

REPORT OF TUNA RFMO CHAIRS' MEETING
(San Francisco, USA – February 5 and 6, 2008)

1. Opening

In accordance with the Course of Actions adopted at the Kobe Meeting of Joint Tuna RFMOs on January 26, 2007, a Tuna RFMO Chairs' Meeting was held on February 5 and 6 in San Francisco, California, USA. The meeting was attended by Officers and Secretariats of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) and the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT), the Chair of the Kobe meeting and a representative from FAO. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Masanori Miyahara. The List of Participants is attached as **Annex I**.

The meeting was held to “discuss follow-up actions by each tuna RFMO” in response to the Course of Actions. All participants considered this meeting a significant step to continue the important process of communication and coordination across all the tuna RFMOs, which began with the Joint Tuna RFMOs Meeting in Kobe. The participants represented their organization, not their States.

The adopted agenda is attached as **Annex II**.

2. Reports of follow-up actions of Kobe meeting

– Reports from RFMOs

The Chair and/or Secretariat from the five tuna RFMOs presented the follow-up actions taken by their respective organization during the past year in response to the Course of Actions. Details of those presentations are attached as **Annexes III to VII**.

The participants welcomed the progress made regarding the 14 Key Areas and Challenges identified in the Course of Actions. In particular, it was noted that all RFMOs took actions, to varying degrees, to improve data sharing and strengthen monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) measures mainly efforts to deter illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing activities. Further, ICCAT, IOTC and CCSBT reported that they will conduct their performance reviews in 2008. It was reaffirmed that performance reviews should be conducted as soon as possible, according to the particular RFMO situation, recognizing that as a newly formed RFMO, the timing may be different for the WCPFC.

While progress was generally viewed as positive, significant concerns were shared among the participants on the slow progress, in some RFMOs, on other issues such as establishment of equitable and transparent allocation procedures, capacity control, and management based on scientific advice. Substantial concerns were expressed regarding the consequences of RFMOs not adopting management measures consistent with the best available scientific advice. Recognizing the potential impact on the stocks, loss of credibility of tuna RFMOs, adverse impacts on markets of the relevant tuna products by private certification and campaign activities, and possible future actions by other international organizations including CITES were other main concerns.

– Technical work

The progress of technical work identified by the Kobe meeting, namely, harmonization and improvement of trade/catch tracking systems, creation of harmonized list of vessels, harmonization of transshipment controls and standardization of stock assessment presentations were reviewed and discussed.

The participants took note of the results of the Technical Working Group on Trade and Catch Documentation Schemes held in Raleigh, North Carolina, USA in July 2007, and they welcomed the adoption of a recommendation by ICCAT in 2007 to implement a catch documentation scheme (CDS) for Atlantic bluefin tuna. It was also recognized that the lists of registered vessels of all RFMOs are now easily accessible from the tuna-org website (www.tuna-org.org) and participants thanked the ICCAT Secretariat for its assistance in this

regard. Further, the participants acknowledged that all RFMOs are now using the “Kobe Chart” format for presenting the stock status of resources.

3. Advice for future activities

The participants agreed to present the results of this meeting to all members at their next annual meeting for their consideration, particularly the following suggestions:

a) Consistency of conservation and management measures with scientific advice

Among other things, the participants shared the view that the critical task many of the RFMOs are currently facing is to establish and implement conservation and management measures that are consistent with advice from their scientific bodies, although it was recognized that other factors such as socio-economic impacts should be taken into account in the discussion of the Commission. In addition, it was recognized that challenges exist in converting scientific advice into management action. Based on these discussions, the participants made the following suggestions:

- RFMOs should reaffirm the need to take conservation and management measures based upon the best available scientific advice.
- RFMOs should clearly explain the rationale of their future conservation and management measures in their report to the public, including the reasons for not following scientific advice, if the situation occurs.
- To enhance the consistency between management and science advice, RFMOs should consider possible involvement of political level and/or stakeholders in future meetings.

b) Trade/catch tracking systems

The participants noted that public pressure to supply products from sustainable sources is increasing and shared the view that CDSs are more comprehensive than the current statistical document programs, and therefore can improve the quality and quantity of data available which in turn can strengthen management. It was also recognized that tracking systems for the same species should be established and, where existing, be harmonized around the world, emphasizing the desirability to move toward use of CDSs. Further, given that CDSs cover both domestically and internationally traded products, which was viewed by the participants as a more appropriate balance, products with accurate and completed CDS forms should be assured effective access to markets, particularly since the system is costly to implement. Participants acknowledged, however, that CDSs have some practical problems as well as financial implications that will need to be overcome before implementation for all species or fisheries, and that cost/benefit analyses may be necessary on a case-by-case basis. Particular concerns were expressed regarding implementation of CDSs for fresh products and purse seine products. Nevertheless, the participants encouraged the RFMOs to consider further how to overcome those issues related to CDSs and how to implement them. The participants also encouraged RFMOs to further develop electronic tracking programs and tagging programs. As a specific recommendation for the 2nd Joint Tuna RFMOs Meeting, the participants considered it useful to have a 2nd Technical Working Group meeting in 2009 on those technical problems associated with implementation of CDSs.

c) Harmonized vessel list

The participants also discussed issues concerning the current list of registered vessels of each tuna RFMO. Among the suggested ways to improve the lists of registered vessels was distinguishing between active and non-active vessels within a certain time period (e.g., within the previous year). In addition, participants saw utility in having clear and compatible procedures, including due process, to list and de-list IUU vessels among RFMOs. The participants welcomed an offer from the WCPFC Secretariat to initiate a study of unique identifier systems for tuna RFMOs taking into account the outcomes of the FAO expert consultation on the subject scheduled in February 2008 and encouraged all the Secretariats to work jointly on this matter.

d) Compliance and MCS

Compliance of members to adopted conservation and management measures was identified as a common problem among RFMOs. A concern was shared among the participants that activities of non-compliant

members could undermine compliance efforts by all other members. The participants considered possible options to improve compliance among members including sanctions for non-compliant members and shifting to centralized and integrated MCS measures. The important role of market states and port state measures were also highlighted because any sanctions could be ineffective if the products caught by non-compliant members can easily enter markets. It was also noted that, when considering sanctions, the different capacity levels of members should be taken into consideration. Participants also indicated ample time should be allowed by RFMOs before annual meetings to conduct compliance assessments of members and non-members particularly given the limited amount of time available during annual meetings.

e) Capacity building and assistance

The participants felt strongly that the effective participation of all members, particularly developing country members, is essential for an RFMO to function properly. It was therefore emphasized that capacity building and financial assistance to developing countries for participation in meetings, data collection, implementation of conservation and management measures, human resource training and scientific research are very important and the participants encouraged RFMOs to consider the issue further. The participants considered it important to take a long-term approach, including by institutionalizing capacity building and assistance in the organization, if it is not. Coordination with other organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Bank were also considered to be useful.

It was reaffirmed that all the progress made regarding “Key Areas and Challenges” and “Technical Work” shall be reported to the 2nd Joint Tuna RFMOs Meeting to be held in Europe in 2009, preferably before the next FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) meeting, in accordance with the Course of Actions. The participants called upon each RFMO to continue to take steps to address the issues identified in the Kobe Course of Actions in the coming year.

The Secretariats were requested to circulate the report of the Meeting to their members and cooperating non-members. It was also confirmed that the report will be posted on the tuna-org website.

4. Closing

The participants thanked the Government of the United States for the arrangement of the meeting.

The participants agreed to adopt the report of the Tuna RFMO Chairs’ Meeting by correspondence. The meeting was closed on February 6, 2008.

List of Participants

<i>Name</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
Mario Aguilar	Comision Nacional de Acuacultura y Pesca, Mexico
Guillermo Compean	Director, Inter-American Tropical Tunas Commission (IATTC)
Kelly Denit	NOAA Fisheries Service, United States
Fabio Hazin	Secretaria Especial de Aquicultura e Pesca, Brazil
Neil Hermes	Executive Secretary, Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT)
Arthur Hore	Ministry of Fisheries, New Zealand
Jim Jones	Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada
Sylvie LaPointe	Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada
Driss Meski	Executive Secretary, International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)
Masanori Miyahara	fisheries Agency of Japan
Shuya Nakatsuka	Fisheries Agency of Japan
Rondolph Payet	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)
Christopher Rogers	NOAA Fisheries Service, United States
Sachiko Tsuji	Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO)
Andrew Wright	Executive Secretary, Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)

Agenda

Tuesday, February 5

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 9:00 am | 1. Registration/Sign-in |
| 9:30 am | 2. Opening
Adoption of Agenda
Meeting arrangements |
| | 3. Reports of follow-up actions of Kobe meeting
- IATTC |
| 10:30-11:00 am | Coffee break
- ICCAT
- IOTC |
| Lunch break | - WCPFC
- CCSBT |
| 3:00-3:30 pm | Coffee break
- Technical Work (stocktaking)
- Harmonization and improvement of trade/catch tracking systems (Mr. M. Miyahara) |

Wednesday, February 6

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 9:00 am | Creation of harmonized list of vessels (RFMO Secretariats) |
| 10:30-11:00 am | Coffee break
- Harmonization of transshipment control (RFMO Secretariats)
- Standardization of stock presentation (RFMO scientific chairs) |
| Lunch Break | |
| | 3. Advice for Future Activities |
| 3:00-3:30 pm | Coffee break
4. Other matters
5. Closing |

CCSBT Chair's Report

A. CCSBT annual meeting support for Kobe Course of Actions

The Extended Commission of the Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the Commission on 16-19 October 2007 in Canberra endorsed the Course of Actions for Tuna RFMOs from the Kobe meeting.

The CCSBT noted that the Commission and its subsidiary bodies will be guided by the recommendations of the first and subsequent meetings of the Joint Tuna RFMOs and its subsidiary meetings.

B. Report in relation to Kobe action points

1. Data sharing

CCSBT has well developed protocols for data exchange in support of its scientific process albeit that data is aggregated in space for reasons of confidentiality. No data exchange provisions have been agreed for bycatch species.

2. Allocation

CCSBT has allocation criteria and historical agreements in relation to future allocations. CCSBT has been active in encouraging other flag states that fish for SBT to cooperate most notably Indonesia which has recently indicated its intention to accede to the convention. Allocation for new members is by negotiation.

3. Capacity

Capacity has not been a focus for CCSBT as a global catch limit is the primary conservation measure for SBT. There is a positive list of vessels authorised to take SBT (although not limited) and a proviso of the resolution establishing that list is that members should not authorise vessels flagged to non-cooperating non-members to fish for SBT.

4. Management based on best available scientific advice

CCSBT has a well established scientific process which includes the use of independent experts. In 2006 CCSBT reduced catch limits on the basis of a scientific risk based assessment and the catch limit adopted (for a three year period) was premised on there being a significant improvement in MCS arrangements for SBT.

5. Integrated MCS arrangements

This has been a key work area for CCSBT.. Proposals being considered as part of integrated MCS measures include implementation of a CDS, VMS system, transshipment monitoring and port state measures. CCSBT requires all vessels fishing for, retaining on board, transshipping or landing SBT to be registered with the CCSBT. This list is made available electronically through the CCSBT website with links from the Tuna.org Website.

6. Penalties and sanctions

Trade constraints are in place to ensure that only SBT taken by authorised vessels and verified by flag states is able to be exported into cooperating markets.

7. IUU measures

CCSBT has a positive vessel list (as outlined in 5 above) plus consideration is being given to implementation of a black list of vessels.

8. CDS

CCSBT has agreed to implement a CDS but has yet to agree details of the system. Different proposals have been developed and a further proposal to integrate these will be progressed in the course of the year. The role of tagging and the role of any centralised CDS has yet to be agreed.

9. Performance review

The general concept of modernising and improving the functioning of the Commission was discussed at the thirteenth meeting of the Commission (CCSBT 13) with the meeting report recording that:

“Members also agreed that there is an immediate need to modernise the CCSBT, with a view to improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

By CCSBT 14, the Kobe meeting had occurred and the suggested criteria for reviewing the performance of tuna RFMO's had been developed. The Commission was able to draw from this work and agree the process and terms of reference for a performance review

The Commission's performance review has two stages:

- Stage one: a self assessment of CCSBT by a group consisting of a nominee from each Member,
- Stage two: a review by the independent expert(s) of the self assessment report

The decision not to include the independent experts in the self assessment was a result of concern by Members at the costs involved.

Members also agreed both the self assessment report and the expert(s)' comments on it would be made available on the CCSBT website.

Current Position

The terms of reference provide that the performance review shall be completed in time for CCSBT 15 (October 2008). To date, Members have identified a list of potential independent reviewers, some of whom have formally indicated their willingness and availability to participate. The selection of the independent reviewers will be made by Members before 15 April 2008. In the meantime work is commencing on the self assessment by the group of Member nominees.

10. Environmental/ precautionary approach

This remains a work in progress for CCSBT. Issues of competency and potential for overlapping measures with geographically based RFMOs remain to be worked through. While there is an existing measure requiring torii line use this measure has yet to be updated to reflect modern best practise.

11. Specific shark fishery management

CCSBT shark management is as in 10 above.

12. Reduction in juvenile by-catch

A substantial part of the fishery is based on juvenile fish as a target for farming. SBT mature at a late age and immature fish are taken as target in other fisheries.

13. Capacity building

While not a CCSBT initiative members have assisted the development of a catch monitoring program in Indonesia.

14. Enhanced scientific cooperation

Standardization of stock presentations Is a matter to be referred to the CCSBT Scientific Committee and Stock Assessment Group.

Annex 4

Presentation by ICCAT

Fabio Hazin, the ICCAT Chairman, made an opening statement to thank Japan and the US for the arrangement of the meeting. He introduced the power point presentation prepared by ICCAT outlining the main actions taken by the Commission in response to the course of actions resulted from Kobe meeting in 2007.

Driss Meski, the ICCAT Executive Secretary, presented the detailed progress made by ICCAT with respect to the Kobe course of actions. He went through the key areas as identified in Kobe. He also mentioned the participation of ICCAT to other international meeting and the cooperation developed with other RFMOs

Among several initiatives, encompassing all 14 key areas and challenges identified in Kobe, ICCAT participated in the Joint Tuna RFMO Technical Working Group on Trade and Catch Documentation Schemes,

held in July 2007, in Raleigh- USA, and applied the results of that meeting to prepare and to adopt, at its annual meeting in 2007, the *Recommendation by ICCAT on an ICCAT Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation program* [Rec. 07-10] which is expected to enter into force in June of this year. This measure will help to strengthen controls in the bluefin tuna fishery by linking catch data to trade data. At the 2007 Commission Meeting, new measures were also adopted in relation to the criteria for inclusion of vessels on the IUU list, allowing vessels identified by other RFMOs to be included on the ICCAT IUU list where appropriate. One of the major objectives of ICCAT in the 2008 inter-sessional period will be the carrying out of a performance review, to be conducted by three external experts in the fields of fisheries management, fisheries biology and international law, which have been already selected through an open and transparent process. The evaluation will be made on the basis of the common criteria accepted by RFMOs, although this does not rule out the use of additional criteria to take into account the specific characteristics of ICCAT. The results of this performance review will be studied in detail by the Working Group to Strengthen ICCAT, which will in turn recommend actions to be taken by the Commission to improve performance and to ensure the objective of maintaining the stocks of tuna and tuna-like species at levels above MSY, at the same time respecting as far as possible the delicate eco-systems of its broad Convention area.

At the end Fabio Hazin provided the example of standardized presentation of the status of tuna species stocks as adopted by the ICCAT SCRS.

Annex 5

Presentation by IATTC

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), following the guidelines recommended for the regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) that were identified at the meeting of these organizations held in Kobe (Japan) in January 2007, has put into action, with various degrees of progress, several of the commitments established, as described below.

The policy of improving, sharing and disseminating the data and stock evaluations has been maintained. With the system of observer coverage of 100% of trips by large tuna purse-seine vessels, catches of both target and bycatch species are well monitored. This system of observers is complemented by the sampling of the unloadings of purse-seine vessels of lesser capacity that do not have observers aboard. Information on catches of target species by longline vessels is gathered monthly, and this system needs only to be complemented with information on other species caught incidentally. Monthly catches, the list of active vessels, stock assessments, and evaluations of the proposals for management measures made by Parties are published on the Commission's web site (www.iatfc.org).

The Regional Vessel Register, established by the IATTC for registering vessels authorized to fish for tunas in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO), and the related system for controlling the fishing capacity of the tuna fleet, which allows free movement of capacity among the countries that participate in the fishery, has proved to be a tool that allows the distribution of fishing opportunities among the countries of the region. In 2007, all the movements of capacity among the participating countries have been published on the IATTC web site.

The Commission staff has continued to ensure that the management measures recommended to the meetings of the IATTC are based on the best scientific information available, and that they be presented to the Parties in a transparent and clear fashion. Its assessments of the stocks are reviewed at the meeting of the Working Group on Stock Assessments, in meetings open to the participation of researchers interested in the study of the tuna species of the EPO.

In order to promote the review of the IATTC's performance, the report of the Kobe meeting was presented to the IATTC Parties during the Commission's 75th Meeting, held in June 2007. Also, a proposal for performance review was submitted, in the form of a draft Resolution presented by one of the Parties and supported by three other Parties, but, due to the importance of other matters, such as the appointment of a new Director, that took up all the time at the meeting, it was not possible to address the matter. It will be addressed at the next Meeting of the IATTC, in June 2008.

Presentation by WCPFC

Improvement, sharing and dissemination of data and stock assessments and all other relevant information in an accurate and timely manner including development of research methodologies.

- Public website:
 - Statistics and Data section.
 - Meeting documents, including assessments and related information.
 - Monitoring of compliance with data submission obligations
- Scientific Committee's Statistics Specialist Working Group monitors data availability
- Initiation of a gaps analysis, data deficiencies (including with respect to provision of data by WCPFC members)
- Particular attention to the Indonesian/Philippines region which accounts for 25% of the WCPO fishery.

Development, where appropriate, and application of equitable and transparent criteria and procedures for allocation of fishing opportunities or level of fishing effort, including provisions to allow for new entrants.

- Allocation has been on the WCPFC agenda since 2006. No substantive progress.
- WCPFC has adopted several conservation and management measures (CMMs) limiting fishing opportunities among CCMs (Members, Participating Territories and Cooperating Non-Members) by controlling catch and effort by fisheries and by areas for CCMs and adopting constraints on capacity expansion.
- New entrants. Most stocks over subscribed and developing State CCMs have fishery development aspirations. Belize the only one of 4 applicants for CNM status admitted at last Session of the Commission.
- Controls, including capacity reduction as appropriate, to ensure that actual total catch, fishing effort level and capacity are commensurate with available fishing opportunities in order to ensure resource sustainability of tuna stocks while allowing legitimate fishery development of developing coastal states, particularly small island developing states and territories
 - Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) use catch, effort and capacity as fishery control tools although the extent these provide for sustainability for some stocks, at levels of effort provided for, is a concern to some CCMs. A Vessel Day Scheme is being implemented for in-zone effort allocation in the purse seine fishery in 8 CCMs with contiguous zones. VDS, which is in early stages of implementation, and will be tested by increased interest by fleets keen to re-locate from other oceans – and no mechanism, other than flag State control and commitment not to increase effort, for the high seas for any gear.
 - Most SIDS CCMs proactive in pursuing their tuna fishery development aspirations.
- Ensuring that management measures are based on the best scientific advice available and consistent with the precautionary approach, particularly, with respect to establishment of effective stock rebuilding measures and other measures to maintain stocks at sustainable levels
 - Concern that some CMMs have not adequately reflected the advice received from the Scientific Committee. Economic and political considerations take precedence over the science. No specific management objectives have yet been adopted by the Commission for each species or fishery (currently use F_{MSY} or B_{MSY} as *de facto* limit reference points), precautionary approaches have not yet been clearly defined. Management strategy evaluation under consideration.
- Ensuring compliance through establishment of integrated MCS (monitoring, control and surveillance) measures that could include VMS, observers, boarding and inspection schemes, port state controls, market state measures, stronger controls on transshipment, and monitoring of bluefin tuna farming, and the harmonization of those measures across the five tuna RFMOs where appropriate to avoid duplication and increase cost efficiency.

Comprehensive suite of integrated tools developed or under development:

- *Developed and being implemented:*

WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels (Active)
IUU List
Register of carriers and bunkers
Scientific data to be provided to the Commission
Information Security Policy
VMS
Regional Observer Programme
HSB&I

- *Under development:*

Transshipment verification
CDS
Port State measures

- Application of penalties and sanctions of adequate severity to deter IUU fishing by both non-members and members.

IUU List now operational. No schedule for penalties and sanctions, particularly in relation to non-compliance with obligations of CCMs in areas such as data submission and reporting obligations yet developed but under consideration.

- Development and implementation of stronger measures to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing including, mechanisms to identify and quantify IUU activities based on trade and other relevant information, a system to exchange information on IUU fishing among RFMOs and among flag states, port states and market states and coastal states, consolidation of the positive and negative lists as described in section II below, effective control over nationals in accordance with their duties under international law, identification of beneficial ownership and demonstration of “genuine link” and dissemination of relevant information to the public.

To be considered during 2008:

Genuine link
Beneficial owners

- Establishment and implementation of a system to monitor catches from catching vessels to markets.
- Views on whether to develop a statistical document programme or full catch document scheme remain polarized in the Commission.
- Reviewing the performance of tuna RFMOs in accordance with ANNEX I
 - The Fifth Session of the Commission (WCPFC5), in December 2008, will consider this issue.
- Implementation of the precautionary approach and an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management including improved data collection on incidental by-catch and non-target species and establishment of measures to minimize the adverse effect of fishing for highly migratory fish species on ecologically related species, particularly sea turtles, seabirds and sharks, taking into account the characteristics of each ecosystem and technologies used to minimize adverse effect.
 - One of the Scientific Committee’s six Specialist Working Groups, established in 2005, is focused on ecosystem and by-catch.
 - Data collection on incidental by-catch is not yet fully implemented, partly because of the delay of implementing Regional Observer Programme. However, the Commission has adopted CCMs that require CCMs to release non-target fish species, release by-catch unharmed where possible and implement research programmes and collect data with a focus on sharks, seabirds and sea turtles.
 - Through the Scientific Committee, WCPFC is supporting Ecosystem Risk Assessment (ERA) to assist an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management. The project is anticipated to be implemented over four years – it commenced in 2007.

- Development of data collection, stock assessment and appropriate management of shark fisheries under the competence of tuna RFMOs.
 - Conservation and Management Measure for Sharks CMM-2006-05] is being implemented from 1 January 2008 for vessels greater than 24m in overall length.
 - WCPFC regional observer programme will require collecting information on the catch of all shark species and shark data should be included in the annual report provided to the Commission by CCMs.
 - The Commission received a report on recent developments at the United Nations regarding shark conservation and management at its December 2007 session.
- Research and development of techniques to reduce incidental take of juvenile tunas during tuna fisheries, in particular FAD operations.
 - At its December 2007 Session the Commission endorsed industry-associated research to mitigate the juvenile mortality of bigeye and yellowfin, especially associated with fish aggregating devices.
- Provision of adequate capacity building assistance, including human resource development, for developing coastal states, particularly small island developing states and territories, towards responsible fishery development, including participation in RFMO and scientific meetings, fisheries data collection and stock assessment and implementation of MCS measures
 - WCPFC has two funds to assist capacity building for developing coastal states such as WCPFC Special Requirements Fund and a Trust Fund provided by Japan. In addition, participation for all SIDS in all meetings of the Commission is provided for in the Commission's core budget. In addition, a voluntary fund to support capacity building in Indonesia and Philippines has been operational in the Commission for three years.
- Enhancement of cooperation among scientists, relevant experts and with other relevant fisheries organizations possibly through organization of symposia or working groups on appropriate topics of common interest. Coordination of timing of annual meetings and scientific meetings with a view to avoiding their overlap as well as allowing an adequate interval between scientific and annual meetings and between proposal submission and annual meetings
- WCPFC has six Specialist Working Group associated with the Scientific Committee which supports cooperation among scientists. Inter-sessional work on the development of a comprehensive tagging proposal for the western and central Pacific, CPUE standardization, and ERA has also promoted scientific interaction.

Technical work to cooperate across RFMOs will commence by addressing the following challenges

- Harmonization and improvement of the trade tracking programs and, as appropriate, development of catch documentation including tagging systems as required
- Creation of a harmonized list of tuna fishing vessels that is as comprehensive as possible (positive list) including use of a permanent unique identifier for each vessel such as an IMO number. The positive list should include support vessels. Creation of a global list of IUU vessels.
- Harmonization of transshipment control measures
- Standardization of presentation form of stock assessment results