



# Progress of Electronic Monitoring in the WCPFC and IOTC

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### Purpose

This paper has been developed to provide the TCWG3 with a summary of the progress of Electronic Monitoring Standards discussions in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) and Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC). The CCSBT Secretariat invited Australia to submit this paper.

### WCPFC

The WCPFC continues to progress towards implementation and use of Electronic Monitoring (EM) in the WCPFC Convention area. A dedicated WCPFC Electronic Reporting and Electronic Monitoring Working Group (ERandEM WG) was formed in July 2015 has convened five times, most recently in July 2022.

At its July 2022 meeting, the ERandEM WG reviewed a draft framework for the WCPFC Regional Electronic Monitoring Programme (REMP), signalling an important step in the programme's development. There was also effort to clarify the relationship between the REMP and the existing Regional Observer Program (ROP) and explain how the framework will work with the existing monitoring tools in the WCPFC.

The framework was presented to the 18th Meeting of the Scientific Committee (August 2022) and was generally supported. The framework will also be presented at the 18th meeting of the Technical and Compliance Committee (September 2022), with the intention of updating the WCPFC Technical Compliance Committee-Workplan. Relevant updates to the workplan include:

- *Seek expert advice by no later June 2023 on key issues related to the establishment of the REMP to enable the ERandEM WG to review and develop the REMP*
- *Formation of a small drafting group to draft the minimum standards for EM and draft a CMM for the Electronic Monitoring Program by mid-2023 at the latest.*

The recommendations from the ERandEM WG and the 18<sup>th</sup> meeting of the TCC will be considered at the 19<sup>th</sup> WCPFC Commission Meeting in December 2022.

### IOTC

IOTC Resolution 22/04 describes electronic monitoring as follows:

- *'Electronic Monitoring System' (EMS) means an integrated system of hardware and software that supports acquisition of video footages of fishing activity, positional data and/or sensor, that allows the analysis and reporting of EM records.*

The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission took a step forward during 2021 and 2022 in providing for the implementation and use of electronic monitoring systems (EMS) in the Indian Ocean.

The first ad-hoc meeting of the electronic monitoring systems working group (WGEMS) met in November 2021 where it reviewed the progress of EMS programmes in the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas and the WCPFC. Members also shared their experiences implementing EMS in their national fisheries and reviewed papers on the capabilities of EMS to collect data consistent with the requirements of the IOTC's current Regional Observer Program (ROS) minimum data standards.

The 24th Session of the Scientific Committee (December 2021) and the 26th Session of the Commission (May 2022) reviewed the progress of the first meeting and endorsed its continuation, Terms of Reference, and Plan of Work.

The 26th Session of the Commission also adopted amendments to the Regional Observer Scheme (ROS), now Resolution 22/04. The main changes in the Resolution create the basis for the introduction of EMS to be used on board vessels in the Indian Ocean.

Resolution 22/04 directs the Scientific Committee, in collaboration with the Compliance Committee, to develop and agree on minimum standards for the use of EMS for purse seine, longline, bait boat (pole and line), handline, and gillnet fleets by 2023 at the latest, including advice on modalities for the substitution of the human observer coverage by EMS, considering factors such as, the principles and regulations regarding minimum safe manning requirements. Resolution 22/04 states that the Commission may consider and adopt these standards by 2024 in a separate Resolution.

The resolution also notes that once EMS standards are adopted and providing contracting Parties meet the minimum mandatory regional observer scheme (ROS) data reporting standards, the minimum human observer coverage provided for in paragraph 3 of Resolution 22/04 may be complemented or substituted by means of EMS.

To ensure the minimum mandatory ROS data reporting standards are met, the EMS may be complemented by port sampling and/or other Commission approved data collection methods. The measure encourages members to use an EMS to improve the collection of scientific data before the minimum standards (for EMS use) are adopted.

The 2nd meeting of the ad-hoc IOTC WGEMS met during June 2022 and further reviewed and refined the draft EMS Programme Standards and recommended that the WGEMS meet again in November 2022 and then June 2023 to further refine the draft Standards, prior to their review at the 2022 and 2023 Scientific Committee meetings, noting the request by the Commission for adoption of EMS standards by 2024 at the latest.

Currently the IOTC WGEMS draft EMS standards are in two parts:

- IOTC EM Program standards
- IOTC EM System and Data standards

The **EM Program Standards** cover program objective, purpose, scope, roles/responsibilities, guiding principles and vessel monitoring plans.

The **EM System and Data standards** cover technical standards (for vessel EM systems), the logistical standards (for data retrieval, back up, chain of custody and frequency) and data analysis standards (including data review, quality, coverage, submission, storage, ownership, etc.)

The WGEMS has also reviewed an assessment of EM capability to collect ROS data in different fisheries. This assessment is important in order to verify the capability and ensure the replicability and accuracy of the information collected through EM (e.g., compared to data collected by human observers) with the purpose of improving the stock assessment and management process

The IOTC WGEMS has also noted the need to consider harmonising key term and definitions across RFMOs and that there may be an element of the upcoming ABNJ Tuna Project Phase II relating to EMS which could help to provide a platform for discussing these definitions between RFMOs as part of the Kobe harmonisation work.