

Walker Seafoods Australian Albacore, Yellowfin tuna, and Swordfish longline fishery Surveillance Report

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Fishery client	Walker Seafood Australia
Assessment Type	Fourth Surveillance

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Glossary

TTRAG	Tropical Tuna Resource Assessment Group
AFMA	Australian Fisheries Management Authority
ETBF	Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery
F	Fishing mortality
MSY	Maximum Sustainable Yield
PRI	Point of recruitment impairment
SAFE	Sustainability Assessment for Fishing Effects
SB, SSB	Spawning biomass, spawning stock biomass
WCPFC	Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission

1 Executive summary

This report summarizes the findings from the 2019 fourth surveillance audit of the Walker Seafoods albacore and yellowfin tuna and swordfish longline fishery. The fishery was first certified to the MSC requirements in 2015 using the default assessment tree MSC Fisheries Certification Requirements and Guidance v 1.3 (January, 2013). The fishery transferred to bio.inspecta on the 23rd July 2019.

The fishery is still operated by five vessels and operates in the EEZ of Australia in the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF).

The fourth annual surveillance audit focused on changes since the last surveillance audit and monitoring continued compliance with the MSC Principles and Criteria. The fishery originally received nine conditions in the full assessment, pertained mainly to Principle 1 and two for Principle 2. An additional condition was added at the second audit under Principle 3. Out of the total 10 conditions 4 were closed out during this surveillance audit and re-scored. The Principle 3 condition under PI 3.2.2, the two Principle 2 conditions under PI 2.3.1 and 2.3.3 following the finalisation of the ERA (AFMA 2019). One condition for albacore tuna was also closed out after rescoring under FCR v 2.0 following the CAB wide variance response for tuna species.

It is bio.inspecta's view that Walkers Seafood tuna and swordfish fishery continues to meet the standards of the MSC and complies with the 'Requirements for Continued Certification'. Bio.inspecta recommends the continued use of the MSC certificate through to the re-assessment.

2 Report details

2.1 Surveillance information

Table 1 – Surveillance information		
1	Fishery name	
	Walker Seafood Australian albacore, yellowfin tuna, and swordfish longline	
2	Surveillance level and type	
	Surveillance level 6, normal default surveillance audits, on-site surveillance audit.	
3	Surveillance number	
	1st Surveillance	
	2nd Surveillance	
	3rd Surveillance	
	4th Surveillance	X
	Other (expedited etc)	
4	Team leader	
	<p>Dr. Sabine Daume, Lead auditor and Principle 2 expert.</p> <p>Dr. Daume meets the competency criteria in Annex PC for team leader as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She has an appropriate university degree and more than five years' experience in fisheries research of invertebrate species; • She has passed the MSC team leader training; • She has the required competencies described in Table PC1, section 2; • She has undertaken more than two fishery assessments as a team member in the last five years, and • She has experience in applying different types of interviewing and facilitation techniques and can effectively communicate with clients and other stakeholders. In addition, she has the appropriate skills and experience required to serve as a Principle 2 assessor as described in FCR Annex PC table PC3. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bio.inspecta Pty Ltd. confirms that Dr. Daume has no conflicts of interest in relation to the fishery under assessment.
5	Team members
	<p>Mr. Alexander "Sandy" Morison, Principle 1 expert.</p> <p>Mr. Morison meets the competency criteria in Annex PC for member as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He has an appropriate university degree and more than five years' experience in fisheries research of invertebrate species; • He has the required competencies described in Table PC2, section 2; • He has undertaken at least two fishery assessments or surveillance visits in the last five years, and • He has the appropriate skills and experience required to serve as a Principle 1 assessor as described in FCR Annex PC table PC3. • Bio.inspecta Pty Ltd. confirms that Mr. Morison has no conflicts of interest in relation to the fishery under assessment. <p>Ms. Sascha Brand-Gardner, Principle 3 expert.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She has an appropriate university degree and more than five years' experience in fisheries research of invertebrate species; • She has the required competencies described in Table PC2, section 2; • She has undertaken at least two fishery assessments or surveillance visits in the last five years, and • She has the appropriate skills and experience required to serve as a Principle 3 assessor as described in FCR Annex PC table PC3. • Bio.inspecta Pty Ltd. confirms that Ms. Sascha Brand-Gardner has no conflicts of interest in relation to the fishery under assessment. <p>*Together the team meets all competency requirements laid out in Table PC3.</p>
6	Audit/review time and location
	The audit was conducted on the 29th & 30th August 2019 in Mooloolaba, Queensland.
7	Assessment and review activities

The annual audit team considered recent developments and monitor progress on the conditions placed on the fishery for continued certification. The annual review included participants such as the fishery managers and scientists and client representatives to gain a full understanding of the current state of the fishery.

2.2 Background

Principle 1 Update

Albacore – Stock assessment

The stock assessment for albacore was updated in 2018 (Tremblay-Boyer et al. 2018). This was an update of the previous assessment (Harley et al. 2015) but also addressed relevant recommendations of that assessment report, and the recommendations of the 2018 pre-assessment workshop (PAW; Pilling and Brouwer, 2018), to explore uncertainties in the assessment model, particularly in response to the inclusion of additional years of data and to improve diagnostic weaknesses in previous assessments.

In addition to the diagnostic case model, the assessment reported the results of one-off sensitivity models to explore the relative impacts of key data and model assumptions for the diagnostic case model on the stock assessment results and conclusions. The assessment also included a structural uncertainty analysis (model grid) for consideration in developing management advice, where all possible combinations of the most important axes of uncertainty from the one-off models were included. It was recommended that management advice be formulated from the results of the structural uncertainty grid.

Across the range of models run in this assessment, the most important factors when evaluating stock status were the assumed level of natural mortality (M), and growth. For natural mortality, age-invariant M values of 0.3 yr⁻¹ (consistent with the 2015 assessment) and 0.4 yr⁻¹ were assumed, with the latter resulting in more optimistic assessment outcomes. Age-dependent M settings were also evaluated as one-off sensitivities. Natural mortality remains a key uncertainty in this assessment, and it is appropriate that such uncertainty continue to be reflected in the overall stock assessment results. For growth, the conditional age-at-length data from recent work was incorporated into the diagnostic case model, while an alternative scenario fixed at the parameter values of the sex-combined 'Chen-Wells' growth model used within the 2017 North Pacific albacore reference case model run was also evaluated. Use of the latter resulted in more pessimistic assessment outcomes. There remains an unresolved inconsistency in the growth rates indicated by the VB curve fitted to the age-at-length data (approximately 20 cm per year for albacore 20-70 cm in length) and presumed annual modes with 10 cm spacing that consistently appear in the troll

size composition data, and historically in the driftnet size composition data. Additional analysis of otoliths taken from 50-70 cm albacore in the troll fishery is required to identify the reason for this inconsistency. This is work that needs to be undertaken with high priority.

The general conclusions of this assessment were as follows:

- While biomass was estimated to have declined initially, estimates of spawning potential, and biomass vulnerable to the various longline fisheries have been stable or possibly increasing slightly over the past 20 years. This has been influenced mainly by the estimated recruitment, which has generally been somewhat higher since 2000 than in the two decades previous.
- Most models also estimated an increase in spawning and longline vulnerable biomass since about 2011, driven by some high estimated recruitments, particularly around 2009.
- A steady increase in fishing mortality of adult age-classes was estimated to have occurred over most of the assessment period, accelerating since the 1990s but declining following the decline in longline catch seen since 2010. Juvenile fishing mortality increased until around 1990 and has remained stable at a low level since that time.
- Key stock assessment results across all models in the structural uncertainty grid showed a wide range of estimates.
- All models indicated that South Pacific albacore was above the limit reference point (of $0.2SBF=0$), with overall median depletion for 2016 ($SBlatest/SBF=0$) estimated at 0.52 (80 percentile range 0.37-0.69).
- Recent average fishing mortality was estimated to be well below FMSY (median $F_{recent}/FMSY = 0.2$, 80 percentile range 0.08-0.41).

The 2018 assessment used a revised regional structure. Region 2 is estimated to contain the majority of the spawning potential and total biomass but most of the recruitment is estimated to originate in Regions 3 and 5. Recruitment from these southern regions was noted as being consistent with where small albacore first appear in the troll fishery, and also where smaller albacore occur in longline fisheries.

Other results of the structural uncertainty analysis were as follows:

- The uncertainty identified was higher than for previous assessments for this albacore stock;
- The most influential axis was that of natural mortality;
- The next most influential axis was growth which further subset the runs into two distinct categories in terms of depletion trends, with virtually no overlap from 1980 onwards;
- CPUE was the next most influential axis. Overall the geostatistical CPUE resulted in a slightly higher median depletion but the traditional CPUE runs were more variable in terms of the initial depletion;

- Size weighting was not the main driver of grid trends.
- The steepness axis had minimal influence on the grid for runs predicting lower, more optimistic depletion estimates, but runs approaching 40% depletion had a clear pattern with 0.65 and 0.95 steepness resulting in more pessimistic and more optimistic terminal depletion, respectively.

The WCPFC Scientific Committee accepted this assessment and noted that the assessment results show that while the stock depletion ($SB/SBF=0$) has exhibited a long-term decline the stock was not in an overfished state and overfishing was not taking place (WCPFC-SC 2018).

In 2018 the WCPFC Scientific Committee also recalled its previous advice from SC11, SC12, and SC13 that longline fishing mortality and longline catch be reduced to avoid a decline in the vulnerable biomass so that economically viable catch rates can be maintained, especially for the longline catch of adult albacore. SC14 recommended that this advice be taken into consideration when the TRP for South Pacific albacore was discussed at the following WCPFC Commission meeting.

Previously, WCPFC-SC (2017) had noted the results of status quo projections, assuming current southern longline and troll fishery effort would continue into the future at levels equal to those seen in 2015. These indicated that, if 2015 fishing effort levels continue into the future, the stock was predicted to continue to decline on average, falling to $SB_{current}/SBF=0 = 0.35$ in 2033 with a 7% predicted probability of being below the LRP. As SB_{MSY} has been estimated to be less than 0.1 $SBF=0$ these projections show there to be no risk of the stock being reduced to below B_{MSY} within the next 5 years.

Table 1. Albacore: Summary of reference points over all of the 72 individual models in the structural uncertainty grid (from Tremblay-Boyer et al. 2018).

	Mean	Median	Min	10%	90%	Max
C_{latest}	61719	61635	60669	60833	62704	63180
MSY	100074	98080	65040	70856	130220	162000
$YF_{current}$	71579	71780	56680	62480	80432	89000
f_{mult}	6.2	4.96	1.89	2.44	12.05	17.18
F_{MSY}	0.07	0.07	0.05	0.05	0.09	0.1
F_{recent}/F_{MSY}	0.23	0.2	0.06	0.08	0.41	0.53
SB_{MSY}	71407	68650	26760	39872	100773	134000
SB_0	443794	439800	308800	353870	510530	696200
SB_{MSY}/SB_0	0.16	0.17	0.07	0.1	0.21	0.23
$SB_{F=0}$	469004	462633	380092	407792	534040	620000
$SB_{MSY}/SB_{F=0}$	0.15	0.15	0.06	0.09	0.2	0.22
SB_{latest}/SB_0	0.55	0.56	0.33	0.42	0.69	0.74
$SB_{latest}/SB_{F=0}$	0.53	0.52	0.3	0.37	0.69	0.77
SB_{latest}/SB_{MSY}	4	3.42	1.45	1.96	7.07	10.74
$SB_{recent}/SB_{F=0}$	0.51	0.52	0.32	0.37	0.63	0.72
SB_{recent}/SB_{MSY}	3.88	3.3	1.58	1.96	6.56	9.67

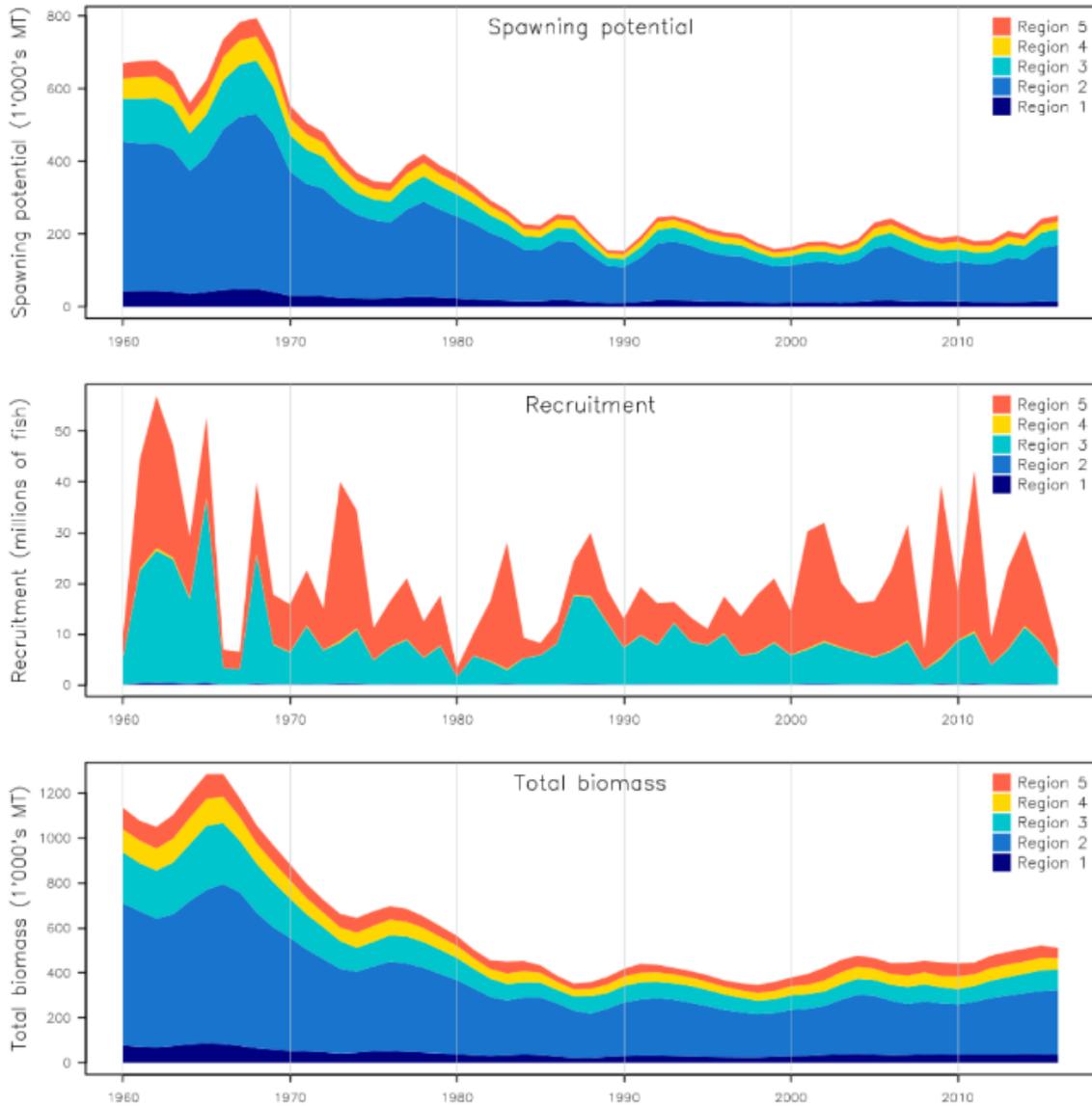


Figure 1. Albacore: Estimated annual average recruitment, spawning potential and total biomass by model region for the diagnostic case model, showing the relative sizes among regions (from Tremblay-Boyer et al. 2018).

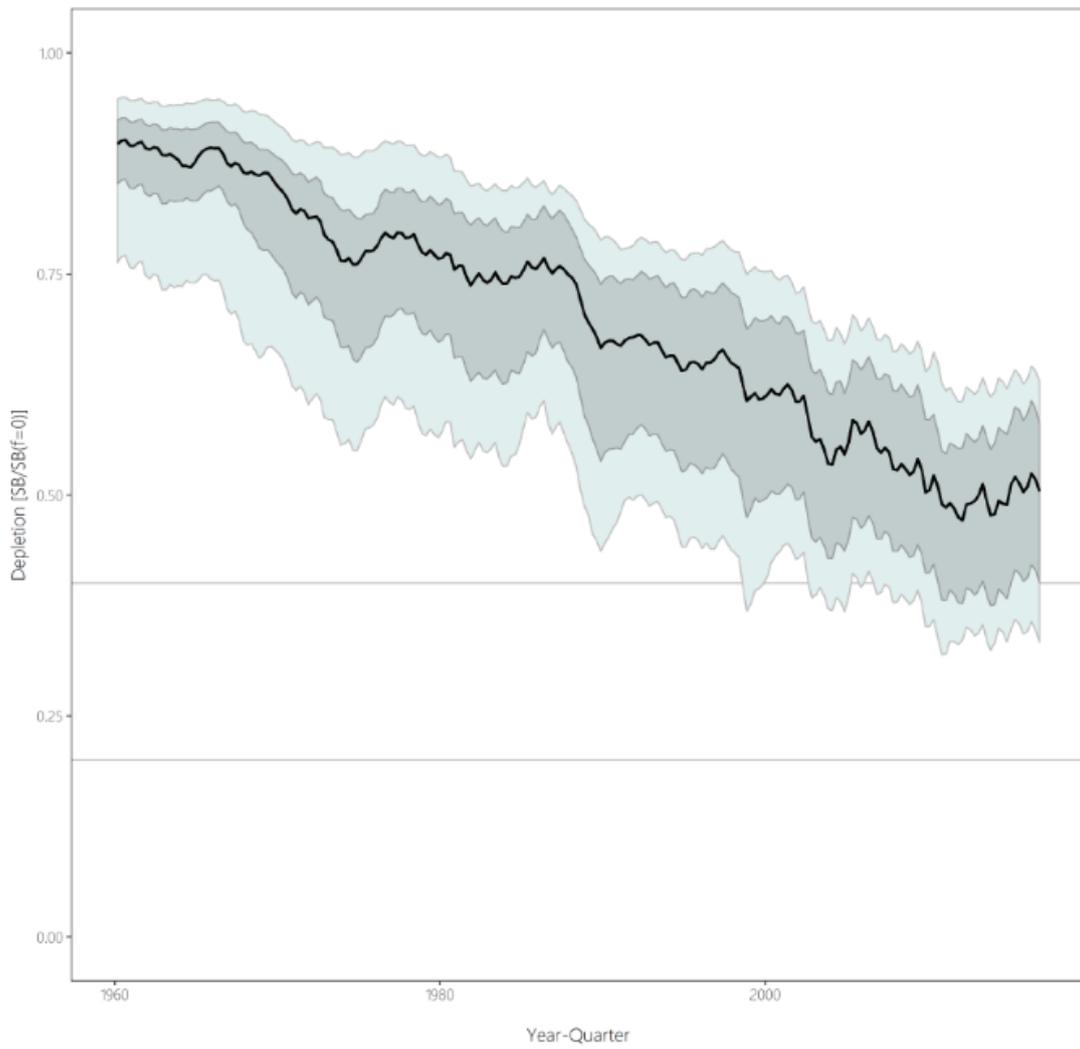


Figure 2. Albacore: Distribution of time series depletion estimates across the structural uncertainty grid. The black line represents the grid median trajectory, the dark grey region represents the 50%ile range, light grey the 90%ile range (from Tremblay-Boyer et al. 2018).

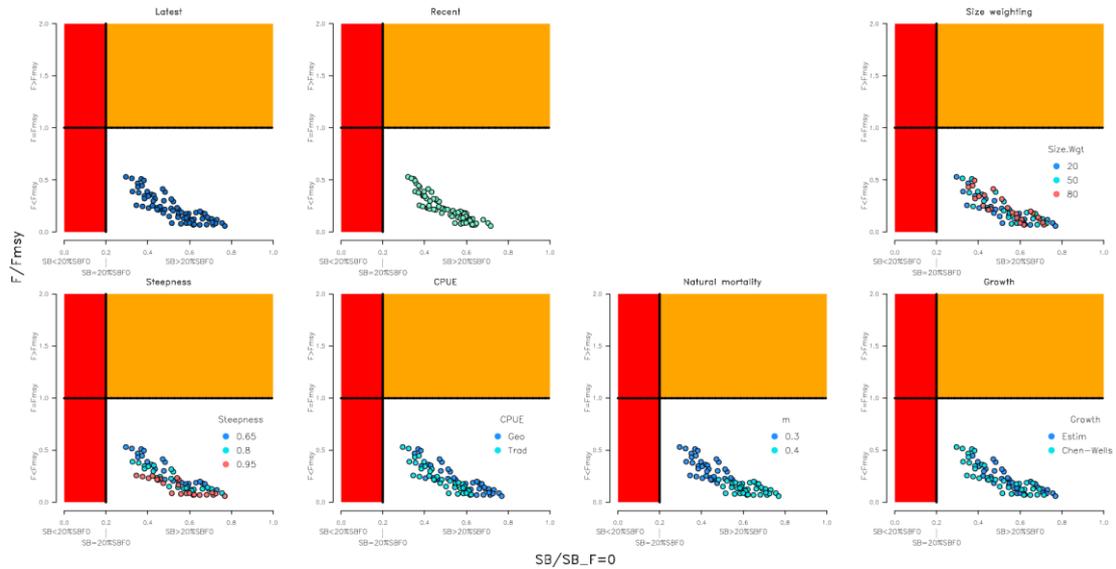


Figure 3. Albacore: Majuro plots summarising the results for each of the models in the structural uncertainty grid. The plots represent estimates of stock status in terms of spawning potential depletion and fishing mortality. The red zone represents spawning potential levels lower than the agreed limit reference point which is marked with the solid black line. The orange region is for fishing mortality greater than F_{MSY} (F_{MSY} is marked with the black dashed line). The points represent $SB_{latest}/SB_{F=0}$ for each model run except in panel (b) where $SB_{recent}/SB_{F=0}$ is displayed. The remaining panels show the estimates for the different levels for the five axes of the grid (from Tremblay-Boyer et al. 2018).

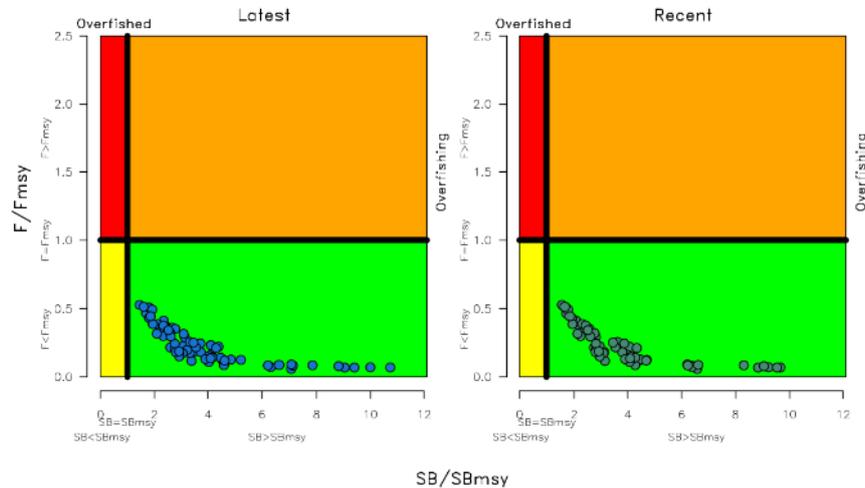


Figure 4. Albacore: Kobe plots summarising the results for each of the models in the structural uncertainty grid under the $SB_{latest}/SB_{F=0}$ and the $SB_{recent}/SB_{F=0}$ reference points (from Tremblay-Boyer et al. 2018).

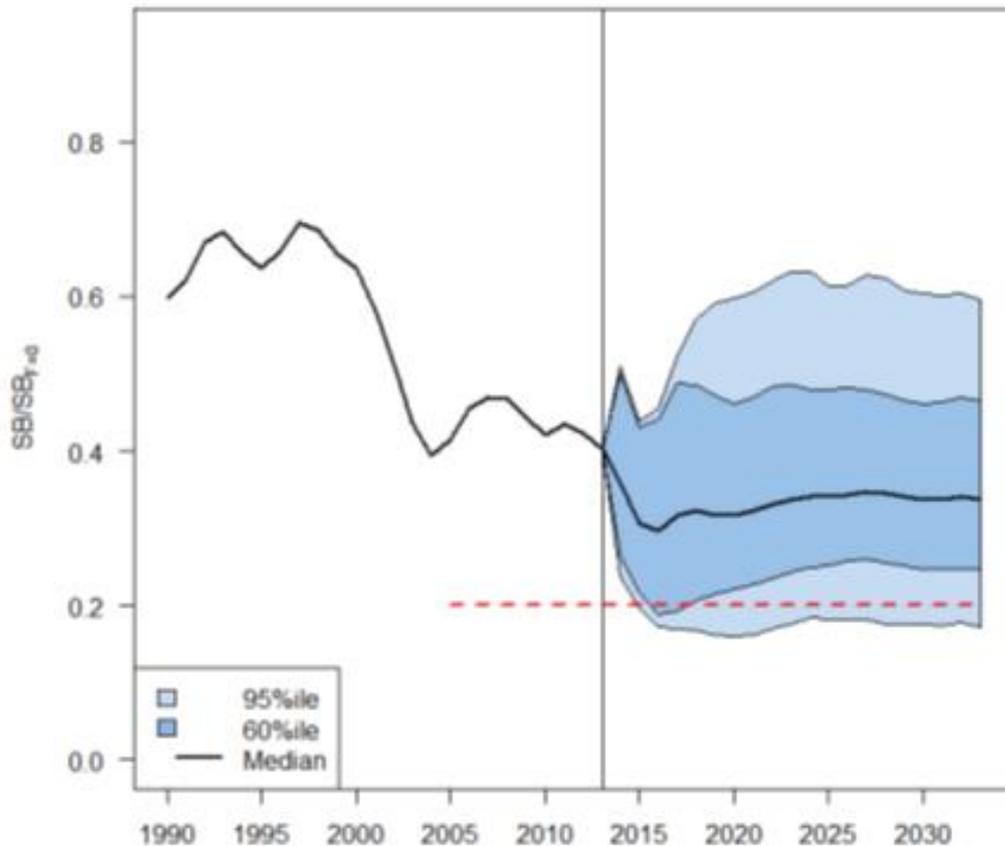


Figure 5. Albacore: Stochastic projections of adult stock status under 2014 longline and troll effort levels. The limit reference point (20% $SB_{F=0}$) is indicated by the horizontal dashed red line. Note: from 1960, up to 2013 inclusive the line represents the median across the 9-assessment model runs (structural uncertainty only); uncertainty after 2013 represents both structural uncertainty and stochastic recruitment (1800 simulation runs) (from WCPFC-SC 2017).

Albacore – Harvest strategy

The WCPFC remains the most important level of management for albacore. In 2018, and since the most recent assessment, the WCPFC adopted an interim TRP for south Pacific albacore of 0.56 $SB_{F=0}$, with the intention of achieving an increase in the profitability of the fishery, as described in the following extract from WCPFC15 Summary report (WCPFC 2018).

207. 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 209.

208. 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. The Science Service Provider is tasked with identifying a range of alternative catch pathways and timeframes that achieve this, for consideration in 2019.

209. In undertaking the assessment identified in paragraph 209 information from all fisheries will be included while noting that any management measures must take account of the impact of different gear types.

210. The Scientific Committee shall refer to the target reference point in its assessment of the status of the WCPO South Pacific albacore tuna stock and in reporting to the Commission on management advice and implications for this stock.

211. Considering that the distribution of the South Pacific albacore stock goes beyond the WCPFC Convention area and the management of this stock is the responsibility of both WCPFC and IATTC, WCPFC15 requested the Scientific Services Provider to coordinate with the IATTC scientific staff with the view to consider including the entire South Pacific in future assessments.

WCPFC15 agreed on an interim target reference point (TRP) for south Pacific albacore at 56 percent of spawning stock biomass in the absence of fishing ($0.56 SBF=0$) with the objective of achieving an 8 percent increase in catch per unit of effort (CPUE) for the southern longline fishery as compared to 2013 levels. 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.

This newly agreed TRP is an economic one so, although the stock is estimated to be below the TRP and some measure of rebuilding is desirable, it is not considered to be overfished or to be requiring rebuilding for conservation reasons.

Harvest control rules for south Pacific albacore have yet to be adopted. Paragraphs 209 and 210 from the WCPFC15 summary report note that options for achieving the TRP within 20 years are to be considered in 2019.

Progress towards the development of a Harvest Strategy for albacore is evaluated based on the Harvest Strategy Workplan adopted by WCPFC for the key tuna species (Table 2). This indicates that there are still important decisions to be made concerning harvest control rules but that progress has been consistent with the agreed plan.

Table 2. Work plan from WCPFC14 (2017) for albacore tuna¹ for the adoption of harvest strategies under CMM 2014-06.

Year	Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance indicators and monitoring strategy (d) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SC provided advice on a range of performance indicators for the Southern Longline Fishery to evaluate the performance of harvest control rules. ▪ Commission noted performance indicators for the Southern Longline Fishery to evaluate harvest control rules.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2017 Progress summary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Noted candidate performance indicators for the Southern Longline Fishery and the Tropical Longline fishery to evaluate harvest control rules. ▪ Agreed on actions to prioritize the development and adoption of a Target Reference Point for South Pacific albacore at WCPFC15.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018 	<p>Agree on Target Reference Point (b).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commission agrees on a TRP for South Pacific albacore. <p>Develop harvest control rules (e) and Management strategy evaluation (f)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SC provides advice on the performance of candidate harvest control rules. (ongoing). ▪ TCC consider the implications of candidate harvest control rules. (ongoing). ▪ Commission consider advice on progress towards harvest control rules. (ongoing). <p>[SC updated advice on SP albacore status.]</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2019 	<p>Develop harvest control rules (e) and Management strategy evaluation (f)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SC provides advice on the performance of candidate harvest control rules. (ongoing). ▪ TCC consider the implications of candidate harvest control rules. (ongoing).

¹ The workplan for albacore tuna was again modified in 2018 but, in response to a Variation Request from all CABs, the 2017 version of the Workplan has been agreed as the fixed timeline for all conditions concerning adoption all elements of harvest strategies for WCPFC tuna stocks. The 2018 updates to the Workplan are therefore not considered further here. More information on this Variation Request is provided in Section 4.1 on Harmonized Fishery Assessments.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commission consider advice on progress towards harvest control rules. (ongoing).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2020 	<p>Develop harvest control rules (e) and Management strategy evaluation (f)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SC provide advice on the performance of candidate harvest control rules. (ongoing). ▪ TCC consider the implications of candidate harvest control rules. (ongoing). ▪ Commission consider advice on progress towards harvest control rules. (ongoing).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021 	<p>Develop harvest control rules (e) and Management strategy evaluation (f)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SC provide advice on the performance of candidate harvest control rules. ▪ TCC consider the implications of candidate harvest control rules. ▪ Commission consider advice on progress towards harvest control rules. <p>Adopt a Harvest Control Rule.</p>

Yellowfin – Stock status

There has been no update to the stock assessment for yellowfin since the most recent one in 2017 (Tremblay-Boyer et al. 2017). The WCPFC-SC advice for yellowfin based on the 2017 stock assessment was that it appears that the stock is not experiencing overfishing (96% probability) and it appears that the stock is not in an overfished condition (92% probability) (WCPFC-SC 2017).

Yellowfin – Harvest strategy

The WCPFC remains the most important level of management for yellowfin. Progress towards the development of a Harvest Strategy for yellowfin is evaluated based on the Harvest Strategy Workplan adopted by WCPFC for the key tuna species (Table 3). This indicates that there are still important decisions to be made concerning harvest control rules, but that progress has been consistent with the agreed plan.

Table 3. Work plan from WCPFC14 (2017)² for yellowfin tuna for the adoption of harvest strategies under CMM 2014-06. Bold items are the six elements that are referred to in CMM 2014-06 (a. Objectives, b. Reference Points, c. Acceptable Levels of Risk, d. Monitoring, e. Harvest Control Rules and f. MSE). Items in brackets are related to harvest strategy development, are part of the plan, but are not one of these six elements.

Year	Activity
2017	<p>Performance indicators and Monitoring strategy (d).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC provides advice on a range of performance indicators for the Tropical Longline Fishery to evaluate the performance of harvest control rules. • Commission noted performance indicators for the Tropical Longline Fishery to evaluate harvest control rules
	<p>2017 Progress summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognized the importance of developing harvest strategies for key stocks in the WCPO. The Commission recognized that this work requires the consideration of fisheries managers and scientists at different stages. The Commission notes that the time required for harvest strategy discussions is substantial but will also vary from year to year and the Commission recognized the need for this to be accommodated. • Agreed to reprioritize as needed the annual agenda of the Commission and Scientific Committee to allow sufficient additional time for consideration of harvest strategy issues. In addition, WCPFC recognized that there may also be a need for a dedicated science/management dialogue.
2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [SC and Commission discussion of management objectives for fisheries and/or stocks, and subsequent development of candidate TRPs for BET and YFT.]
2019	<p>Agree on Target Reference Point (b).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC provides advice on potential Target Reference Points for yellowfin. • Commission agrees on a TRP for yellowfin. <p>Develop harvest control rules (e) and Management strategy evaluation (f)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC provides advice on the performance of candidate harvest control rules. (ongoing).

² The workplan for yellowfin tuna was again modified in 2018 but, in response to a Variation Request from all CABs, the 2017 version of the Workplan has been agreed as the fixed timeline for all conditions concerning adoption all elements of harvest strategies for WCPFC tuna stocks. The 2018 updates to the Workplan are therefore not considered further here. More information on this Variation Request is provided in Section 4.1 on Harmonized Fishery Assessments.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission consider advice on progress towards harvest control rules. (ongoing).
2020	<p>Develop harvest control rules (e) and Management strategy evaluation (f)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC provides advice on the performance of candidate harvest control rules. (ongoing). • TCC consider the implications of candidate harvest control rules. (ongoing). • Commission consider advice on progress towards harvest control rules. (ongoing).
2021	<p>Develop harvest control rules (e) and Management strategy evaluation (f)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC provides advice on the performance of candidate harvest control rules. • TCC consider the implications of candidate harvest control rules. • Commission consider advice on progress towards harvest control rules. <p>Adopt a Harvest Control Rule</p>

Swordfish – Stock status

The 2017 stock assessment (Takeuchi et al. 2017) is the most recent for South Pacific Swordfish. Based on this assessment the advice from the WCPFC Scientific Committee (WCPFC-SC) was as follows:

The SC noted

- The central tendency of relative recent fishing mortality was median ($F_{recent}/FMSY$) = 0.86 with an 80% probability interval of 0.51 to 1.23 (Table 4). While this suggested that there was likely a buffer between recent fishing mortality and FMSY, it also showed that there was some probability that recent fishing mortality was above FMSY.
- There was a roughly 32% probability (23 out of 72 models) that the recent fishing mortality was above FMSY with $Prob((F_{recent}/FMSY) > 1) = 0.32$. The median estimate (0.86) was above that estimated from the 2014 assessment grid ($F_{current}/FMSY = 0.74$, see SC9-SA-WP-05).
- Fishing mortality rate had increased notably from the mid-1990s in both model regions, on maturing swordfish aged 4-6 fish in particular.
- Across all models in the uncertainty grid the spawning biomass declined steeply between the late 1990s and 2010 but since then the rate of decline had been less (Figure 7 and Figure 8). Those declines were found in both model regions but were higher in the eastern Region 2 (equator to 50°S, 165°E to 130°W).
- In comparison with the bigeye and yellowfin assessments, evidence for an increase in recent recruitment for southwest Pacific swordfish was not

found in either the CPUE time series or estimates of recruitment. SC13 noted that the longline only nature of the fishery catching mainly larger, older swordfish, was not strongly informative with regards to recruitment dynamics.

The following were the SC's management advice and implications.

- Based on the uncertainty grid adopted by SC13, the south west Pacific swordfish spawning biomass was likely above the 20%SBF=0, biomass LRP adopted for tunas and the SBMSY level (noting that the Commission has yet to adopted an LRP for south Pacific swordfish) and it was highly likely that the stock was not in an overfished condition (0% probability). Recent F was likely below FMSY, and it appeared that the stock was not experiencing overfishing (32% probability of overfishing) (Figure 9 and Figure 10).
- There had been an increase in fishing mortality notably from the mid-1990s, and that the biomass relative to unfished levels was estimated to have declined rapidly during the period late-1990s to 2010 followed by a more gradual but continued decline after 2010, across the uncertainty grid. It was noted the fishing mortality was likely below FMSY.
- Consistent with its previous advice (from SC9), SC13 recommended that the Commission consider developing appropriate management measures for the area north of 20°S to the equator which is not covered by CMM 2009-03, noting that:
recent catches between the equator and 20°S continued to represent the largest component of the catch in Region 2 (equator to 50°S, 165°E to 130°W) and represented half the total catches from the stock, and, catches in that area contributed substantially to fishing mortality and spawning biomass depletion levels in eastern Region 2 that are substantially higher than in the western region (Region 1) (Figure 11).
- Further, SC13 recommended that current restrictions on catches south of 20°S also be maintained.

Table 4. Swordfish. Summary of reference points over the 72 models in the structural uncertainty grid for management advice. Note that SBrecent/SBF=0 is calculated where SBrecent is the mean SB over 2012-2015 instead of 2011-2014 (used in the stock assessment report), at the request of the Scientific Committee (from WCPFC-SC 2017).

α	Mean α	Median α	Min α	10% α	90% α	Max α
$C_{latest}\alpha$	9,884 α	9,884 α	9,318 α	9,343 α	10,157 α	10,287 α
$MSY\alpha$	8,172 α	7,913 α	5,905 α	6,396 α	10,150 α	11,360 α
$Y_{Frecent}\alpha$	7,628 α	7,775 α	4,998 α	6,062 α	8,948 α	9,684 α
$f_{mult}\alpha$	1.27 α	1.15 α	0.66 α	0.79 α	1.89 α	2.32 α
$F_{MSY}\alpha$	0.16 α	0.14 α	0.10 α	0.10 α	0.22 α	0.23 α
$F_{recent}/F_{MSY}\alpha$	0.88 α	0.87 α	0.43 α	0.53 α	1.26 α	1.51 α
$SB_{MSY}\alpha$	17,314 α	17,740 α	7,278 α	8,943 α	26,661 α	30,460 α
$SB_0\alpha$	84,173 α	84,075 α	57,070 α	71,199 α	98,039 α	111,000 α
$SB_{MSY}/SB_0\alpha$	0.20 α	0.21 α	0.11 α	0.12 α	0.28 α	0.28 α
$SB_{F=0}\alpha$	78,619 α	78,301 α	61,996 α	64,342 α	92,120 α	100,691 α
$SB_{MSY}/SB_{F=0}\alpha$	0.22 α	0.23 α	0.10 α	0.12 α	0.32 α	0.33 α
$SB_{latest}/SB_0\alpha$	0.33 α	0.32 α	0.24 α	0.25 α	0.44 α	0.46 α
$SB_{latest}/SB_{F=0}\alpha$	0.35 α	0.35 α	0.26 α	0.27 α	0.44 α	0.49 α
$SB_{latest}/SB_{MSY}\alpha$	1.85 α	1.61 α	0.85 α	0.99 α	3.14 α	4.05 α
$SB_{recent}/SB_{F=0}\alpha$	0.36 α	0.35 α	0.27 α	0.29 α	0.43 α	0.48 α
$SB_{recent}/SB_{MSY}\alpha$	1.86 α	1.58 α	0.88 α	1.02 α	3.10 α	3.96 α

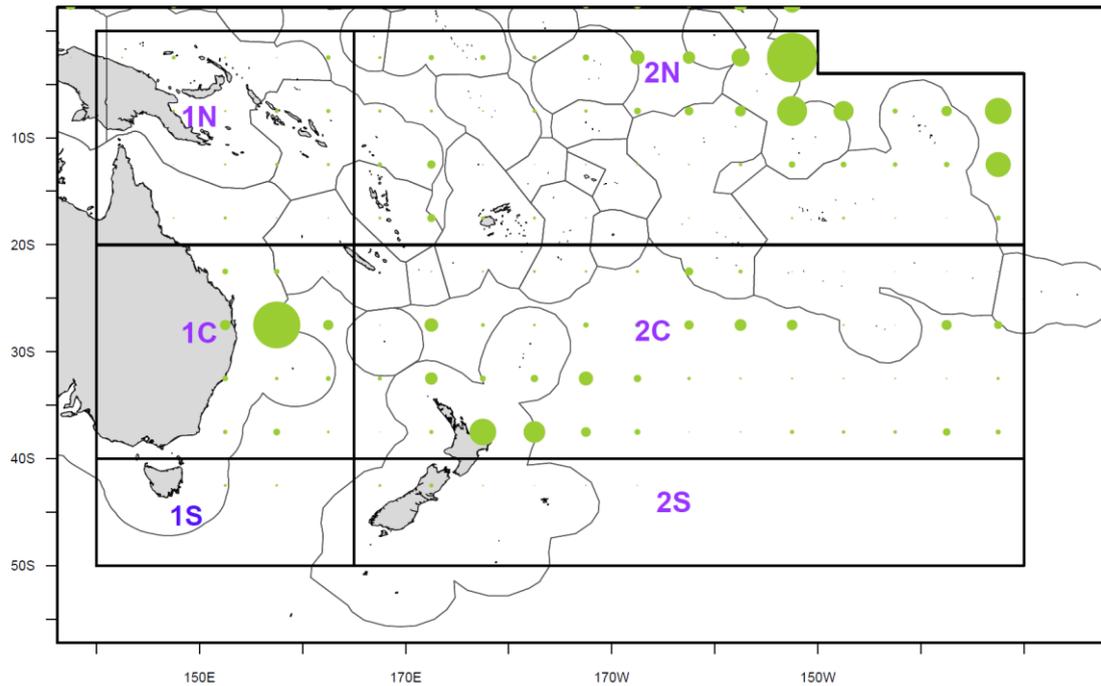


Figure 6. Swordfish. Catches of swordfish (numbers) in the southwest Pacific, 2006–2015. Source: raised catch estimates available from the SPC. The black lines represent the boundaries of the assessment regions 1 and 2 (outer lines) for swordfish in the southwest Pacific Ocean, and the six fishery sub-areas within those regions (from Takeuchi et al. 2017).

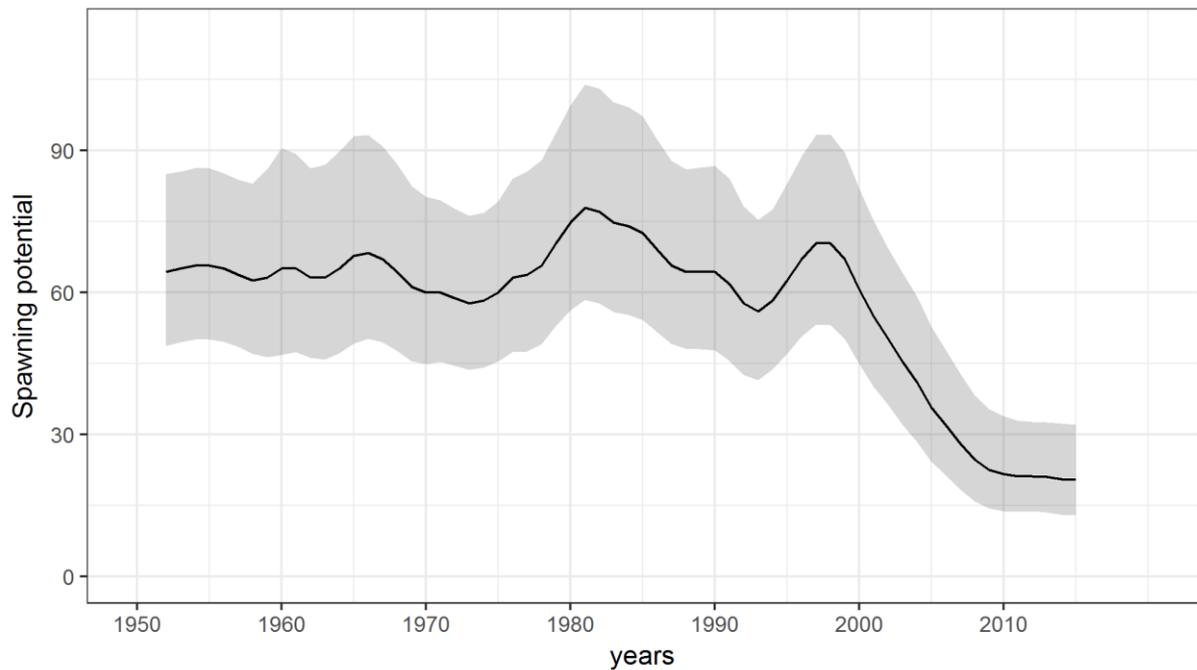
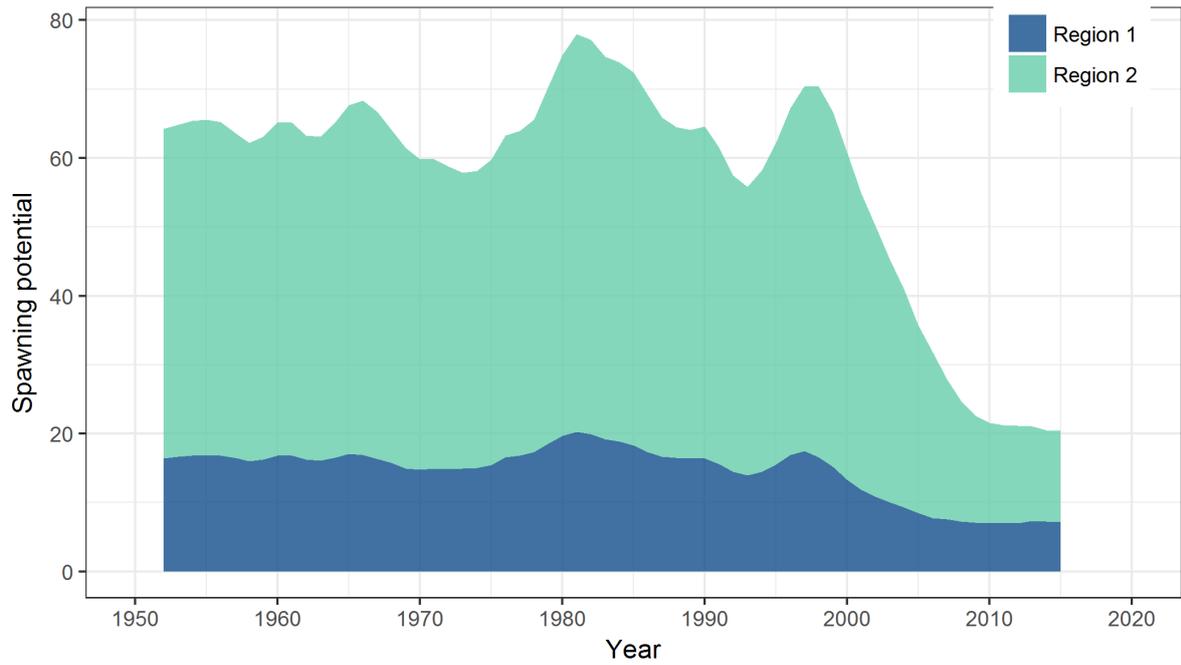


Figure 7. Swordfish. Estimated annual average spawning potential by year for the diagnostic case model, left: by model region, showing the relative sizes among regions; right: by year (black line) with 95% asymptotic confidence limits (shaded area) (from WCPFC-SC 2017).

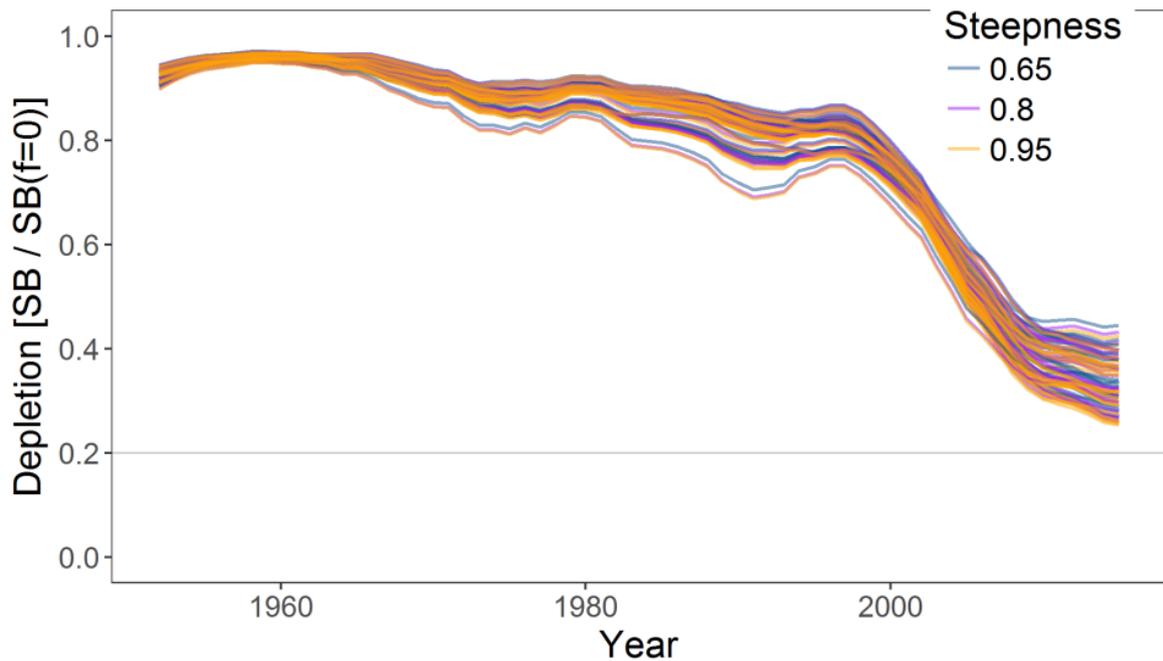


Figure 8. Swordfish. Trajectories of fishing depletion (of spawning potential) for the 72 model runs retained for the structural uncertainty grid used for management advice. The colours depict the models in the grid with three levels of steepness (0.65, 0.8 and 0.95) (from WCPFC-SC 2017).

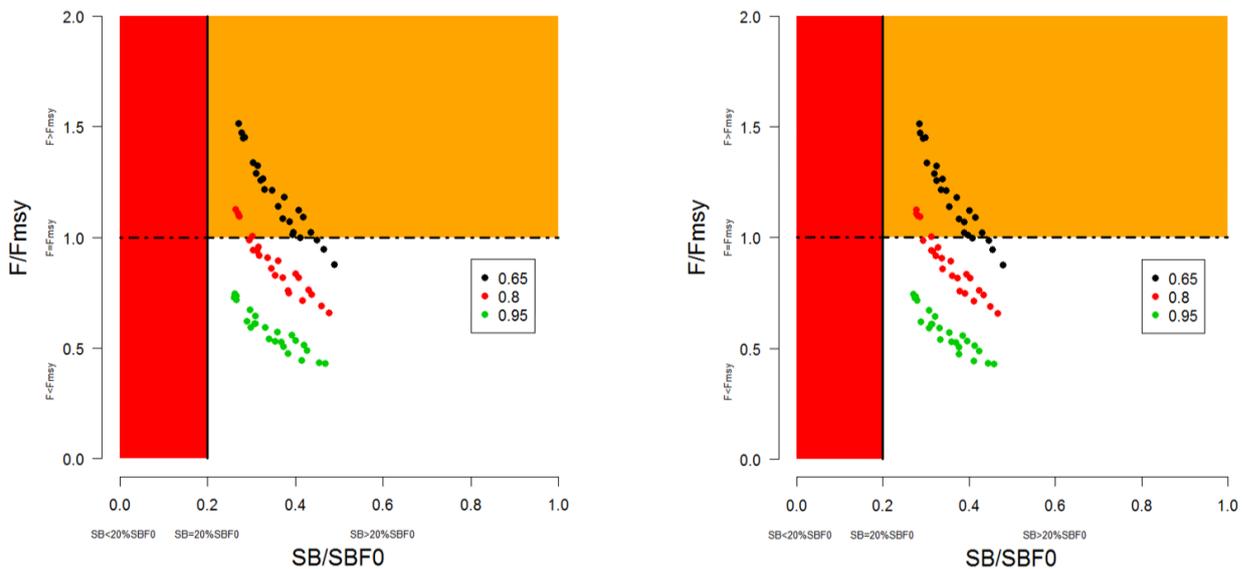


Figure 9. Swordfish. Majuro plot summarising the results for each of the models in the structural uncertainty grid retained for management advice. The plots represent estimates of stock status in terms of spawning potential depletion and fishing mortality. The red zone represents spawning potential levels lower than the agreed limit reference point which is marked with the solid black line. The orange region is for fishing mortality greater than FMSY (FMSY is marked with the black dashed line). The points represent Left: $SBlatest / SBF=0$; Right: $SBrecent / SBF=0$. The colours depict the models in the grid with three levels of steepness (0.65, 0.8 and 0.95) Note, $SBrecent$ is defined as the mean of SB over 2012-2015 and $SBlatest$ is the value for 2015. (from WCPFC-SC 2017).

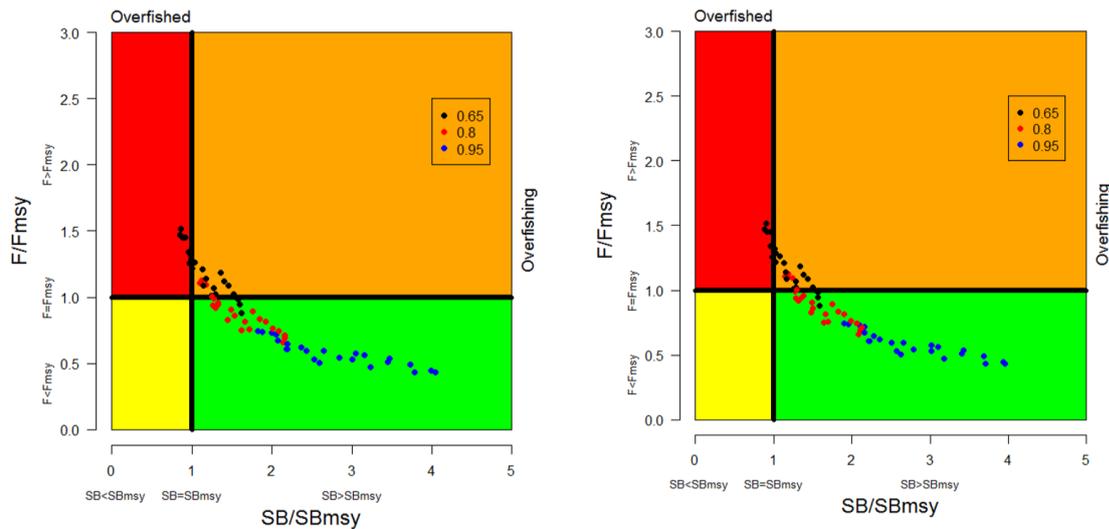


Figure 10. Swordfish. Kobe plot summarising the results for each of the models in the structural uncertainty grid, where the x-axis represents – Left: SBlatest /SBMSY; Right: SBrecent/SBMSY. The colours depict the models in the grid with three levels of steepness (0.65, 0.8 and 0.95). Note, SBrecent is defined as the mean of SB over 2012-2015 and SBlatest is the value for 2015. (from WCPFC-SC 2017).

Swordfish – Harvest strategy

The original MSC assessment (Gascoigne et al. 2015) considered that for swordfish, unlike the situation for albacore and yellowfin, the Australian management regime was more important than the regional WCPFC regime, but the WCPFC regime should also be taken into account. In that assessment the Australian Harvest Strategy for swordfish was the main basis for the assigned score for PIs 1.2.1 (which was scored at 80) and 1.2.2 (for which a condition was still imposed based on remaining deficiencies with the WCPFC harvest control rule). However, in March 2018 AFMA’s Tropical Tuna Resource Assessment Group (TTRAG) proposed, and the AFMA Commission subsequently agreed, to stop using the ETBF Harvest Strategy for swordfish as the basis for setting its Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC) because it “was not achieving its objectives for sustainability and maximising economic return to industry” (TTRAG 2018). Following discussions with AFMA and viewing of background reports, however, the team has confirmed that the issue was not one of there being a risk to sustainability but that the Harvest Strategy would have continued to reduce catches for the ETBF even when the stock was above target levels. A revised harvest strategy for the ETBF is therefore being developed and this is expected to be in place in 2020. While this is taking place, the fishery has moved to an indicators-based approach similar to that used for albacore and yellowfin. In implementing the new indicators-based approach, the TTRAG provided a summary of the main indicators (Table 5). An update to this advice was provided by TTRAG in 2019 as a check on whether any change to the 2-year TACC was warranted. No change was recommended or made.

Table 5. A summary of the main indicators for South Pacific Swordfish (from TTRAG 2018).

Indicator	Comment
Stock structure	<p>The results of genetic studies support a separate south-western Pacific stock of Broadbill Swordfish. TTRAG therefore considered that Broadbill Swordfish is a single stock within the south-west Pacific. Over the past 5 years (2013-2017) the ETBF catch as a proportion of the total catch in the WCPFC Statistical Area south of the equator has averaged 11%.</p>
WCPO Stock Assessment – Stock wide status	<p>Last assessment: 2017</p> <p>Overfished: Highly Unlikely</p> <p>Overfishing: Unlikely</p> <p>TTRAG noted that the last stock assessment for south-west Pacific Broadbill Swordfish was undertaken in 2017 and reviewed by the WCPFC Scientific Committee meeting (SC13) held in August 2017. The assessment incorporated data to the end of 2015. The stock assessment was based on a structural uncertainty grid comprising 72 models. The major uncertainty related to growth and maturity noted in the previous assessment has now been resolved due to the results of new research which were presented to and endorsed by SC12.</p> <p>SC13 considered all options within the four axes of uncertainty for steepness, size data, diffusion rate and natural mortality to be equally likely and the resulting uncertainty grid was used to characterize stock status.</p> <p>SC13 noted that the central tendency of relative recent spawning biomass was ($S_{Brecent}/S_{BF=0}$) = 0.35 with a probable range of 0.29 to 0.43 (80% probability interval). The central tendency of relative recent fishing mortality was (F_{recent}/F_{MSY}) = 0.86 with an 80% probability interval of 0.51 to 1.23. While this suggested that there was likely a buffer between recent fishing mortality and FMSY it also showed that there was some probability that recent fishing mortality was above FMSY. SC13 noted that there was a roughly 32% probability (23 out of 72 models) that the recent fishing mortality was above FMSY. Fishing mortality rate increased notably from the mid-1990s in both model regions, on maturing aged (4-6) fish in particular.</p> <p>Across all models in the uncertainty grid the spawning biomass declines steeply between the late 1990s and 2010 but since then the rate of decline has been less. Those</p>

	<p>declines are found in both model regions but are higher in the eastern Region 2 (equator to 50°S, 165°E to 130°W). TTRAG noted that the present assessment includes large catches taken in the north-eastern corner of the assessment region which may not be part of the stock in the southwest Pacific. Exclusion of these catches (which are around 50% of the total Region 2 catch over the past decade) is likely to lead to more optimistic assessment outcomes.</p> <p>TTRAG also noted that the results of the assessment excluding the northern areas have recently been provided to CSIRO. TTRAG has requested that the results based on these assessment runs be made available to TTMAC and the Commission.</p> <p>Next assessment: 2022</p>	
<p>WCPO Stock Assessment – Regional Assessment Indicators</p>	<p>Region 1 fishing mortality trends depend strongly on the diffusion rate scenario. For the zero diffusion rate scenario the fishing mortality (F/FMSY) showed a gradual increase from the 1960s and was highest in the late 1990s/early 2000s. During the last decade (2005-2015) fishing mortality has decreased to around half of these previous high levels. For the 11% diffusion rate scenario, the fishing mortality multiplier shows a similar gradual increase from the 1960s to the mid-1990s but then shows a dramatic increase for the 1995-2005 period. It then decreases by around 25% for the 2005-2015 decade (c.f. Figure SWO-3).</p> <p>Across the uncertainty grid of all 72 models, the median spawning biomass relative to unfished levels (SB/SBF=0) in 2015 was 35% across both Regions. Assuming either zero, 11% or 25% diffusion rate between Regions 1 and 2, the median values of SB/SBF=0 in 2015 were 42%, 32% or 31% respectively. TTRAG deemed the high diffusion rate scenario to be highly unlikely based on observations from tagging studies. An estimate of swordfish movement rates between the two regions of the current model was developed by Evans et al. (2012). They estimated diffusive mixing across the boundary at 165°E (diffusion rate, $D = 0.11$) as the best estimate of movement between regions at this time.</p>	
Indicator	10-year trend	Comment
<p>Region 1 catch</p>	<p>Variable, but recently stable</p>	<p>Between 2008 and 2017, minimum catch was 1,418t (2016), maximum catch was 1880t (2012) and average catch was 1,590t (c.f. Figure SWO-1a). TTRAG noted the recent increase in catches taken by the EU adjacent</p>

		to Region 1 (i.e. in the Tasman Region defined earlier) (c.f. Figure SWO-1b).
ETBF Proportion of Region 1 Catch	Decline then increase	The proportion of the ETBF catch in Region 1 declined from around 80% in 2008 to a low of around 50% in 2011. Since then it has steadily increased, reaching around 70% in 2016-17.
Region 1 spawning biomass	Decline	The major influencing factor on depletion of spawning biomass (both total and regional) is the rate of diffusion between Regions 1 and 2. Steepness of the stock-recruitment relation has little influence (whereas it strongly influences the FMSY ratios). For zero, 11% and 25% diffusion rates the median spawning biomass relative to level in the absence of fishing ($SB/SBF=0$) in Region 1 in 2015 is estimated to be around 62%, 41% and 37% respectively.
ETBF Catch	Stable around an average of 1151t	Since the introduction of quotas in 2011, quota year catches have fluctuated between years but averaged 1,151t between 2011 and 2017, varying over a range of 1,064t (2012) to 1,230t (2015) (c.f. Figure SWO 2a).
ETBF Standardised CPUE	Declining for recruits; stable then decline for sub-adults; stable for adults.	During 2017 the CPUE of recruits (age 1&2 fish) was 28% below the mean over the 10 year period (2008-17), CPUE of sub-adults (age 3&4 fish) was 21% below, while CPUE of adults (age 5+ fish) was similar to the previous 10 year average. (c.f. Figure SWO-2b)
ETBF Weights	Stable then increasing	The mean and upper 95th percentiles of the processed weight distribution show an increasing trends since about 2012/13.
State Catches	Negligible	Negligible based on advice from industry members
Recreational Catches	Very small	A small recreational fishery targeting adult fish (less than 100 fish per year) has recently developed off eastern Tasmania and has expanded to Victoria and NSW.
Status of stock in relation to the CHSP		Noting that the CHSP advocates a proxy target reference point of spawning biomass depletion ($SB/SBF=0$) of 48%, the 2017 SWO assessment indicates that for zero, 11% and 25% diffusion rates the median depletion in Region 1 in 2015 is estimated to be around 62%, 41% and 37% respectively. Again, TTRAG deemed the high diffusion rate

		scenario to be highly unlikely based on observations from tagging studies.
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In framing its advice to the AFMA Commission the TTRAG also provided the following comments.

"TTRAG have considered the above indicators and information in the context of any future TACC decisions for ETBF swordfish (made by the AFMA Commission), and noted the following

- *Increasing the TACC - If the TACC is fully utilised, increased catches in the ETBF under the zero diffusion rate scenario are likely to reduce the level of spawning biomass in Region 1 (currently 62% SBF=0) over time. Under the 11% diffusion rate scenario, increased catches in the ETBF are likely to reduce the level of spawning biomass in Region 1 below the current level of 41% SBF=0.*
- *Maintaining the TACC - If the TACC is fully utilised, maintenance of present catch levels in the ETBF under the zero diffusion rate scenario are likely to maintain the level of spawning biomass in Region 1 at its current level (62% SBF=0). Under the 11% diffusion rate scenario, maintenance of present catch levels in the ETBF are likely to maintain the level of spawning biomass in Region 1 at the current level of 41% SBF=0.*
- *Reducing the TACC - If the TACC is fully utilised, reduction of present catch levels in the ETBF under the zero diffusion rate scenario are likely to increase the level of spawning biomass in Region 1 from its current level (62% SBF=0). Under the 11% diffusion rate scenario, reduction of present catch levels in the ETBF are likely to increase the level of spawning biomass in Region 1 to above the current level of 41% SBF=0.*

In considering the above scenarios, TTRAG noted that the degree to which the above responses in the stock occur will be dependent on a number of factors including:

- *Diffusion rate,*
- *The level of TACC change, and*
- *The timeframe over which these changes occur.*

While the level of diffusion rate remains uncertain, TTRAG noted that past analyses indicate the rate is around 11% based on the analysis of pop-up tags. TTRAG also noted that the bulk of tags released in Region 1 moved north-south."

These comments represent some advice about the implications of the different options (between increasing or decreasing the TACC) but do not contain a clear preference for any particular one.

The AFMA response to this situation, as recorded in the minutes of the subsequent Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee (TTMAC) meeting (TTMAC 2018), was to propose a small increase to the TACC AFMA for two years

which it considered would represent a relatively low risk to stock sustainability, and improve short term economic returns. The reasoning also included the following points.

- The stock assessment identified concerns with the level of fishing mortality in region 2 (in which the UoA vessels operate) on age 3 and 4 swordfish, while ETBF CPUE indicators were of some concern for recruits (age 1 and 2 fish) and sub-adults (age 3 and 4 fish) which have been at or near historically low levels over the past 3 years.
- The then current TACC of 1157mt was below the 10 year average catch, with the ETBF catch having been very consistent for the past 10 years (averaging 1258t and ranging between 1170t and 1362t).
- AFMA were not willing to support either a large increase in the TACC as proposed by ETBF industry or a decrease in the TACC while the HS was being redeveloped, noting that although depletion levels were uncertain, the stock was not overfished and median depletion was 35% of unfished spawning biomass (well above 20%).

TTTMAC, including its scientific member, endorsed the proposed TACC.

The TACC for 2019 was set by the AFMA Commission at 1,250 t, which represented a 93 t increase on that for 2018 (implemented as a 960 t TACC for a reduced 10 month season but equivalent to 1,157 t for a 12 month TACC).

There remains no agreed WCPFC plan for the development of a Harvest Strategy for swordfish and CMM 2009-03 is still the effective management measure at the WCPFC level. As noted in the previous surveillance report, 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 for the main tuna species. Consequently, the main focus of management for the stock at the WCPFC level will likely be through strengthening of CMMs.

The change to the Australian harvest strategy described above was also noted in the 3rd surveillance audit report (Collinson and Stokes 2019) but no revisions to scores were considered.

We followed this approach and consider that any re-scoring of the Principle 1 Performance Indicators (PIs) should be undertaken under V2.01 of the MSC Standard. This will be applied at the re-assessment, which has already commenced. A Variation Request to the MSC to allow swordfish to be re-scored under V2.01 as part of this surveillance audit, as has been done for the yellowfin and bigeye tuna, was denied as swordfish were not included in the Mega-VR that applies to these tuna species and which required the earlier re-scoring (see Appendix 5.7). Any changes to scores at this surveillance audit re-scoring under

V1.3 would be quickly made redundant by updated scores at the re-assessment under V2.01 and would only cause unnecessary confusion. In addition, a variance request to carry the existing swordfish conditions in to the re-assessment was recently approved by the MSC (see Appendix 5.8).

The swordfish stock is currently estimated to be at healthy levels, and the approach being followed by AFMA, TTRAG and TTMAC is a responsible one. They have quickly moved to replace the harvest strategy with a comprehensive suite of indicators, to implement a project to redesign the harvest strategy, and at the same time have aimed to keep catches close to current levels so that the risks to the stock are not increased while the new harvest strategy is being developed and tested.

Principle 2 Update

The latest full set of 2017 and 2018 retained and discarded catch data (for species other than albacore, yellowfin and swordfish) were provided in last year's surveillance audit report. These comprised both logbook catch and Electronic Monitoring (EM) reports for all client vessels in 2017 and 2018.

Table 5. Retained and discarded species for 2017 and 2018 from client logbooks. Target species are written in green text, 'main' retained species in bold text, consideration different to last report in orange 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
	Bigeye tuna	149,178	8,995	713	13.1
	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
Mahi mahi	33,830	3,037	216	29.69
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
Striped marlin	59,724	740	36	5.24
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
	TOTAL	1,139,138 kg	58398	14507	100 %
2018	Albacore tuna	204,781	20,470	1,766	23.27
	Barracouta	0	0	58	0.0
	Bigeye tuna	91,630	2,655	404	10.41
	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
Striped marlin	46,029	553	20	5.23
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
TOTAL	880,176 kg	42065	16371	100

The 'main' species identified in Table 4 above were bigeye tuna, mahi mahi and striped marlin. All of which were assessed as 'main retained' species in the initial assessment.

Catches of Southern bluefin tuna (SBT) have increased from 2017 to 2018 but are still < 1% and therefore do not need to be considered as "main" on a percentage of total catch basis but further consideration will be given in the re-assessment of the fishery, if it needs to be considered as "main" due to vulnerability reasons. Southern bluefin tuna is listed as conservation dependant in national EPBC Act. There is Australian federal legislation and SBT management plan in place for the species (<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2013C00776>).

The new stock assessment for bigeye tuna in 2017 together with additional work carried out by Farley et al. in 2018 will result in different scores across the retained species performance indicators.

Bait

Argentinian shortfin squid (*Illex argentinus*) and sardines from Japan and the US (*Sardinops melanostictus* and *S. sagax* respectively). Approximately 180 tonnes of squid and 180 tonne of sardine is used by the client vessels annually. The species used are similar to the original assessment, but the use of sardines have

increase. Overall this constitutes about 17 % of the total catch landed in the fishery (incl. bait). Bait species therefore need to be considered “main” for the assessment.

None of these changes are likely to result in overall scores falling below the SG80 and a new condition is therefore not likely. This information will instead be considered at the upcoming reassessment and under the new version FCR v.2.0.

ETP

Interactions of Walker Seafood vessels with endangered, threatened or protected (ETP) species remains low for seabirds and marine mammals (Table 6).

Table 6: ETP interactions from 2018 from Walker Seafood vessel logbooks.

		Dead	Alive	Unknown	Total
Seabirds	Albatrosses	3			3
	Shearwaters	3	1		4
Marlin	Black Marlin			5	5
	Blue Marlin			5	5
Marine Mammal	Dolphins		1		1
	Seal		1		1
Turtle	Green Turtle	1	6		7
	Hawksbill Turtle	1			1
	Leatherback Turtle		5	1	6
	Loggerhead Turtle		4	1	4
	Pacific (Olive) Ridely Turtle		1		1
	Turtles	1	3		4
Sharks	Shortfin Mako	5		5	10
	Longfin Mako	1		1	2

The highest interaction occurs with turtles and mako sharks as well as black and blue marlin. In 2018 three fatal turtle interactions were recorded and six mako sharks. All interactions with ETP species and fate during the 2018 fishing year is presented in Table 6 below.

These numbers are significantly lower than numbers presented in the 3rd annual surveillance audit report (Control Union, April 2019) for marlin and mako sharks indicating that perhaps interaction of the whole ETBF were presented and not just of the Walkers Seafood fleet as indicated.

Ecological Risk Assessment

The Ecological Risk Assessment for the Effects of Fishing (ERAEF) has been completed and the report finalized (Sporcic et al. 2019). The ERAEF proceeds through four stages of analysis: scoping; an expert judgement-based Level 1 analysis (SICA – Scale Intensity Consequence Analysis); an empirically based Level 2 analysis (including PSA – Productivity Susceptibility Analysis and SAFE – Sustainability Assessment for Fishing Effects); and a model-based Level 3 analysis. A description of the ERAEF method is provided in the methodology document (Hobday et al. 2007; Hobday et al. 2011b).

At the Level 1 component that remained and triggered a Level 2 analysis were:

- Direct impact of capture by fishing (byproduct/bycatch species, protected species and communities) - at moderate for bycatch and community and major risk level for protected species,
- Direct impact without capture by fishing (protected species) - at major risk level and
- Addition/movement of biological material by translocation of species (communities) - at major risk level through the use of imported baits.

A total of 261 species were evaluated at Level 2. Of the 261 species evaluated at Level 2 (PSA and bSAFE), eight species were assessed at high risk (one byproduct (bSAFE), two bycatch (bSAFE), five protected (PSA)), 69 species at medium risk and 184 species at low risk. No species remained at high risk a following a residual risk analysis.

Further details are only presented for known species that interact with WSA vessels below:

Protected species

Five of 85 species were assessed at high risk consisting of two whales and three dolphins. These were the Indian Ocean bottlenose dolphin *Tursiops aduncus*, bottlenose dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*, Risso's dolphin *Grampus griseus*, Longman's beaked whale *Indopacetus pacificus* and pygmy killer whale *Feresa attenuata*. These five high risk species were all reduced to low risk following a residual risk analysis, based on low levels of reported interactions (based on AFMA Logbook data).

bSAFE and residual risk

A more quantitative methodology, bSAFE, has been used as the preferred Level 2 method (over PSA) where sufficient spatial and biological data are available. Typically, this has been used for teleost and chondrichthyan species.

All three commercial bait species were assessed at low risk in the bSAFE analysis. All nine assessable chondrithyan species were also assessed at low risk.

Principle 3 Update

The fishery continues to be managed by AFMA at a national level and through the WCPFC at a regional level. Nationally, AFMA have introduced the following management changes during 2019:

- The new season start date is 1st January (it was previously 1st February). The shift makes it easier for Industry and AFMA and aligns with the WCPFC.
- New transshipment requirements were introduced on the 1st January. There is no longer a need for a Carrier Boat Licence. The new reporting requirements are outlined in the 2019 ETBF management arrangements booklet.
- AFMA are now allowing boats to carry more than 500 hooks fishing in the Coral Sea Zone (CSZ). This means they can fish outside the zone on same trip and set extra hooks. This is now possible because of the EM to check they are not setting more than 500 hooks in the CSZ but they don't have to come back into port to get more hooks should they want to fish outside CSZ.
- AFMA has mandated that all ETBF longline vessels will have e-logs (no more paper logs) by 1 October 2019.
- TTRAG membership expired in June 2019 and the new positions have been appointed. The terms of reference and composition of both the TTRAG and the TTMAC remain the same.
- There are some new AFMA personnel. Of particular note is the new CEO Wes Norris.
- AFMA provided a copy of the Annual Compliance Report. This report and discussions with AFMA personnel indicate that there are no major concerns from a compliance perspective. AFMA's MCS system continues to be implemented and is supportive by an educative approach with ongoing Port Visits.
- AFMA's reach to stakeholders more generally has been extended through the increased use of social media including the facebook page.
- AFMA continues to hold an annual open meeting for all interested stakeholders to attend.
- The ETBF Fisheries Management Strategy (FMS) has been approved by the AFMA Commission and will soon be available on AFMA's website. The FMS is a compilation of all of the management policies and plans and includes an updated bycatch and discarding workplan.

At the regional level, a TRP for albacore was determined at WCPFC15 and condition 10 is now closed (see Table 23 and Appendix 3.4). The harvest strategy is progressing in accordance with the WCPFC workplan. Once the harvest strategy is finalised there will be an allocation process between the countries that fish the stock.

Six new CMMs and one resolution relevant to this fishery were adopted at WCPFC15. CMM 2018-04 Conservation and Management Measure of Sea Turtles will take effect on 1 January 2020. Resolution 2018-01 refers to labour standards for crew on fishing vessels and encourages CCMs to establish minimum standards regulating crew labour conditions in national legislation. This new resolution compliments the MSC's new labour requirements to ensure that forced or child labour is considered as part of the assessment process.

Table 7. List of all current Conservation and Management Measures and Resolutions of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission relevant to this fishery (as of 2 May 2019).

CMM Reference	Title
2004-03	Specifications for the Marking and Identification of Fishing Vessels
Res. 2005-03	Resolution on Non-Target Fish Species
2006-04	Conservation and Management Measure for Striped Marlin in the Southwest Pacific
2006-07, 2007-01	Conservation and Management Measure for the Regional Observer Programme
2006-08	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Boarding and Inspection Procedures
2008-03	Conservation and Management of Sea Turtles
Res. 2008-01	Resolution on Aspirations of SIDS and Territories
2009-03	Conservation and Management Measure for Swordfish
2009-06	Conservation and Management Measure on the Regulation of Trans shipment
2009-09	Conservation and Management Measure for Vessels without nationality
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
2010-07	Conservation and Management Measure for Sharks
2011-04	Conservation and Management Measure for Oceanic Whitetip Sharks
Res. 2012-01	Resolution on the best available science
2013-04	Conservation and Management Measure for WCPFC Implementation of a Unique Vessel Identifier (UVI)
2013-05	Conservation and Management Measure on daily catch and effort reporting

2013-07	Conservation and Management Measure on the special requirements of Small Island Developing States and Territories
2013-08	Conservation and Management Measure for Silky Sharks
2014-05	Conservation and Management Measures for Sharks (<i>This CMM does not replace or prejudice any other existing shark CMM</i>)
2014-06	Conservation and Management Measures to develop and implement a harvest strategy approach for key fisheries and stocks in the WCPO
2015-02	Conservation and Management Measure for South Pacific Albacore
Res. 2017-01	Resolution on Provisional Application of CMM 2017-01
2017-02	Conservation and Management Measure on Minimum standards for Port State Measures
2017-03	Conservation and Management Measure for the protection of WCPFC Regional Observer Programme Observers ((Replaced CMM 2016-03 (2017))
2017-04	Conservation and Management Measure on Marine Pollution
Res. 2018-01	Resolution on Labour Standards for Crew on Fishing Vessels
2018-01	Conservation and Management Measure for bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack tuna in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean
2018-03	Conservation and Management Measure to mitigate the impact of fishing for highly migratory fish stocks on seabirds
2018-05	Conservation and Management Measure for the Regional Observer Programme
2018-06	Conservation and Management Measure for WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels and Authorisation to Fish
2018-07	Conservation and Management Measure for Compliance Monitoring Scheme

2.3 Version details

Table 8 – Fisheries program documents versions	
Document	Version number
MSC Fisheries Certification Process	Version 2.1
MSC Fisheries Standard	Version 1.3
MSC General Certification Requirements	Version 2.3
MSC Surveillance Reporting Template	Version 2.0

3 Results

3.1 Surveillance results overview

Summary of conditions

Table 9 – Summary of conditions				
Condition number	Performance Indicator (PI)	Status	original score	PI revised score
1	1.1.2 (albacore)	Behind target	75	NA; Superseded as rescored v 2.0 (which has no PI 1.1.2)
2	1.2.1 (albacore)	On target	70	rescored under v 2.0, Appendix 5.4
3	1.2.2 (albacore)	On target	60	rescored under v 2.0, Appendix 5.4
4	1.2.1 (yellowfin)	On target	70	rescored under v 2.0, Appendix 5.4
5	1.2.2 (yellowfin)	On target	65	rescored under v 2.0, Appendix 5.4
6	1.1.2 (swordfish)	Behind target	75	60; Appendix 3.4
7	1.2.2 (swordfish)	Behind target	65	65; Appendix 3.4
8	2.3.1	Closed	75	80; Appendix 3.4
9	2.3.3	Closed	75	85; Appendix 3.4
10	3.2.2	Closed	75	80; Appendix 3.4

Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC) and catch data

Table 10 – Approved TACCs for 2019 fishing season	
Quota species	TACC
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 11 – TACC and catch data - South Pacific Albacore				
TAC	Year	2018	Amount	2,351 t
UoA share of TAC	Year	2018	Amount	529.64 t
UoA share of total TAC	Year	2018	Amount	529.64 t
Total green weight catch by UoC	Year (most recent)	2018	Amount	206.64 t
Total green weight catch by UoC	Year (second most recent)	2017	Amount	262.88 t

Table 12 – TACC and catch data – Yellowfin tuna				
TAC	Year	2018	Amount	2,054 t
UoA share of TAC	Year	2018	Amount	442.72 t
UoA share of total TAC	Year	2018	Amount	442.72 t
Total green weight catch by UoC	Year (most recent)	2018	Amount	191.91 t
Total green weight catch by UoC	Year (second most recent)	2017	Amount	249.60 t

Table 13 – TACC and catch data – Swordfish				
TAC	Year	2018	Amount	960 t
UoA share of TAC	Year	2018	Amount	355.03 t
UoA share of total TAC	Year	2018	Amount	355.03 t
Total green weight catch by UoC	Year (most recent)	2018	Amount	291.54 t
Total green weight catch by UoC	Year (second most recent)	2017	Amount	384.26 t

3.2 Conditions

Table 14 – Condition 1	
Performance Indicator	1.1.2 (albacore)
Score	75
Justification	There is no explicit target reference point agreed by WCPFC for use in management (as opposed to use in the stock assessment process), although the issue is under discussion. Although there is an Australian target, it is not applied. This scoring issue is not met at the SG80 level.
Condition	The management system should formally adopt a target reference point for the South Pacific albacore stock, which is consistent with maintaining the stock at BMSY or some other measure with similar intent or outcome. This target reference point should be used for management purposes. Note: This condition may be addressed jointly with conditions 2 and 3.
Milestones	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. 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>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>
<p>Consultation on condition</p>	<p>The client will consult and coordinate with AFMA, the Australian delegation to WCPFC, other members of the WCPO Tuna MSC Principle 1 Alignment Group, other delegations to FFA, PNA and WCPFC and environmental NGOs as appropriate.</p>
<p>Progress on Condition (Year 1)</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 (now disbanded) 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.</p> <p>WSA maintains its role as an industry member on the Australian Commonwealth Governments Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee (TTMAC)² and the Tropical Tuna Resource Advisory Group (TTRAG)³ 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) 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</p>

	<p>plan, invest and manage the association to improve representation of the fishery. The objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure ecological sustainable development of the industry; • To improve resource access and property rights; • To improve profitability; • To extend and market industry practices to stakeholders and the general public; • To enhance market opportunity; and • To improve safety and workforce development. <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>
Status	Open on target
Progress on Condition (Year 2)	<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</p>

Australian Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources on 18 October 2017. This letter clearly and concisely outlined WSA priorities for tuna fisheries and asks for the 2017 WCPFC and FFA meetings.

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 the second surveillance report.

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, 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 BMSY. 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 BMSY.

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 and sub-regional levels) (DAWR 2018).

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.

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.

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

	<p>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>
Status	Open on target
Progress on Condition (Year 3)	<p>WCPFC15 agreed “an interim target reference point (TRP) for south Pacific albacore at 56 per cent of spawning stock biomass in the absence of fishing (0.56 SBF=0) 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. 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.” The agreed TRP is included in the updated 2018 Harvest Strategy workplan (suppl-CMM 201406) and provides a basis for the planned development of harvest control rules using management strategy evaluation.</p>
Status	<p>The condition calls for adoption of a target reference point consistent with maintaining the stock at BMSY or some other measure with similar intent or outcome. The interim TRP agreed on above is well above the default reference point of BMSY=40%B0 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 formal adoption 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 & FZLC Cook Islands EEZ Pacific albacore & 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>
Progress on Condition (Year 4)	This condition has been superseded by the requirement to rescore under v2.0 and no remedial action or new condition has been deemed necessary.
Status	Open. Behind target
Additional information	This condition was rescored following the MSC advice and response the CAB wide mega variance (see Appendix 5.5).

Table 15 – Condition 2	
Performance Indicator	1.2.1 (albacore)
Score	70
Justification	<p>In relation to SG80 'responsive to the status of the stock', it is difficult to evaluate what might happen in the future, should the stock status decline to target levels or below. One line of evidence is to consider the harvest strategy put in place for bigeye, where the most recent stock assessment considers that the stock is ~at the limit reference point level, with overfishing is likely to be occurring ($B < B_{MSY}$ and $F > F_{MSY}$). The details of the harvest strategy for bigeye over the last few years, as set out in CMMs 2012-01, 2013-01 and 2014-01 are given in Section 3.4.6 of the main report. In this case, WCPFC has been somewhat responsive to the state of the stock, in that 2012-01 (the first management measure) was a response to the 2011 stock assessment showing the F was too high, while the impact of this and subsequent management measures are yet to be evaluated by a stock assessment (the 2014 assessment uses data only to the end of 2012). Nevertheless, several WCPFC members, and NGOs, expressed their disappointment at the weakness of the response.</p>

	Overall, therefore, the team considered that SG80 is not fully met in relation to the regional harvest strategy.
Condition	<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>
Milestones	<p>By the first, second and third annual surveillance audits, there will be evidence that work is ongoing 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>
Consultation on condition	The client will consult and coordinate with AFMA, the Australian delegation to WCPFC, other members of the WCPO Tuna MSC Principle 1 Alignment Group, other delegations to FFA, PNA and WCPFC and environmental NGOs as appropriate.
Progress on Condition (Year 1)	<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: 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"> • Agreement in determining acceptable levels of risk (interim 0 to 20 but not above) with harvest strategy for albacore, yellowfin and skipjack; • Agreement to explore levels of risk, and development of performance indicators for albacore tuna in 2017.

	<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, 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 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>
Status	Open on target
Progress on Condition (Year 2)	<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>
Status	Open on target
Progress on Condition (Year 3)	<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</p>

	<p>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>
Status	Open. On target
Progress on Condition (Year 4)	This condition has been superseded by the requirement to rescore under v2.0 from which a revised condition has been imposed reflecting the v2.0 wording and revised milestones. See Appendix 5.4.
Status	Open on target
Additional information	<i>The CAB may provide any additional information for this condition here.</i>

Table 16 – Condition 3	
Performance Indicator	1.2.2 (albacore)
Score	60
Justification	<p>The combined impact of CMM 2010-05, the Tokelau Arrangement and the approach for bigeye over the last few years imply that the existing or available HCRs, although somewhat weak, are somewhat responsive to the status of the stock. On this basis, SG60 is met for WCPO albacore. Nonetheless, this approach cannot be described as 'well-defined' pre-agreed rules, nor can it be said to 'ensure' that the exploitation rate is reduced. Both Tokelau Arrangement members and WCPFC have a stated aspiration to develop a stronger harvest strategy with a robust HCR (see CMM 2014-06). On this basis, we would conclude SG60 is met, but SG80 is not.</p> <p>Arguing by analogy with bigeye, there is evidence that as reference point levels are approach and exceeded, the Commission can be expected to take stronger action to restrain effort (e.g. as per CMM 2012-01 and CMM 2013-01). Hence as noted above, more effective tools are likely to be available for albacore if required (SG60). Overall the team considered that there is some evidence that available tools are effective (e.g. stock status, approach to bigeye), but not all</p>

	available evidence indicates this (e.g. evaluating impacts of CMMs on reducing effort). We argue on this basis that the SG60 level is met, but not SG80.
Condition	<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>
Milestones	<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. 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>
Consultation on condition	The client will consult and coordinate with AFMA, the Australian delegation to WCPFC, other members of the WCPO Tuna MSC Principle 1 Alignment Group, other delegations to FFA, PNA and WCPFC and environmental NGOs as appropriate.
Progress on Condition (Year 1)	<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>
Status	Open. On target
Progress on Condition (Year 2)	<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>

Status	Open on target
Progress on Condition (Year 3)	<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 (https://www.wcpfc.int/harvest-strategy) 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>
Status	On target
Progress on Condition (Year 4)	This condition has been superseded by the requirement to rescore under v2.0 from which a revised condition has been imposed reflecting the v2.0 wording and revised milestones. See Appendix 5.4.
Status	Open on target
Additional information	<i>The CAB may provide any additional information for this condition here.</i>

Table 17 – Condition 4	
Performance Indicator	1.2.1 (yellowfin)
Score	70
Justification	The team concluded, however, that SG80 is not met, because the harvest strategy is insufficiently responsive to the status of the stock. The team were not confident based on past form that, should yellowfin stock status be revealed at the next stock assessment to be approaching or below target levels, WCPFC and/or PNA would be able to stabilise or decrease fishing mortality in a fully effective and timely way. SG80 is therefore not met in relation to the regional harvest strategy.
Condition	<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>
Milestones	<p>By the first, second and third annual surveillance audits, there will be evidence that work is ongoing 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>
Consultation on condition	The client will consult and coordinate with AFMA, the Australian delegation to WCPFC, other members of the WCPO Tuna MSC Principle 1 Alignment Group, other delegations to FFA, PNA and WCPFC and environmental NGOs as appropriate.
Progress on Condition (Year 1)	<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>

Status	Open and on target
Progress on Condition (Year 2)	<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 "Australia 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".</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).</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>
Status	Open and on target
Progress on Condition (Year 3)	<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 "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" 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."</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>
Status	On target
Progress on Condition (Year 4)	This condition has been superseded by the requirement to rescore under v2.0 from which a revised condition has been imposed reflecting the v2.0 wording and revised milestones. See Appendix 5.4.
Status	Open. On target
Additional information	<i>The CAB may provide any additional information for this condition here.</i>

Table 18 – Condition 5	
Performance Indicator	1.2.2 (yellowfin)
Score	65
Justification	The team did not consider, however, that this approach could be described as 'well-defined' pre-agreed rules, nor can it be said to 'ensure' that the exploitation rate is reduced. On this basis, we would conclude SG60 is met, but SG80 is not. (The scoring of this scoring issue has been harmonised with the expedited P1 assessment for PNA yellowfin).
Condition	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).

	Note: This condition can be addressed together with Condition 4.
Milestones	<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>
Consultation on condition	The client will consult and coordinate with AFMA, the Australian delegation to WCPFC, other members of the WCPO Tuna MSC Principle 1 Alignment Group, other delegations to FFA, PNA and WCPFC and environmental NGOs as appropriate.
Progress on Condition (Year 1)	<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>
Status	Open. On target
Progress on Condition (Year 2)	<p>Please refer to information provided for Condition 1 & 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>
Status	Open. On target
Progress on Condition (Year 3)	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>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 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 SB/SBF=0, 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 rescoring 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>
Status	On target
Progress on Condition (Year 4)	This condition has been superseded by the requirement to rescore under v2.0 from which a revised condition has been imposed reflecting the v2.0 wording and revised milestones. See Appendix 5.4.
Status	Open. On target
Additional information	<i>The CAB may provide any additional information for this condition here.</i>

Table 19 – Condition 6

Performance Indicator	1.1.2 (swordfish)
Score	70
Justification	Based on the reference case model, this is estimated to be $\sim\sim 0.5\text{BMSY}$, which is a reasonable precautionary level based on normal practice. WCPFC has not agreed to a limit reference

	<p>point for swordfish (in contrast to the tuna stocks) and the stock assessment only considers targets. The achievement of a management target implies avoidance of a limit although the latter is not explicitly stated. Given that there is no explicit LRP for the Pacific – wide swordfish stock, SG80 is not met.</p>
Condition	<p>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.</p>
Milestones	<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>
Consultation on condition	<p>The client will consult and coordinate with AFMA, the Australian delegation to WCPFC, other members of the WCPO Tuna MSC Principle 1 Alignment Group, other delegations to FFA, PNA and WCPFC and environmental NGOs as appropriate.</p>
Progress on Condition (Year 1)	<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</p>

	<p>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>
Status	Open. On target
Progress on Condition (Year 2)	<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 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 BMSY 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</p>

	<p>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>Status</p>	<p>Open. On target</p>
<p>Progress on Condition (Year 3)</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>

Status	Behind target but no remedial action required (see above)
Progress on Condition (Year 4)	As stated above for year 3 updates, the CAB expected to rescore swordfish under FCR v 2.0 (Control Union Pesca, 2018). MSC did not approve rescoring at this stage of the process (see also additional information below) but rather re-score swordfish under v 2.0 at the time of the re-assessment. These updated requirements involve changes to the assessment of reference points and HCRs. There has been no progress at the WCPFC level towards adopting a target reference point for swordfish.
Status	Behind target but no remedial action required as the reassessed under V 2.01 started in November 2019.
Additional information	Bio.inspecta submitted a variance request on the 10 October 2019 to allow for rescoring of swordfish in accordance with the mega variance (see details in harmonisation section). The request was denied by the MSC and this condition will be carried over into the re-assessment (new variance request submitted by the CAB in November 2019 against FCP 7.30.4. and approved on 20 January 2020).

Table 20 – Condition 7	
Performance Indicator	1.2.2 (swordfish)
Score	65
Justification	<p>The extent to which this HCR acts to reduce the exploitation rate across the whole stock depends on the view of the stock structure, and hence the proportion of the exploitation rate which comes from the ETBF. Currently, the view of the TTRAG and AFMA is that the HCR continues to be effective in controlling the exploitation rate across the whole stock, but clearly if current trends continue then this may be open to question in a few years. Given that the WCPFC HCR is not well defined, in contrast to that of the ETBF, SG80 is not met.</p> <p>Regarding the WCPFC, there has not been an examination of its performance in the face of the main uncertainties confronting its HCR. SG80 is not met.</p>
Condition	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).
Milestones	<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>
Consultation on condition	The client will consult and coordinate with AFMA, the Australian delegation to WCPFC, other members of the WCPO Tuna MSC Principle 1 Alignment Group, other delegations to FFA, PNA and WCPFC and environmental NGOs as appropriate.
Progress on Condition (Year 1)	<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>
Status	Open. On target
Progress on Condition (Year 2)	<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>

Status	Open. On target
Progress on Condition (Year 3)	<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 South West Pacific swordfish. 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 difficult to see, therefore, how the fourth milestone (... the client should provide evidence that the harvest control rule and associated management actions are put in place) 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>
Status	On target
Progress on Condition (Year 4)	The changes to the ETBF harvest strategy in 2018 (see section 2.2) have triggered a re-scoring of the swordfish UoC for this PI. Revised rationales and scores are presented in Section 3.4.

	Rather than progress being made towards closing out the condition, the harvest strategy has been replaced by less well-defined approach. The re-scoring resulted in a condition being maintained for this PI which is therefore considered to be behind target.
Status	Behind target but no remedial action required as the reassessed under V 2.01 started in November 2019.
Additional information	Bio.inspecta submitted a variance request on the 10 October 2019 to allow for rescoring of swordfish in accordance with the mega variance (see details in harmonisation section). The request was denied by the MSC and this condition will be carried over into the re-assessment (new variance request submitted by the CAB in November 2019 against FCP 7.30.4. and approved on 20 January 2020).

Table 21 – Condition 8	
Performance Indicator	2.3.1 (All UoAs)
Score	75
Justification	<p>For turtles and shortfin mako, scoring issue b) is not met at the SG80 level: Direct effects are highly unlikely to create unacceptable impacts to ETP species.</p> <p>For turtles, the issue is that while the measures recently put in place are expected to work, based on other fisheries, no data from ETBF are yet available to show that turtle bycatch has been reduced to below trigger levels.</p> <p>For shortfin mako, the issue is that bycatch by this fishery is not negligible, and no population estimates exist which allow the team to judge with the appropriate degree of certainty whether or not fishing mortality impacts on the stock are 'highly unlikely' to be unacceptable.</p>
Condition	<p>Turtles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to collect data; • If data show that interactions have reduced from historical trends, no further action is required; • 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. <p>Shortfin mako:</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</p>

	<p>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>
Milestones	<p>Turtles: Year 1: Collect and analyse data, assess whether historical trends are exceeded. Year 2: If historical trends exceeded, discuss appropriate management measures. Continue to collect and analyse data. 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. 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>Shortfin mako: For approach i) above: 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) Year 2: AFMA to review, revise, finalise and implement mitigation plan for shortfin mako with client and stakeholder input. 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: Year 1: Collate and analyse data, in consultation with AFMA or any other appropriate organisation or expert. 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. Year 3: If the assessment does not suggest that impacts are highly unlikely to be unacceptable, implement further management measures to reduce impact.</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.												
Consultation on condition	The client will consult and coordinate with AFMA.												
Progress on Condition (Year 1)	<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 http://www.afma.gov.au/managing-ourfisheries/environment-and-sustainability/protected-species/.</p> <p>Turtles: 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 (TMP4) 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 (>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"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Interaction rate (per 1,000 observed hooks set)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Green</td> <td>0.0048</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leatherback</td> <td>0.0040</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Loggerhead</td> <td>0.0040</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other: combination of Hawksbill, Flatback, Pacific (olive) Ridley</td> <td>0.0040</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</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 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.</p>		Interaction rate (per 1,000 observed hooks set)	Green	0.0048	Leatherback	0.0040	Loggerhead	0.0040	Other: combination of Hawksbill, Flatback, Pacific (olive) Ridley	0.0040	TOTAL	0.0168
	Interaction rate (per 1,000 observed hooks set)												
Green	0.0048												
Leatherback	0.0040												
Loggerhead	0.0040												
Other: combination of Hawksbill, Flatback, Pacific (olive) Ridley	0.0040												
TOTAL	0.0168												

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

	<p>peer reviewed by experts from industry, government, science and across other fields.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
Status	Open on target
Progress on Condition (Year 2)	<p>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 (TMP5) 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.</p> <p>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.</p>

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 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.

	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
Status	Open on target
Progress on Condition (Year 3)	Turtles:

Species	Status 2017			Status 2018			Rate per 1000 hooks	
	Alive	Dead	Unknown	Rate per 1000 hooks	Dead	Unknown	2017	2018
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
Total	75	11	1	53	8	2		

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.

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)".

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.

Shortfin mako sharks:

Species	Status 2017			Status 2018			Compared	
	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 harrissoni</i>	Harrisson'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 (Fcrash), FLIM and Fishing Maximum Sustainable Mortality (FMSM). Fcrash, FLIM and FMSM are biological reference points based on a simple

	<p>surplus production model. bSAFE utilises much of the same information as a Productivity Susceptibility Analysis (PSA) to estimate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>Further information is provided in the 2017 Ecological Risk Management Guide.</p> <p>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 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>
Status	Open on target
Progress on Condition	The ecological risk assessment (ERA) have been finalised and all species including protected species like turtles and mako sharks

(Year 4)	<p>assessed at high risk during the level 2 assessment were reduced to low risk following the PSA and residual risk assessment (Sporcic et al. 2019).</p> <p>In the previous ERA (2008) completed by AFMA, leatherback turtle remained as a 'high risk' species due to its low productivity and uncertain extent of its full geographical range and shortfin mako as 'medium risk'.</p> <p>Based on the revised risk score from the most recent ERA which is based on the information about the whole ETBF and data up to 2015, this condition can be closed as it can be concluded that the direct effects of this fishery (WSA) are highly unlikely to create unacceptable impacts to ETP species like turtles and mako sharks.</p>
Status	Closed
Additional information	The Performance Indicator was re-scores in Appendix 3.4.

Table 22 – Condition 9	
Performance Indicator	2.3.3 (All UoAs)
Score	75
Justification	<p>For shortfin mako, scoring issue b) is not met at the SG80 level: Information is sufficient to determine whether the fishery may be a threat to protection and recovery of the ETP species.</p> <p>For shortfin mako, the issue is the same as that raised in the condition for PI 2.3.1, i.e. that bycatch by this fishery is not negligible, and no population estimates exist which allow the team to judge with the appropriate degree of certainty whether or not the fishery may be a threat to the protection of the population.</p>
Condition	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.
Milestones	<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</p>

	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.
Consultation on condition	The client will consult and coordinate with AFMA.
Progress on Condition (Year 1)	Please refer to information provided for Condition 8 above.
Status	Status
Progress on Condition (Year 2)	Please refer to information provided for Condition 8 above.
Status	Status
Progress on Condition (Year 3)	Please refer to the information provided for Condition 8 above.
Status	On target
Progress on Condition (Year 4)	<p>The ecological risk assessment (ERA) have been finalised and all species including protected species like shortfin mako sharks assessed at high risk during the level 2 assessment were reduced to low risk following the PSA and residual risk assessment (Sporcic et al. 2019).</p> <p>Based on this and a revised risk score from the most recent ERA which is based on the information about the whole ETBF and data up to 2015, this condition can be closed as it can be concluded that the information is sufficient to determine that this fishery is not a threat to protection and recovery of the ETP species including shortfin mako as a low risk score has been assigned after the residual risk assessment of the ERA. WSA only operates 5 vessels compared to the whole ETBF with around 37 vessels.</p>
Status	Closed
Additional information	The Performance Indicator was re-scores in Appendix 3.4.

Table 23 – Condition 10

Performance Indicator	3.2.2 (Albacore)
Score	75

Justification	<p>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 Commissions decision-making processes are based heavily on Scientific Committee reports on the status of target and nontarget 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.</p>
Condition	<p>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.</p>
Milestones	<p>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) 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>
Consultation on condition	<p>Not provided at time of setting condition.</p>
Progress on Condition (Year 1)	<p>Not applicable as new Condition set after 2nd year audit.</p>
Status	<p>NA</p>
Progress on Condition (Year 2)	<p>Not applicable as new Condition set after 2nd year audit.</p>

Status	NA						
Progress on Condition (Year 3)	<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 15th WCPFC Regular Session meeting in Hawaii, USA in December 2018, an interim target reference point was agreed. This is as per the 2017 revised harvest strategy workplan. 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 (0.56 SBF=0) 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. 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>						
Status	On target						
Progress on Condition (Year 4)	<p>The client action plan focuses on the continued engagement of Walker Seafoods and Tuna Australia with the Australian Government to progress the setting of a TRP and progress the harvest strategy. Mr Pavo Walker has maintained his role as an Industry member on AFMA's TTRAG and the TTMAC and is in attendance at the meetings (as evidenced in the meeting minutes) to advocate for the sustainable management of albacore. The Australian Government continues to participate at international meetings regarding the management of Albacore. So far, during 2019, Australia has participated in the following meetings:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Meeting</th> <th>Date and location</th> <th>Australian Participation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>FFA Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Working Group (MCSWG22) including Niue Treaty Information System workshop and Persons of Interest workshop</td> <td>25 March–5 April 2019, Honiara, Solomon Islands</td> <td>2 AFMA (Head of Delegation: Fraser McEachan, International Compliance Policy) 2 DFAT</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Meeting	Date and location	Australian Participation	FFA Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Working Group (MCSWG22) including Niue Treaty Information System workshop and Persons of Interest workshop	25 March–5 April 2019, Honiara, Solomon Islands	2 AFMA (Head of Delegation: Fraser McEachan, International Compliance Policy) 2 DFAT
Meeting	Date and location	Australian Participation					
FFA Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Working Group (MCSWG22) including Niue Treaty Information System workshop and Persons of Interest workshop	25 March–5 April 2019, Honiara, Solomon Islands	2 AFMA (Head of Delegation: Fraser McEachan, International Compliance Policy) 2 DFAT					

	FFA High Level Consultations (Annual FFA/AU/NZ trilateral)	18-19 March 2019, Wellington, NZ	2 DFAT (Head of Delegation: Celeste Powell, Fisheries and Environment) 1 Dept of Agriculture
	110th Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Committee Officials Meeting (FFC110) including FFA Audit Committee, WCPFC Planning Meeting, Regional Longline Strategy Meeting, Meeting of the Parties to the Niue Treaty Subsidiary Agreement, Strategic Plan Review Workshop and Pacific-EU Marine Partnership (PEUMP) Programme Planning Meeting	29 April–10 May, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia	2 Dept of Agriculture (Head of Delegation: Cassandra Kennedy, First Assistant Secretary–AgVet Chemicals, Fisheries and Forestry Division) 1 AFMA 1 DFAT
	16th Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Committee Ministerial Meeting (FFCMIN16) and 1st Special Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting (SRFMM1) Including FFC Officials meeting	17–20 June, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia	Assistant Minister for Fisheries, Forestry and Regional Tourism Senator the Hon. Jonathon Duniam (Head of Delegation) 1 Minister’s Advisor 2 Dept of Agriculture 2 DFAT 1 Dept of Defence
	FFA-EU Fisheries Policy Dialogue (first Annual Fisheries Policy Dialogue under the PEUMP Programme)	21 June, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia	2 Dept of Agriculture (Head of Delegation: Cassandra Kennedy, First Assistant Secretary–AgVet Chemicals, Fisheries and Forestry Division) 1 DFAT
	15th Meeting of the WCPFC Scientific Committee Including FFA pre-SC15 working Group	6–20 August, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia	1 Dept of Agriculture (Head of Delegation: James Larcombe, ABARES) 2 CSIRO
	<p>The milestone at year 4 states that “Decision-making processes have responded to the albacore catch rate issues as identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation (Score: 80).” The interim TRP for albacore that was determined at the 15th WCPFC meeting in December 2018 demonstrates that the WCPFC’s decision making processes are responsive. In addition, the development of the regional harvest strategy for albacore is progressing in line with the 2017 workplan and HCRs should be adopted in 2022.</p>		

	<p>Decision making in response to fishing information is often linked to the harvest control rules which are under development and subject to the albacore condition 2 which remains open.</p> <p>The majority of the Albacore catch by the Australian longline fleet active in the WCPFC Convention Area is caught within the Australian EEZ and AFMA continues to monitor the catch which remains steady.</p>
Status	Closed
Additional information	<p>Condition 10 (under PI 3.2.2b) was added at the second surveillance audit due to harmonisation with several WCPO tuna longline fisheries also targeting albacore that were recently certified. It is worth noting that the previous decline in catch rate was flagged to the Commission as a concern regarding economic viability and not a concern regarding the status of the stock.</p>

3.3 Client Action Plan

As there are no conditions there is no need for any client action plan.

3.4 Re-scoring Performance Indicators

For albacore and yellowfin tuna, P1 Performance indicators require rescoring under V2.0 of the FCR following advice from MSC (February 2019) in response to a joint CAB variation request. Scores for these species are harmonized and the rationales have been copied from recent reports that have used V2.0 and the latest information. As per the process requirements provided as part of MSC response to the CAB wide Mega variance, the revised scores and rationales have been added in a separate Appendix 5.4.

For swordfish, and to align with the other target species, we submitted a variation request, to re-scored Principle 1 using the wording of FCR v2.0 . However, as noted above, this request was declined. A new variance request to carry the conditions into re-assessment was approved by the MSC (Appendix 5.7). Full re-scoring for swordfish will now occur as part of the re-assessment of the fishery which has already commences.

Performance indicators 2.3.1 and 2.3.3. (all UoAs) and 3.2.2 for swordfish requires rescoring as condition 10 has been closed at this surveillance audit. The following is the scoring table for 3.2.2 that justifies the score of 80 to close out the condition. **Note: deleted text is shown with strike through and new text is shown in red.**

PI 2.3.1 ETP outcome (turtle and shortfin mako) – all UoCs

PI 2.3.1		The fishery meets national and international requirements for the protection of ETP species		
		The fishery does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to ETP species and does not hinder recovery of ETP species		
Scoring Issue		SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
a	Guidepost	Known effects of the fishery are likely to be within limits of national and international requirements for protection of ETP species.	The effects of the fishery are known and are highly likely to be within limits of national and international requirements for protection of ETP species.	There is a high degree of certainty that the effects of the fishery are within limits of national and international requirements for protection of ETP species.
	Met?	Y	Y	N
		<p><i>Seabirds:</i> small number of observed interactions between Walker Seafood vessels and seabirds were observed in 2018 (3 albatross and 3 shearwaters). The 2008 ERA Level 2 analysis originally listed 23 species of seabird as 'high-risk' of being impacted by fishing operations in the ETBF. Through further analysis, the risk classifications of these taxa were downgraded to 'medium' and 'low' risk based on management measures enacted through the Threat Abatement Plan (TAP) (Commonwealth of Australia, 2014) and warrant the downgrading of risk to seabirds. The latest ERA is 2019 confirms the low risk for all ETP species including seabirds. On this basis, there is a high degree of certainty that the effects of the fishery are within limits of national and international requirements. SG100 is therefore met.</p> <p><i>Turtles:</i> In 2018 a total of 23 turtle interactions with Walkers vessels were recorded resulting in 3 mortalities, compared to 27 interactions and 1 mortality in 2017. Turtle interactions remain high. AFMA implemented further management measures, included large circle hooks to be used on shallow sets (if less than 8 hooks per float are used) to significantly reduce longline catches and improve survival rates. Turtle bycatch as a result of the implementation of circle hooks in the fishery, evidence for other fisheries strongly suggests this measure will be effective in the ETBF (Watson et al, 2005; Gilman, 2006; Gilman et al., 2007). It also became compulsory to keep line-cutters and de-hookers to aid the safe release of live turtles, with a minimal amount of stress to the animal (AFMA, 2014b). In the ERA (2008) completed by AFMA, only the leatherback turtle remained as a 'high risk' species due to its low productivity and uncertain extent of its full geographical range. The latest ERA (2019) confirmed the low risks for turtles and therefore the SG80 is met but not SG100 due to the need for further mitigation actions.</p> <p><i>Marine mammals:</i> for cetaceans, depredation is the main issue. The ETBF Ecological Risk Assessment (AFMA, 2012a) also notes that it is a rare occurrence for animals to experience "immediate mortality due to these interactions". Since 2012, no interactions have been observed in the fishery. Line cutters and dehookers are mandatory management</p>		

PI 2.3.1		The fishery meets national and international requirements for the protection of ETP species	
		The fishery does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to ETP species and does not hinder recovery of ETP species	
		<p>measures, which ensure their safe release. Two species of toothed whale (<i>Pseudorca crassidens</i> and <i>Globicephala macrorhynchus</i>) remained high risk in the ERA – this was attributed to the species having high susceptibility despite observed interactions being zero with a negligible level of cryptic mortality (AFMA, 2008). For pinnipeds, only one seal interacted with the fishery in 2012 and it was released safely. On this basis, it is highly likely that the effects of the fishery are within limits of national and international requirements. SG80 is met but the high-risk ERA rankings of the toothed whales prevent SG100 from being awarded. Elasmobranchs: the ETP elasmobranchs of concern to this fishery are the short-finned mako (<i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i>), long-finned mako (<i>I. paucus</i>), porbeagle shark (<i>Lamna nasus</i>), silky shark (<i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i>), and oceanic whitetip shark (<i>C. longimanus</i>). The average shark catch rate in the ETBF 2007-2010 is 1.4 per 1000 hooks (AFMA, 2012a). This includes both ETP and non-ETP shark species.</p> <p>*for silky and oceanic whitetips, number of individuals retained were prior to their respective WCPFC CMMs being implemented at the national level. From the above table, it is apparent that the number of oceanic whitetips and silky sharks caught by the ETBF fishery is a very small portion of all those taken at the stock level. It is therefore unlikely to have a stock-level effect. SG80 is therefore met for those two stock-assessed species. AFMA (2008) ERA lists shortfin mako as 'medium risk'. Tag recapture suggests regional separation between those in the south Pacific and north (Sippel et al., 2011). It has a mid-range intrinsic rebound potential ($r_{2M} = 0.04-0.07$), meaning it is relatively fast growing early maturing (Smith et al., 1998). Given that shortfin mako's ERA rating and every mitigation measure is being used by the fishery – there is evidence from the Hawaiian tuna longline fishery that these measures are effective in reducing shark catch (Walsh et al.; 2009) - the team believe for shortfin mako and therefore for ETP sharks that the effects of the fishery are highly likely to be within limits of national and international requirements for protection of ETP species. SG80 is met.</p> <p>With regard to longfin makos and porbeagles, logbook report such low numbers in this fishery of these species that it is highly likely that the effects of the fishery are within national and international limits. Without quantitative stock information for shortfin and longfin mako and porbeagle in the south Pacific, SG100 cannot be awarded.</p>	
b	Guidepost	Known direct effects are unlikely to create unacceptable impacts to ETP species.	Direct effects are highly unlikely to create unacceptable impacts to ETP species.
	Met?	Y	N

<p>PI 2.3.1</p>	<p>The fishery meets national and international requirements for the protection of ETP species</p> <p>The fishery does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to ETP species and does not hinder recovery of ETP species</p>
	<p>Seabirds: Current catch rates for the fishery is well below trigger limits designated under the TAP (Commonwealth of Australia, 2014) for at least four years. The 23 species of seabirds analysed in the ERA (2008) evaluated them as medium risk. Observer coverage is potentially not representative of the fishery enough for rarely caught species such as seabirds. It was therefore concluded by the team that impacts are highly unlikely to create unacceptable impacts but not with a high degree of certainty. SG80 is therefore met but not SG100.</p> <p><i>Marine mammals:</i> Recorded interactions show live release of both cetaceans and pinnipeds and AFMA (2008) reports negligible cryptic mortality levels. Based on this, there is a high degree of confidence that there are no significant detrimental direct effects to marine mammals in this fishery. SG80 is met but the high-risk ERA rankings of the toothed whales prevent SG100 from being awarded. Turtles: Through the introduction of circle hooks in the fishery, anecdotal evidence from other pelagic longline fisheries suggests that turtle bycatch will be significantly reduced (Watson et al, 2005; Gilman et al., 2006; Gilman et al. 2007). Bravington et al. (2002) noted that for low-level interaction species such as turtles, 5.1% coverage of sets observed provided annual estimates of turtle bycatch precise to $\pm 70\%$ (a 95% confidence interval). SG60 is therefore met. SG80 cannot be awarded as no fishery dependent data were available to determine direct effects in this fishery.</p> <p>Elasmobranchs: The main elasmobranch species of concern is shortfin mako, there is no evidence of any trends in catch rates of shortfin mako over the last 15 years, and they are still reported (e.g. by recreational fishers) to be 'abundant'. On this basis and given that effort in the ETBF has declined by a factor of ~ 5 since 2003, the team considered that the known direct effects of the fishery are unlikely to be having an unacceptable impact on shortfin mako. Catch of other shark species is negligible. A comparison of mako shark catch reported in ETBF logbooks between 2009 and 2011 shows positive results with a decrease 37% and between 2010 and 2011, a further 13% decrease in mako and porbeagle sharks (from logbook data) after operators were encouraged to release live sharks (AFMA, 2012b). The prohibition of wire traces has also led to a 30% reduction in shark catch (AFMA, 2012a). The team concluded that for species such as silky and oceanic whitetips, the fishery's impact on the overall stock is not unacceptable.</p> <p>The ecological risk assessment (ERA) have been finalised and all species including protected species like turtles and makosharks assessed at high risk during the level 2 assessment were reduced to low risk following the PSA and residual risk assessment (Sporcic et al. 2019). Based on the revised risk score from the most recent ERA which is based on the information about the whole ETBF and data up to 2015, it can be concluded that the direct effects of this fishery (WSA) are highly unlikely to create unacceptable impacts to ETP species like turtles and mako sharks and therefore the SG 80 is met.</p> <p>The effects of fishery are not accurately quantified, there is no high degree of confidence in this statement. SG100 is therefore not met.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Justification</p>	

PI 2.3.1		The fishery meets national and international requirements for the protection of ETP species	
		The fishery does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to ETP species and does not hinder recovery of ETP species	
c	Guidepost		Indirect effects have been considered and are thought to be unlikely to create unacceptable impacts.
			There is a high degree of confidence that there are no significant detrimental indirect effects of the fishery on ETP species.
	Met?		Y
	Justification	Any interactions with the gear for marine mammals must be recorded, i.e. collisions, disturbance etc. With sharks, no evidence could be found to suggest shark mortality as a result of biting off hooks. Observer data indicate that on most occasions ETP species are released alive but with uncertainty in the probability of post-release survival. While survival rates of sharks in particular are difficult to estimate and while it is clear that some practices can be improved on (see PI 2.3.2), it is highly unlikely that this fishery creates unacceptable impacts on the species concerned. SG80 is therefore met. However, as previously stated, because the effects of fishery are not accurately quantified, there is no high degree of confidence in this statement. SG100 is therefore not met.	
References		AFMA, 2008; AFMA, 2012a; AFMA, 2014b; Australia Government, 2009; Bravington et al., 2002; Bruce et al., 2013; Commonwealth of Australia, 2014; Gilmann et al. 2006; Gilmann et al. 2007; Harley et al., 2013; Rice & Harley, 2012a; Rice & Harley, 2012b; Sippel et al., 2011; Smith et al., 1998; Walsh et al.; 2009; Watson et al., 2005; WCPFC, 2013b; WCPFC 2014b <i>Sporcic et al. (2019).</i>	
OVERALL PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SCORE:			80
CONDITION NUMBER (if relevant):			

PI 2.3.3 ETP information (shortfin mako) – all UoCs

PI 2.3.3		Relevant information is collected to support the management of fishery impacts on ETP species, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information for the development of the management strategy; • Information to assess the effectiveness of the management strategy; and • Information to determine the outcome status of ETP species. 		
Scoring Issue		SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
a	Guidepost	Information is sufficient to qualitatively estimate the fishery related mortality of ETP species.	Sufficient information is available to allow fishery related mortality and the impact of fishing to be quantitatively estimated for ETP species.	Information is sufficient to quantitatively estimate outcome status of ETP species with a high degree of certainty.
	Met?	Y	Y	N
	Justification	<p>AFMA regularly assesses the impacts of fishing on all parts of Australia’s marine environment as part of their strategy to pursue “Ecologically Sustainable Development” (AFMA, 2014a). This is achieved through ecological risk assessments (ERAs), which encompasses an ecosystem-based approach (discussed further in 3.5.7) and provides a quantitative analysis for species, which come out as high risk in ERA (Level 3). The ERAs are then used to prioritise research and data collection needs and subsequent necessary management actions for the fisheries. A study in 2002, (Bravington et al., 2002) inferred that coverage as low as 5.1% could provide a good representation of what is occurring in the fishery and provided very precise bycatch estimates for commonly caught species. It is also mandatory to record all interactions with ETP species in logbooks and their fate (released, retained, escaped etc.). For all ETP species concerned, information gathered through observer reports is sufficient to enable a quantitative evaluation of fishery related mortality. Lack of population estimates on some shark species such as mako and porbeagle sharks in the fishery does not allow for a high degree of certainty to be applied to the quantitative information presented in the logbook and observer records. As such, the team considered that SG80 is met, but not SG100.</p>		
b	Guidepost	Information is adequate to broadly understand the impact of the fishery on ETP species.	Information is sufficient to determine whether the fishery may be a threat to protection and recovery of the ETP species.	Accurate and verifiable information is available on the magnitude of all impacts, mortalities and injuries and the consequences for the status of ETP species.
	Met?	Y	Y	Y

PI 2.3.3	Relevant information is collected to support the management of fishery impacts on ETP species, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information for the development of the management strategy; • Information to assess the effectiveness of the management strategy; and • Information to determine the outcome status of ETP species. 			
	Justification	<p>As above, the information is adequate to broadly understand the impact of the fishery; SG60 is met. Interactions with ETP species are well recorded through logbook and observer reports.</p> <p>The ecological risk assessment (ERA) have been finalised and all species including protected species like shortfin mako sharks assessed at high risk during the level 2 assessment were reduced to low risk following the PSA and residual risk assessment (Sporcic et al. 2019).</p> <p>Based on the low risk ranking in can be concluded, that there is sufficient information to determine whether the fishery may be a threat to the protection and recovery of these species. SG80 is therefore met for all ETP species.</p>		
c	Guidepost	Information is adequate to support measures to manage the impacts on ETP species.	Information is sufficient to measure trends and support a full strategy to manage impacts on ETP species.	Information is adequate to support a comprehensive strategy to manage impacts, minimize mortality and injury of ETP species, and evaluate with a high degree of certainty whether a strategy is achieving its objectives.
	Met?	Y	Y	Y
	Justification	<p>For all ETP species concerned, information gathered for this fishery and regionally is adequate to support the relevant CMMs, NPOAs, ERAs and research. Bravington et al. (2002) indicates representative observer sampling for the fishery. Information is adequate to support a comprehensive strategy to manage impacts to minimise mortality (AFMA, 2014a). SG100 is therefore met.</p>		
References	AFMA, 2014a; Bravington et al.,2002 ; Sporcic et al. 2019			
OVERALL PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SCORE:				85
CONDITION NUMBER (if relevant):				

PI 3.2.2 Swordfish – Decision-making processes

PI 3.2.2		The fishery-specific management system includes effective decision-making processes that result in measures and strategies to achieve the objectives and has an appropriate approach to actual disputes in the fishery under assessment.		
Scoring Issue		SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
a	Guidepost	There are some decision-making processes in place that result in measures and strategies to achieve the fishery-specific objectives.	There are established decision-making processes that result in measures and strategies to achieve the fishery-specific objectives.	
	Met?	Y	Y	
	Justification	<p>There are established decision-making processes at the national level with the AFMA Commission receiving advice from TTMAC and TTRAG as well as industry and AFMA management when making decisions. The advice provided to the Commission and the Commission’s decisions must be in accordance with AFMA’s legislative objectives as defined in the FMA 1991 and reiterated in the ETBF Plan (AFMA, 2010a). The TTMAC and TTRAG advice is formed taking into account the decisions of the WCPFC, on issues such as TAC setting and other relevant CMMs, for example on mitigating impacts on sea turtles or sharks. Extensive consultation processes occur prior to decisions being made by the Commission to ensure transparency and feedback mechanisms for stakeholders (see PI 3.1.2).</p> <p>The decision-making processes at the international level are well established and documented in aiming to apply the precautionary approach and best available scientific information. Decision-making at the Commission is by consensus and if consensus cannot be reached, voting grounds for appealing decisions, conciliation and review are all part of the established decision-making process, as described in Article 20 of the WCPFC Convention. Extensive consultation processes occur prior to and during decision-making to ensure transparency and feedback mechanisms for stakeholders (see PI 3.1.2).</p> <p>On the basis of the above SG 80 is considered met.</p>		
b	Guidepost	Decision-making processes respond to serious issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a	Decision-making processes respond to serious and other important issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a	Decision-making processes respond to all issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and

	transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take some account of the wider implications of decisions.	transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions.	consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions.
Met?	Y	Y	N
Justification	<p>At the national level, AFMA responds proactively to serious and other important issues identified in relevant research, monitoring and evaluation. An example of this is through the ERA and ERM process for the ETBF. The ERA process analysed the risk of all organisms, habitats and ecological communities that occur in the area of the fishery to the effects of fishing. It identified nine species at high risk to the effects of fishing in the ETBF and these were managed in a timely and adaptive manner by AFMA through integration into the associated ERM strategy and bycatch and discarding workplan for the fishery (AFMA, 2012a).</p> <p>It's not certain that AFMA responds to all issues identified through relevant research, monitoring and evaluation, particularly in regard to ecosystem components other than target species due to financial and technical constraints. A recent review of Commonwealth fisheries management and policy highlighted that AFMA focused primarily on target species through the requirements of the Commonwealth HSP, even though overarching policy required equal consideration of all ecosystem components. This was caused to some extent by the large amount of time spent understanding and discussing technical stock assessment information at TTRAG to inform decision-making, leaving little time for contemplating other issues (Borthwick, 2012). AFMA is seemingly aware of this issue as it was noted by the team that the AFMA member at a recent TTRAG meeting highlighted the importance of regularly considering bycatch species as part of their agenda (AFMA, 2013a).</p> <p>At the international level, the WCPFC Commission 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, and again at the Fourteenth Regular Session of the WCPFC December 2017, 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</p>		

		<p>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. At the Fifteenth Regular Session of the WCPFC December 2018, an interim target reference point (TRP) for albacore was determined which demonstrates that the WCPFC's decision making processes are responsive (WCPFC 2019). In addition, the development of the regional harvest strategy for albacore is progressing in line with the 2017 workplan and HCRs should be adopted in 2022. Therefore, for the regional level decision-making processes, SG 80 is met.</p>		
c	Guidepost		Decision-making processes use the precautionary approach and are based on best available information.	
	Met?		Y	
	Justification	<p>As previously outlined in PI 3.1.3, Section 3 of the <i>FMA 1991</i> requires that AFMA makes decisions that are consistent with the principles of ecological sustainable development, including the precautionary principle, which is reiterated under Section 1.5 (b) of the ETBF Plan. The ETBF harvest strategy requires the collection of catch and effort data in order to determine RBCCs for target species using a series of decision rules. The harvest strategy uses the latest and best available scientific information to support decision-making. There is evidence that decision-making processes use the precautionary approach through the AFMA Commission setting TACCs for target species such as bigeye tuna (1,056 tonnes) lower than the recommended WCPFC limit of 2,000 tonnes as defined in CMM 2013-01 (Borthwick, 2012).</p> <p>At the international level the WCPFC Convention Article 5(c) requires the Commission to apply the precautionary approach in decision-making and Article 6 requires the application of the precautionary approach and use of a Scientific Committee to ensure that the Commission obtains the best scientific information available for its consideration and decision-making.</p> <p>On the basis of the above SG 80 is considered met.</p>		
d	Guidepost	Some information on fishery performance and management action is generally available on	Information on fishery performance and management action is available on request, and explanations are provided for any actions or lack of	Formal reporting to all interested stakeholders provides comprehensive information on fishery

	request to stakeholders.	action associated with findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring, evaluation and review activity.	performance and management actions and describes how the management system responded to findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring, evaluation and review activity.
Met?	Y	Y	N
Justification	<p>At the national level, AFMA has an effective consultation process with stakeholders, particularly through the TTMAC and TTRAG processes. This has previously been highlighted under PI 3.1.2. AFMA uploads copies of the TTMAC and TTRAG minutes onto their website, which describes how the management system responds to findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring, evaluation and review activity. Formal reports such as the bycatch and discarding workplan (AFMA, 2014c), ABARES fishery status report (AFMA, 2011a), the ERM strategy (AFMA, 2012a) and the TACC determinations for the ETBF are all publically available on the website and stakeholders are notified of their availability through newsletters such as AFMA update and direct mail to concession holders. Any formal management changes are advertised in Australian newspapers. AFMA has to submit an annual report on its operations to the relevant Minister for Parliament (which also goes to the peak industry body), that includes an evaluation of AFMA's functioning against performance indicators set out in its corporate and operational plan.</p> <p>It was previously highlighted by AFMA in its submission to the review on Commonwealth fisheries legislation and policy that they needed to expand their level of public engagement through increasing the level of publically available information on fisheries management (AFMA, 2012c). It was noted by the team (as at PI 3.1.2) that decisions of the AFMA Commission (which may or may not accept MAC and RAG advice) are summarised and published regularly through the newsletter AFMA Update but the deliberations and decision-making (i.e. minutes) of Commissioners and the reasoning for their decisions is not made public (Timmiss pers. comm. 2014).</p> <p>At the international level, the WCPFC maintains a publically accessible website where meeting minutes, reports and scientific reports from the Commission and subsidiary bodies are posted and are freely available for</p>		

		<p>download. These provide a high level of public access and transparency, showing how scientific information is used to inform management actions, which are then monitored for effectiveness and discussed at the Commission.</p> <p>At both the national and international level, information on fishery performance and management action is freely available that would provide a suitable explanation of management decision-making to stakeholders. The team considered that given there is no formal reporting of the AFMA Commission decision-making to stakeholders and AFMA itself has highlighted the need to increase publicly available information on fisheries management only SG 80 is considered met.</p>		
e	Guidepost	Although the management authority or fishery may be subject to continuing court challenges, it is not indicating a disrespect or defiance of the law by repeatedly violating the same law or regulation necessary for the sustainability for the fishery.	The management system or fishery is attempting to comply in a timely fashion with judicial decisions arising from any legal challenges.	The management system or fishery acts proactively to avoid legal disputes or rapidly implements judicial decisions arising from legal challenges.
	Met?	Y	Y	N
	Justification	<p>At the national level, there is no evidence to suggest that AFMA is disrespectful to, or defiant of Commonwealth law, or legally binding agreements reached at the international level. As outlined in PI 3.1.1, the Australian management system has well established mechanisms for administrative and legal appeals of management decision-making and has in place legal and other frameworks to respond to judicial decisions in a timely fashion (see e.g. FMA 1991). AFMA tries to minimise and avoid disputes by consulting extensively with industry through the MAC and RAG process, organising port visits and direct mail to concession holders. This allows parties to raise grievances and discuss alternative points of view, prior to AFMA making amendments to management measures and/or policy. There is some evidence stemming from recent legal disputes in the Commonwealth small pelagic fishery that AFMA could be more proactive in avoiding disputes by providing greater transparency through additional participative involvement of the public in fisheries management and a clearer and targeted advocacy/public education on the management approach in Australia fisheries (Borthwick, 2012).</p>		

	<p>At the international level WCPFC decision-making is based on consensus, so one could argue the WCPFC is to a degree proactive in avoiding legal disputes through the adoption of consensus-based decision-making.</p> <p>At both the national and international level, there are formal legal frameworks in place to deal with judicial decisions in response to legal action in a timely fashion. Since a recent review considered that AFMA could be more proactive to improve its avoidance of legal disputes through greater public engagement of fisheries management in Australia, the team concluded that only SG 80 is considered met.</p>
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OVERALL PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SCORE:	
	80

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5 Appendices

5.1 Evaluation processes and techniques

Site visits

The surveillance audit for 2019 comprised:

- An Audit Plan was provided to the client, management, and scientists before the meeting. The opening meeting included an exchange of information relevant to the surveillance audit.
- A meeting took place in Mooloolaba on the 29th & 30th of August with client representatives, scientists and managers of the fishery (Table 24). Other stakeholders were notified of the time and location of the meeting. They were invited to participate or submit comments in writing. No requests for meetings were received.
- Necessary documents were sent to the CAB by the client prior to and after the meeting.

Meeting Attendees	Role	Organisation
Heidi Walker	Managing Director	Walker Seafood Australia
Pavo Walker		Walker Seafood Australia
Phil Ravanello	Client representative	Tuna Australia
Don Bromhead	Fisheries manager	AFMA
Sabine Daume	Lead auditor, P2 expert	Bio-inspecta Pty Ltd
Alexander Morison	P1 expert	Contractor/ Bio-inspecta Pty Ltd Morison Aquatic Sciences
Sascha Brand-Gardner	P3 expert	Bio-inspecta Pty Ltd
Bill Holden		MSC

5.2 Stakeholder input

As required by FCP v2.1 Section 7.28, stakeholders were informed about the time, place and scope of the surveillance audit, the surveillance team as well as the surveillance level for this fishery. There were no requests from stakeholders for in-person interviews. No written submissions were received.

5.3 Harmonised fishery assessments

Principle 1: Harmonisation is required as per the CAB-wide Mega- Variance for RFMO highly migratory stocks listed in Appendix A of the variance. For this UoA this includes albacore and yellowfin tuna (see 5.4).

Principle 2: Not required.

Principle 3: The Fishery shares a management system with the Fisheries listed in Table 25 below and at the WCPFC level with RFMO highly migratory stocks listed in Appendix A of the CAB-wide Mega variance. Therefore, harmonisation is required with the Governance and Policy PIs (3.1.1-3.1.3) of those fisheries. The scores for Performance Indicators under 3.1 will be harmonised at the time of the re-assessment.

Table 25 – Overlapping fisheries		
Fishery name	Certification status and date	Performance Indicators to harmonise
1. South East Australia Small Pelagic Fishery	Certified since August 2019	3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3
2. Northern Prawn Fishery	Certified since November 2012	3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3
3. Australian Blue Grenadier Fishery	Certified since August 2015	3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3
4. Heard and McDonald Islands Toothfish and Icefish	Certified since March 2012	3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3
5. Macquarie Island Toothfish	Certified since May 2012	3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3
6. Walkers Seafood albacore, yellowfin and swordfish fishery	Certified since August 2015	3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3

Differences between scoring are listed below in Table 26 and are only apparent between this fishery (Walkers Seafood) and all other certified AFMA managed fisheries. The scoring of these PIs will be revisited at the re-assessment with the aim of full harmonisation.

Reasons provided in the initial assessment report why this fishery achieved a lower score for the PIs 3.1.1.-3.1.3.:

- 3.1.1. at the RFMO level dispute resolution mechanism had not been tested and therefore not proven to be effective and did not meet the SG100.

- 3.1.2 absence of formal reporting of AFMA commission decision making and at AFMA is not actively facilitate effective engagement of all interested parties.
- 3.1.3 RFMO level long term objectives are explicit but there are not fully implemented

Table 26 – Scoring differences						
Performance Indicators (PIs)	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.1.1	100	100	100	100	100	85
3.1.2	100	100	100	100	100	85
3.1.3	100	100	100	100	100	90

Appendix 5.4 Rescoring of Albacore and yellowfin tuna using FCR 2.0 following CAB wide Mega variance

PI 1.1.1 Albacore – Stock status

PI 1.1.1	The stock is at a level which maintains high productivity and has a low probability of recruitment overfishing		
Scoring Issue	SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
a	Stock status relative to recruitment impairment		
Guide post	It is likely that the stock is above the point where recruitment would be impaired (PRI).	It is highly likely that the stock is above the PRI.	There is a high degree of certainty that the stock is above the PRI.
Met?	Y	Y	Y
Justification	<p>Agreed harmonised score: 100</p> <p>The stock assessment was updated in 2018 (Tremblay-Boyer et al. 2018) but its findings have confirmed the conclusions of previous assessments: that there is no evidence of any impairment to recruitment for south Pacific albacore and no trend over time. All models indicated that South Pacific albacore was above the limit reference point (of 0.2SBF=0), with overall median depletion for 2016 (SB_{latest}/SBF=0) estimated at 0.52 (80 percentile range 0.37-0.69). An analysis using SS3, presented to SC12 confirmed the conclusions of the SPC assessment and estimated SB at ~55% of SB₀. Although confidence intervals that match the MSC definition of a high degree of certainty (the 95th percentile) were not available, the lower 90th percentile (0.37) is so far above the PRI that it is clear that this threshold is met. The stock continues to meet the requirements of the SG 60, SG 80 and SG 100 levels.</p>		
b	Stock status in relation to achievement of MSY		
Guide post		The stock is at or fluctuating around a level consistent with MSY.	There is a high degree of certainty that the stock has been fluctuating around a level consistent with MSY or has been above this level over recent years.
Met?		Y	Y
Justification	<p>Agreed harmonised score: 100</p> <p>The updated assessment (Tremblay-Boyer et al 2018) has provided estimates of spawning biomass relative to MSY for recent and latest years (Figure 1) and also as Kobe plots showing this over the history of the fishery (Figure 4). SB_{MSY} was estimated to be at 0.15 SBF=0 with the lower 10 percentile estimated to be</p>		

PI 1.1.1	The stock is at a level which maintains high productivity and has a low probability of recruitment overfishing		
Scoring Issue	SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
	1.96 times this level. Although confidence intervals that match the MSC definition of a high degree of certainty (the 95th percentile) were not available, the lower 90th percentile is so far above the PRI that it is clear that this threshold is met. These showed that there continues to be a high degree of certainty that the stock has always been above a level that is consistent with MSY. The stock continues to meet the requirements of the SG 80 and SG 100 levels.		
References	Tremblay-Boyer et al. 2018		
Stock Status relative to Reference Points			
	Type of reference point	Value of reference point	Current stock status relative to reference point
Reference point used in scoring stock relative to PRI (SIa)	Level of spawning biomass in the absence of fishing (SBF=0) LRP: 20% SBF=0	SBF=0 = 443,794 t 0.2X SBF=0 = 93,801 t	SBlatest/SBF=0 = 0.53 (> LRP) SBrecent/SBF=0 = 0.51 (> LRP)
Reference point used in scoring stock relative to MSY (SIb)	Level of spawning biomass in the absence of fishing (SBF=0) Interim TRP: 56% SBF=0 Level of spawning biomass relative to MSY (SBMSY)	SBF=0 = 443,794 t 0.56 XSBF=0=242,642 t SBMSY= 71,407 t	SBlatest/SBF=0 = 0.53 (< Interim TRP) SBrecent/SBF=0 = 0.51 (< Interim TRP) SBlatest/SBMSY = 4 (>> SBMSY) SBrecent/SBMSY = 3.88 (>> SBMSY)
OVERALL PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SCORE:			Score 100
CONDITION NUMBER (if relevant): Click here to enter text.			

PI 1.2.1 Albacore – Harvest strategy

PI 1.2.1	There is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place		
Scoring Issue	SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
a	Harvest strategy design		
Guide post	The harvest strategy is expected to achieve stock management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG 80.	The harvest strategy is responsive to the state of the stock and the elements of the harvest strategy work together towards achieving stock management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG 80.	The harvest strategy is responsive to the state of the stock and is designed to achieve stock management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG 80.
Met?	Y	N	N
Justification	<p>Agreed harmonized score: 60</p> <p>MSC defines a harvest strategy as 'the combination of monitoring, stock assessment, harvest control rules and management actions, which may include an MP or an MP (implicit) and be tested by MSE' (MSC – MSCV Vocabulary v1.1).</p> <p>WCPFC adopted a process for developing a formal harvest strategy for each of its key stocks, including South Pacific albacore, in CMM 2014-06, which has an associated workplan.</p> <p>The harvest strategy for South Pacific albacore has several contributing components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data collection on the stock and fishery (described in Section 3.3.2 and evaluated under PI 1.2.3 below) ▪ Stock assessment process (described in Section 3.3.2 and evaluated under PI 1.2.4 below) ▪ A limit reference point (explicit) and an interim target reference point (see PI 1.1.1 above) <p>Measures to control the fishery at WCPFC, PNA and Australian national levels that are in place (such as CMM 2018-01) or 'available' are described in Section 3.3.2 and these are evaluated below under PI 1.2.2.</p> <p>Implementation of CMM 2015-02 is monitored via data gathering and Part 2 reports to the Commission.</p> <p>These components of a harvest strategy as applied to south Pacific albacore are expected to achieve stock conservation management objectives meeting the requirements of the SG 60 level.</p>		

PI 1.2.1	There is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place			
		<p>There are, however, no formal harvest control rules. This absence of agreed harvest control rules within WCPFC for any other tuna species, and the record of the Commission failing to reduce fishing mortality on bigeye tuna when it was thought to have been subject to overfishing, reduces the level of confidence that the harvest strategy would be responsive to the state of the stock or that the elements will work together when required to do so to achieve the management objectives.</p> <p>It is also not clear that coherent management actions are implemented throughout the range of the stock, particularly in Indonesia and the Philippines. Overall this prevents the conclusion that the strategy is designed to achieve stock management objectives.</p> <p>The harvest strategy for south Pacific albacore is therefore considered to meet the SG 60 level of this scoring issue but not the SG 80 or SG 100 levels.</p>		
b	Harvest strategy evaluation			
Guide post	The harvest strategy is likely to work based on prior experience or plausible argument.	The harvest strategy may not have been fully tested but evidence exists that it is achieving its objectives.	The performance of the harvest strategy has been fully evaluated and evidence exists to show that it is achieving its objectives including being clearly able to maintain stocks at target levels.	
Met?	Y	Y	N	
Justification	<p>Agreed harmonized score 80</p> <p>As described under PI 1.1.1 above, albacore remain classified as not overfished nor subject to overfishing. The stock is about half of unfished levels and only slightly below the newly agreed TRP which is evidence that the strategy is achieving its objectives. The harvest strategy, however, remains incompletely specified and has not fully been fully evaluated. This meets the requirements of the SG 60 and SG 80 levels but not of the SG 100 level.</p>			
c	Harvest strategy monitoring			
Guide post	Monitoring is in place that is expected to determine whether the harvest strategy is working.			

PI 1.2.1	There is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place		
	Met?	Y	
	Justification	Agreed harmonized score 60 Monitoring in place for the longline fishery for albacore tuna include mandatory logbooks with records of catch and effort for each fishing operation, a VMS, tagging data, biological studies and port inspections. There is, however, only very limited observer coverage of fishing operations so there are relatively few data on the discarded component of the catch, but few albacore would be expected to be discarded (Tremblay-Boyer et al. 2018). The data that are collected support a sophisticated stock assessment process that provides robust estimates of stock status that is sufficient to determine whether the harvest strategy is working. This meets the requirements of the SG 60 level.	
d	Harvest strategy review		
	Guide post		The harvest strategy is periodically reviewed and improved as necessary.
	Met?		Not scored
	Justification	Not scored because not all SG 80 requirements are met	
e	Shark finning		
	Guide post	It is likely that shark finning is not taking place.	It is highly likely that shark finning is not taking place. There is a high degree of certainty that shark finning is not taking place.
	Met?	Not relevant	Not relevant
	Justification	Sharks are not a target species (or even a main retained species) of this fishery. This PI is therefore not relevant.	
f	Review of alternative measures		
	Guide post	There has been a review of the potential effectiveness and practicality of alternative measures to minimise UoA-related mortality of unwanted catch of the target stock.	There is a regular review of the potential effectiveness and practicality of alternative measures to minimise UoA-related mortality of unwanted catch of the target stock and they are There is a biannual review of the potential effectiveness and practicality of alternative measures to minimise UoA-related mortality of unwanted catch of the target stock, and they are

PI 1.2.1	There is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place			
			implemented as appropriate.	implemented, as appropriate.
Met?	Not relevant		Not relevant	Not relevant
Justification	<p>Reported discards of albacore for the UoA represented <4% of the retained catch for 2014 - 2016. Discarded catches of albacore across the whole fleet are also likely to be minor and are ignored in the stock assessment (Tremblay-Boyer et al. 2018). The rules in place indicate that this scoring issue is not relevant to the UoA.</p>			
References	Tremblay-Boyer et al. 2018			
OVERALL PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SCORE:				Score 70
<p>CONDITION NUMBER: 2</p> <p>By the fourth surveillance audit, demonstrate that the harvest strategy for albacore tuna 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.</p> <p>Under advice from MSC (February 2019) in response to a joint CAB variation request, the deadline for closing harvest strategy conditions for all WCPFC tuna fisheries is 2021.</p>				

PI 1.2.2 Albacore – Harvest control rules and tools

PI 1.2.2	There are well defined and effective harvest control rules (HCRs) in place		
Scoring Issue	SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
a	HCRs design and application		
Guide post	Generally understood HCRs are in place or available that are expected to reduce the exploitation rate as the point of recruitment impairment (PRI) is approached.	Well defined HCRs are in place that ensure that the exploitation rate is reduced as the PRI is approached, are expected to keep the stock fluctuating around a target level consistent with (or above) MSY, or for key LTL species a level consistent with ecosystem needs.	The HCRs are expected to keep the stock fluctuating at or above a target level consistent with MSY, or another more appropriate level taking into account the ecological role of the stock, most of the time.
Met?	Y	N	
Justification	<p>Agreed harmonized score: 60</p> <p>A generally understood HCR is taken here to mean one that is not well defined, as otherwise there is no distinction between requirements at the SG 60 and SG 80 levels. This PI is also assessed taking account the guidance for scoring ‘available’ HCRs at SG 60 containing in SA2.5.2, SA2.5.3 and SA2.5.5.</p> <p>The first option for scoring ‘available’ HCRs is intended to cover the situation where even generally understood HCRs are not yet clearly in place for a fishery. For WCPFC fisheries, including albacore tuna, there are measures for controlling fishing effort through closures, limits on fishing capacity and, for vessels involved, through limits on fishing days under the LL VDS. There are expectations about responses and examples of how actions have been implemented for species such as bigeye tuna, but there is no clear linkage or explicit process that links changes in stock status to emergent associated management actions. Therefore we do not consider that there are even generally understood HCRs that are also “in place”; and the options for ‘available’ HCRs are evaluated below.</p> <p>MSC CR v2.0 lays out two conditions for acceptance of HCR being available sufficient to justify scoring at the SG60 level.</p> <p>First, CR v2.0 SA2.5.2a provides for HCR being recognized as available “...Stock biomass has not previously been reduced below the MSY level or has been maintained at that level for a recent period of time that is at least longer than 2 generation times of</p>		

PI 1.2.2	There are well defined and effective harvest control rules (HCRs) in place
	<p>the species, and is not predicted to be reduced below BMSY within the next 5 years”.</p> <p>As noted at PI 1.1.1(c), The MULTIFAN-CL assessment provides probabilistic estimates of parameters of interest and has been extensively explored through sensitivity tests (Tremblay-Boyer et al. 2018). The stock assessment estimates spawning stock biomass to be well above SBMSY (see PI 1.1.1 above). The stock is estimated never to have reduced to SBMSY and has hence been above SBMSY in all years. Stock projections reported in WCPFC-SC (2017) (Figure 5) indicated that, under 2015 effort levels, the stock was predicted to decline but only gradually and would not fall below BMSY levels within 5 years. The CR v2.0 SA2.5.2a condition is therefore met.</p> <p>Second, CR v2.0 SA2.5.3 requires that “Teams shall recognise ‘available’ HCRs as ‘expected to reduce the exploitation rate as the point of recruitment impairment is approached’ only in cases where,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. HCRs are effectively used in some other UoAs, that are under the control of the same management body and of a similar size and scale as the UoA; or b. An agreement or framework in place that requires the management body (in this case WCPFC) to adopt HCRs before the stock declines below Bmsy”. <p>There are CMMs that are in place for a range of tuna species within the WCPFC (including albacore) that contain a range of management measures that are designed to constrain fishing mortality to acceptable levels. Nevertheless, none are considered to offer an example of effectiveness in reducing exploitation as the PRI is approached. Option a. is therefore not considered to be met.</p> <p>Option b. examines plans for the introduction of an effective HCR. WCPFC CMM 2014-06 sets out definitions of harvest strategies to be developed and implemented. The definitions include target and limit reference points and decision rules or (“harvest control rules”), with a clear intention that harvest control rules, tested using simulation approaches, will be part of the implemented harvest strategies. The Commission agreed to adopt a work plan at the 2015 Commission meeting, with later revisions in subsequent years, with application to skipjack, bigeye, yellowfin, Pacific Bluefin, and South and North Pacific albacore tunas. In fact, work towards establishing reference points and harvest control rules has been initiated through the Management Objectives Workshop (MOW) process (Pilling et al. 2015).</p> <p>We note that there is no specific requirement in CMM 2014-06 linking implementation of the HCRs to stock projections.</p>

PI 1.2.2	There are well defined and effective harvest control rules (HCRs) in place		
	<p>Nevertheless, given that albacore tuna are projected to remain well above BMSY for many years and that the process CMM 2014-06 describes has already been initiated – considered in place - we have considered that the requirements of Option b. SA2.5.3b are met. The requirements of the SG 60 level are therefore considered to be met.</p> <p>In summary, generally understood HCRs are not in place. Albacore is a stock that has not previously been reduced below MSY, which has always been maintained well above the TRP and has an improbably low likelihood of becoming overfished or to experience overfishing. Therefore this stock meets the requirements to be considered against "availability" requirements. In the WCPF, HCRs are not yet effectively used in any other WCPFC-managed UoAs. However, there is a framework that is in place, expected to develop further that will require the WCPFC to take action on HCRs before there is any detectable, projected risk that albacore stock status could decline below BMSY.</p>		
b	HCRs robustness to uncertainty		
Guide post		The HCRs are likely to be robust to the main uncertainties.	The HCRs take account of a wide range of uncertainties including the ecological role of the stock, and there is evidence that the HCRs are robust to the main uncertainties.
Met?		N	Not scored
Justification	<p>Agreed harmonized score: SG 80 is not met.</p> <p>The 'available' harvest control rules are not sufficiently articulated to allow an evaluation of the extent to which they are robust to the main uncertainties. When well-defined HCRs are developed they can be evaluated as to whether this is the case.</p> <p>The SG80 requirements are not considered to be met.</p>		
c	HCRs evaluation		
Guide post	There is some evidence that tools used or available to implement HCRs are appropriate and effective in controlling exploitation.	Available evidence indicates that the tools in use are appropriate and effective in achieving the exploitation levels required under the HCRs.	Evidence clearly shows that the tools in use are effective in achieving the exploitation levels required under the HCRs.

PI 1.2.2	There are well defined and effective harvest control rules (HCRs) in place			
	Met?	Y	N	
	Justification	<p>Agreed harmonized score: 60</p> <p>As noted under scoring issue a above, following SA2.5.3b, we have recognised 'available' HCRs as 'expected to reduce the exploitation rate as the point of recruitment impairment is approached'.</p> <p>SA2.5.5b, which requires that teams shall include in their rationale a description of the formal agreement or legal framework that the management body has defined, and the indicators and trigger levels that will require the development of HCRs. The agreement is contained in CMM 2014-06 whose objective is "To agree that the Commission shall develop and implement a harvest strategy approach for each of the key fisheries or stocks under the purview of the Commission according to the process set out in this conservation and management measure."</p> <p>This CMM contains general principles (including a description of a harvest strategy) and principles and elements of the proposed harvest strategies (which are consistent with the MSC definitions). The definitions include target and limit reference points and decision rules (or "harvest control rules"), with a clear intention that harvest control rules, tested using simulation approaches, will be part of the implemented harvest strategies. The specified timelines are that:</p> <p>"The Commission shall agree a workplan and indicative timeframes to adopt or refine harvest strategies for skipjack, bigeye, yellowfin, South Pacific albacore, Pacific bluefin and northern albacore tuna by no later than the twelfth meeting of the Commission in 2015. This workplan will be subject to review in 2017."</p> <p>Work towards establishing reference points and harvest control rules was initiated before this CMM was passed through the Management Objectives Workshop process and requires no additional trigger for their development.</p> <p>The requirements of SA2.5.5b are therefore considered to be met.</p> <p>Furthermore, SA2.5.6 requires that, in scoring issue (c) for "evidence" teams shall include consideration of the current levels of exploitation in the UoA, such as measured by the fishing mortality rate or harvest rate, where available.</p> <p>The most recent stock assessment for albacore tuna (Tremblay-Boyer et al. 2018) and stock status projections (Figure 3) provide some evidence that the tools in use are effective in controlling exploitation of albacore tuna and achieving the exploitation levels</p>		

PI 1.2.2	There are well defined and effective harvest control rules (HCRs) in place		
	<p>that are required. As noted above, these indicate that fishing mortality has always been below the FMSY level, that the stock has not declined below BMSY and that it is exceptionally unlikely (<1%) that fishing mortality will increase above the FMSY level by 2032. The current levels of exploitation are therefore acceptable and the requirements of SA2.5.6 are met. This meets the requirements of the SG 60 level.</p> <p>The HCRs are only regarded as being 'available' in scoring issue (a) and not 'in place', so we have considered that it is not possible to score more than 60 for issue (c) since the SG 80 refers to the tools 'in use' in the fishery and not the tools 'in use or available'.</p> <p>The requirements of the SG 80 level are therefore not clearly met</p>		
References	Tremblay-Boyer et al. 2018		
OVERALL PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SCORE:			Score 60
CONDITION NUMBER: 3			
<p>SI a) By the fourth surveillance audit, demonstrate that well defined HCRs are in place for albacore tuna that ensure that the exploitation rate is reduced as the PRI is approached, are expected to keep the stock fluctuating around a target level consistent with (or above) MSY.</p> <p>SI b) By the fourth surveillance audit, provide evidence that the selection of the harvest control rules for albacore tuna are robust to the main uncertainties.</p> <p>SI c) By the fourth surveillance audit, provide evidence that indicates that the tools in use for albacore tuna are appropriate and effective in achieving the exploitation levels required under the harvest control rules.</p> <p>Under advice from MSC (February 2019) in response to a joint CAB variation request, the deadline for closing harvest strategy conditions for all WCPFC tuna fisheries is 2021.</p>			

PI 1.2.3 Albacore – Information and monitoring

PI 1.2.3	Relevant information is collected to support the harvest strategy		
Scoring Issue	SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
a	Range of information		
Guide post	Some relevant information related to stock structure, stock productivity and fleet	Sufficient relevant information related to stock structure, stock productivity, fleet composition	A comprehensive range of information (on stock structure, stock productivity, fleet composition,

PI 1.2.3		Relevant information is collected to support the harvest strategy		
		composition is available to support the harvest strategy.	and other data is available to support the harvest strategy.	stock abundance, UoA removals and other information such as environmental information), including some that may not be directly related to the current harvest strategy, is available.
	Met?	Y	Y	N
	Justification	<p>Agreed harmonized score: 80</p> <p>The south Pacific albacore stock has been monitored through the assessment work of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC).</p> <p>The range of data available for albacore is described in the background section (Section 3.3.2) and includes information on stock structure, stock productivity, fleet composition, and other data such as the results of tagging.</p> <p>There remain some important data gaps, however, as identified by Williams (2018 – and previous versions of this annual report). For UoA vessels, a key data gap comes from the low level of observer coverage, which limits the information available on the non-retained component of the catch.</p> <p>Overall, given the size and complexity of the fishery, the range and comprehensiveness of the data available is impressive and improving all the time. Nonetheless, these data gaps do constrain stock assessments – as does bias and lack of precision in some of the data sets, particularly historical data. Perhaps more importantly, the albacore stock assessment continues to rely on commercial CPUE as an index of stock abundance, and although these data are carefully analysed and standardised as far as possible, there are no fishery-independent data sets with which they can be compared, while issues such as spatial and temporal changes in catchability remain problematic. On this basis, the team concluded that SG 80 is met, but SG 100 is not met.</p>		
b	Monitoring			
	Guide post	Stock abundance and UoA removals are monitored and at least one indicator is available and monitored with sufficient frequency	Stock abundance and UoA removals are regularly monitored at a level of accuracy and coverage consistent with the harvest control rule, and one	All information required by the harvest control rule is monitored with high frequency and a high degree of certainty, and there is a good

PI 1.2.3		Relevant information is collected to support the harvest strategy		
		to support the harvest control rule.	or more indicators are available and monitored with sufficient frequency to support the harvest control rule.	understanding of inherent uncertainties in the information [data] and the robustness of assessment and management to this uncertainty.
	Met?	Y	Y	N
	Justification	<p>Agreed harmonized score: 80</p> <p>Standardized abundance indices are regularly monitored by the ALBWG. The ALBWG aggregated catch and effort data into monthly 10x10 strata for the surface fishery, and 50x50 strata for the longline for standardization using generalized linear models.</p> <p>Internationally systems are in place for recording catch and effort for all fishing entities fishing on north Pacific albacore. CCMs are required to annually report the following data for fishery monitoring: total annual catch (round weight by species) total annual effort (active vessels by fishery); catch-effort (summary of logbook data); biological data, (size composition, length or weight frequencies, sex information).</p> <p>Removals of retained species are monitored annually through the logbooks.</p> <p>There are several information related uncertainties with the assessment. Tremblay-Boyer et al. (2018) state that the main underlying source of difficulty concerns the basic structure of the fishery: exploitation is focused on the oldest segment of the population that are growing slowly or have have essentially ceased growing. This means that there is relatively little information in the model to inform on recruitment variability and the information in the data to support estimation of absolute population size is weak. There is also some conflict between some of the data sources available for the assessment including conflicts between the length-frequency data and CPUE series, and between troll length frequency samples and the age-length data. Growth was also a major uncertainty with an unresolved inconsistency in the growth rates indicated by the VB curve fitted to the age-at-length data and presumed annual modes in the size composition data for some gears.</p> <p>Therefore the fishery does not meet the SG100.</p>		
c	Comprehensiveness of information			
	Guide post		There is good information on all other fishery	

PI 1.2.3	Relevant information is collected to support the harvest strategy		
			removals from the stock.
	Met?		Y
	Justification	<p>Agreed harmonized score: 80</p> <p>All fishery removals are considered in the south Pacific albacore stock assessment. There are some data gaps (notably Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia and some smaller coastal states). SPC provides support for developing data collection systems in these areas in order to address these shortcomings. Overall there is adequate information on all other fishery removals from the stock.</p>	
References			
OVERALL PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SCORE:			Score 80
CONDITION NUMBER (if relevant):			

PI 1.2.4 Albacore – Assessment of stock status

PI 1.2.4	There is an adequate assessment of the stock status		
Scoring Issue	SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
a	Appropriateness of assessment to stock under consideration		
Guide post		The assessment is appropriate for the stock and for the harvest control rule.	The assessment takes into account the major features relevant to the biology of the species and the nature of the UoA.
Met?		Y	N
Justification	<p>Agreed harmonized score: 80</p> <p>The assessment for south Pacific albacore tuna is described in the background (Section 3.3.2). Like previous assessments, it is an integrated, model-based assessment that is undertaken by an experienced and internationally recognised stock assessment program at the SPC. It is appropriate for the stock.</p> <p>However, one 'major feature' relevant to the biology of the species and the nature of the UoA that is not taken into account in the present stock assessment is the fishery removals from this stock in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO). While these are small relative to the catches in the WCPO, the IATTC has indicated that the assessment would benefit from their inclusion. Therefore, the SG100 is not met and we have raised a recommendation associated with this concern. The IATTC is planning to do a collaborative benchmark assessment with SPC in 2022 wherein the EPO catches will be included (IATTC 2018).</p> <p>The requirements of the SG80 are met but not the SG100 on the basis of not including the EPO catches as an input to the stock assessment. This is slightly out of agreement with the outcome of the MSC harmonization meeting (Hong Kong 21-22 April 2016), however the difference is not material.</p>		
b	Assessment approach		
Guide post	The assessment estimates stock status relative to generic reference points appropriate to the species category.	The assessment estimates stock status relative to reference points that are appropriate to the stock and can be estimated.	
Met?	Y	Y	
Justification	<p>Agreed harmonized score: 80</p> <p>As described in the background (Section 3.3.2) the assessment estimates stock status of south Pacific albacore stock status</p>		

PI 1.2.4	There is an adequate assessment of the stock status			
	relative to a range of reference points (Table 1). This meets the requirements of the SG 80 level.			
c	Uncertainty in the assessment			
	Guide post	The assessment identifies major sources of uncertainty.	The assessment takes uncertainty into account.	The assessment takes into account uncertainty and is evaluating stock status relative to reference points in a probabilistic way.
	Met?	Y	Y	Y
	Justification	<p>Agreed harmonized score: 100</p> <p>As described in the background (Section 3.3.2) the assessment of albacore tuna has provided explicit commentary on the major sources of uncertainty, has assessed the sensitivity of the assessment to these uncertainties, and has evaluated current and future stock status relative to these in a probabilistic way. This meets the requirements of the SG 60, SG 80 and SG 100 levels of this scoring issue</p>		
D	Evaluation of assessment			
	Guide post			The assessment has been tested and shown to be robust. Alternative hypotheses and assessment approaches have been rigorously explored.
	Met?			Y
	Justification	<p>Agreed harmonized score: 100</p> <p>There is an ongoing program of review of assessment assumptions and approaches by the staff in the SPC-OFP. Alternative hypotheses are continually being explored (within funding and time constraints) and assessments are updated and modified as required.</p> <p>Model structure has been updated to reflect the availability of new data or new interpretations of existing data and a suite of sensitivity analyses have been undertaken to explore the impact of options such as changing assumptions for fixed parameters or different treatments of the data. Furthermore, retrospective analyses have been undertaken to explore any systematic biases in the model and the results used to adjust the reference case</p>		

PI 1.2.4	There is an adequate assessment of the stock status		
	<p>Tremblay-Boyer et al. (2018) conducted extensive sensitivity analyses to evaluate alternative assumptions on the assessment results. Several hundred model runs were undertaken. Information was presented on the bounds of plausible model sensitivity to biological assumptions (natural mortality, steepness) and sensitivity to data inputs (alternative CPUE indices, length data weighting).</p> <p>The assessment has been tested using a systematic exploration of the interactions among different sets of assumptions. This confirms that alternative hypothesis and assessment approaches have been rigorously explored.</p>		
e	Peer review of assessment		
	Guide post	The assessment of stock status is subject to peer review.	The assessment has been internally and externally peer reviewed.
	Met?	Y	N
	Justification	<p>Agreed harmonized score: 80</p> <p>Internal reviews are undertaken by SPC and there has been an external review of the assessment of Bigeye tuna (Ianelli et al. 2012) which provided recommendations that were also applicable to other similar assessments such as for albacore tuna. Many of those recommendations have been addressed with the latest yellowfin assessment.</p> <p>There have also been external reviews commissioned of different aspects of the data analyses that feed into the assessments. This is also a level of review provided by submission to the scientific committee of the WCPFC, at which experienced scientific staff from several countries attend, but we consider this to be internal to WCPFC processes.</p> <p>This meets the SG 80 requirements but not those of the SG 100 level.</p>	
References			
OVERALL PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SCORE:			Score
CONDITION NUMBER (if relevant):			85

Yellowfin tuna

PI 1.1.1 Yellowfin Tuna – Stock status

PI 1.1.1	The stock is at a level which maintains high productivity and has a low probability of recruitment overfishing		
Scoring Issue	SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
a	Stock status relative to recruitment impairment		
Guide post	It is likely that the stock is above the point where recruitment would be impaired (PRI).	It is highly likely that the stock is above the PRI.	There is a high degree of certainty that the stock is above the PRI.
Met?	Y	Y	Y
Justification	<p>The diagnostic case from the 2017 stock assessment (Tremblayer-Boyer et al. 2017) estimated that the spawning biomass was at 40% of unfished levels in 2015 and was well above the WCPFC limit reference point, 20%SBF=0.5. Recruitment was also estimated to have been stable since the mid-1960s (Error! Reference source not found.).</p> <p>In the analysis of model structural uncertainty in the assessment (Tremblayer-Boyer et al. 2017), using a crosswise grid of 72 alternative model formulations, only two runs (<5%) fell below the limit reference point.</p> <p>Previous modelling had also indicated that a biomass of this level for Yellowfin Tuna had a greater than 95% likelihood of being above the limit reference point of 20% of unfished levels (SPC-OFP 2014). A stock above this limit reference point is considered to be above the point where recruitment would be impaired.</p> <p>Furthermore, Pilling et al. (2014) used stochastic projections under status quo conditions to estimate that it was exceptionally unlikely (<1%) that the yellowfin stock would fall below the limit reference point level or that fishing mortality would increase above the FMSY level by 2032, and dependent upon the future recruitment assumption, it was exceptionally unlikely (<1%; long-term recruitment deviate assumption) or very unlikely (<10%; recent recruitment assumption) to fall below BMSY.</p> <p>There is, therefore, a high degree of certainty that the stock is above the point where recruitment would be impaired, which meets the requirements of scoring issue a at the SG 60, SG 80 and SG 100 levels.</p>		
b	Stock status in relation to achievement of MSY		
Guide post		The stock is at or fluctuating around a level consistent with MSY.	There is a high degree of certainty that the stock has been fluctuating around a level consistent with MSY or has been above

PI 1.1.1	The stock is at a level which maintains high productivity and has a low probability of recruitment overfishing		
Scoring Issue	SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
			this level over recent years.
Met?		Y	N
Justification	<p>There is no explicit target reference point for Yellowfin Tuna but there is considered to be an implicit target of BMSY (supported by CMM 2016-01).</p> <p>The grid medians for both SBrecent/SBMSY and SBlatest/SBMSY in the most recent assessment were 1.42 (Tremblayer-Boyer et al. 2017) which is well above this (default) target reference point and, given the estimated stock trajectory, would have done so over the whole period modelled.</p> <p>This meets the requirements of scoring issue b at the SG 80 level. Following SA2.2.1.3 a high degree of certainty means greater than or equal to the 95th percentile of a distribution. This assessment (unlike the previous one) does not provide 95% confidence intervals for the ratios SBrecent/SBMSY and SBlatest/SBMSY but across the grid of uncertainties only two runs (<5%) fell below the chance of the stock being below BMSY over recent years. This finding might suggest that that Yellowfin Tuna now meets the requirements of scoring issue b at the SG 100 level.</p> <p>Nevertheless, previous assessment scores for Yellowfin Tuna, based on the 2014 stock assessment (Rice et al. 2014), were that the SG 100 level was not met because the lower 95% confidence intervals for B/BMSY was less than 1 and the upper 95% confidence interval for F/FMSY was greater than 1. The 2017 assessment was slightly more optimistic but as the stock has recently been estimated to have been below that threshold the SG 100 requirement that stock be above MSY over recent years is still not met.</p>		
References	Pilling et al. 2014, Rice et al. 2014, Tremblayer-Boyer et al. 2017		
Stock Status relative to Reference Points			
	Type of reference point	Value of reference point	Current stock status relative to reference point
Reference point used in scoring stock relative to PRI (SIa)	Level of spawning biomass in the absence of fishing (SBF=0) LRP: 20% SBF=0	SBF=0 = 2,592,702 t 0.2X SBF=0 = 518,540 t	SBlatest/SBF=0 = 0.46 > LRP SBrecent/SBF=0 = 0.42 > LRP
Reference point used in scoring	Level of spawning biomass relative to MSY (SBMSY)	SBMSY=750,100 t	SBlatest/SBMSY = 1.58 SBrecent/SBMSY = 1.46

PI 1.1.1	The stock is at a level which maintains high productivity and has a low probability of recruitment overfishing		
Scoring Issue	SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
stock relative to MSY (SIb)			
OVERALL PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SCORE:			Score
CONDITION NUMBER (if relevant):			90

PI 1.2.1 Yellowfin Tuna – Harvest strategy

PI 1.2.1	There is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place		
Scoring Issue	SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
a	Harvest strategy design		
Guide post	The harvest strategy is expected to achieve stock management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG 80.	The harvest strategy is responsive to the state of the stock and the elements of the harvest strategy work together towards achieving stock management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG 80.	The harvest strategy is responsive to the state of the stock and is designed to achieve stock management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG 80.
Met?	Y	N	Not scored
Justification	<p>Agreed harmonized score: 60</p> <p>MSC defines a harvest strategy as 'the combination of monitoring, stock assessment, harvest control rules and management actions, which may include an MP or an MP (implicit) and be tested by MSE' (MSC – MSCV Vocabulary v1.1).</p> <p>The harvest strategy for WCPO yellowfin has several contributing components, with WCPFC, PNA and national and archipelagic waters management actions being supported by a robust stock assessment and extensive monitoring frameworks. There are, however, no formal harvest control rules. This conclusion is consistent with the results of extensive harmonisation discussions among CABs as described in detail in Section 4.1.</p> <p>The range of measures applied to the sectors that fish for Yellowfin Tuna are expected to achieve stock management objectives meeting the requirements of the SG 60 level.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the general stock decline for yellowfin (albeit with a recent increase in stock size), the absence of agreed harvest control rules within WCPFC or PNA for any other tuna species, and the record of the Commission failing to reduce fishing mortality on bigeye tuna when it was thought to have been subject to overfishing, reduces the level of confidence that the harvest strategy would be responsive to the state of the stock or that the elements will work together when required to do so to achieve the management objectives.</p> <p>It is also not clear that coherent management actions are applied throughout the range of the stock, particularly in Indonesia and the Philippines.</p> <p>Overall this prevents the conclusion that the strategy is designed to achieve stock management objectives.</p>		

PI 1.2.1	There is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place			
	Yellowfin Tuna is therefore considered to meet the SG 60 level of this scoring issue but not the SG 80 or SG 100 levels.			
b	Harvest strategy evaluation			
	Guide post	The harvest strategy is likely to work based on prior experience or plausible argument.	The harvest strategy may not have been fully tested but evidence exists that it is achieving its objectives.	The performance of the harvest strategy has been fully evaluated and evidence exists to show that it is achieving its objectives including being clearly able to maintain stocks at target levels.
	Met?	Y	Y	Not scored
	Justification	<p>Yellowfin Tuna have been estimated to be above default target levels and the status quo stock projections undertaken indicate that "it was exceptionally unlikely (<1%) that the yellowfin stock would fall below the limit reference point level or that fishing mortality would increase above the FMSY level by 2032" (Pilling et al. 2014a).</p> <p>Furthermore, the most recent stock assessment (Tremblayer-Boyer et al. 2017) indicates that fishing mortality for Yellowfin Tuna has always been below the FMSY level and that the stock has not declined below the default target of BMSY. This constitutes good evidence that the harvest strategy is meeting its objectives.</p> <p>Therefore, Yellowfin Tuna is considered to meet both the SG 60 and SG 80 levels of this scoring issue</p>		
c	Harvest strategy monitoring			
	Guide post	Monitoring is in place that is expected to determine whether the harvest strategy is working.		
	Met?	Y		
Justification	<p>Monitoring in place for the longline fishery for Yellowfin Tuna include mandatory logbooks with records of catch and effort for each fishing operation, a VMS, tagging data, biological studies and port inspections. There is, however, only very limited observer coverage of fishing operations so there are relatively few data on the discarded component of the catch, but few yellowfin would be expected to be discarded. The data that are collected do support a sophisticated stock assessment process that provides robust estimates of stock status that is sufficient to determine whether the harvest strategy is working. This meets the SG 60 requirements.</p>			

PI 1.2.1	There is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place			
d	Harvest strategy review			
	Guide post			The harvest strategy is periodically reviewed and improved as necessary.
	Met?			Not scored
	Justification	Not scored as not all SG 80 requirements are met.		
e	Shark finning			
	Guide post	It is likely that shark finning is not taking place.	It is highly likely that shark finning is not taking place.	There is a high degree of certainty that shark finning is not taking place.
	Met?	Not relevant)	Not relevant	Not relevant
	Justification	Sharks are not a target species (or even a main retained species) of this fishery. This PI is therefore not relevant.		
f	Review of alternative measures			
	Guide post	There has been a review of the potential effectiveness and practicality of alternative measures to minimise UoA-related mortality of unwanted catch of the target stock.	There is a regular review of the potential effectiveness and practicality of alternative measures to minimise UoA-related mortality of unwanted catch of the target stock and they are implemented as appropriate.	There is a biannual review of the potential effectiveness and practicality of alternative measures to minimise UoA-related mortality of unwanted catch of the target stock, and they are implemented, as appropriate.
	Met?	Not relevant	Not relevant	Not relevant
	Justification	CMM 2015-01 (and its predecessors) requires that "To create a disincentive to the capture of small fish and to encourage the development of technologies and fishing strategies designed to avoid the capture of small tunas and other fish, CCMs shall require their purse seine vessels fishing in EEZs and on the high seas within the area bounded by 20°N and 20°S to retain on board and then land or transship at port all bigeye, skipjack, Yellowfin Tuna." Exceptions to this requirement are possible where the fish are unfit for human consumption for reasons other than size or when serious malfunction of equipment occurs. Reporting of discards is done via vessel logbooks and Observer Programs. Compliance with CMM 2015-01 (and its predecessors) is verified by observers with any violations (such as illegal discards) being reported to the WCPFC via the Observer authority. Reported discards for the UoA		

PI 1.2.1	There is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place represented 0.9% of the total catch for 2014 and 2015. Discarded catches of yellowfin across the whole fleet are also estimated to be minor and are ignored in the stock assessment (Tremblayer-Boyer et al. 2017). The rules in place indicate that this scoring issue is not relevant to the UoA.
References	Pilling et al. 2014, Tremblayer-Boyer et al. 2017
OVERALL PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SCORE:	
<p>CONDITION NUMBER: 4</p> <p>By the second surveillance audit, demonstrate that the harvest strategy for Yellowfin Tuna 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 Under advice from MSC (February 2019) in response to a joint CAB variation request, the deadline for closing harvest strategy conditions for all WCPFC tuna fisheries is 2021.</p>	Score 70

PI 1.2.2 Yellowfin Tuna – Harvest control rules and tools

PI 1.2.2	There are well defined and effective harvest control rules (HCRs) in place		
Scoring Issue	SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
a	HCRs design and application		
Guide post	Generally understood HCRs are in place or available that are expected to reduce the exploitation rate as the point of recruitment impairment (PRI) is approached.	Well defined HCRs are in place that ensure that the exploitation rate is reduced as the PRI is approached, are expected to keep the stock fluctuating around a target level consistent with (or above) MSY, or for key LTL species a level consistent with ecosystem needs.	The HCRs are expected to keep the stock fluctuating at or above a target level consistent with MSY, or another more appropriate level taking into account the ecological role of the stock, most of the time.
Met?	Y	N	Not scored
Justification	<p>A generally understood HCR is taken here to mean one that is not well defined, as otherwise there is no distinction between requirements at the SG 60 and SG 80 levels. This PI is also assessed taking account the guidance for scoring 'available' HCRs at SG 60 containing in SA2.5.2, SA2.5.3 and SA2.5.5.</p> <p>The first option for scoring 'available' HCRs is intended to cover the situation where even generally understood HCRs are not yet clearly in place for a fishery. For WCPFC fisheries, including Yellowfin Tuna, there are measures for controlling fishing effort through closures, limits on fishing capacity and, for vessels involved, through limits on fishing days under the VDS. There are expectations about responses and examples of how actions have been implemented for species such as bigeye tuna, but there is no clear linkage or explicit process that links changes in stock status to emergent associated management actions. Therefore we do not consider that there are even generally understood HCRs that are also "in place" ; and the options for 'available' HCRs are evaluated below.</p> <p>The second question to address, is whether there are HCRs that meet the requirements for being considered as 'available'. The guidance in SA2.5.2a indicates that teams shall accept 'available' HCRs in cases where, "...Stock biomass has not previously been reduced below the MSY level or has been maintained at that level for a recent period of time that is at least longer than 2 generation times of the species, and is not predicted to be reduced below BMSY within the next 5 years".</p> <p>As noted at PI 1.1.1 scoring issue (b), the 2017 assessment provides probabilistic estimates of parameters of interest, and has been extensively explored using a crosswise grid of sensitivity tests (Tremblayer-Boyer et al. 2017). The stock assessment</p>		

PI 1.2.2	There are well defined and effective harvest control rules (HCRs) in place
	<p>estimates spawning biomass for Yellowfin Tuna, SB, to be at 46% of unfished levels (SBF=0) and 1.58 times SBMSY. The stock is estimated to have never been reduced to SBMSY and has hence been above SBMSY in all years.</p> <p>According to WCPFC (2014a), paragraph 37, "Future status under status quo projections (assuming 2012 conditions) depends upon assumptions on future recruitment. When spawner-recruitment relationship conditions are assumed, spawning biomass is predicted to increase and the stock is exceptionally unlikely (0%) to become overfished (SB2032<0.2SBF=0) or to fall below SBMSY, nor to become subject to overfishing (F>FMSY). If recent (2002-2011) actual recruitments are assumed, spawning biomass will remain relatively constant, and the stock is exceptionally unlikely (0%) to become overfished or to become subject to overfishing, and it was very unlikely (2%) that the spawning biomass would fall below SBMSY."</p> <p>An estimate of the generation time of Yellowfin Tuna using the MSC definition (Box GSA4 in CR v2.0) is not available but SPC have produced an estimate of 5 years by a different method (Berger et al. 2013) and by any method of estimation 2 generation times will be much less than the 20 years used in the projections mentioned above.</p> <p>The CR v2.0 SA2.5.2a condition is therefore met and HCRs are therefore considered to be 'available'.</p> <p>The third question to address is whether these available HCRs meet the requirement for reducing the exploitation rate as the LRP is approached. The guidance in SA2.5.3 requires that "Teams shall recognise 'available' HCRs as 'expected to reduce the exploitation rate as the point of recruitment impairment is approached' only in cases where,</p> <p>HCRs are effectively used in some other UoAs, that are under the control of the same management body and of a similar size and scale as the UoA; or</p> <p>An agreement or framework in place that requires the management body (in this case WCPFC) to adopt HCRs before the stock declines below Bmsy".</p> <p>There are CMMs that are in place for a range of tuna species within the WCPFC (including yellowfin) that contain a range of management measures that are designed to constrain fishing mortality to acceptable levels. Nevertheless, none are considered to be more highly developed than the measures currently in place for Yellowfin Tuna and therefore they do not offer an example of effectiveness in reducing exploitation as the PRI is approached.</p> <p>Option a. is therefore not considered to be met.</p> <p>Option b. examines plans for the introduction of an effective HCR. WCPFC Conservation and Management Measure CMM 2014-06 (WCPFC, 2014) sets out definitions of harvest strategies to be developed and implemented. The definitions include target and</p>

PI 1.2.2	There are well defined and effective harvest control rules (HCRs) in place		
	<p>limit reference points and decision rules or ("harvest control rules"), with a clear intention that harvest control rules, tested using simulation approaches, will be part of the implemented harvest strategies. The Commission agreed to adopt a work plan at its 2015 annual meeting, which was revised in 2016 and 2017, with application to skipjack, bigeye, yellowfin, Pacific bluefin, and South and North Pacific albacore tunas. In fact, work towards establishing reference points and harvest control rules was progressed through the Management Objectives Workshop (MOW) process.</p> <p>We note that there is no specific requirement in CMM 2014-06 linking implementation of the HCRs to stock projections. Nevertheless, given that Yellowfin Tuna are projected to remain well above BMSY for many years and that the process CMM 2014-06 describes has already been initiated – considered in place - we have considered that the requirements of Option b. SA2.5.3b are met. The requirements of the SG 60 level are therefore considered to be met.</p> <p>In summary, generally understood HCRs are not in place. Yellowfin is a stock that has not previously been reduced below MSY, which has always been maintained well above the TRP and has an improbably low likelihood of becoming overfished or to experience overfishing. Therefore this stock meets the requirements to be considered against "availability" requirements. In the WCPF, HCRs are not yet effectively used in any other WCPFC-managed UoAs. However, there is a framework that is in place, expected to develop further that will require the WCPFC to take action on HCRs before there is any detectable, projected risk that yellowfin stock status could decline below BMSY.</p>		
b	HCRs robustness to uncertainty		
Guide post		The HCRs are likely to be robust to the main uncertainties.	The HCRs take account of a wide range of uncertainties including the ecological role of the stock, and there is evidence that the HCRs are robust to the main uncertainties.
Met?		N	Not scored
Justification	<p>Agreed harmonized score: SG 80 is not met.</p> <p>The 'available' harvest control rules are not sufficiently articulated to allow an evaluation of the extent to which they are robust to the main uncertainties. When well-defined HCRs are developed they can be evaluated as to whether this is the case.</p> <p>The SG80 requirements are not considered to be met.</p>		

PI 1.2.2	There are well defined and effective harvest control rules (HCRs) in place		
c	HCRs evaluation		
Guide post	There is some evidence that tools used or available to implement HCRs are appropriate and effective in controlling exploitation.	Available evidence indicates that the tools in use are appropriate and effective in achieving the exploitation levels required under the HCRs.	Evidence clearly shows that the tools in use are effective in achieving the exploitation levels required under the HCRs.
Met?	Y	N	Not scored
Justification	<p>As noted under scoring issue a above, following SA2.5.3b, we have recognised 'available' HCRs as 'expected to reduce the exploitation rate as the point of recruitment impairment is approached'.</p> <p>SA2.5.5b, which requires that teams shall include in their rationale a description of the formal agreement or legal framework that the management body has defined, and the indicators and trigger levels that will require the development of HCRs.</p> <p>The agreement is contained in CMM 2014-06 whose objective is "To agree that the Commission shall develop and implement a harvest strategy approach for each of the key fisheries or stocks under the purview of the Commission according to the process set out in this conservation and management measure."</p> <p>This CMM contains general principles (including a description of a harvest strategy) and principles and elements of the proposed harvest strategies (which are consistent with the MSC definitions). The definitions include target and limit reference points and decision rules (or "harvest control rules"), with a clear intention that harvest control rules, tested using simulation approaches, will be part of the implemented harvest strategies. The specified timelines are that:</p> <p>"The Commission shall agree a workplan and indicative timeframes to adopt or refine harvest strategies for skipjack, bigeye, yellowfin, South Pacific albacore, Pacific bluefin and northern albacore tuna by no later than the twelfth meeting of the Commission in 2015. This workplan will be subject to review in 2017."</p> <p>Work towards establishing reference points and harvest control rules was initiated before this CMM was passed through the Management Objectives Workshop process and requires no additional trigger for their development.</p> <p>The requirements of SA2.5.5b are therefore considered to be met. Furthermore, SA2.5.6 requires that, in scoring issue (c) for "evidence" teams shall include consideration of the current levels of exploitation in the UoA, such as measured by the fishing mortality rate or harvest rate, where available.</p>		

PI 1.2.3 Yellowfin Tuna – Information and monitoring

PI 1.2.3	Relevant information is collected to support the harvest strategy		
Scoring Issue	SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
a	Range of information		
Guide post	Some relevant information related to stock structure, stock productivity and fleet composition is available to support the harvest strategy.	Sufficient relevant information related to stock structure, stock productivity, fleet composition and other data is available to support the harvest strategy.	A comprehensive range of information (on stock structure, stock productivity, fleet composition, stock abundance, UoA removals and other information such as environmental information), including some that may not be directly related to the current harvest strategy, is available.
Met?	Y	Y	N
Justification	<p>Stock structure - the WCPO yellowfin fishery is assessed and managed as a single stock. However, suggestive evidence for population structure is emerging for the tropical tunas (e.g. Kolody et al., 2013).</p> <p>Williams (2013) identified data gaps (for all key species, rather than yellowfin in particular) as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vietnamese domestic fleet: no annual catch data provided (but this now appears to be provided – see Davies et al. 2014); • Philippines and Indonesian fleets: catch data not broken down by gear type; operation (logsheet) data not provided; • Chinese Taipei fleet: no operational data, aggregated effort data or size data prior to 2004; likewise, for the Japanese coastal fleet up to the present data; likewise, for the Japanese pole and line fleet prior to 1972; • Several countries may have historical data which has not been identified • Historical estimates of coverage rates from logsheets and port sampling are missing in some cases; • Some key (distant water) fleets provide only aggregated rather than operation level data – this is identified as a constraint on stock assessments, and on the use of more detail’s spatial models such as SEAPOPDM. <p>Overall, given the size and complexity of the fishery, the range and comprehensiveness of the data available is impressive and improving all the time. Nonetheless, these data gaps do constrain</p>		

PI	1.2.3	Relevant information is collected to support the harvest strategy		
		<p>stock assessments – as does bias and lack of precision in some of the data sets, particularly historical data. Perhaps more importantly, the stock assessment continues to rely on commercial CPUE as an index of stock abundance, and although these data are carefully analysed and standardised as far as possible, there are no fishery-independent data sets with which they can be compared, while issues such as spatial and temporal changes in catchability remain problematic. On this basis, the team concluded that SG 80 is met, but SG 100 is not met.</p>		
b	Monitoring			
	Guide post	Stock abundance and UoA removals are monitored and at least one indicator is available and monitored with sufficient frequency to support the harvest control rule.	Stock abundance and UoA removals are regularly monitored at a level of accuracy and coverage consistent with the harvest control rule, and one or more indicators are available and monitored with sufficient frequency to support the harvest control rule.	All information required by the harvest control rule is monitored with high frequency and a high degree of certainty, and there is a good understanding of inherent uncertainties in the information [data] and the robustness of assessment and management to this uncertainty.
	Met?	Y	Y	N
	Justification	<p>Stock abundance and removals are monitored at a level of accuracy and coverage that is sufficient to support the harvest control measures in place.</p> <p>There is not, however, a high degree of certainty about all the information required.</p> <p>Operational level data are not provided by some WCPFC members (although some who do not provide it to WCPFC make their country's data available for assessment purposes).</p> <p>The issues raised above mean that we do not consider there to be a high degree of certainty about stock abundance or the robustness of the assessment to this uncertainty.</p> <p>This meets the requirements for the SG 60 and SG 80 levels but not the SG 100 level.</p>		
c	Comprehensiveness of information			
	Guide post		There is good information on all other fishery	

PI 1.2.3	Relevant information is collected to support the harvest strategy		
			removals from the stock.
	Met?		Y
	Justification	<p>This scoring issue was the subject of particular attention in the original Skipjack Tuna assessment (Banks et al. 2011) and in particular whether there was good information on the level of fishery removals from some countries.</p> <p>The conclusion was that “despite a number of deficiencies in compilation and analysis from the Indonesia and Philippines, this reaches SG 80”.</p> <p>Since that assessment there has been additional work to improve the level of data available (noted in the Surveillance Reports for Skipjack Tuna) and we conclude that the requirements of the SG 80 level are also met for Yellowfin Tuna.</p>	
	References	Banks et al. 2011, Tremblayer-Boyer et al. 2017	
OVERALL PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SCORE:			80
CONDITION NUMBER (if relevant): Condition			N/A

PI 1.2.4 Yellowfin Tuna – Assessment of stock status

PI 1.2.4	There is an adequate assessment of the stock status		
Scoring Issue	SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
a	Appropriateness of assessment to stock under consideration		
Guide post		The assessment is appropriate for the stock and for the harvest control rule.	The assessment takes into account the major features relevant to the biology of the species and the nature of the UoA.
Met?		Y	Y
Justification	The most recent assessment applied to Yellowfin Tuna (Tremblayer-Boyer et al. 2017), like other recent assessments, is an integrated, model-based assessment that is undertaken by an experienced and internationally recognised stock assessment program at the SPC. It takes into account major features relevant to the biology and the nature of the fishery. It therefore meets the requirements of the SG 80 and SG 100 levels of this scoring issue		
b	Assessment approach		
Guide post	The assessment estimates stock status relative to generic reference points appropriate to the species category.	The assessment estimates stock status relative to reference points that are appropriate to the stock and can be estimated.	
Met?	Y	Y	
Justification	The assessment reports provide a wide range of estimates of stock status relative to indicators of interest to management including both the target and limit reference points that have been agreed for Yellowfin Tuna. This therefore meets the requirements of the SG 60 and SG 80 levels		
c	Uncertainty in the assessment		
Guide post	The assessment identifies major sources of uncertainty.	The assessment takes uncertainty into account.	The assessment takes into account uncertainty and is evaluating stock status relative to reference points in a probabilistic way.
Met?	Y	Y	Y
Justification	The assessment of Yellowfin Tuna has provided explicit commentary on the major sources of uncertainty, has assessed the sensitivity of the assessment to these uncertainties, and has		

PI	1.2.4	There is an adequate assessment of the stock status		
		evaluated current and future stock status relative to these in a probabilistic way. This meets the requirements of the SG 60, SG 80 and SG 100 levels of this scoring issue		
d	Evaluation of assessment			
	Guide post			The assessment has been tested and shown to be robust. Alternative hypotheses and assessment approaches have been rigorously explored.
	Met?			Y
	Justification	There is an ongoing program of review of assessment assumptions and approaches by the staff in the SPC-OFP. Alternative hypotheses are continually being explored (within funding and time constraints) and assessments are updated and modified as required. Model structure has been updated to reflect the availability of new data or new interpretations of existing data and a suite of sensitivity analyses have been undertaken to explore the impact of options such as changing assumptions for fixed parameters or different treatments of the data. Furthermore, retrospective analyses have been undertaken to explore any systematic biases in the model and the results used to adjust the reference case. The assessment for Yellowfin Tuna has been shown to be robust and therefore meets the requirements of this scoring issue. We note that there has been no simulation testing of the model, but such testing is not necessary to meet the requirements.		
E	Peer review of assessment			
	Guide post		The assessment of stock status is subject to peer review.	The assessment has been internally and externally peer reviewed.
	Met?		Y	N
	Justification	Internal reviews are undertaken by SPC and there has been an external review of the assessment of Bigeye tuna (Ianelli et al. 2012) which provided recommendations that were also applicable to other similar assessments such as for Yellowfin Tuna. Many of those recommendations have been addressed with the latest yellowfin assessment. There have also been external reviews commissioned of different aspects of the data analyses that feed into the assessments. This is also a level of review provided by submission to the scientific committee of the WCPFC, at which experienced scientific		

PI 1.2.4	There is an adequate assessment of the stock status	
		<p>staff from several countries attend, but we consider this to be internal to WCPFC processes.</p> <p>We note, as discussed in the background, there have been two earlier reviews of the previous Yellowfin Tuna assessment (Haddon 2010 and Maguire 2010) which were commissioned by the USA through the Center for Independent Experts (CIE). A response to these reviews was provided by SPC to SC7 (SPC-OFP 2011) but there was no reference to the findings of this review or the response in the subsequent stock assessment (Davies et al. 2014). Given the manner of its initiation (it was not commissioned by the WCPFC or SPC) and the lack of a clear response in the subsequent assessment we are inclined to take a conservative approach in not considering scoring the last scoring issue to have been met at the SG 100 level. An effective external review should lead to an acknowledgment of deficiencies identified and evidence of a response in the subsequent assessment.</p> <p>Therefore, we consider that this scoring issue is met at the SG 80 level but not at the SG 100 level.</p>
References	Davies et al. 2014, Haddon 2010, Ianelli et al. 2012, Maguire 2010, SPC-OFP 2011, Tremblayer-Boyer et al. 2017	
OVERALL PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SCORE:		95
CONDITION NUMBER (if relevant): Condition		N/A

5.5 CAB wide variance 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 HMS¹ 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 RFMO² 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.

Date submitted to MSC	11 December, 2018
Name of CAB	All CABs accredited to undertake MSC fishery assessments
Fishery Name/CoC Certificate Number	See Appendix 1
Lead Auditor/Programme Manager	Chrissie Sieben (CU Pesca), Amanda Stern-Pirlot (MRAG Americas), Sian Morgan (SCS), Geraldine Criquet (SAI Global), Polly Burns (Lloyds Register-Acoura), Anna Kiseleva/Sandhya Chaudhury (DNV), Macarena García (BV), Louise Le Roux (TUN), Carolina Medina Foucher (OIA), Julia Nebolsina (Marine Certification)
Scheme requirement(s) for which variation requested	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>

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

² 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.

	<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>Is this variation sought in order to fulfil IPI requirements (FCR 7.4.14)?</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
Echebastar 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 (https://www.iccat.int/en/RecRes.asp)
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 (https://www.iccat.int/en/RecRes.asp) 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 http://isc.fra.go.jp/reports/alb/alb_2018_1.html
WCPFC/IATTC	PO-ALB-S	2021	On target (agreed RFP by Dec 2018)	2021 (HCR adopted)	2017 workplan (https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/placeholder-harvest-strategy-key-documents)
WCPFC	WPO-SKJ	2021	On target (interim RFP was agreed in Dec 2015)	2021 (HS in place)	2017 workplan (https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/placeholder-harvest-strategy-key-documents)
WCPFC	WPO-YFT	2021	On target (agreed RFP by Dec 2019)	2021 (HCR adopted)	2017 workplan (https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/placeholder-harvest-strategy-key-documents)



Kat Collinson
Control Union Pesca Ltd
56 High Street
Lymington
United Kingdom
SO41 9AH

Sent by email

Date: 14/02/2019

Dear Kat Collinson,

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 rescore, 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 rescore 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 A

List of relevant tuna fisheries and associated actions

February 2019

Fishery name	Stock	P1 upgrade required?	P1 upgrade type	CAB proposal condition deadline	Part of variation request?	Action required
North West Atlantic Canada Harpoon swordfish	AO-SWO-N	Yes	Full	n/a	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity (no alignment of condition timelines required)
North West Atlantic Canada Longline swordfish	AO-SWO-N	Yes	Full	n/a	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity (no alignment of condition timelines required)
US North Atlantic swordfish, yellowfin and albacore	AO-SWO-N	Yes	Full	n/a	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity (no alignment of condition timelines required)
US North Atlantic swordfish, yellowfin and albacore	AO-YFT	Yes	Full*	2022	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity (no alignment of condition timelines required)
Northeastern Tropical Pacific Purse Seine SKJ and YFT	EPO-SKJ	Yes	Full*	n/a	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity (no alignment of condition timelines required)

Fishery name	Stock	P1 upgrade required?	P1 upgrade type	CAB proposal condition deadline	Part of variation request?	Action required
French Polynesia albacore and yellowfin longline fishery	EPO-YFT	No	n/a	n/a	Yes	No P1 upgrade or alignment of condition timelines required
Echebstar Indian Ocean Purse Seine Skipjack Tuna	IO-SKJ	No	n/a	n/a	Yes	No P1 upgrade or alignment of condition timelines required
Maldives Pole and Line Tuna Skipjack	IO-SKJ	No	n/a	n/a	Yes	No P1 upgrade or alignment of condition timelines required
AAFA and WFOA North Pacific albacore tuna	PO-ALB-N	No	n/a	2023	Yes	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline at next surveillance audit
American Samoa EEZ Albacore and Yellowfin Longline Fishery	PO-ALB-S	No	n/a	2021	Yes	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline at next surveillance audit
Fiji albacore and yellowfin longline	PO-ALB-S	No	n/a	2021	Yes	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline at next surveillance audit
French Polynesia albacore and yellowfin longline fishery	PO-ALB-S	No	n/a	2021	Yes	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline at next surveillance audit
New Zealand Albacore Troll Fishery	PO-ALB-S	No	n/a	2021	Yes	No P1 upgrade or alignment of condition timelines required
New Zealand Talley's skipjack	WPO-SKJ	No	n/a	2021	Yes	No P1 upgrade or alignment of condition timelines required
PNA skipjack and yellowfin tuna	WPO-SKJ	No	n/a	2021	Yes	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline at next surveillance audit

Fishery name	Stock	P1 upgrade required?	P1 upgrade type	CAB proposal condition deadline	Part of variation request?	Action required
WPSTA purse seine free school yellowfin and skipjack	WPO-SKJ	No	n/a	2021	Yes	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline at next surveillance audit
American Samoa EEZ Albacore and Yellowfin Longline Fishery	WPO-YFT	No	n/a	2021	Yes	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline at next surveillance audit
Fiji albacore and yellowfin longline	WPO-YFT	No	n/a	2021	Yes	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline at next surveillance audit
French Polynesia albacore and yellowfin longline fishery	WPO-YFT	No	n/a	2021	Yes	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline at next surveillance audit
PNA skipjack and yellowfin tuna	WPO-YFT	No	n/a	2021	Yes	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline at next surveillance audit
WPSTA purse seine free school yellowfin and skipjack	WPO-YFT	No	n/a	2021	Yes	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline at next surveillance audit
North Atlantic albacore artisanal fishery	AO-ALB-N	Yes	Reduced	n/a	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity (no alignment of condition timelines required)
US North Atlantic swordfish, yellowfin and albacore	AO-ALB-N	Yes	Reduced	n/a	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity (no alignment of condition timelines required)
Northeastern Tropical Pacific Purse Seine SKJ and YFT	EPO-YFT	Yes	Reduced	n/a	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity (no alignment of condition timelines required)
CHMSF British Columbia albacore tuna North Pacific	PO-ALB-N	Yes	Reduced	2023	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity AND condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline

Fishery name	Stock	P1 upgrade required?	P1 upgrade type	CAB proposal condition deadline	Part of variation request?	Action required
Japanese skipjack and albacore pole and line	PO-ALB-N	Yes	Reduced	2023	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity AND condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline
SZLC, CSFC & FZLC Cook Islands EEZ South Pacific albacore & yellowfin longline	PO-ALB-S	Yes	Reduced	2021	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity AND condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline
Walker Seafood Australian albacore, yellowfin tuna, and swordfish longline	PO-ALB-S	Yes	Reduced	2021	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity AND condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline
Japanese skipjack and albacore pole and line	WPO-SKJ	Yes	Reduced	2021	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity AND condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline
Solomon Islands skipjack and yellowfin tuna	WPO-SKJ	Yes	Reduced	2021	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity AND condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline
TriMarine Western and Central Pacific Skipjack and Yellowfin Tuna	WPO-SKJ	Yes	Reduced	2021	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity AND condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline
Solomon Islands skipjack and yellowfin tuna	WPO-YFT	Yes	Reduced	2021	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity AND condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline
SZLC, CSFC & FZLC Cook Islands EEZ South Pacific albacore & yellowfin longline	WPO-YFT	Yes	Reduced	2021	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity AND condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline
TriMarine Western and Central Pacific Skipjack and Yellowfin Tuna	WPO-YFT	Yes	Reduced	2021	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity AND condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline
Walker Seafood Australian albacore, yellowfin tuna, and swordfish longline	WPO-YFT	Yes	Reduced	2021	Yes	P1 rescored against v2.0 at first opportunity AND condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline

Fishery name	Stock	P1 upgrade required?	P1 upgrade type	CAB proposal condition deadline	Part of variation request?	Action required
ACTEMSA-LEAL SANTOS pole and line West Atlantic skipjack fishery	AO-SKJ-W	n/a	n/a	2022	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1
Sant Yago TF Unassociated purse seine Atlantic yellowfin tuna fishery	AO-YFT	n/a	n/a	2022	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1
Pan Pacific yellowfin, bigeye and albacore longline fishery	EPO-BET	n/a	n/a	n/a	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1
Panama tropical Pacific yellowfin and skipjack purse seine tuna fishery	EPO-SKJ	n/a	n/a	n/a	No	Condition timelines to be harmonised with overlapping fishery (no RFMO workplan exists), either as part of assessment or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1
Pan Pacific yellowfin, bigeye and albacore longline fishery	EPO-YFT	n/a	n/a	n/a	No	No conditions expected therefore no action
Panama tropical Pacific yellowfin and skipjack purse seine tuna fishery	EPO-YFT	n/a	n/a	n/a	No	No conditions expected therefore no action
Ishihara Marine Products albacore and skipjack pole and line fishery	PO-ALB-N	n/a	n/a	2023	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1
Pan Pacific yellowfin, bigeye and albacore longline fishery	PO-ALB-N	n/a	n/a	2023	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1
AAFA and WFOA South Pacific albacore tuna	PO-ALB-S	n/a	n/a	2021	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1
Pan Pacific yellowfin, bigeye and albacore longline fishery	PO-ALB-S	n/a	n/a	2021	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1

Fishery name	Stock	P1 upgrade required?	P1 upgrade type	CAB proposal condition deadline	Part of variation request?	Action required
Pan Pacific yellowfin, bigeye and albacore longline fishery	WPO-BET	n/a	n/a	2021* *	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1
SZLC CSFC & FZLC FSM EEZ Longline Yellowfin and Bigeye Tuna	WPO-BET	n/a	n/a	2021* *	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1
Ishihara Marine Products albacore and skipjack pole and line fishery	WPO-SKJ	n/a	n/a	2021	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1
PT Citraraja Ampat, Sorong pole and line Skipjack and Yellowfin Tuna	WPO-SKJ	n/a	n/a	2021	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1
Tropical Pacific yellowfin and skipjack free-school purse seine fishery	WPO-SKJ	n/a	n/a	2021	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1
Pan Pacific yellowfin, bigeye and albacore longline fishery	WPO-YFT	n/a	n/a	2021	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1
PT Citraraja Ampat, Sorong pole and line Skipjack and Yellowfin Tuna	WPO-YFT	n/a	n/a	2021	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1
SZLC CSFC & FZLC FSM EEZ Longline Yellowfin and Bigeye Tuna	WPO-YFT	n/a	n/a	2021	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1
Tropical Pacific yellowfin and skipjack free-school purse seine fishery	WPO-YFT	n/a	n/a	2021	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1
Solomon Islands longline albacore and yellowfin tuna fishery	WPO-YFT	n/a	n/a	2021	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1

Fishery name	Stock	P1 upgrade required?	P1 upgrade type	CAB proposal condition deadline	Part of variation request?	Action required
Solomon Islands longline albacore and yellowfin tuna fishery	PO-ALB-S	n/a	n/a	2021	No	Condition timelines to be aligned with relevant proposed deadline, within assessment if possible or at 1st SA following FCP 2.1

* Reduced upgrade permitted if an assessment against v2.0 has been completed for another UoA on the same stock

** No date for WPO-BET included in CAB's proposal. This date is added following the logic of the variation request and in line with other WCPFC stock workplans

Appendix B

Principle 1 v2.0 assessment upgrade process

February 2019

Principle 1 v2.0 assessment upgrade process

Introduction

This document provides the process requirements CABs shall follow to upgrade Principle 1 assessments of tuna fisheries currently certified against v1.3 of the MSC Fisheries Standard.

This process is only applicable to the combined tuna fishery variation request, submitted 11 December 2018.

This process is adapted from FCP v2.1 7.27 and Annex PE - scope extensions. It is noted that the MSC has no expectation that CABs – if they choose to apply this process before the FCP v2.1 becomes effective - are obliged to adopt the FCP v2.1 more generally before such time that it is required to do so.

The MSC expects that Principle 1 assessment upgrades will be conducted at the next surveillance audit. These process requirements do not change the need for CABs to conform to surveillance audit requirements as per FCP v2.1 7.28.

1. Scope

- 1.1. The requirements of this annex shall apply only to Principle 1 assessment upgrade of tuna fisheries currently certified against v1.3 of the MSC Fisheries Standard (as per Appendix A of the MSC's variation response).

2. Assessment team

- 2.1. The team shall comprise of a team leader and a minimum of 1 additional team member, that meet the qualifications and competency requirements relevant to Principle 1, specifically that the team leader shall meet Table PC1; team members meet table PC2; and combined they meet sections 1 (Fish stock assessment), 2 (Fish stock biology / ecology) and 5 (Current knowledge of the country, language and local fishery context) of table PC3.

3. Announcement

- 3.1. The CAB shall use the 'MSC Surveillance Announcement Template', which shall be uploaded to the MSC database for publication on the MSC website, to notify stakeholders and the MSC of the CAB's intent to undertake a Principle 1 v2.0 assessment upgrade at the next surveillance audit.
- 3.2. The CAB shall include the following information in the announcement:
 - a. Reference to the variation request
 - b. Details of the on-site or off-site assessment (depending on the surveillance level of the fishery as per FCP 7.28), including the date and, where relevant, the location of the site visit.
 - c. Details of what will be assessed/reviewed during the audit

- d. Details of reporting timelines with respect to audit timing and expected report publication
- e. Details of the opportunities and input methods for stakeholders to participate during the on-site or off-site assessment.
 - i. The details should make clear that the assessment team is available to meet with stakeholders in person or remotely.
- f. Summaries of CVs of the team and team leader, including an explanation of how they meet the competency criteria in the GCR and Annex PC , as well as confirmation that the team has no conflicts of interest in relation to the fishery under assessment.

3.3. The CAB shall upload the Announcement to the MSC database for publication on the MSC website at least 30 days before the Principle 1 v2.0 assessment upgrade on site or offsite audit is carried out.

4. Assessment

- 4.1. The CAB shall conduct the Principle 1 v2.0 assessment upgrade at the next Surveillance Audit.
- 4.2. The CAB shall use one of the following assessment types:
 - a. On-site. The assessment involves face-to-face engagement with the client, conducting stakeholder interviews and a review of management and science in the fishery.
 - b. Off-site. The assessment involves engagement with the client, conducting stakeholder interviews and a review management and science in the fishery and is undertaken by the assessment team from a remote location.
- 4.3. The CAB shall determine whether the Principle 1 v2.0 assessment upgrade is conducted on-site or off-site depending on the existing surveillance level assigned to the fishery and the ability of the CAB to remotely verify information.
 - 4.3.1. Where an off-site assessment is conducted, the CAB shall provide a rationale in the announcement of how clause 4.3 is met.
- 4.4. The team shall:
 - a. Conduct interviews to make sure that the team is aware of any concerns or information that stakeholders may have.
 - b. Allow private interviews with the team for stakeholders who request one.
 - c. Use any information provided in private in conformity with confidentiality requirements, see FCP v2.1 Section 4.3.
- 4.5. The CAB shall evaluate the assessment components using all requirements in MSC Fisheries Standard Annex SA2 following the process as described in FCP Section 7.17 and Section 7.18.
- 4.6. The CAB shall complete the Principle 1 v2.0 upgrade assessment in compliance with timelines as set out in FCP 7.20.1 and 7.22.1.

5. Reporting

- 5.1. If the stock has been assessed against FCR v2.0 Annex SA, the CAB shall follow 5.1.1 – 5.1.4.
 - 5.1.1. The CAB shall produce a single report using the 'MSC Reporting Template' and follow procedures outlined in FCP Sections 7.19.1, 7.19.2, 7.19.6 to 7.19.10, 7.24.3 and 7.24.4 (exclusive of references to the Peer Review Draft Report and the Peer Review College).
 - 5.1.2. Reporting shall include:
 - a. Sections 1 to 5 of the 'MSC Reporting Template', limited to Principle 1
 - b. Section 7.1 (limited to Principle 1) and Section 7.2 of the 'MSC Reporting Template'
 - c. Section 8 of the 'MSC Reporting Template'

- 5.1.3. Where appropriate, the CAB shall populate sections of the ‘MSC Reporting Template’ from the existing Public Certification Report.
- 5.1.4. The report, completed in accordance with 5.1.2, will be published as an Annex to the Surveillance Audit.
 - 5.1.4.1. If the Principle 1 v2.0 upgrade assessment is conducted outside of a Surveillance Audit, the CAB shall upload the report to the MSC database for publication on the MSC website.
- 5.2. If the stock has not been assessed against FCR v2.0 Annex SA, the CAB shall follow 5.2.1 – 5.2.5
 - 5.2.1. The CAB shall produce the following reports using the ‘MSC Reporting Template’ and follow procedures outlined in FCP Sections 7.19 to 7.23 and 7.24.1 to 7.24.4:
 - a. Client and Peer Review Draft Report.
 - b. Public Comment Draft Report.
 - c. Final Draft Report.
 - d. Public Certification Report.
 - 5.2.2. Reporting shall include:
 - a. Sections 1 to 5 of the ‘MSC Reporting Template’, limited to Principle 1
 - b. Section 7.1 (limited to Principle 1) and Section 7.2 of the ‘MSC Reporting Template’
 - c. Section 8 of the ‘MSC Reporting Template’
 - 5.2.3. Where appropriate, the CAB shall populate sections of the ‘MSC Reporting Template’ from the existing Public Certification Report.
 - 5.2.4. The minimum number of peer reviewers for Principle 1 v2.0 assessment upgrade shall be 1.
 - 5.2.5. All other requirements for peer review outlined in FCP Sections 7.14, 7.19.3-7.19.5 and 7.20.9 shall apply.

6. Certification

- 6.1. The CAB shall make a determination regarding the Principle 1 assessment upgrade outcome and notify stakeholders in the Final Draft Report.
- 6.2. If it determined that the scores from the Principle 1 assessment upgrade meet the requirements for certification, the CAB shall update the Fishery Certificate Statement and fishery certificate(s) in accordance to FCP v2.1 Section 7.24.6.3 and 7.25.3.
- 6.3. If the determination is that the fishery has not met the requirements for certification, the CAB shall report this in the Final Draft Report and Public Certification Report and shall make no changes to the existing certificate, which shall remain valid.
- 6.4. If the Principle 1 assessment upgrade results in continued certification, the CAB shall conduct a full Principle 1 assessment at re-assessment.

Table 1: Principle 1 v2.0 assessment upgrade – indicative timelines

Principle 1 assessment upgrade announcement	30 days
On-site or off-site visit (i.e. surveillance audit)	
Client & Peer Review	60 days
Public Comment Draft Report	30 days
Final Draft Report	15 days
Public Certification Report	
Total	135 days (4.5 months)

5.6 Variance request and MSC response for delayed surveillance report



Marine Stewardship Council assessments

bio.inspecta (mandated by q.inspecta) Walker Seafood Australian albacore, yellowfin tuna, and swordfish longline fishery

Marine Stewardship Council variation request

Table 1 – Variation request	
1	22 November 2019
2	CAB
	bio.inspecta (mandated by q.inspecta)
3	Fishery name and certificate number or CoC certificate number
	Walker Seafoods Australian albacore, yellowfin tuna and swordfish longline
4	Lead auditor or program manager
	Dr Sabine Daume
5	Request prepared by
	Dr Sabine Daume
6	Scheme requirement(s) for which variation requested
	FCP v 2.1 7.28.23 The surveillance report shall be forwarded to the MSC within 60 days of completing the audit, for publication on the MSC website.
7	How many times has a variation for this requirement been accepted for the same assessment of the same fishery?
	Once previously. A variance was approved to extend the timeline for 4 weeks.

Table 2 – Variation justification

1	Proposed variation	
	We propose to finalise the surveillance report after the next Tropical Tuna Resource Assessment Group (TTRAG) meeting and before the 29 th February 2020.	
2	Additional time requested	
	Original deadline date	29 th October 2019
	Modified deadline date requested	29 th February 2020
	Length of additional time requested	3 months (+ 4 weeks extension previously grated)
3	Justification	
	<p>The anticipated Tropical Tuna Resource Assessment Group (TTRAG) meeting has been postponed until early next year. The TTRAG is the key research and scientific committee for the management of the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) and the Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery. Walker Seafoods albacore, yellowfin and swordfish fishery is part of the ETBF.</p> <p>The last updates, specifically considering the work currently conducted on the swordfish harvest strategy, were provided at the TTRAG meeting in July 2019 (before the surveillance audit on the 29th August 2019). The next updates were anticipated before the surveillance report was originally due in late October 2019. The meeting has now been postponed until early next year.</p> <p>At the meeting, updates on the harvest strategy project for the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) including swordfish are going to be provided. The project was funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC) in early 2019 and is well on its way (as evident by the TTRAG meeting minutes from March and July 2019). These results will form the basis for the assessment towards meeting condition 7 (Harvest control rules and tools for swordfish) which is due to be closed out during this surveillance audit.</p> <p>The ACDR for the re-assessment of the fishery is imminent (posted on the 26th November 2019). Indicative scores for all of Principle 1 (tuna and swordfish species) are provided at that time.</p>	
4	If a fishery assessment, implications for assessment	
	There are no implications as the provisional score ranges and rationales will be made public as part of the ACDR.	
5	If a fishery assessment, mitigation of the implications for assessment	
	NA	
6	If a fishery assessment, how many conditions does the fishery have and will their progress be affected (positive or negative)?	

	There are 10 conditions and progress will not be affected. The delay will allow the team to fully consider the latest analysis and updates on the harvest strategy project to determine the progress against condition 7.
7	What is the status of the current assessment or audit?
	The fishery is at the 4 th annual surveillance and due to start re-assessment this year. The last surveillance report (by Control Union Pesca) was posted on the 5 th April 2019, only 4 months before the 4 th audit was conducted due to the re-assessment timelines.
8	Further comments
	None of the target species are considered to be overfished or subject to overfishing. We have been advised that the ARC funded project has commenced but need to fully review the analysis which will also be provided to the TTRAG meeting in early 2020.
9	If applicable, additional information added after the MSC's request



Sabine Daume
q.inspecta GmbH (q.inspecta)
Ackerstrasse
Frick
Switzerland
5070

Sent by email

Date: 29/11/2019

Subject: Request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement v2.1 FCP-7.28.23 for Australian Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (albacore tuna, yellowfin tuna, bigeye tuna and swordfish)

Dear Sabine Daume,

I write with reference to your submission on 27/11/2019 of a request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement (CR) to allow:

We propose to finalise the surveillance report after the next Tropical Tuna Resource Assessment Group (TTRAG) meeting and before the 29th February 2020.

As you are aware, the CR procedures relating to v2.1 FCP-7.28.23 state:

The CAB shall upload the Surveillance Report to the MSC database within 60 days of completing the audit for publication on the MSC website

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:

- The assessment team at the recent 4th surv visit was awaiting the outcome of a meeting that was to occur soon after the site visit.
- This meeting was the Tropical Tuna Regional Assessment Group (TTRAG) meeting where the harvest strategy and HCRs for the national management of tunas are discussed.
- This meeting has been delayed until early 2020 and so the updated information relevant to the swordfish condition on HCRs (condition 7) wont be available until then.

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

- Stakeholders are informed.
- The report shall be submitted no later than Feb 29, 2020.
- The CAB can confirm that it is not aware at this time of any factor (related to either fishery status, or performance against conditions) that could result in the fishery no longer being in compliance with the MSC Fisheries Standard.

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

5.7 Variance request and MSC response for rescoring Principle 1 for Swordfish



Marine Stewardship Council assessments

Bio.inspecta (mandated by q.inspecta) Walker Seafood Australian albacore, yellowfin tuna, and swordfish longline fishery

Marine Stewardship Council variation request

Table 1 – Variation request	
1	10 November 2019
2	CAB
	Bio.inspecta (mandated by q.inspecta)
3	Fishery name and certificate number or CoC certificate number
	Walker Seafood Australian Australian albacore, yellowfin tuna, and swordfish longline
4	Lead auditor or program manager
	Dr Sabine Daume
5	Request prepared by
	Dr Sabine Daume
6	Scheme requirement(s) for which variation requested
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FCP 2.1, 7.30.4 The CAB shall consider all surveillance reports and outcomes and evaluate progress against certification conditions. Unless exceptional circumstances as set out in 7.18.1.5 or 7.30.4.2 apply, the fishery shall have met all conditions and milestones. 2. Fisheries scored against v1.3:

	<p>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). (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. 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.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
7	<p>How many times has a variation for this requirement been accepted for the same assessment of the same fishery?</p>
	<p>This relates to the Mega variance submitted to the MSC on the 11 December 2018 and accepted by the MSC on the 28 February 2019.</p> <p>It also relates to the decline variance request submitted by bio.inspecta to re-score swordfish under v 2.0 at the 4th annual surveillance also which was declined.</p> <p>This variance however is focussing on</p>

Table 2 – Variation justification

1	Proposed variation	
	<p>It relates to all tuna and tuna-like highly migratory species. In the context of this variation request, we refer to the tuna and swordfish stocks. Walker seafood tuna and swordfish fishery was listed as part of the variance but there are no other Pacific swordfish fisheries currently certified or in assessment and therefore would not be under any harmonisation requirement per se.</p> <p>We propose to align Pacific swordfish of the Walker Seafood fishery to the same one-off Principle 1 alignment which was already accepted by MSC under the mega variance. As this fishery is currently scored against CRv1.3 we are proposing to rescore swordfish against FCRv2.0 for Principle 1 at the next available opportunity which is the current 4th annual surveillance audit to align with the rescoring of the other tuna species which is occurring as well. It is noted that this rescoring would have to take place at reassessment anyway which is starting now with preparations for the ACDR.</p> <p>We are proposing to provide all of these in an annex to the 4th annual surveillance report. The proposal avoids producing a report in which different P1 species are scored against different versions of the Certification Requirements. This would be an anomalous situation for which it would be hard to explain the logic to readers and the client.</p>	
2	Additional time requested	
	Original deadline date	29 th October 2019
	Modified deadline date requested	29 th November 2019
	Length of additional time requested	4 weeks
3	Justification	
	<p>This will allow an alignment of rescoring all of Principle 1 (tuna and swordfish species) against common certification requirements in one report. The ACDR for the re-assessment of the fishery is also due to be posted around the end of November 2019</p>	
4	If a fishery assessment, implications for assessment	
	<p>There are no implications as the scores and rationales under FCR 2.0 will also be made public as part of the ACDR which will be due at the same time.</p>	
5	If a fishery assessment, mitigation of the implications for assessment	
	NA	
6	If a fishery assessment, how many conditions does the fishery have and will their progress be affected (positive or negative)?	

	Progress will not be affected there are 10 conditions.
7	What is the status of the current assessment or audit?
	The fishery is at the 4 th annual surveillance and due to start the re-assessment this year. The last surveillance report (by Control Union Pesca) was posted on the 5 th April 2019, only 4 months before the 4 th audit was conducted due to the re-assessment timelines.
8	Further comments
	- Please include any further relevant information.
9	If applicable, additional information added after the MSC's request



Sabine Daume
q.inspecta GmbH (q.inspecta)
Ackerstrasse
Frick
Switzerland
5070

Sent by email

Date: 30/10/2019

Dear Sabine Daume,

I write with reference to your submission on 10/10/2019 of a request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement (CR) to allow:

To align Pacific swordfish of the Walker Seafood fishery to the same one-off Principle 1 alignment which was already accepted by MSC under the mega variance.

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:

- As part of the CAB-wide variation for rescoring tuna fisheries and aligning condition milestones, Walker seafood tuna and swordfish fishery was listed as part of the variance but only for WCPO yellowfin and albacore.
- Walker seafood has South Pacific swordfish as a UoC but this was not part of the CAB-wide variation.
- There are no other Pacific swordfish fisheries currently certified or in assessment and therefore would not be under any harmonisation requirement per se.
- We propose to align Pacific swordfish of the Walker Seafood fishery to the same one-off Principle 1 alignment which was already accepted by MSC under the mega variance.
- The rescoring is underway at the moment due to the fishery undergoing reassessment and producing an ACDR
- Additionally, the swordfish rescoring would be added to an annex to the 4th annual surveillance report.
- The proposal avoids producing a report as per the CAB-wide variation process in which different P1 species are scored against different versions of the Certification Requirements.

In this case the rationale is insufficient for the MSC to grant a variation to the CR. This request is therefore declined.

- In upgrading the swordfish UoA to FCR v2.0, the client shall follow all relevant reporting requirements for full upgrades in Annex B of the CAB wide variation process document
- Reassessment of swordfish against v2.0 shall occur at the upcoming reassessment

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

5.8 Variance request and MSC response to carry the swordfish condition into re-assessment



Marine Stewardship Council assessments

bio.inspecta (mandated by q.inspecta)

Walker Seafoods Australian albacore, yellowfin tuna and swordfish longline fishery Marine Stewardship Council variation request

Table 1 – Variation request

1	13 November 2019
2	CAB
	bio.inspecta (mandated by q.inspecta)
3	Fishery name and certificate number or CoC certificate number
	Walker Seafoods Australian albacore, yellowfin tuna and swordfish longline
4	Lead auditor or program manager
	Dr Sabine Daume
5	Request prepared by
	Dr Sabine Daume
6	Scheme requirement(s) for which variation requested
	FCP 2.1, 7.30.4 The CAB shall consider all surveillance reports and outcomes and evaluate progress against certification conditions. Unless exceptional circumstances as set out in 7.18.1.5 or 7.30.4.2 apply, the fishery shall have met all conditions and milestones.

	<p>FCP 2.1, 7.28.16.1.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.</p> <p>FCP 2.1, 7.28.16.2: 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).</p> <p>FCP 2.1, 7.18.1.3 (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.</p> <p>FCP 2.1, 7.30.2 (and subclauses): When conducting a re-assessment of a certified fishery, the CAB shall (...) evaluate progress against certification conditions. Unless exceptional circumstances apply (7.18.1.5) 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 7.28.16.1 and 7.28.16.2 (except 7.28.16.2.) 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.</p>
--	--

7	How many times has a variation for this requirement been accepted for the same assessment of the same fishery?
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	<p>This relates to the Mega variance submitted to the MSC on the 11 December 2018 and accepted by the MSC on the 28 February 2019. The Mega variance was a request submitted by all CABs collectively, to harmonise all open P1 condition milestones for tuna fisheries and align their milestones with relevant international or national workplans.</p> <p>It also relates to the variance request submitted by bio.inspecta to re-score swordfish under v 2.0 at the 4th annual surveillance which was declined by the MSC with the request that the rescoring of swordfish against v2.0 shall occur at the upcoming reassessment.</p> <p>This variance however is focussing on carrying the swordfish conditions into the reassessment under FCR v 2.0 with FCP 2.1 for process requirements.</p>
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Table 2 – Variation justification

1	Proposed variation
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We propose to carry the 2 swordfish conditions (Condition 6 and 7 for PI 1.1.2 and 1.2.2 respectively) assigned for Walker Seafoods tuna and swordfish longline fishery into the re-assessment. The re-assessment will need to utilise MSC Certification Requirements v2.01. This allowance given to all other tuna fisheries, including the two other Walker Seafoods UoAs as part of the mega variance granted by the MSC on the 28 February 2019. This variance follows the same intent for a highly migratory species (swordfish).

Proposed deadline to close out of Conditions is at the first surveillance audit (2021) following the re-assessment in 2020. This will align with the project plan of the Australian Research Council (ARC)

funded project on revisions and further developments of the billfish harvest strategy for the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) and the selection by the revised harvest strategy by the Topical Tuna Research and Advisory Group (TTRAG) and final adoption by the end of 2020.

2	Additional time requested	
	Original deadline date	NA
	Modified deadline date requested	
	Length of additional time requested	

Condition 6 (1.1.2):

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. At the third annual audit (conducted by the previous CAB judged the condition as behind target with no remedial action required as it would be anticipated to be covered under the MSC approved mega variance.

Condition 7 (1.2.2):

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). At the third annual audit (conducted by the previous CAB judged the condition as on target even it was clear that the milestone of the fourth audit was difficult to be achieved to close out the condition. As progress to meeting the condition the CAB stated the on-going representations at the regional level and of client engagement with AFMA and through AFMA with other bodies.

Update on work conducted and reasons why conditions cannot be closed out:

The reason the condition 7 cannot be closed out at the 4th annual surveillance audit, is to address a problem found with the previous version of the harvest strategy, that reduced catches by the ETBF even when the Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) was estimated to be above target levels. Following an update to the swordfish assessment by the WCPFC SC, simulation studies had shown that, over a broad range of options explored, it was not feasible with the current ETBF HS general structure to hit both the target for SSB (0.48 SSB₀) with probability 0.5 and hit the CPUE target within the projection time-frame.

Therefore a project on revisions and further developments of the billfish harvest strategy for the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) was funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC) in early 2019 and is well on its way (as evident by the Topical Tuna Research and Advisory Group (TTRAG) meeting minutes from March and July 2019). The project has the following objectives:

1. Update the current suit of Operating Models for both billfish species
2. Reassess existing stock structure and migration hypotheses
3. Restructure and redesign new candidate Harvest Strategies (HS) for both species
4. Use Management Strategy Evaluation to full assess performance of the revised HS

Options for a revised HS for the ETBF are being developed that explore performance under a range different scenario including variations to the gradient of the HCR, the width of the buffer zone around the selected TRP, and the period for the moving average of the CPUE index (2, 3, or 4 years). Preliminary results were presented to the TTRAG in 2019 for feedback on the range of options to be explored for these and other variables such as the proportion of the regional catch

	<p>taken by the ETBF and the level of movement between regions. TTRAG is expected to review final MSE results and select a revised HS in 2020.</p> <p>The re-assessment of fishery will need to utilise MSC Certification Requirements v2.01.</p> <p>The updated standard involves changes to the assessment of reference points and HCRs. The requirements under the current v 1.3 resulted in condition against Principle 1 performance indicators (PI) 1.1.2 on Reference Points. Therefore, the condition 6 was not closed out but will be re-assessed under PI 1.2.4 scoring issue b and more implicitly under 1.1.1 of the v 2.01. The draft ACDR report, currently posted for public comments, does not indicate that a condition will be required under v 2.01 to replace condition 6.</p> <p>FCP 2.1 7.30.4.2 for fisheries with conditions written against PIs in assessment trees that differ from those in the tree being used in the reassessment, the CAB shall consider whether the conditions as originally formulated are appropriate to meet the SG80 outcome for the PI, or the equivalent PI, within the reassessment tree.</p> <p>b. If the conditions are not appropriate to deliver SG80 outcomes in the reassessment tree, the CAB shall consider what action is needed to deliver the outcome required at SG80 level and evaluate whether this outcome has been achieved.</p> <p>i. If the SG80 level has not been achieved, such conditions shall be rewritten against the reassessment tree, with a timeline for completion of less than 1 certification period.</p> <p>The guidance of FCP v 2.1 G7.30.4 states "Where the tree has changed so that existing conditions no longer match those in the reassessment tree, or where old conditions cannot be expected to achieve SG80 in the reassessment tree even if they are completed, the CAB may redraft and re-set the conditions. The timelines on completion of any new conditions should be shorter than 1 certification period (i.e. 5 years), and they should contain appropriate milestones."</p> <p>The current swordfish condition 7 related to the HCRs (PI 1.2.2) will need to be re-written using the wording of the FCR 2.0. The proposed deadline to close out of Conditions is at the first surveillance audit (2021) following the re-assessment in 2020. This will align with the project plan of the Australian Research Council (ARC) funded project on revisions and further developments of the billfish harvest strategy for the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) and the selection by the revised harvest strategy by the Topical Tuna Research and Advisory Group (TTRAG) and final adoption by the end of 2020.</p>
4	If a fishery assessment, implications for assessment
	There are no implications as the scores and rationales under FCR 2.0 will follow the relevant reporting requirements.
5	If a fishery assessment, mitigation of the implications for assessment
	NA

6	If a fishery assessment, how many conditions does the fishery have and will their progress be affected (positive or negative)?
	At the time of the re-assessment only tuna and swordfish P1 conditions remain open. The other conditions will be closed out as part of the 4 th annual surveillance audit.
7	What is the status of the current assessment or audit?
	The fishery is at the 4 th annual surveillance and the surveillance report and the Announcement Comment Draft Report (ACDR) for the re-assessment posted on the 26 th November 2019.
8	Further comments
	This variance is requesting to allow what has been granted to other tuna fisheries (and highly migratory species), including the two other Walker Seafoods UoAs as part of the mega variance. This variance follows the same intent for a highly migratory species, swordfish.
9	If applicable, additional information added after the MSC's request



Sabine Daume
q.inspecta GmbH (q.inspecta)
Ackerstrasse
Frick
Switzerland
5070

Sent by email

Date: 1/20/2020

Dear Sabine Daume,

I write with reference to your submission on 08/01/2020 of a request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement (CR) to allow:

To carry over the 2 swordfish conditions (Condition 6 and 7 for PI 1.1.2 and 1.2.2 respectively) assigned for Walker Seafoods tuna and swordfish longline fishery into the re-assessment.

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:

- As part of the CAB-wide variation for rescoring tuna fisheries and aligning condition milestones, Walker seafood tuna and swordfish fishery was listed as part of the variance but only for WCPO yellowfin and albacore.
- Walker seafood (now named Australian ETBF tuna) has South Pacific swordfish as a UoC but this was not part of the CAB-wide variation.
- There are no other Pacific swordfish fisheries currently certified or in assessment and therefore would not be under any harmonisation requirement per se.
- It is proposed to carry the 2 swordfish conditions (Condition 6 and 7 for PI 1.1.2 and 1.2.2 respectively) assigned for Walker Seafoods tuna and swordfish longline fishery into the re-assessment.
- The proposed deadline to close out of Conditions is at the first surveillance audit (2021) following the re-assessment in 2020.
- This deadline will align with the project plan of the Australian Research Council (ARC) funded project on revisions and further developments of the billfish harvest strategy

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

- Stakeholders are informed

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: Assurance Services International