



NOAA FISHERIES

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Meeting of the Permanent Advisory Committee to Advise the U.S. Commissioners to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission

Teleconference call
July 7, 2020

Meeting Minutes

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August 2020

**Meeting of the Permanent Advisory Committee
to Advise the U.S. Commissioners to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission**

July 7, 2020

Meeting Minutes

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**Meeting of the Permanent Advisory Committee
to Advise the U.S. Section to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission**

Meeting conducted by teleconference

July 7, 2020

Meeting Minutes

1. The meeting was opened at 10 am on July 7, 2020, with a roll call; the list of participants is provided in Attachment 1.
2. The Chair of the Permanent Advisory Committee (PAC), Mr. Ryan Steen, provided opening remarks, and then turned the meeting over to Mr. Michael Tosatto, Regional Administrator of the NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIRO).

Agenda Item 1 – Update to U.S. priorities for WCPFC in 2020

a. Tropical tunas

3. NOAA stated it is still working with the concept proposal that it introduced last December and is working on an information request through the Scientific Committee that would allow NOAA to flesh out the proposal further. NOAA summarized the four main aspects of the U.S. proposal that it continues to welcome PAC input on: 1) the level of risk that would be appropriate in terms of breaching the reference points; 2) for bigeye tuna (BET), the appropriate balance in allocation between the purse seine and longline sectors (ultimately expressed in terms of catch for longline and fish aggregating devices (FADs) closure length for the purse seine); 3) methods for allocating the longline BET total allowable catch (TAC) among members and Participating Territories; and 4) regarding the purse seine fishery, the level of importance for the United States to pursue (or not) the potential changes in the way that floating objects are treated during the FAD closures, in particular small floating objects and natural floating objects. The Chair asked if the United States is close to having a written document with suggested options for a proposal for the December meeting, as the PAC would like to consider and discuss the options in advance.
4. NOAA noted that although the United States has signaled it would like to see substantive negotiations and possible modifications to the tropical tuna measure, the Pacific Islands Fisheries Forum Agency (FFA) members have stated they would be seeking a rollover of the current measure without changes. This issue may be resolved in part at the upcoming Heads of Delegation (HOD) meeting.
5. The Chair asked whether the United States is close to having a written document with suggested options for a proposal for the December meeting, as the PAC would like to consider and discuss the options in advance.

6. NOAA responded it has hypothetical scenarios that can be considered. For example, one approach would be to maintain the purse seine BET allocation (in terms of FAD closure lengths), and allocate any extra allowable exploitation to the longline sector. Once the information request goes to the Commission, if the Scientific Committee (SC) agrees and tasks the scientific provider to carry out this task, NOAA may be able to have a full draft proposal ready in October or November.
7. The Chair thanked NOAA for this example and noted that it is essential to have the proposal fleshed out before the PAC meeting in October.
8. A PAC member noted three things: 1) he was encouraged to learn that the FFA is reconsidering science-manager dialogues, which have proven useful in other fora, so it would be good to bridge that divide; 2) regarding BET, the most recent scientific advice states fishing mortality should not be increased and spawning stock biomass should be maintained at the average of recent levels; and 3) it is important to agree on a target reference point (TRP) on BET. He encouraged the United States to consider objectives for BET in the harvest strategies, taking into account the stock-specific objective in the management measure, which is to maintain spawning stock biomass above recent levels.
9. With regard to the concept proposal, NOAA stated that it would seek to avoid complex equations in the proposal; the overall goal is to make the plan simple to understand.
10. A PAC member shared his support along with Hawaii Longline Association's (HLA) for NOAA's plan moving forward. He inquired about the timing of the interaction with the SPC and whether NOAA was waiting on further information from the SPC. He would like to see the United States continue to develop a proposal to address the shortcomings in the allocation for the U.S. longline sector, and would support the changes noted for the purse seine fishery, because we have been on the losing side of the measure. He stated he would also like the United States to push for the measure being addressed or revised this year, rather than rolling it over. Regarding the proposal, the PAC member asked to see hypothetical numbers and since there is not a target reference point, the limit reference point (LRP) is key. Additionally, he noted the importance of seeing the new stock assessment from the SC, but overall supported the United States moving forward with the proposal.
11. Another PAC member inquired about the status of the Northern Committee (NC) meeting in July. NOAA answered that the meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) - Northern Committee Joint Working Group for the Management of Pacific Bluefin Tuna (JWG) was originally scheduled for late July, but Japan has notified the Commission that it cannot host an in-person meeting. The co-chairs of the JWG were discussing whether and how to hold the JWG meeting. The NC meeting is scheduled for September but NOAA has not heard whether Japan still intends to host it, and expects this to be discussed in the upcoming virtual HOD meeting.
12. The PAC member asked whether the U.S. position for all meetings is to hold them virtually rather than postpone, or cancel them entirely. NOAA answered yes, its position has been to hold the meetings virtually to accommodate necessary work. For the NC for

example, necessary work might include the work plan and Pacific bluefin tuna (PBF) measure.

13. A Commissioner asked whether the United States has heard from any other countries regarding the FFA's position to consider a rollover of the tropical tuna measure or whether it is too early to know.
14. NOAA replied that the FFA sent its letter within the last two weeks so it is too early to know definitely one way or another. However, the United States heard from Japan that as a matter of principle, it does not want to see automatic rollovers, and the Republic of Korea (ROK) very tentatively signaled a similar point of view. These are the only two other WCPFC members the United States has heard from at this point.
15. The Commissioner then asked whether the United States has any idea whether the ROK is going to put forward another proposal on FADs this year. NOAA replied it has asked the ROK its intentions and views, but has not heard back. Last year, the United States and the ROK submitted a co-proposal, so the goal is to work with the ROK again on the issue, and when NOAA hears from the ROK, it will share that information with the PAC.
16. The Commissioner thanked NOAA and stated that he appreciates in advance anything NOAA can share in the future.
17. The Chair supported this statement and invited NOAA to present that information to the PAC when it is available, noting the importance of timing with respect to the annual meeting of the PAC in October.
18. The Commissioner also stated that although this is an unusual year, he hoped the United States could progress on whatever is possible; noting the significant challenges there will be in the negotiations. Adding to what a PAC member had noted he is also interested in seeing the hypothetical scenarios for the U.S. longline and purse seine fisheries, along with other fishing sectors, in hopes of progressing a proposal and the tropical tuna measure.
19. A member of the public asked whether there has been any discussion with the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), or other Compact of Free Association (COFA) countries that may help the United States and the FFA members come to an agreement on the measure. NOAA responded that no specific conversations with COFA countries on that topic have been held.
20. The Chair asked NOAA whether the United States has had any bilateral discussions with any countries about tropical tunas since the last PAC teleconference meeting (April 28, 2020), and if not, were there plans as to how the United States is going to engage in those discussions in advance of the Commission meeting.

21. NOAA answered it will continue to reach out to some like-minded CCMs¹ and flag states, particularly Japan and the ROK. Currently, the United States is in the middle of negotiations under the South Pacific Tuna Treaty (SPTT) with the FFA members, in which many of the discussions go hand in hand with WCPFC issues.
22. The Department of State (DoS) added that the United States has been in touch with FFA members in relation to terms of access for the SPTT, however, generally the United States separates those negotiations from those for the tropical tuna measure in the WCPFC. Although, they are coinciding more this year than in past years. During the SPTT talks, some FFA members have raised questions about the future of the tropical tunas measure and concerns about how the United States' implementation, such as combining the high seas and U.S. EEZ limits in the Effort Limit Area for Purse Seine (ELAPS). Bilateral conversations will depend on how SPTT negotiations go. The virtual nature of recent meetings has made it more difficult to have productive side meetings. Depending on how we engage with FFA and non-FFA countries, it will guide the U.S. objectives in the WCPFC. The upcoming HOD meeting will lead to more certainty and the United States will design objectives and make more efforts to engage bilaterally with both FFA and non-FFA member countries.

b. Pacific bluefin tuna

23. NOAA provided an update on PBF. The executive summary for the PBF stock assessment was posted to the IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee meeting page. The International Scientific Committee (ISC) will finalize the full stock assessment report at the ISC plenary meeting in July. Additionally, the co-Chairs of the JWG circulated a letter to both Commissions (WCPFC and IATTC) announcing that Japan is unable to host the JWG meeting in July. Although the preference is for an in-person meeting, it has yet to be determined what is viable. The co-Chairs notified members they may need to consider a rollover for the measure, as the IATTC measure expires this year and several provisions of the WCPFC measure sunset in 2020. For example, the ability to carry over up to 17% of uncaught catch limit from the previous year, the 300 metric ton (MT) transfer catch from Taiwan to Japan, and the ability for CCMs to transfer some of their small fish limits to use to catch large fish. NOAA explained if there is a desire to rollover some of the expiring provisions, they need to be agreed to by NC since this is a northern stock. Finally, the United States recently submitted a second round of comments on the draft Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS) CMM and the CDS Technical meeting will likely be postponed until in-person meetings resume. NOAA welcomed any questions or comments.
24. A PAC member stated he would like to discuss the full ISC stock assessment report with NOAA when it is available for review. He noted the need to review several details of the assessment before advising on an appropriate US position. He also noted the importance of continuing conversations with Japan in the next few months as the schedules are resolved and maintaining a precautionary approach on managing PBF.

¹ WCPFC Members, Participating Territories, and Cooperating Non-members, collectively referred to as "CCMs".

25. Another PAC member supported what the previous PAC member stated and expressed his concern in pushing for any quota changes, in the absence of seeing the full stock assessment. He hoped his questions could be answered by the stock assessment and looked forward to further discussions on PBF at the October PAC meeting.
26. A PAC member noted that her preliminary look at the PBF stock assessment executive summary led her to note that the stock looked to be rebuilding to the target the United States wanted, within the timeframe of the rebuilding plan, which indicated the current CMMs are working and supported continuation of the existing measure. She also noted that there will likely be requests to increase catch if there are discussions this year on that topic.
27. A PAC member noted that the United States had previously held the position that progress on a PBF CDS should occur in concert with progress on a WCPFC CDS. He asked if the U.S. position had changed since there is work progressing on a PBF CDS and there has been no progress on a more global WCPFC CDS.
28. NOAA answered it has not heard anything from the FFA on its plans or goals for CDS. NOAA has been in support of the development of a CDS for PBF as long as it is not contradictory to the work (or lack of work) thus far. There are still a number of issues for discussion related to a PBF CDS, and much of the draft CDS currently borrows heavily from the at the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) Resolutions related to CDS for Atlantic bluefin.
29. Another PAC member noted that last year at NC, the United States “did some favors” for Japan in the hopes that this year we could achieve a better East-West split on the fishery. According to the executive summary of PBF stock assessment, a catch increase should be possible. Additionally, during the General Advisory Committee (GAC) meeting (IATTC), there were questions about why the ISC plenary is closed; the answer being they could only accommodate a certain number of participants on the virtual platform, which is why there was no room for observers or members of the public.
30. A PAC member noted that re-balancing the East-West split was important. His company has vessels fishing out of California and the current measures to restrict catch affect his vessels.
31. NOAA responded with two statements: 1) while this discussion is WCPFC-focused, the U.S. position, particularly through the JWG, has been to negotiate in the West for our advantages in the East (Pacific), knowing that is where our fisheries participate. Overall, with the mindset of conservation and rebuilding of the stock principally, going forward, the PAC members should know that NOAA is in constant contact with its West Coast Region (WCR) counterparts for how to use negotiations in the West to advantage the East. 2) ISC rules do not allow for participation by outside observers at its meetings. The United States is aware of this issue, and has generally been supportive of participation of observers in international fora such as the ISC.

c. North Pacific striped marlin

32. NOAA provided an update that since the last PAC teleconference call, it has received feedback from a PAC member and member of the public, and also had conversations with the HLA, Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (hereafter the Council), and the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC). HLA is interested in catch limits while some non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are interested in exploring other options such as removal of the shallowest hook, circle hooks, live release, etc. PIFSC agreed to run projections for PIRO, which allows NOAA to explore scenarios for consideration. PIFSC evaluated whether live release could help meet the rebuilding plan, and estimated that 53% of all striped marlin would have to be released alive in order to meet the goals of the rebuilding plan. Data from NOAA's Observer program indicate that only 48% of striped marlin are hauled in alive, so that suggests that live release is not a stand-alone option to meet rebuilding, but it could supplement other mitigation options. The United States still intends to submit a proposal to WCPFC, though it understands that other members may not be interested in discussing new proposals beyond a very limited scope. After the HOD meeting occurs, NOAA should have a better idea of the scope of work the Commission might consider this year.
33. A PAC member thanked NOAA for exploring and looking into the option of live release. She noted this is a very interested first look at a management measure that goes beyond a quota or catch limit. Her concern is that when a catch limit is reached, it could lead to marlin discarded alive or dead, and if there were only a catch limit in place, one ultimately might kill more fish. She noted she is looking forward to seeing what other combinations of options arise and added if projections including removal of top hooks, one additional advantage may be a benefit for oceanic whitetip sharks.
34. NOAA replied it has been thinking about how to model circle hooks and elimination of the shallowest (top) hook, but hook type and set type are not included in the readily available data so it will have to make some broad assumptions on what is occurring in other fleets in order to evaluate those options.
35. Another PAC member stated he maintains the position that catch limits are the best way forward for compliance reasons. He emphasized he does not have any confidence that foreign fleets will comply with live release or gear modifications. Operationally, various fleets do things differently and this could affect how many dead striped marlin are brought up or differences in depth of gear, which could be a challenge if NOAA aim's to move forward with the idea of removing the shallowest hook, specifically in foreign fleets. He supports the United States developing a measure, but does not support any live release or gear configurations because he does not believe there will be compliance by other fleets. He suggested NOAA look at the relative impact of the U.S. fleet compared to other fleets.
36. A member of the public stated the Council recommended the staged and phased reductions, and thanked PIFSC for running the additional projections. When using the projections in the proposal, it is important that the catch level coming from the projections are given as a TAC or prospective limit and not phrased as a percentile

reduction from the status quo. He expressed concern that any proposal should not unduly burden the U.S fleet when other fleets may be contributing to greater depletion.

d. South Pacific albacore

37. NOAA provided a brief update noting it has reached out to Fiji who has been Chairing the WG, but since that Chair left the Fisheries Ministry, a replacement has not been named. The draft of the WG roadmap has not been updated or circulated further since WCPFC16. If the WG holds a session this year, it will not be in conjunction with SC or the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC), but given the lack of a Chair, the likelihood of holding a session is unlikely.
38. A Commissioner asked NOAA if there has been anyone put forward or discussions on choosing a new Chair, noting it will be difficult to have the WG proceed without one. NOAA answered no; there has not been any communications with the WG members, Secretariat, or Fiji regarding this matter.
39. The Commissioner noted it would be productive if NOAA could figure out what can happen, realistically, due to the concern if there is no Chair this year, it could affect next year as well. NOAA stated it would work on figuring out an appropriate method for progressing the issue.
40. A PAC member supported the Commissioners statement and emphasized the South Pacific albacore fishery has become increasingly important to U.S. troll vessels.
41. NOAA summarized the initiative out of American Samoa where they are taking the opportunity of a winter season (November 2020 through early 2021 - Austral summer) to diversify their fleet to troll fisheries for South Pacific albacore out of Pago Pago. NOAA, the Council, and the Government of American Samoa are all working with industry to determine how to accomplish that initiative, which adds to the importance of the South Pacific albacore stock to the U.S. fisheries.
42. A member of the public thanked NOAA for explaining that initiative. He noted that during the Austral summer months, the high seas pockets south of Samoa and French Polynesia have become increasingly more important. In 2019, the Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) showed that for the last two to three years, volume of catches by the troll vessels (10) that fished in the South Pacific during the Austral summer made in three months was greater than the catch by the American Samoa longline fleet over a six month period (14-17 vessels).
43. A PAC member corrected this statement and noted those are not high seas pockets.

e. At-sea transshipment

44. NOAA provided an update on at-sea transshipment, noting that similarly to South Pacific albacore; it is unlikely the WG will hold a meeting with SC or TCC. NOAA is discussing options with the Co-Chair and Secretariat, which includes holding a virtual session in the fall of 2020. The Secretariat is unlikely to provide IT support for such a meeting so

NOAA is looking at other options. Any decisions on the issue will be circulated to PAC members. Additionally, the Co-Chair of the WG from Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) will be moving out of the fisheries sector at some point in time, so the FFA will be looking to potentially nominate a successor through the WCPFC, once his resignation is notified to the Commission.

45. A PAC member thanked NOAA for the information and thought it was encouraging to hear about a potential virtual meeting. He asked if the Terms of Reference (TOR) have been agreed upon and circulated to members, and whether NOAA thinks that before the Co-Chair leaves, they can pursue a solicitation with a consultant that was previously discussed and financed at the meeting last year. He added there are things the United States can do within the WG while waiting on work from the consultant, including requiring transshipment observer reports be sent directly to the Secretariat, modifications to the regional observer handbook, and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) strengthening transshipment data sharing with the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) and IATTC.
46. NOAA appreciated the suggestions and recommendations and will potentially put out a circular seeking recommendation from the WG. Regarding the consultancy and request for proposals, NOAA explained it was delayed by COVID and the Secretariat has subsequently lost staff, which has created further problems. Regarding the TOR, the final version was not agreed upon by the WG but it should be coming out in a circular in the near future.

Agenda Item 2 – PAC meetings

a. October PAC meeting

47. NOAA provided a brief update, noting the meeting dates for the annual meeting of the PAC is still scheduled for October 15-16, 2020. However, NOAA is assessing the best plan of action for this meeting- whether to hold it in person or virtually, and will make a decision in the near future.

Agenda Item 3 – Upcoming WCPFC meetings

48. NOAA summarized that SC is going to take place as scheduled, but virtually. The fate of the JWG meeting at the end of July along with the NC meeting scheduled for September are yet to be determined. NOAA is assuming TCC will happen as scheduled, but virtually, since FSM has announced it cannot host an in-person meeting. NOAA also expects the annual Commission meeting to take place virtually. For the working group meetings that had been scheduled, the United States is waiting to hear back from the working group chairs on the details, but is assuming the meetings will take place virtually as well.
49. A PAC member thanked NOAA for the update and emphasized that under the Convention, virtual meetings should be treated the same as in-person meetings in terms of Observers. He would appreciate it if the United States could support this and make

sure it is known that accredited Observers would like to engage in these discussions virtually, as they would in in-person meetings.

Agenda Item 4 – Other business

a. COVID-19

50. NOAA noted the three waivers/suspensions that WCPFC adopted related to COVID-19 have been extended through July 31, 2020. There are no particular proposals for what to do after that date, but the fate of these waivers/suspensions will be discussed at the upcoming HOD meeting.
51. A Commissioner suggested that although the Commission has been agreeing to these waivers on a month-by-month basis, it would be preferable to extend that timeline, given the realistic outlook for the near future.
52. NOAA agreed with this idea and noted part of this is driven by FFA members. From the FFA's point of view, they are cautious about waiving important requirements and NOAA speculates they are having internal debates about substitutes or conditions that could be applied in lieu of requirements.
53. A PAC member added he is concerned that as time continues, COVID responses may impact the stock assessments and other important scientific work that the SC is working to complete. He highlighted the idea to advance electronic monitoring (EM) and noted that Pew circulated comments on the draft EM CMM with three main points to emphasize: 1) stakeholder participation throughout design and implementation process is important; 2) the measure should account for potential future changes in the program; and 3) there should be a minimum review threshold that occurs at the national, sub regional, and regional levels.

b. U.S. proposal regarding HSBI vessel pennant size

54. NOAA summarized the United States intends to put forth a proposal to TCC and then to the Commission, to modify the specifications for the pennant used by small boarding vessels for high seas boarding and inspection. The current size of the pennant is inadvertently the same as the size of the inspection vessel's flag, which is a safety hazard for small boarding vessels -- the pennant obstructs the look-out of the small boarding vessel. The proposal is simply to reduce the size of the pennant. The United States is not expecting any opposition.

c. VMS SWG update

55. NOAA provided a brief update: the WCPFC VMS small WG (SWG) that started after the last Commission meeting has been proceeding well with unusually robust participation and input. The most recent solicitation for input on the latest redraft of the concept paper brought up concerns that were not present before in relation to policy level. The tasking of the SWG was to report to TCC, but now, the SWG is having difficulties reaching consensus. Unless any significant developments occur between now and TCC, it would

likely be in the best interest of the United States to seek a recommendation from TCC and Commission that the SWG continue its work with an adjusted target of presenting recommendations to TCC17 next year.

56. A PAC member noted he understood there is no agreement on whether to allow vessels to report using AIS in the event of VMS failure, but he believes AIS will be a valuable tool for the Commission to use for science and compliance. He suggested AIS could be a useful supplementary tool to VMS to provide important fisheries data and would support further conversation on this issue at TCC.
57. The Chair noted this concluded the last agenda item and asked whether any PAC members, U.S. Commissioners, U.S. Government, or members of the public had any further questions or comments.
58. A PAC member raised a question for NOAA: he noted there was a letter sent by Indonesia about the death of an observer and there have been subsequent discussions at the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and elsewhere about conditions of crews on vessels. He inquired whether this was going to be discussed further at TCC or the annual Commission meeting.
59. NOAA answered that some of the Pacific Island Countries (PIC) may be working on drafting a measure for WCPFC, and Indonesia had flagged it as an issue they wanted to discuss but NOAA has not seen any draft proposals. The United States has not progressed any more on its potential proposal. The general FFA stance is that the Commission rolls over measures this year and does not focus on new proposals, so NOAA is waiting to see whether or not this issue will be included on the agenda this year given the current circumstances.
60. Another PAC member stated he would like to strengthen port state measures-and in the meantime, he asked if the United States can support the Commission gathering more information on port activities. He explained that information on port state measures would 1) increase measure and scale of scope of activity in the Commission, 2) provide data that is lacking to facilitate review of CMMs, and 3) inform development of WCPFC funding mechanisms required by para 25 of CMM 2017-02 (Minimum Standards for Port State Measures). The PAC member noted Pew has developed approximately 20 questions that small island developing states (SIDs) CCMs could complete to characterize port activity and would be happy to share with the U.S. Government, if it were interested.
61. NOAA thanked the PAC member for his thoughts and asked him to send the referenced materials.
62. A Commissioner asked NOAA whether the Commission would be discussing rolling over the Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS) for another year. NOAA answered that last year the Commission adopted a two-year measure that lasts through the end of 2021; no new measure is needed this year.

63. A PAC member asked NOAA to what extent PAC members will get a summary of the HOD meeting and whether that will determine what the United States works on for the December Commission meeting.
64. NOAA answered it is hard to speculate on the timing of that, but pointed out the Chair emphasized the HOD meeting will not be a decision making meeting- it will be exchanging views. If any issues come up where Commission decisions need to be made, subsequent intersessional decision-making will occur by the Chair. NOAA does not know whether that will occur or not. Regarding narrowing the scope of the agenda, that will likely be a decision of the Executive Director and Chair for the meeting since they are responsible for the agenda. NOAA is unsure but assuming this may be part of the normal process of developing a provisional meeting agenda and putting it out for public review. An example of an action that may require intersessional decision could be a change to the meeting dates of a particular meeting, which would be made subsequent to the HOD meeting, not during.
65. NOAA congratulated Drew Lawler on receiving his Presidential appointment- he is now a Commissioner for the WCPFC, IATTC, and ICCAT. Since he was previously an Alternate Commissioner, his capacity does not change, but his role and title are now official.
66. NOAA thanked the Chair for his leadership, the PIRO team for the preparatory work, and to everyone's contributions to the meeting. He noted that in this meeting, the PAC did not discuss specifics of the high seas table or proposed changes to the tropical tuna measure. He ensured he would be looking at those closely with his colleagues in the near future. He stated the PAC meetings are a great venue to hear people's thoughts and perspectives but often, things come to mind after these meetings. Therefore, he provided an open invitation for anyone to reach out to him on email to give additional thoughts and perspectives as they come to mind in the weeks and months ahead, noting the sooner the better as NOAA continues to drill down positions and objectives. He thanked everyone for participating.
67. The Chair thanked NOAA and congratulated the Commissioner on his formal appointment. He echoed thanks to the U.S. Government for putting together information for this meeting on behalf of the PAC. He thanked PAC members for being involved in a less than ideal meeting format while keeping the discussions moving forward. The next formally scheduled meeting is in October and he noted NOAA will let the PAC know in the near future about the meeting format. He urged anyone to take the Commissioner's advice to reach out if their thoughts were not shared during this meeting and encouraged NOAA to reach out to the PAC if it needs more information as it develops options and proposals that will be discussed in October.

ATTACHMENT 1 – Meeting Participants

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ATTACHMENT 2 – Final Agenda

Meeting of the Permanent Advisory Committee to Advise the U.S. Commissioners to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission

July 7, 2020, 10 am - 12 pm HST

AGENDA

1. Update to U.S. priorities for WCPFC in 2020
 - a. Tropical tunas
 - b. Pacific bluefin tuna
 - c. North Pacific striped marlin
 - d. South Pacific albacore
 - e. At-sea transshipment
2. PAC meetings
 - a. October PAC meeting
3. Upcoming WCPFC meetings
4. Other business
 - a. COVID-19
 - b. U.S. proposal regarding HSBI vessel pennant size
 - c. VMS SWG update

ATTACHMENT 3 – Tentative 2020 U.S. Priorities

Top-priority:

Issue	2020 Objective	Notes	Key steps
Tropical tunas	<p>With a view to the general objective of providing for greater LL exploitation and reduced BET mortality from PS while satisfying PICs' concerns with disproportionate conservation burdens:</p> <p>1) See adoption of favorable allocation decisions for BET catches in longline (p44) and purse seine fishing effort on the high seas (p28). 2) See agreement to evaluate effects of alternative FAD definition/restrictions (p18).</p>	<p>CMM 2018-01 is in effect through 2020; the small-garbage FAD provision expired at the end of 2019 (p18).</p>	<p>a. After reaching out to FFA, send letter to the Commission requesting specific information needed for allocation exercise. b. Consider development of proposal setting and allocating BET LL TAC. c. Consider development of proposal for allocation of transferable PS fishing effort limits. d. Prepare proposal to evaluate effects of alternative FAD definition/restrictions. e. Continue to explore ways to mitigate adverse impacts of limits on American Samoa.</p>
Pacific bluefin tuna	<p>1) Revise CMM if warranted by rebuilding progress, including consideration of limit increases (and ensure commensurate changes in IATTC Resolution). 2) Make progress on CDS for Pacific bluefin.</p>	<p>ISC conducting a stock assessment for PBF in 2020. JWG meeting scheduled for late July in Fukuoka, Japan</p>	<p>a. Informal outreach with Japan and other countries.</p>
NP striped marlin	<p>Revise the CMM to adopt exploitation controls that will rebuild stock within the rebuilding plan parameters</p>	<p>ISC to provide advice to WCPFC on recruitment scenarios.</p>	<p>a. Develop draft revised CMM. b. Informal outreach with FFA, Japan, Taiwan, ROK and China</p>
SP albacore	<p>Active engagement through the roadmap WG for South Pacific</p>	<p>SP albacore roadmap to hold two face-to-face meetings, a one day meeting prior to</p>	<p>a. At SPC head of fisheries, have a small meeting on margins to meet with SP Albacore</p>

	albacore.	SC, and a one day meeting immediately following TCC	south Pacific countries b. Coordinate with American Samoa officials
Compliance Monitoring Scheme	<p>1) Continue to participate in the CMS process and work to ensure that is a fair and meaningful process.</p> <p>2) Participate in the CMS IWG to progress the CMS future work plan: development of audit points; improvements to case file system; development of risk-based assessment framework; development of corrective actions for instances of non-compliance; and development of guidelines for participation of observers.</p> <p>3) Continue to push for a more permanent CMS measure which includes a mechanism for responses to non-compliance.</p>	WCPFC16 agreed to establish a CMS Intersessional Working Group, Chaired by Robert Day (Canada), to continue intersessional work on the CMS Workplan	<p>a. Review and provide comments on US dCMR when provided and be prepared to address any areas on US potential compliance issues identified.</p> <p>b. Prepare for and participate in the CMS process by reviewing the dCMR and identifying an areas of non-compliance by other CCMs that the US wishes to highlight or address.</p> <p>c. Be prepared to provide updates on any outstanding Investigation Status issues from past assessments.</p> <p>d. Participate in the CMS IWG to develop audit points & begin work on a risk-based framework</p> <p>e. Support development of a list of obligations to be reviewed in 2021, which includes review of bycatch measures</p>
Regional Observer Programme	See substantial improvements to the flow of observer reports from ROP Providers to flag Members for investigations.	PNA blocked adoption of an ROP standard on the sharing of observer reports at TCC15. The TCC WG will continue work in 2020.	<p>a. Lead WG to develop recommendations to TCC16, focusing on improving tracking requests and responses, and improving pre-screening of observer reports to minimize false-positives.</p> <p>b. Consider provocative proposals on ROP and ROP-dependent CMMs to stimulate movement on this issue.</p>
At-sea transshipment	<p>1) Further develop guidelines for allowing at-sea transshipment and explore implications of further restrictions on at-sea transshipment.</p> <p>2) Strengthen implementation of existing regulatory scheme, particularly in making use of pre-transshipment notifications and transshipment declarations for</p>	USA is co-lead, with RMI, the IWG on review of the transshipment measure.	<p>a. Work with Secretariat to develop mechanism to facilitate dissemination of notifications and declarations to MCS entities when requested.</p> <p>b. Identify non data elements of CMM 2009-06 to be revised in 2020.</p>

	enforcement. 3) Explore EM applications for monitoring transshipment at sea.		
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Medium-priority:

Issue	2020 objective	Notes	Key steps
Budget	Work with intersessional working group.	Cook Islands is spearheading the intersessional review of Secretariat salaries.	
Charters	Make progress on dealing with the effects of vessels chartered by SIDS.	WPFC16 agreed that SC, TCC and the Commission should continue to consider improvements to charter notification requirements and/or the treatment of chartered vessels in the WCPFC more generally.	a. Get a better handle on status and dynamics of charters and how they influence CMM effectiveness. b. support review of the effectiveness of the current charter notification scheme/management of charters more generally
eR and eM	Provide input on FAD management related to non-entangling and biodegradable FADs.	WCPFC17 to consider adoption of measures of the implementation of non-entangling and/or biodegradable materials on FADs based on guidelines defined by the FAD MO IWG and advice from SC16 and TCC16. FAD MO WG to hold a meeting alongside SC16 at a date to be determined.	
Harvest strategies	See progress on harvest strategy elements, particularly for southern LL, tropical LL, and tropical PS.	For 2020, harvest strategy workplan lists: SP ALB: SC provide advice on performance of potential management procedures (MPs), TCC consider implications of potential MPs, and Commission consider advice on progress towards MPs SKJ: SC provide advice on performance of candidate management procedures (MPs), TCC consider implications of candidate MPs, and Commission consider and refine a candidate set of MPs	

		BET and YFT: Commission provide guidance on desirable fishery conditions to inform TRP.	
IUU Vessel List			a. Participate in routine listing procedures. b. continue to consider options for cross-listing procedures
Marine mammals	Adopt best handling practices for the safe release of cetaceans, improve understanding of the impacts of fishing on cetaceans in the Convention Area, and support adoption of a stronger cetacean CMM which applies to both purse seine and longline interactions.	At WCPFC16, ROK proposed modifications to the current cetacean CMM (2011-03) to include requirements for longline fisheries. Japan was unwilling to adopt the modifications without further advice from SC	a. Support the development and review of best handling practices for cetaceans at SC16 b. Support SPC review of available data to provide estimates of fishery interaction types and levels with cetaceans, for review by the SC
Overlap area	1) Identify opportunities to improve implementation of IATTC-WCPFC agreement. 2) Support AS office to facilitate smooth cross-endorsement of observer placements and trips.	Declarations of CCMs to the WCPFC on which RFMO measures apply in overlap area are available (WCPFC13) but incomplete. Declarations to IATTC don't appear to be available on the IATTC website, but are available in various circulars and meeting minutes from the WCPFC.	a. Request list of overlap notifications from CCMs, from Secretariat.
Port State measures	Support Embassy and HQ engagement with PICs interested in acceding to PSMA		
Seabirds	Continue to strengthen mitigation effectiveness, particularly in NP small-longline fleets.		a. Push for improved reporting and species identification skills for observers. b. Progress mitigation effectiveness on small Llers in NP. c. Look into data indicating very high albatross catches by Japanese small Llers.
Sea turtles	Improve data collection on sea turtle interactions and continue development of a stronger CMM that more effectively reduces HMS fisheries' adverse impacts, particularly on the leatherback.	New measure adopted in 2018 - includes obligation to review the measure in 2021 to explore further expansion to deep-set. U.S. should continue to push for modifications to the ROP MSDF alongside work scheduled for 2019 - including project 93 and	a. Continue to track Project 93 and development of observer data collection elements for transshipment - consider proposing modifications to the ROP MSDF to TCC15. b. Track implementation of CMM 2018-04. c. Consider development of a proposal to further expand CMM 2018-04 in 2021.

		development of observer data collection elements for transshipment.	
SIDS issues	1) Improve efforts to cooperate with SIDS and consult on proposals for disproportionate burden implications. 2) Strengthen USG coordination in PIC fisheries development.	AT SPC HOF, USAID rolling out \$14 million MOU with SPC. Will focus on coastal fisheries and economic development.	a. Regularize process of consulting with SIDS on proposals and other issues of interest. Consider trip to Honiara to meet with FFA or raise WCPFC on the margins of tuna treaty consultation. b. Host USG interagency PIC fisheries development coordination meeting in HNL, Spring 2020. Will include State, USAID, DOI, and PIRO.
Vessel Monitoring System			a. Terry to lead VMS intersessional WG

Continuing priority – no identified 2020 action

Issue	2020 objective	Notes	Key steps
Catch Documentation Scheme	Continue to engage in the development of a WCPFC catch documentation scheme.		a. Review and provide feedback to FFA on any draft measures or other documentations related to the WCPDC CDS. b. Participate in any electronic or in-person meetings relating to the CDS working group.
Data	Improve the quality and quantity of fisheries data held and used by the Commission.		
High Seas Boarding and Inspection Scheme			
Crew labor standards			
Marine debris/pollution			a. Explore opportunities for ALDFG harmonization in RFMOs.
New members	Continue to push for a process for interested and eligible CNMs to become full members.	FFA members continue to strongly oppose new membership as well as the development of a formal process for	United States could consider reaching out to other supportive members to try to progress the issue in advance of WCPFC17.

		accession. Other members (Japan, EU, China, Taiwan) have been supportive of the U.S. position to develop a process and to support new membership.	
NP Albacore	Contribute to MSE progress.	NP albacore MSE work on hold until after new stock assessment is completed. Potential MSE meeting in late 2020 or early 2021.	
NP Swordfish		Next stock assessment scheduled for 2022	