



Fishery Data Collection and Research Committee – Technical Committee

Data Collection Subpanel

April 23-24, 2020

1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Draft Report

1. Welcome and introductions

Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council (Council) staff welcomed participants of the Fishery Data Collection and Research Committee - Technical Committee (FDCRC-TC) Data Collection Subpanel (DCSP) and led introductions. Present via teleconference were Scott Bloom, Domingo Ochavillo, Hongguang Ma, Jude Lizama, Michael Quach, Brent Tibbatts, and Thomas Ogawa. Other participants presented via teleconference were John Gourley, Thomas Flores, Tino Aguon, and Richard Farrell.

2. Approval of draft agenda

The draft agenda for the 2020 FDCRC-TC DCSP was approved by members.

3. Report on previous TC recommendations and Council actions

Council staff presented on updates to progress on FDCRC-TC recommendations from the 2019 FDCRC-TC meeting. Last year the committee had one recommendation: for Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR) to provide time series of the number of commercial permit holders and number of violations for non-compliance to the commercial permit for use in the annual stock assessment and fishery evaluation (SAFE) report. A letter was sent to DMWR to request these data but there was no response received. DMWR requested their enforcement officers for this information, and they were provided with one year of data showing 12 violations in 2019. DMWR will continue to follow up to retrieve these data.

4. Status of the fishery dependent data collection improvement efforts

A. American Samoa

Domingo Ochavillo, DMWR, presented on updates to the state of fishery dependent data collection improvement efforts in American Samoa. There was not much change regarding the data collection systems. A meeting was held with DMWR staff regarding the Pacific Insular Fisheries Monitoring, Assessment and Planning Summit (PIFMAPS) recommendations, but there was no additional progress to report on this front.

B. Guam

Brent Tibbatts, Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources (DAWR), presented on updates to the state of fishery dependent data collection improvement efforts in Guam. DAWR's main data input staff left the agency at the end of 2019, and one of the other staff took over data input and approaching vendors to get them into the commercial receipt program. In the past few months, there was little data collected due to complications from the COVID-19 pandemic. Shore-based creel survey protocol was modified. There used to be four creel surveys and four participation surveys completed per month. A review of creel survey program in 2017 suggested that it would

be beneficial to have more creel surveys and fewer participation surveys. The survey design was changed so that now six creel surveys and two participation surveys are conducted every month. Reducing the number of participation surveys also reduced the island-wide count for boat-based surveys as well. No new regions were added to the surveys.

C. CNMI

Jude Lizama, DFW, presented on updates to the state of fishery dependent data collection improvement efforts in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). Improvements were made to the creel surveys, commercial purchase data, fishing tournament sampling, opportunistic interviews, and staff performance. The number of extra sampling days for creel surveys was reduced to focus on quality over quantity. Fewer sampling days allowed for additional time with commercial vendors. Commercial purchase data improved with business listings being acquired for all vendors, and a mandatory licensing and reporting regulation was passed. Catch, catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE), and species composition were collected from fishing tournaments. Opportunistic interviews collected information on enforcement confiscations, fishing exemptions, and northern island trips. Staff performance was improved with more trainings and additional practice in data validation and preparation.

Extra sampling days for shore-based creel surveys were stopped in September through December of 2019. There were 158 interviews conducted with 202 fishers who had mostly unsold catch (251 lbs. of catch surveyed with only 13% sold). Boat-based surveys conducted 73 interviews with 133 fishers who had mostly sold catch (4,374 lbs. of catch surveyed with 99% sold). For commercial purchase data, the mandatory reporting regulation passed in July 2019, causing vendors to be prompter and more proactive in their reporting. 206 vendors with 185 restaurants, 21 fish markets, and 10 commercial fishers were registered under North American Industry Classification system (NAICS) codes. Seven fishing tournaments were sampled in 2019, with some catch weighed and unweighted catch having lengths taken. Opportunistic surveys for confiscated catch were not entered into the data collection system.

There was a question from the committee regarding if *Saloptia powelli* is commonly caught, but it is not that common in CNMI relative to all other catches.

D. Hawaii

Thomas Ogawa, Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources (HDAR), presented on updates to the state of fishery dependent data collection improvement efforts in Hawaii. The Commercial Marine License (CML) catch and trip reports continue to be reported to HDAR via the online reporting system. The platform has upwards of 80 to 90% compliance because it is linked to a violation system that can issue citations. Contractors are now working on a similar reporting platform for dealers in Hawaii. Once up and running, the dealer platform will be automated such that discrepancies between fish caught and fish sold will be flagged.

There have not been many improvements to non-commercial data collection. The transition plan for the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) has had its initial draft completed. discussion on the transition plan and working with the territories toward MRIP certification was scheduled later in the agenda.

E. Small Boat E-Reporting App

Council staff presented on updates to the small boat electronic reporting application. The Council is developing this application to support data collection in the territories and provide an alternative source of data other than creel surveys. The application works best with mandatory

licensing and reporting in place. Traditionally, fish vendors record data in logbooks and give them to data collectors, with creel surveys being similar. The data collector transfers the information to a data transcriber (to perform quality assurance/quality control [QA/QC]) before sending it to the data portal and server (managed by the Western Pacific Fisheries Information Network [WPacFIN]). Data are compiled on the WPacFIN website where they are accessible.

This new application changes the flow of data, creating benefits for those with mandatory licensing and reporting. Fishermen would self-report using the application, and the data goes to a server before being reviewed by a Council contractor for QA/QC. Then, the data goes to the Council Amazon Web Services (AWS) bucket, to which local agencies, NMFS, and the Council have access. A community dashboard allows the fishermen to see summarized total data. Additionally, each fisher that has an account will have access to personal catch logs and market performance relative to the rest of those submitting data.

The administrative portion of the application was presented first. This allows for new accounts to be added with personal fishing information/license number/vendor number/etc. Once the account is established, fishers can use their own application to file new reports or view existing or submitted reports. They can also see rejected reports that might have questionable entries.

New fishing reports allow for stipulation of time and place departed, registration number, whether it was a charter trip or not, and crew members if more than one person fishing (however, preferable if everyone reports catch on their own account). Then, the user can add fishing events with gear type, number of gears used, time fished, targeted species, place fished, fish species caught, number caught, estimated weight caught, photos, and additional notes. They can also log if a fish was thrown back or lost to predation before recording return time and place. Multiple fishing events can be recorded. The user can also log fishing vendor reports by submitting amount of fish sold and price per pound. The application will not allow for a record of more fish sold than caught. The vendor application is meant to be used to document fish being purchased from fishermen, and can record amount being bought, species, number, pounds, and price per pound. Fishers are still expected to report when they land no catch from a fishing trip, and the application has been configured to allow this.

The community dashboard acts as incentive to the community in the form of feedback. Fishers can see data summaries of cumulative catch through the year, including total trips, fishers, areas, and cumulative catch against active quotas. The community dashboard can be viewed through the fishers' personal application, which also has a personal dashboard and a leaderboard for all reports. The dashboard also shows average price per pound of bought fish as well as price sold relative to average market price. The vendors have their own dashboard displaying amount of fish purchased by each establishment relative to the total amount purchased for the island/region.

The Council hopes to deploy the application soon after COVID-19 lockdown is lifted. The reporting application is for commercial fishers but was also designed with non-commercial fishermen in mind, allowing fishers to skip reporting of sales. However, mandatory reporting for commercial fishers only exists in CNMI currently and not for American Samoa or Guam. Both fishermen and vendors are required to register for licenses and report data in CNMI.

There was discussion about the small demographic of fishers that do not own smartphones or are not electronically knowledgeable. While the application can be used on a computer as well, the Council will provide 150 tablets to fishers and training on how to use the device to report catch. The Council will be working with local agencies to help identify fishers who might need this extra assistance. Paper logbooks will remain as backups for mandatory reporting requirements.

The application is only able to upload data while the user has internet access. The idea is that the fisher would log into their account before they leave the house, use the application while on their fishing trip out of internet range, and then the application will automatically upload the catch report(s) when internet access is available again. If the fishermen do not have internet access at home, the Council will explore installing a Wi-Fi hub at a main port that fishers depart from and configure their devices to automatically connect to this internet source. There will be continued test runs to address issues with the application as they arise.

It is the goal for the application that the territories will eventually maintain the system for the purpose of longevity, but the Council will help sustain the project as much as possible. It has not yet been decided if the data reported will eventually replace boat-based creel survey data or work in tandem with it. Likely, the application will be run simultaneously with creel surveys for several years to establish a calibration factor for creel survey time series. Later, a transition can be made to solely electronic reporting if the territory wishes to do so. One issue with this is that there is limited funding for boat-based creel surveys, and they may require additional resources.

F. WPacFIN Initiatives

Michael Quach, PIFSC, presented on WPacFIN initiatives for fishery dependent data collection improvement efforts. There were no major improvements or updates other than trying to figure out how the new electronic reporting application will impact the data collection program. In Guam, DAWR has shifted new staff into a survey position, but it is not clear if it is permanent. CNMI data collection has been improving as well, but they need more staff because they are running both shore- and boat-based surveys at the same time. It is not clear how the reduction of extra survey days in CNMI will affect the data collection program. WPacFIN is down to three programmers now, so currently, most effort has been put towards establishing the new dealer data system in Hawaii.

WPacFIN has been transitioning from Visual Fox Pro (VFP) to MySQL. The MySQL database is now housing all existing data from VFP, but application development has suffered from WPacFIN being shorthanded. The Hawaii dealer data system came online last year, and the Council's new application has brought up more questions for the MySQL database. They do not want to set up the database only to have a new data collection format that supersedes it.

5. Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Certification/Review of Non-Commercial Fisheries Surveys

A. Hawaii Marine Recreational Fishing Surveys

Ogawa also presented on updates for Hawaii Marine Recreational Fishing Surveys (HMRFS), which is currently focused on their survey transition plan. In Hawaii, they currently use angler access intercept surveys where data are retrieved from fishers at a main access point. This works to capture information from boat-based fishers by waiting at wash down areas near boat ramps, for example, but does not work as well for shoreline or insular fishing. Access point angler intercept surveys are being maintained for the boat-based fisheries but are having their sampling design modified. The largest change is that surveyors will not just be sampling when peak fishing activity is happening, but throughout the day with three different time blocks to increase intercept numbers and capture morning trips. While the survey focused on individual-based catch before, it will transition total boat-based catch since all catch for a vessel is typically kept in a single container. Also, the survey will look to restart data collection of invertebrates, since there are many important species in Hawaii fisheries (e.g., opihi, tako, lobsters, and crabs). The effort metric will be shifted from trips to gear hours. Trip hours will still be collected, but it is better to

have data on gear numbers and usage to identify catch from the range of gears used. A gear code for bottomfishing-trolling mixed trips will also be added.

A shoreline roving survey is also being suggested to cover more fishing grounds and capture more gear types being used. The survey will similarly collect total fishing hours and gear hours while utilizing the same time blocks as the boat-based survey (without the additional time block in the middle of the day) because shore fishing depends on targets, season, and when people work. There will be focus on data collection for invertebrates in the shoreline surveys as well.

Lastly, a new design for the random fishing effort mail-based survey is being introduced, with the only difference being the addition of invertebrate fishing trips to the questionnaire. The survey is very general currently, but the idea is to make it more nuanced to include both finfish and invertebrates to allow for better catch and effort estimates for those species.

There was discussion about getting HMRFS certified through MRIP. Once the transition plan is complete, it will be sent to MRIP, go through their peer review process, revised, and finalized. Then, MRIP will have to certify the shoreline roving survey, as the other two surveys have already been certified in the past and it is not clear if they must be certified again. It is hoped that the new design of the angler access point survey will be implemented in fiscal year 2022.

Because parallel surveys are no longer being completed, it is not clear if calibration can be done for the new survey design. Other regions do three years of calibration with both old and new surveys, but the old survey in Hawaii was only run for one year. There may be calibration needed for the shoreline roving survey if possible, but there was only four months of parallel surveys done for it. Additionally, there is worry about fatigue in the roving surveys such that surveyors may pester fishers since more layers are being added to the surveys. This may have a detrimental impact on the surveys and their results if fishers no longer want to be involved.

The survey protocols were revised following MRIP review. The MRIP implementation process starts with a formal review of the surveys, looking at pros and cons of the current design before decided whether they need to be revised. Hawaii surveys had several design flaws, so a series of workshops were held to examine the surveys and potential alternatives. The transition document itself is more about establishing a timeline since most other items were already approved, focusing on implementation of the surveys.

It may be easier for the territories to get MRIP funding and have their own roving surveys certified once the Hawaii roving survey is certified, but there will be several years of pilot studies performed before the actual surveys are implemented. The Hawaii roving survey will hopefully get certified this year, but the idea is to get approval for both the roving survey and mail-effort survey simultaneously. It is estimated that the roving survey might be implemented in fiscal year 2023 depending on how calibration fares.

Territory representatives wondered if it would be logical to make changes to their survey designs prior to the MRIP review and certification processes, and this was further discussed during the next agenda item (see below).

B. Territory Shore-Based Creel Surveys

Hongguang Ma, PIFSC, presented on updates to territory shore-based creel surveys. The Pacific Island Region (PIR) MRIP workshop was held in May 2019. Some major steps of survey transition are review of survey of designs, developing new survey designs, tests with pilot studies, and then peer review of the pilot studies by MRIP. The PIR MRIP workshop presented both pros and cons of some designs tested. Once a preferred survey design is established, the

process of transition to implementation begins. Benchmarking, looking at same data from different survey methods to see what differences exist, is required. Calibration is necessary when a new survey design is available but time series data from the old survey design are still needed; the process allows conversions of estimates from the old survey to the new survey. Although this MRIP process was done for Hawaii, there have been initial discussions for territory reviews. MRIP consultants will look at the territories' survey designs to see if they are statistically valid.

Having an additional layer of review to do improvements before the MRIP review is likely unnecessary and would require additional effort for potentially no reason. One of the outcomes of PIFMAPS was a recommendation that the territories' shore-based creel survey go through MRIP certification. The first step of this process is to provide documentation of survey protocol. While Guam and CNMI both have protocol for their shore-based creel surveys documented, American Samoa only possesses a technical memo that was never formally published. If these documents can be consolidated, then the review process can be initiated with MRIP staff.

6. Discussions

FDCRC-TC discussions were held immediately after each agenda item.

7. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

8. Finalizing the Implementation Plan for the Small-Boat E-Reporting App

Council staff presented on the finalization of the implementation plan for the small boat electronic reporting application. The focus of the presentation was discussion on how each of the territory agencies view the application and how everyone's resources can be utilized to implement the application and augment the surveys currently in place. The Council is in the final stages of implementing the application suite and completing the dashboards; Council staff expect to be done by July or August of this year. The Council is developing extensive outreach for each of the territories, including on-air media as well as printed flyers, so that the Council's advisory panels can provide these outreach materials at fishing tournaments and similar events. The Council is also planning to do an extensive training workshop in association with local agency staff and to hire local technical support to act as the point-of-contact to implement the application and respond to questions and issues. In the meantime, Council contractor SudoKrew, LLC will be finalizing the application and dashboards. SudoKrew will be present at the training workshops to provide technical support and repair the application as needed.

Council staff requested that local agencies help organize the fishing community for application implementation and trainings, note if there is an associated regulatory framework underway (e.g., mandatory reporting in Guam), generate a list of potential participants, and get buy-in from local staff. Council staff also requested comments on concerns with the application, implementation of electronic self-reporting to augment existing data collection, and possible contributions that local agencies can provide to support this effort.

The Guam representative noted that DAWR has a list of fishing community contacts, can provide staff as well as a venue for the training, and are generally supportive of the self-reporting application. The CNMI representative stated that DFW is also coordinating a venue for the training, compiling a list of fishers who are supportive of the application, expects a good turnout from commercial fishers who are required to report their catch, and is generally supportive of the application. DFW expects that they might have a reach of approximately 85% of total fishers in implementing the use of the application depending on if the fishers are able to understand the

training. Extra emphasis will be placed on making the training efficient and ensuring that it clearly states why this self-reporting application is being introduced. The American Samoa representative stated that the DMWR director is supportive of the application.

There were concerns about how data from the application will coexist with the creel survey program currently in place. The recent stock assessments showing the bottomfish complexes in Guam and American Samoa to be overfished, and the PIFSC Stock Assessment Program believes that they would get the same result no matter how the complex is split if using the same data stream. The data from electronic self-reporting would provide an alternative data stream to compare against the creel survey data in future assessments. The idea of the application began at PIFMAPS, where recommendations were made that were collectively agreed upon outlining necessary steps to move toward data improvement efforts.

There were also concerns about older fishermen not being especially skilled in using electronic technologies such as the self-reporting application, and that if they choose not to use the application that the database will be missing numbers from some of the more experienced fishers. Even though the Council will be providing training, some fishers may not be comfortable with the technology or just may not want to bother learning to use it. However, the way that the application is designed was to be easy to use and allow fishers to report after a fishing trip, not necessarily while out on the water. If there is a general idea of the list of fishers that need to report and can do so, the raw data can be used as an independent source of total catch unlike the creel surveys that require expansion. It was also suggested that the trainings include fishermen who are technologically-savvy to show those fishers who are apprehensive about using electronic reporting technologies that they can have success using the application. The Council will evaluate feedback from fishermen during the training phase.

It was asked if the self-reporting application is consistent with new regulations for mandatory reporting in Guam. The application was designed to directly support the mandatory reporting regulations. If fishers do not have access to a smartphone or computer, they can be issued a tablet when registering for a fishing license. There were concerns about how weather-resistant the devices to be used for electronic reporting may be since many bottomfish fishermen in Guam use kayaks for their fishing trips. The tablets are relatively weather-resistant, with rubber, water-resistant cases and protective screens.

Additional concerns were expressed regarding local survey staff feeling like the application threatens their job security. While this concern makes sense in theory, it is unfounded as the application will have no impact on the job security of creel surveyors and is a separate effort. Creel surveys will continue because the long, continuous time series is needed for stock assessments, and the self-reporting application can be used to support the creel surveys. In the future, it is possible that there may be discussion on transfer from one data stream to the other to avoid redundancy, as electronic reporting is becoming more popular in fisheries nationwide. Ultimately, the decision to retain or discontinue creel surveys will lie with the local agencies.

It was expressed that the local agencies expect that the application will have to go through several iterations as new issues are found and fixed, and that in addition to regular training, there needs to be regular communication with fishermen about the performance of the application and a step-by-step process regarding how to use the application while fishing. Regular assistance from a local technical support hire will be required as it may take several months for fishermen to begin consistent use of the application.

It was reiterated that is critical for the implementation of the electronic reporting application to have buy-in from fishermen, and that incentives may need to be used to encourage use of the application. The Council is interested in developing outreach materials to address these issues. For incentives, the Pacific Islands Fisheries Group (PIFG) submitted a proposal to get funding for incentives for fishers using the application. Additionally, the individual and community dashboards can provide non-monetary incentives in the form of a personal catch log that can be used for tax purposes and proof of catch history in case the fishery shifts to allocation-based management in the future. It was suggested that the application could also report weather forecasts as an incentive for use to help with the planning of fishing trips, as fishers are usually interested in weather conditions near their fishing grounds.

An additional concern was noted that both commercial and non-commercial surveys are conducted and if fishers report using the application, then they may decline to take part in the surveys as well. This is problematic because an important part of the application is validating what has been captured by creel surveys. It was speculated if the fishers could potentially provide creel surveyors information they reported from the application, which would impact the independence of the data streams but potentially supplement the interview surveys. It would be good to clarify to fishers during the training if they are expected to participate in both electronic reporting and creel surveys. Perhaps the creel surveyors could support use of the application by helping fishers input data into it after interviews. Paper forms may need to be implemented initially in case there are issues with the application, so that the forms can be submitted to creel surveyors who can input the data into the application and use it for interview data as well.

It will need to be reiterated to fishers that the application is in its testing phase initially, and they will need to be provided a date when the application is fully implemented. A cutoff time where credible data will start to be taken has not yet been established but can likely be determined from rate of data submission as it is likely more fishers would be reporting over time.

Another topic of discussion was data sharing for the data generated by the self-reporting application. The Council is governed by the MSA, so different rules may apply if the data collection system would be under the authority of the Council versus the local agencies. There is an existing data sharing agreement between the federal and local agencies, but it was not initially clear if there would need to be some sort of data release statement that fishermen would need to sign so that their data could be shared with federal and local agencies. It was discussed that each of the territory agencies have lawful mandates to collect data and perform research, but there may be issues with data confidentiality if there are less than three fishers reporting. Representatives from Guam indicated that they may need to look again at what authority DAWR has to be clear to the Council and fishers what the regulations are under Guam law. It is likely the application would be directed by the local agencies given that they have the authority to collect data in their respective territories with technologic and funding support coming from the Council. The Council is currently discussing this issue with NOAA GC and it will be brought up at the full FDCRC meeting in June 2020. It is of a high priority as it will dictate which authority can be used to collect the data. There might be a stipulation when fishers sign up for electronic reporting that they are releasing data to a certain entity but will be subject to data confidentiality regulations that exist.

Looking at data from 2017, most of bottomfishing was done by commercial fishers in American Samoa and CNMI, but Guam had nearly half of bottomfishing done by non-commercial fishers. Trolling generally has a higher composition of commercial fishers in Guam.

9. Developing a Framework for Calibration and Transition for E-Reporting

Council staff did not present on this agenda item, noting that it is too early to comment on calibration for the application since still the implementation phase is still ongoing.

10. MRIP Related Agenda Items

A. Review of the State Partnership Plan

Council staff and Ma presented on the review of the Hawaii State Partnership Plan. The region has strong collaboration with MRIP, as there have been eight projects funded by MRIP in Hawaii and three in the territories since 2009. A couple of years ago, the PIR Regional Implementation Team developed an implementation plan to identify priority needs and actions. The region has significant contributions to MRIP in the form of different MRIP teams. Recently, members of the regional implementation team council were asked to coordinate two activities triggered by the Modern Fish Act (MFA). When the MFA was approved, it required the Secretary to submit a report every two years on fisheries and their data collection. The Secretary may present grants to Hawaii and the territories to improve programs that collect non-commercial data, enhance quality assurance, and support outreach for submitting data. MRIP maximized existing collaboration in this region using the data repository by WPacFIN. The Partnership Plan outlines the existing structure of collaboration on collecting data and some of the other guidelines that provide authority for collecting non-commercial data that the region has, and the activities that are described in the MRIP regional implementation plan will be the ones that receive funding when it is made available. Some of these involve certification of surveys in Hawaii and the territories, so it is essential that the Partnership Plan is appropriately updated. MRIP is looking for comments on the Partnership Plan, which will need to be submitted by May 1st, 2020.

A comment will be submitted suggesting the FDCRC structure as a coordinating body, like commissions in other regions. This is especially important if WPacFIN does not exist in the future, as there will need to be some sort of structure for data coordination going forward.

It was suggested that the directors of each of the local agencies be made aware of the Partnership Plan, as it could act as an additional source of funding for data collection surveys. MRIP will prioritize funding for areas that have partnerships between the federal government and states/territories, so it is important to demonstrate that this framework exists in the Western Pacific region.

B. National Saltwater Angler Registry Memorandum of Agreement Review Plan

Council staff and Ma also presented on the National Saltwater Angler Registry Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) Review Plan. There is a federal requirement for anglers to be included on this the registry, but Hawaii and the territories received an exemption because of the existence of their shore-based creel surveys that can provide information on non-commercial fisheries. As part of this exemption, Hawaii and the territories are required to submit creel survey data to MRIP. The MOA that provides this exemption, however, is currently being reviewed. It is possible that not all the requirements stipulated in the MOA were fulfilled by Hawaii and the territories, and MRIP will be making a thorough review for compliance. One of the requirements in the MOA was that Hawaii and the territories would provide data from their shore-based creel surveys to MRIP starting in 2012, but it is not clear that this has happened.

The WPacFIN representative noted that since Hawaii and the territories provide creel survey data to WPacFIN, they have been compliant to the MOA. There is no stipulation in the MOA as to what information needed to be provided to MRIP. For example, the MOA states that the

territories provide a transfer of quarterly data to WPacFIN within 45 days of the end of the year, which has been occurring. It was suggested that the MOA be sent to Hawaii and territory local staff so they can be aware of the requirements. If the MOA is changed, MRIP will need to clearly identify what is required of Hawaii and the territories so they know what their responsibilities are going forward. Comments on the MOA were requested from the committee by May 1st, 2020.

11. Discussions

FDCRC-TC discussions were held immediately after each agenda item.

12. Other Business

The committee discussed the next steps for WPacFIN and the future of the program. There will be no large changes to the program itself in the immediate future. There is a renewed interest in working more closely with the territories, but due to staff shortages, most support is currently being given to the Hawaii dealer data reporting system. Additionally, WPacFIN is still looking at how they can transition from their VFP database to a cloud-based MySQL server that would allow access from territory staff.

13. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

14. FDCRC-TC-DSP Recommendations

The Data Collection Sub-Panel of the FDCRC-TC recommends that the Council request the DMWR, DFW, and DAWR for documentation of the boat- and shore-based creel survey protocols and to work with MRIP to initiate creel survey reviews for certification.

The Data Collection Sub-Panel of the FDCRC-TC recommends that Council work with the local fishery management agencies, PIFSC and NOAA GC regarding the data collection (e.g. the small boat electronic reporting application) authority to determine whether data collection should be run by the local agencies with support from the Council and the NMFS.

Work item recommendations:

- Council staff to send a copy of the MOA and the MOA Review Plan to the DMWR, DFW, DAWR directors.
- Finalize implementation plan for electronic reporting.