isc.fra.go.jp/reports/alb/alb_2018_1.html">http://isc.fra.go.jp/reports/alb/alb_2018_1.html</a>
WCPFC/IATTC	PO-ALB-S	2021	On target (agreed RFP by Dec 2018)	2021 (HCR adopted)	2017 workplan ( <a href="https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/placeholder-harvest-strategy-key-documents">https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/placeholder-harvest-strategy-key-documents</a> )
WCPFC	WPO-SKJ	2021	On target (interim RFP was agreed in Dec 2015)	2021 (HS in place)	2017 workplan ( <a href="https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/placeholder-harvest-strategy-key-documents">https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/placeholder-harvest-strategy-key-documents</a> )
WCPFC	WPO-YFT	2021	On target (agreed RFP by Dec 2019)	2021 (HCR adopted)	2017 workplan ( <a href="https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/placeholder-harvest-strategy-key-documents">https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/placeholder-harvest-strategy-key-documents</a> )



Chrissie Sieben  
Control Union Pesca Ltd  
56 High Street  
Lymington  
United Kingdom  
SO41 9AH

**Sent by email**

Date: 14/02/2019

Dear Chrissie Sieben,

I write with reference to your submission on 11/12/2018 of a request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement (CR) to allow:

For fisheries scored against v1.3

- All tuna fisheries currently on v1.3 will be upgraded to v2.0 at the next surveillance audit
- CABs shall follow the process requirements in Appendix B that have been prepared specifically for P1 upgrades
- If the stock has already been fully assessed against FCR v2.0 at the time of rescoring, a reduced upgrade process applies that does not require peer review and additional reporting requirements; fisheries for which this is applicable are identified in Appendix A
- No suspension action will be undertaken for fisheries that are behind target on P1 conditions raised against v1.3
- Any new conditions raised as a result of the Principle 1 rescoring will be harmonised with other tuna fisheries and aligned with the stock-specific condition deadlines set out in Appendix A

For fisheries already scored against v2.0

- Principle 1 conditions and timelines will be harmonised for all tuna fisheries on the same stock
- A shared deadline for achievement of conditions, based on the most recent RFMO workplan, will be set as per the calendar years specified in Appendix A

For all fisheries

- To facilitate harmonisation efforts between CABs, surveillance schedules of the relevant tuna fisheries will be aligned (to the extent that is practical) so that annual progress can be assessed collectively by CABs

This may vary against one or more of the following requirements, depending on the fishery circumstances:

1. Fisheries scored against v1.3:

Implementation timeframes: Existing fisheries (in assessment or certified) shall apply the new standard requirements (...) at their first reassessment commencing after 1st October 2017. (FCR V2.0 p. 9)

FCR V.2.0 7.23.13.1.b.i. If the progress against the measurable outcomes, expected results or (interim) milestones specified when setting the condition is judged to be behind target, the CAB shall specify the remedial action, and any revised milestones, that are required to bring process back on track within 12 months to achieve the original condition by the original deadline.

FCRv2.0 7.23.13.2: In the event that the CAB determines that progress against a condition is not back 'on target' within 12 months of falling 'behind target', the CAB shall:

- a. Consider progress as inadequate.

b. Apply the requirements of GCR 7.4 (suspension or withdrawal).

For fisheries with conditions under Principle 1 subject to harmonization:

FCRv2.0 7.11.1.3 (and subclauses): The CAB shall draft conditions to result in improved performance to at least the 80 level within a period set by the CAB but no longer than the term of the certification unless: a. There are exceptional circumstances, and the CAB determines that achieving a performance level of 80 may take longer than the period of certification. The CAB shall interpret exceptional circumstances in 7.11.1.3.a to refer to situations in which, even with perfect implementation, achieving the 80 level of performance may take longer than the certification period.

FCRv2.0 7.24.2 (and subclauses): When conducting a re-assessment of a certified fishery, the CAB shall (...) evaluate progress against certification conditions. Unless exceptional circumstances apply (7.11.1.3) or paragraph (b) applies, the fishery shall have met all conditions and milestones. (...) In the event that there are unmet conditions, the CAB shall apply 7.23.13.1 and 7.23.13.2 (except 7.23.13.2.b.) in determining the adequacy of progress against those conditions and milestones. If the CAB concludes that the client has made inadequate progress, it shall not grant a new fishery certificate.

These are integral to ensuring all MSC accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies operate in a consistent and transparent manner. The MSC intends that these requirements be met across all fisheries and CoC certificate holders, except in exceptional, well-justified circumstances, as part of the MSC programme.

**MSC notes the factors presented supporting your request, including:**

- This variation will contribute to an alignment of P1 condition timelines between certified HMS fisheries.
- This will in theory incentivise all parties fishing on a particular HMS stock to work towards a common deadline for meeting shared P1 conditions.
- Fisheries currently scored against v1.3 will be rescored against v2.0 for Principle 1 at the next available opportunity
- Conditions on PI 1.2.2 (HCRs) and PI 1.2.1 (harvest strategy), and their associated timelines, will be harmonized between all UoAs that share the same P1 stock
- Timelines for achieving the conditions will be set in line with RFMO workplans for developing HCRs and harvest strategies (ranging between 2021 and 2023)
- This variation request covers only certified and harmonised fisheries; for new or in assessment fisheries, CABs instead propose to use existing mechanisms to achieve harmonization

**Given the rationale provided, the MSC is willing to grant a variation to the CR in this case subject to the following conditions:**

- Where applicable, rescoring against v2.0 is to be undertaken at the next surveillance audit and shall follow the process requirements set out in Appendix B
- Relevant P1 conditions shall be closed by the proposed dates given in Appendix A as per FCP v2.1 7.28.16.1.b.i and 7.28.16.2 and GCR v2.2 7.4.2.b
- All new or in assessment fisheries for which harmonisation is required must be aligned with the applicable timelines given in Appendix A, as per the guidance in the FCP v2.1
- CABs shall make efforts to ensure the language of the conditions and milestones is consistent between harmonised fisheries
- CABs should make good faith efforts to coordinate surveillance with overlapping fisheries
- Reassessments shall be undertaken on usual timelines

If you have any questions regarding this response, please do not hesitate to contact the relevant Fisheries Assessment Manager for this fishery.

Marine Stewardship Council  
cc: Accreditation Services International

## Appendix 2. Meeting attendance of National Fishing Advisory Council (30<sup>th</sup> November 2018)

### NATIONAL FISHING ADVISORY COUNCIL – MEETING PARTICIPANTS

#### Members:

Senator the Hon. Richard Colbeck	Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources
Professor Colin Buxton	Principal consultant – Colin Buxton and Associates
Ms Veronica Papacosta	Chair – Seafood Industry Australia
Ms Heidi Walker	Owner/Managing Director – Walker Seafoods Australia
Ms Annie Jarrett	CEO – Northern Prawn Fishery Industry Inc
Mr John Susman	Director – Fishtales
Mr Colin Tannahill	Managing Director – Shimano Australia Fishing
Mr Brett Cleary	Chair – Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation
Mr Stan Lui (apology)	Chair – Indigenous Reference Group of Fisheries Research and Development Corporation
Ms Leonie Noble	National President – National Rural Woman’s Coalition
Ms Erica Starling	Managing Director – Indian Ocean Fishing Association
Ms Katherine Winchester	CEO – Northern Territory Seafood Council
Mr Mark Ryan	Managing Director/CEO, Tassal Operations
Mr Al McGlashan	Fishing media personality – host of ‘Strike Zone’, ‘Fish’n with Mates’
Mr Jonas Wolford	Chairman – Wildcatch Fisheries South Australia
Ms Jo Starling	Creative consultant and sitting member on the NSW Recreational Fishing Advisory Council.

#### Invited observers:

Mr Jason Mundy	Assistant Secretary – Marine Protected Areas Branch, Department of the Environment and Energy
----------------	---

#### Secretariat:

Ms Laura Timmins	Assistant Secretary – Fisheries Branch, DAWR
Ms Terri McGrath	Assistant Director – Domestic Fisheries Policy, DAWR
Mr Greg Wallace	Policy Officer – Domestic Fisheries Policy, DAWR

### Appendix 3. Revised Surveillance Programme

The surveillance level remains at Level 6, as mentioned earlier in the report. The audit was however delayed from the August anniversary date. See Table 25.

**Table 25. Surveillance level rationale**

Year	Anniversary date of certificate	Proposed date of surveillance audit	Rationale
Year 4	August 2019	August 2019 (under FCR 7.24.1 – the CAB should commence the re-assessment of a certified fishery by the fourth anniversary of the existing certificate.)	WCPFC15 was held at the beginning of December, with the understanding that significant changes could occur with regard to management of two of the three target stocks in this fishery. The assessment was therefore delayed to allow time for the outcome of WCPFC15 to be announced.