

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

June 8, 2022

Meeting Minutes

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Meeting Minutes

1. The meeting was opened by the Alternate Federal Commissioner to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), Dr. Kelly Kryc, Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) at 10:00 am *Hawaii Standard Time* on June 8, 2022.
2. The Chair of the Permanent Advisory Committee (PAC), Ryan Steen, and NOAA provided information on meeting arrangements and administrative matters including the agenda, etiquette for the web conference, and meeting objectives.
3. NOAA facilitated roll call and invited attendees to introduce themselves. Fifteen PAC members, five Commissioners, officials from NOAA and Department of State, and members of the public attended the meeting (**Attachment 1**).
4. The Federal Commissioner thanked the PAC Chair and NOAA for the preparatory work leading into this meeting. She reminded participants that NOAA published a Federal Register notice on May 23, 2022 regarding the open call to apply to be a Commissioner of a Regional Fishery Management Organization (RFMO) and noted the July 8, 2022 application deadline. She requested that any questions be directed to her and indicated looking forward to working with the PAC and fellow Commissioners in the future.
5. The Chair and PAC approved the addition of an agenda item on Area Based Management to be discussed after Agenda Item 1. The final agenda was adopted (**Attachment 2**).

Agenda Item I – COVID-19

6. NOAA noted the Commission scheduled a meeting for June 8 (Special Session 4) to review waivers for the 100% purse seine observer coverage and at-sea transshipment observer coverage that have been in place for over two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Both of these waivers expire on June 14, 2022. The United States supports at-sea transshipment observer coverage resuming on June 15, 2022, but does have concerns about resuming 100% purse seine observer coverage, due to health, safety, and logistical reasons.
7. PAC members agreed with the U.S. position and expressed concern over the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) proposal pushing for resuming purse seine observer coverage soonest.

Agenda Item II – Area Based Management

Agenda Item IIa – Status of BBNJ Convention

8. Department of State (DoS) announced the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) will be held August 15-26, 2022, in New York. The IGC President released a new draft of the text on May 30 in advance of the fifth session. While delegations made progress at the previous session, a number of key issues remain outstanding in the text.
9. Members of the PAC stated that they would like the opportunity to provide input on perspectives prior to the August meeting.

Agenda Item IIb – Administrative response to Pacific Remote Islands Coalition (PRIC) proposal to expand the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument (PRIMNM)

10. PAC Members discussed their concerns on the proposed additional closures near the PRIMNM and how other Pacific Island countries may view the United States in relation to this closure. Fishing ground importance, the economic impact, and the impacts of climate change were discussed by PAC and Council members.

Agenda Item III – Update to U.S. priorities for WCPFC in 2022

Agenda Item IIIa – Overview

11. NOAA provided a few updates in reference to the tentative U.S. priorities for WCPFC in 2022 (**Attachment 3**).

Agenda Item IIIa – Pacific bluefin tuna

12. NOAA provided an update on Pacific bluefin tuna (PBF) noting that the International Scientific Committee (ISC) conducted an updated stock assessment for PBF this year. Preliminary results from the assessment were shared at the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) in May, and key takeaways were as follows: 1) the stock reached the initial rebuilding target in 2019; 2) the 2020 SSB was estimated to be 10.2%; 3) projections indicate that the stock will reach the second rebuilding target with a 60% probability by the end of the 2023 fishing year. NMFS also held two public meetings on April 1 and May 5, 2022, to gather input on operational management objectives and candidate performance indicators for PBF. NOAA intends to submit a proposal or white paper to the Joint Working Group/Northern Committee (JWG/NC) on candidate operational management objectives and performance indicators. NOAA solicited feedback on the proposal, and noted that they would also be soliciting feedback on the proposal at the upcoming meetings of the Pacific Fisheries Management Council meeting and IATTC General Advisory Committee (GAC).

13. PAC members expressed their support for U.S. efforts on a proposal for operational management objectives and candidate performance indicators for PBF, and suggested a few specific edits. PAC members also urged the United States to take a cautious approach given the uncertainty around the impact of increasing the fishing quota, and noted that it would be useful to have a greater understanding of inputs used in the stock assessment.

Agenda Item IIIb – South Pacific albacore

14. NOAA provided an update on South Pacific albacore (SP ALB), sharing that pending a SP ALB WG meeting in July, the United States has engaged other CCM's and understand FFA members are focused on the zone based approach but remain at loggerheads on potential future SP ALB catch allocation among its members. The United States topline position includes a recalibrated target reference point (TRP) and more on this will be discussed under Agenda Item IIIC, Harvest Strategies. The United States will continue to advocate for these interests, especially among other countries in the South Pacific.
15. A PAC member encouraged the United States to continue to push for the adoption of a list of candidate management measures for SP ALB and skipjack tuna (SKJ) this year and suggested the Scientific Committee (SC) look at the stock assessment and roadmap in preparation for the July meeting. A member of the public offered discussions are ongoing with SPC to collaborate on a specific study to assist the stock assessment.

Agenda Item IIIC – Harvest Strategies

16. NOAA provided an update on harvest strategies: WCPFC18 updated its Harvest Strategy Work Plan; for 2022, the Workplan has WCPFC adopting TRPs for bigeye tuna (BET) and yellowfin tuna (YFT) and revising the TRP for SKJ; SPC is hosting two capacity building seminars (June 8 & July 7); and the first Science-Manager Dialogue (SMD01) is to be held in August after SC18 where the focus will be on a management procedure for SKJ but some time will also be spent discussing a management procedure for SP ALB.
17. There was discussion among the PAC members and NOAA regarding the interim TRP for SP ALB, opportunities to negotiate parameters of the interim TRP, and whether there is an appetite by the Commission to enact cuts needed to meet the TRP. PAC members also discussed the need for the United States to be engaged in harvest strategy conversations and to support adopting TRPs for the tropical tuna stocks..

Agenda Item IIId – North Pacific albacore reference points and acceptable levels of risk

18. NOAA provided an update on North Pacific albacore (NP ALB). NOAA Fisheries held a public meeting on April 5, 2022 to discuss candidate reference points for NP ALB. As Canada and Japan expressed interest in adopting a complete harvest strategy for NP ALB in the IATTC, the United States felt that it was important to consider developing a proposal for NP ALB for IATTC that contained all the elements of a harvest strategy and was not just limited to reference points and originally envisioned. A draft of the IATTC proposal was provided to the PAC as part of the meeting materials, and the outcomes of IATTC will likely influence the scope of any proposal to NC to revise the WCPFC harvest strategy for NP ALB as there is general agreement that there should be complementary harvest strategies between the IATTC and WCPFC.

19. PAC members discussed the need for outreach and opportunities for further discussion, and NOAA encouraged PAC members to provide feedback. Some PAC members encouraged the United States to work with Japan and Canada on a full harvest strategy for NP ALB and to include more details to show how various elements of the proposal work together, potentially providing comfort to those who express uncertainty. These PAC members also expressed support for the United States to move forward with a full proposal and keep in mind Pacific-wide applications.

Agenda Item IIIe – Tropical Tunas: New Pacific Strategy

20. A member of the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (WPFMC or Council) provided background information on the Council's recommendations for a new Pacific strategy for managing fisheries in the region, the Council's efforts to provide input on this subject, and continued interest in the U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy.
21. There was substantial discussion regarding PAC members' interest in providing a recommendation at its annual meeting that endorses a new strategy and encourages the U.S. government to collaborate with others and protect the interests of U.S. fisheries.
22. The Federal Commissioner stated that the United States government is working within a larger framework of an Indo-Pacific strategy (released in February) and assured PAC members they will share more information on a strategy when they are able to and will look forward to future collaboration.

Agenda Item IIIf – Compliance Monitoring Scheme

23. NOAA provided an update on compliance monitoring scheme (CMS) noting there will not be a review of compliance and monitoring at the WCPFC Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC) this year, rather compliance activity will be added onto the TCC meeting in fall of 2023. The risk-based assessment framework and CMS audit points are expected to be adopted at WCPFC19 in December of this year.
24. PAC members expressed the need for collaboration and discussions around strengthening CMS prior to the TCC and next PAC meeting and noted the need for recommendations on CMS at the next PAC meeting.

Agenda Item IIIg– Transshipment

25. NOAA provided an update on transshipment. Last year, the United States unsuccessfully proposed minimum data standards for transshipment observers. The Commission directed the transshipment working group to develop the standards for future consideration. The United States is co-leading the transshipment working group and will ensure transshipment observer minimum data standards are further considered by the Commission in 2022. Further, the United States will continue to look for opportunities to integrate and improve electronic monitoring of transshipment activity in the convention area.
26. A PAC member discussed the negotiations that took place at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) technical consultation on transshipment in early June 2022. The

PAC member stated that it is hoped that the draft document that is going to the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) can be taken into consideration in the deliberations of the IWG.

Agenda Item IIIh – Oceanic whitetip sharks

27. NOAA provided an update on oceanic whitetip sharks (OCS), noting the population is considered overfished and overfishing is occurring. NOAA plans to complete a new analysis using some new assumptions and updated estimates of post-release mortality for presentation at SC.
28. Earthjustice spoke about written comments provided to the PAC in advance of the meeting and requested the PAC provide the U.S. Commissioners with adequate proposals and recommendations to protect OCS and make protective measures a high priority.
29. The PAC members agreed these are recommendations that the PAC has made before (and can make again). The U.S. fleet has already implemented many of the recommendations already. PAC members appreciated the U.S. proposal from last year and encouraged the United States to submit another proposal and to engage in intersessional discussions with other members. There was also interest expressed for additional monitoring and research to see how the use of mono leaders would impact catch of other species.

Agenda Item IV – Participating Territory issues

30. The PAC Chair acknowledged the comments received prior to the start of the meeting on this agenda item and no other comments were made at this time.

Agenda Item V – Upcoming WCPFC meetings

31. NOAA opened the floor for questions/comments on this agenda item and pointed participants to the following list of meetings (all dates provided are in U.S. time zones):
 - IWGs (ER & EM, TS, CMS, etc): active & throughout 2022
 - Crew Labor Standards workshop: July 26, 2022
 - JWG7: July 11-13, 2022
 - ERandEM WG: proposed a meeting on July 18-19, 2022
 - SP ALB WG: July TBD
 - SC18: August 9--18, 2022; (virtual)
 - Science-Management Dialogue: August 18 and 21, 2022; (virtual)
 - NC18: TBD October
 - TCC18: September 21-27, 2022; proposed to be virtual
 - Annual meeting of the PAC: October 27-28, 2022; Honolulu, HI
 - WCPFC19: TBD December, 2022; Vietnam

ATTACHMENT 1: Meeting Participants

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ATTACHMENT 2: Final Agenda
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June 8, 2022

10 am-12 pm HST

AGENDA

1. COVID-19
2. Area Based Management
 - a. Status of BBNJ convention
 - b. Administration response to PRIC proposal to expand PRI MNM
3. Update to U.S. priorities for WCPFC in 2022 *[attachment]*
 - a. Pacific bluefin tuna *[attachment]*
 - b. South Pacific albacore
 - c. Harvest strategies
 - d. North Pacific albacore reference points and acceptable levels of risk *[attachment]*
 - e. Tropical Tunas: New Pacific Strategy *[attachments]*
 - f. Compliance Monitoring Scheme
 - g. Transshipment
 - h. Oceanic whitetip sharks
4. Participating Territories issues
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ATTACHMENT 3: Tentative U.S. Priorities in WCPFC for 2022

	2022 objective	Key steps	USG lead(s)	IFD staff lead
Top priority:				
Tropical tunas	<p>1) Adopt TRPs for BET and YFT and revised TRP for SKJ.</p> <p>2) Consider adoption of management procedure for SKJ.</p> <p>3) Adopt a new baseline period or limit for Indonesia's Large Fish Handline Fishery</p>	<p>1) Engage PAC and delegation to develop U.S. position on TRPs for tropical tunas and management procedure for SKJ</p>	PIRO, with PIFSC, Alexa, and DOS	Valerie/ Jason
Pacific bluefin tuna	<p>1) Confirm initial rebuilding target was met, and ensure attainment of second rebuilding target within parameters of rebuilding plan.</p> <p>2) Identify performance criteria for evaluating candidate LRPs, TRPs and HCRs.</p>	<p>1) Review ISC stock assessment.</p> <p>2) Developing proposal for JWG7 and NC18 on performance criteria.</p>	PIRO, with WCRO and DOS	Valerie
NP striped marlin	Adoption of revised CMM for NP striped marlin that will ensure achievement of rebuilding plan.	US to submit draft proposal for revised CMM for NP striped marlin	PIRO	Valerie
SP albacore	1) Assertive posture in WG and at meetings on protecting historic interests and shared FFA Member-U.S. positions.	<p>a. Coordinate with American Samoa officials</p> <p>b. Engage key FFA members to understand more about licensing and chartering options used by Chinese vessels targeting SP ALB.</p> <p>c. Stakeholder meetings</p> <p>d. Potential proposal to Commission via TCC, strengthening CMM</p>	PIRO, with WCRO, PIFSC, and DOS	Alex

	2022 objective	Key steps	USG lead(s)	IFD staff lead
Compliance Monitoring Scheme	<p>1) See that the CMS process and work is fair and meaningful.</p> <p>2) See progress on the CMS future work plan elements: 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) See progress towards a more permanent CMS measure which includes a mechanism for responses to non-compliance.</p>	<p>a. Participate in the CMS IWG to: continue work on a risk based assessment framework; begin work on the development of audit points; and begin work on the development of a process for the participation of observers in the CMS</p>	<p>Alexa, with Elizabeth and Alex and Pat</p>	<p>Alex/ Jason</p>
At-sea transshipment	<p>1) Secretariat and SPC to complete Phases I & II of TS Analysis using US funds.</p> <p>2) Leverage concern stemming from the ongoing COVID-19 waiver of TS observer requirement, to make progress towards transshipment at sea.</p> <p>3) Accomplish key step d to require minimum data standards for TS observers</p>	<p>a. Work with Secretariat to develop mechanism to facilitate dissemination of notifications and declarations to MCS entities when requested.</p> <p>b. Identify additional non data elements of CMM 2009-06 to be revised in 2021, such as those related to transshipment observer data and protocols.</p> <p>c. Working through the Observer and possibly EM WGs, propose an at sea transshipment monitoring scheme that leverages existing protocols and technologies.</p> <p>d. TS-IWG complete outcome of US proposal on min. data standards</p>	<p>Alexa, with PIRO, DOS and USCG</p>	<p>Alex</p>
Crew labor	<p>Adoption of a WCPFC measure focused on crew safety, forced labor/human trafficking</p>	<p>Continue to gather input from stakeholders and other agencies on U.S. priorities and positions.</p>	<p>Alexa, Elizabeth, DOS</p>	<p>Rini/Jason</p>

	2022 objective	Key steps	USG lead(s)	IFD staff lead
ROP - observer reports	a. Devising "WCPFC observer report" b. develop process for timely provision of reports to law enforcement authorities investigating alleged infringements.	Explore options for regional diplomatic and leadership engagement in 2022 and 2023	GCES, PIRO, IATC, and OLE	Alex
Medium priority	2022 objective	Key steps	USG lead(s)	IFD staff lead
Budget	Work with intersessional working group.	Participate in WG. Ideas for potential voluntary contributions depending on resources as identified by DOS.	DOS with PIRO and Pat	Alex
eR and eM	1. Develop minimum standards for EM 2. Develop revised list of priorities for EM and ER		PIFSC (Keith)	Valerie
FAD management	Develop definition of biodegradable FADs and consider timeline for the stepwise introduction of biodegradable FADs.	SC18 tasked to provide recommendations to WCPFC19.	PIRO, with PIFSC, Elizabeth, Alexa, DOS, and Fred	Valerie
Harvest strategies	1) See progress on harvest strategy elements, particularly for southern LL, tropical LL, and tropical PS. 2) Adopt TRPs for BET and YFT. Revise TRP for SKJ.	Participate in the Science-Management Dialogue.	PIRO, with PIFSC	Valerie
Marine mammals	a) Seek adoption of a stronger cetacean CMM which applies to both purse seine and longline interactions in 2022 b) Develop graphics for recently adopted best handling practices for the safe release of cetaceans c) Improve understanding of the impacts of fishing on cetaceans in the Convention Area	a. Support any proposal to WCPFC19 to address longline interactions with cetaceans and/or consider U.S. proposal in 2022 b. Solicit contractor to develop graphics for WCPFC best handling practices for cetaceans for review at SC18 and adoption at WCPFC19	PIRO, Pat	Valerie
NP Albacore	Adoption of a target reference point for NP albacore.	1) US to hold domestic stakeholder meeting in spring 2022. 2) US to submit TRP proposal to NC18.	PIRO, with WCRO and SWFSC	Valerie

2022 objective	Key steps	USG lead(s)	IFD staff lead
ROP - general	<p>a. Improvements to Gen3 form and pre-notification process</p> <p>b. Improvements to ROP min required data fields for whale sharks and cetaceans</p>	<p>a. Consider improvements to the Observer Trip Monitoring Summary data fields, which trigger pre-notifications, to better align with the Commission's priorities in terms of compliance</p> <p>b. Review and provide advice on improvements to the ROP minimum standard data fields for whale sharks and cetaceans – to allow for a distinction between an interaction and a possible infraction in the compliance case file system</p> <p>c. Continue work through the TS-IWG to complete work related to US proposal on transshipment min. data standards</p>	<p>PIRO, IATC, and OLE</p> <p>Alex</p>
Seabirds	<p>a. See thorough review by NC of all available evidence on the effectiveness of streamer-less tori lines in the small-vessel NP longline fisheries</p> <p>b. See progress towards improved observer coverage on small longline vessels in the NP</p>	<p>a. Review information on effectiveness of seabird mitigation measures in the NP, particularly streamer-less tori lines</p> <p>b. Continue to highlight issues regarding low observer coverage in the North Pacific - push for increased observer/eM coverage and improved seabird interaction reporting.</p>	<p>PIRO and Pat</p> <p>Valerie</p>
Sea turtles	<p>a. See progress towards improved reporting on implementation of sea turtle mitigation requirements</p> <p>b. See the stage set for adoption in 2023 of a stronger CMM that includes mitigation measures for all longline fisheries</p> <p>c. See progress towards modifying the ROP MSDF to improve data collection on sea turtle interactions</p>	<p>a. Seek to improve CCM reports on implementation of sea turtle mitigation obligations through the development of audit points in the CMS IWG; consider potential future adoption of reporting template to improve available information on implementation of sea turtle mitigation measures</p> <p>b. Consider development of a working paper or proposal to further expand CMM 2018-04 in 2022 or 2023.</p> <p>c. Consider potential improvements to the ROP MSDF for sea turtles in 2023</p>	<p>PIRO, with PIFSC</p> <p>Valerie</p>
Sharks	<p>a. Adoption of a revised shark measure to prohibit both the use of wire leaders and shark lines on longline vessels.</p> <p>b. Paragraphs 8 and 9 of CMM 2019-04 expire in 2022. Need to revise specifically paragraph 8 to ensure continuation of requirement for sharks to be landed with fins naturally attached.</p>	<p>a. US to submit updated analysis to SC18 and possibly TCC18. Submit revised shark measure to WCPFC19.</p> <p>b. TCC to review reports on implementation of paragraphs 8 and 9 and provide advice to Commission in 2023. Need either to get TCC to address this year or revise CMM to extend provision for additional year.</p>	<p>PIRO, with PIFSC</p> <p>Valerie</p>

Continuing Priority - no identified 2022 objective	2022 objective	Key steps	USG lead(s)	IFD staff lead
NP Swordfish	Adoption of a CMM for NP swordfish		PIRO	Valerie
Catch Documentation Scheme			Alexa, with Elizabeth, Pat, and Valerie	Valerie
Charters	Make progress on dealing with the effects of vessels chartered by SIDS.	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	PIRO, with DOS	Alex
Climate	Needs more discussion	Develop US position on PICs' intent to negotiate rights to catch of tuna stocks that have shifted - or are projected to shift - out of their zones due to climate change.	Alexa, PIRO, Pat	Alex&Rini
Data			PIRO, with PIFSC and DOS	Valerie
High Seas Boarding and Inspection Scheme			USCG with DOS	Rini
IUU Vessel List		a. Participate in routine listing procedures. b. Continue to consider options for cross-listing procedures	Alexa with Elizabeth and Pat	Rini
Marine debris/pollution			Pat	Emily R.
New members			DOS with PIRO	Alex
Overlap area			PIRO, with WCRO and DOS	Alex
Port State measures			Alexa, with Elizabeth and DOS	Alex
SIDS issues			DOS, PIRO, Pat	Alex
Vessel Monitoring System			OLE (Terry)	Alex