

Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)

	WCPFC	Area of Competence	Objectives	Organizational Structure	Scientific Regime
RFMO Structure	<p><b>Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission</b></p> <p><b>Headquarters:</b> Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia.</p> <p><b>Convention:</b> Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.</p> <p><b>Signed:</b> September 4, 2000 Honolulu, USA.</p> <p><b>In force:</b> June 19, 2004. (Organizational meeting held December 2004. First substantive meeting to be held December 2005).</p>	<p>The Western and Central Pacific Ocean. From the south coast of Australia south along 141° E to its intersection with 55°S then east along 55° S to its intersection 150°E; then south along 150° E to its intersection with 60°S; then east along 60°S to its intersection with 130°W; then north along 130° W to its intersection with 4°S; then west along 4°S to its intersection with 150° W; then north along 150°W.</p>	<p>To ensure, through effective management, the long-term conservation and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks (Annex 1 of UNCLOS and other species as the Commission may determine) in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean in accordance with the 1982 Convention and UNFA.</p>	<p>Commission, Scientific Committee (SC), Technical and Compliance Committee, Northern Committee, Secretariat (Executive Director).</p>	<p>WCPFC will employ a small scientific and technical staff. The SPC will be the interim provider of science to the SC. SC is comprised of CP representatives, and is expected to establish several Specialist Working Groups. SC recommends research plans and reviews stock assessments (which may be produced by independent experts) to the Commission. SC can make recommendations as directed by Commission or on its own initiative. SC will work with Technical and Compliance Committee on Observer Program procedures. Representatives of the Oceanic Fisheries Programme of the Pacific Community, IATTC and other organizations can be invited to participate in the SC. Commission can engage other scientific experts to provide information and advice. First meeting of the SC is August 2005.</p>
The Fishery EA and PA	<p><b>Key Species and Gear</b></p> <p><b>Highly Migratory Fish Stocks:</b></p> <p>Skipjack tuna, yellowfin tuna, albacore tuna, bigeye tuna.</p> <p><b>Gear:</b></p> <p>purse seine, longline, pole and line, trolls, artisinal gear.</p>	<p><b>Stock Status</b></p> <p><b>Above B<sub>MSY</sub>:</b> skipjack, bigeye (although F<sub>CURRENT</sub> &gt; F<sub>MSY</sub>), South Pacific albacore.</p> <p><b>Near fully exploited:</b> bigeye and to some extent yellowfin.</p>	<p><b>Bycatch</b></p> <p>Seabirds, sharks and turtles, juvenile target species especially surrounding FADs, billfish. There are no bycatch mitigation measures in place</p>	<p><b>Ecosystem Approach (EA)</b></p> <p>Article V (d) outlines the responsibility of Commission in assessing fishing impacts, other human activities and environmental factors on target stocks, non-target species, and species belonging to the same ecosystem.</p>	<p><b>Precautionary Approach (PA)</b></p> <p>PA is adopted in Article 5(c). Article 6 outlines PA with reference to Annex II of UNFA.</p>
Participation	<p><b>Members / Contracting Parties</b></p> <p><b><i>Australia</i></b>, China, <b>Cook Islands</b>, <b>Federated States of Micronesia</b>, <b>Fiji Islands</b>, <i>Republic of Korea</i>, Kiribati, <b>Marshall Islands</b>, <b>Nauru</b>, <b>New Zealand</b>, Niue, <b>Papua New Guinea</b>, <b>Samoa</b>, <b>Solomon Islands</b>, <b>Tonga</b>, Tuvalu (16 Members). The EU was invited to join in December 2004.</p> <p><b>Bold:</b> UNFA <i>Italics:</i> FAO Compliance Agreement</p>	<p><b>Cooperating Non-Members</b></p> <p>Fishing Entity of Taiwan (Chinese Taipei) agreed to be bound to Convention as of November 2, 2004. Annex I of Convention allows for participation of Fishing Entities.</p>	<p><b>Membership</b></p> <p>Membership is open to participants in the negotiation process of Convention. States or REIOs who wish to fish for highly migratory fish stocks in Convention Area may be invited, by consensus, by CPs to accede to the Convention. This approach restricts access, emphasizing initiative to accede lies with existing CPs, not with new applicants.</p>	<p><b>Participation Criteria</b></p> <p>All CPs must contribute to the budget, the amount to be based on: an equal basic fee; the wealth of the country; and, a variable fee depending on catch taken within EEZ and on high seas. CPs must apply Convention principles.</p>	<p><b>Transparency</b></p> <p>Publicly accessible website. Meeting minutes and background papers are available online. Subject to Commission rules and procedures, representatives from NCPs, IGOs and NGOs may participate in Commission meetings and its subsidiary bodies as observers or otherwise as appropriate; have access to pertinent information subject to Commission rules and procedures; and, are permitted to give oral presentations and distribute papers through the Secretariat.</p>
Monitoring, Control and Surveillance	<p><b>Data Collecting and Reporting</b></p> <p>CPs must provide data annually and as otherwise requested to Commission. Catch, effort, biological and other data and information must be collected in accordance with Annex I of UNFA.</p>	<p><b>Observer Program</b></p> <p>Region wide, independent Observer Program established under Article 28(1) with guidelines specified in Annex III of the Convention. Commission will determine final details including % coverage. The program will be coordinated to the extent possible with other national or regional programs.</p> <p>Adopted procedures for Commission record of fishing vessels and authorizations to fish, specifications for marking and identification of vessels, and procedures for Cooperating non-members at its first meeting. MCS Scheme to be further developed by the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC), who are scheduled to hold first meeting in December 2005.</p>	<p><b>Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)</b></p> <p>Article 24(8) requires all vessels fishing in the Convention Area to use VMS. CPs must cooperate to ensure compatibility between national and high seas VMS. Options for implementing VMS will be considered by TCC in December 2005 including the possible expansion of the existing FFA VMS to include WCPFC Area.</p>	<p><b>Enforcement</b></p> <p>Article 26 establishes a boarding and inspection procedure. If no procedure is in place within 2 years of entry into force, Articles 21 and 22 of UNFA will be applied. Article 27 established port State inspection procedure, which allows the port State to prohibit landings and transshipments if catch was taken through non-compliance. Article 29 outlines procedures for both in-port and at-sea transshipment.</p>	<p><b>Catch and Trade Documentation</b></p> <p>There is no catch or trade documentation scheme at this time.</p>
Other Governance Efforts and Challenges	<p><b>Decision Making</b></p> <p>Decisions will be made by consensus wherever possible. Consensus means absence of any formal objection. In cases where consensus is not reached, decisions on questions of substance will be taken by a 3/4 majority overall and in each chamber (i.e., 3/4 majority of FFA members and 3/4 majority of non-members of the FFA). Such decisions will be binding. There is no objection procedure. A Member who has voted against a decision or was absent when decision was taken may seek a review by a panel constituted as outlined in Annex II of the Convention. The results of the review panel determine whether or not the decision is re-visited at a subsequent Commission meeting.</p>	<p><b>Dispute Settlement Mechanism</b></p> <p>Article 31 addresses the "peaceful" settlement of disputes and refers to Part VII of the Convention which addresses observer programs and transshipping. Provisions set out in Part VIII of Convention apply to any dispute between Members of Commission, whether or not they are Parties to the Agreement.</p>	<p><b>Cooperative Efforts</b></p> <p>Article 22 provides for cooperation with FAO and other UN specialized agencies. Commission will act in cooperation with CCAMLR, CCSBT, IOTC and IATTC with regards to related and similar objectives.</p>	<p><b>Efforts to Strengthen RFMO</b></p> <p>Negotiated Convention and established WCPFC as RFMO largely consistent with UNFA. Inclusion of PA and EA in Convention. Provisions for regional, independent Observer Program. Established Pacific Island Countries (PIC) group. Preparation of tuna management plans by coastal/ island States.</p>	<p><b>Challenges</b></p> <p>Addressing conservation concerns for bigeye and yellowtail. Reducing bycatch and revising reporting obligations for bycatch of seabirds, sharks and turtles. Ensuring participants in negotiation process (who have yet to ratify or accede) become CPs as soon as possible. Implementing Convention. Establishing vessel register for vessels and nationals authorized to fish in the Area. Determining Western boundary of Convention Area. Ensuring compatible management throughout range of stocks and determining respective roles of WCPFC and coastaléisland States. Defining evolving role of FFA. Ensuring effective participation and strengthening capacity of developing coastal/island States.</p>