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WCPFC Position Statement

**WCPFC19-2022-OP12
28 November 2022**

Global Tuna Alliance

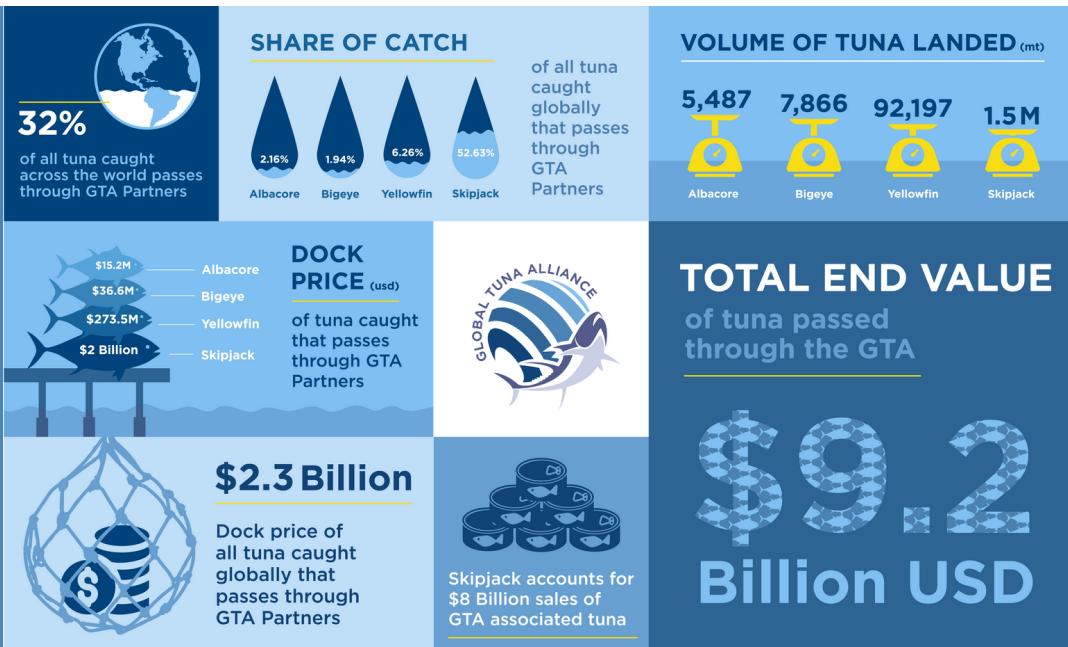


2022 WCPFC Position Statement

GLOBAL TUNA ALLIANCE

WHO ARE THE GTA?

We are an independent group of retailers and supply-chain companies, working to ensure that tuna ultimately meets the highest standards of environmental performance and social responsibility.



TOP LEVEL ASKS

Harvest Strategies

Accelerate development and implementation of comprehensive, precautionary Harvest Strategies, including precautionary Reference Points and Harvest Control Rules.

Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA)

WCPFC adopts port state measures (PSMs) that are aligned with PSMA requirements.

Electronic Monitoring

Adopt a CMM for an Electronic Monitoring Program as well as associated Minimum Standards.

Labour Standards For Crew On Fishing Vessels

Support proposed CMM on Labour Standards for crew on fishing vessels.

HARVEST STRATEGIES

What is the issue?

- The major Western and Central Pacific Ocean tuna stocks are “in the green” – with no overfished stocks or overfishing occurring.
- To ensure this continues, we are calling on the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) to accelerate action to develop comprehensive management procedures (harvest strategies) across these stocks.
- In addition, there are many tuna fisheries in the region that are either Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified or in full assessment.
- These certifications are at high risk of suspension from the program if the WCPFC cannot complete its workplans related to management procedures and harvest control rules by December 2022. The MSC has published a factsheet that outlines this situation.
- Our Partners, engaged in the sourcing of tunas globally, are concerned that if the WCPFC fails to make significant progress, then MSC certified tuna fisheries in the west and central Pacific Ocean could face difficulty meeting their conditions and certifiers may suspend them in June 2023. But the bigger picture is that if these fisheries are not managed properly, there is a risk that the current good status of these tuna stocks will be lost. Whether the MSC certification is maintained or lost will indicate what we may see happen.

What are we calling for?

- Adopt and implement without delay a management procedure for skipjack.
- Agree revised workplan for setting Target Reference Points (TRP) for bigeye and yellowfin in 2023 - with adoption of interim TRPs this year.
- Agree a revised workplan for setting a comprehensive, precautionary harvest strategy for South Pacific albacore in 2023.
- Establish the Science-Management Dialogue (SMD) as a permanent working group.

PORT STATE MEASURES AGREEMENT

What is the issue?

- The PSMA, adopted in 2009 by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), requires parties to place tighter controls on foreign-flagged vessels seeking to enter and use their ports to land or tranship fish.
- Tuna RFMOs also regulate member nations' port State controls as part of their management measures. This ensures that these governments have minimum standards in place, regardless of whether they are a party to the PSMA.
- In December 2017 the WCPFC agreed to a CMM (2017-02) on Port State Minimum Standards with the stated purpose being "to establish processes and procedures for CCMs to request that port inspections be undertaken on fishing vessels suspected of engaging in IUU fishing or fishing related activities in support of IUU fishing."
- However, the WCPFC measure is largely for members to request port inspections to be undertaken and foreign-flagged vessels can enter any non-designated WCPFC member port without requesting access, providing information in advance, or being inspected.

What are we calling for?

- Expand the existing CMM to cover all foreign flagged vessels seeking entry into a member's port (Article 3).
- Adopt integration and coordination and electronic exchange of relevant information between RFMO, States, FAO and other international organisations (PSMA Article 5, 6 & 16).
- Require advance notice of port entry with a specific time frame and information to be provided (Article 8).
- Include denial of port entry and use provisions (Article 9, 11, 18).
- Final consideration is to require inspections of suspicious vessels in foreign ports at the request of a member with reasonable grounds to believe that a vessel has engaged in IUU fishing or fishing related activities, and is seeking entry in to, or is in the designated port of another member (Article 12).
- Members to opt into the PSM measure by designating ports.
- Accelerate action on developing the funding mechanism to assist Small Island Developing States to implement CMM 2017-02 on port State minimum standards.



ELECTRONIC MONITORING

What is the issue?

- Comprehensive observer coverage is critical to effective fisheries management, compliance monitoring, and independent verification of catch, effort and species interactions.
- Low levels of observer coverage limit the availability of independent catch and operational data, reducing the accuracy of stock assessments and effectiveness of conservation management measures.
- Some WCPFC members still do not meet the minimum 5% observer coverage requirement for longline vessels adopted in 2007.
- Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic affected observer coverage in the purse seine and longline fisheries in the WCPO.
- Had minimum standards for electronic monitoring been in place, the impact would have been considerably less.

What are we calling for?

- Adopt a CMM for an Electronic Monitoring Program as well as associated Minimum Standards.



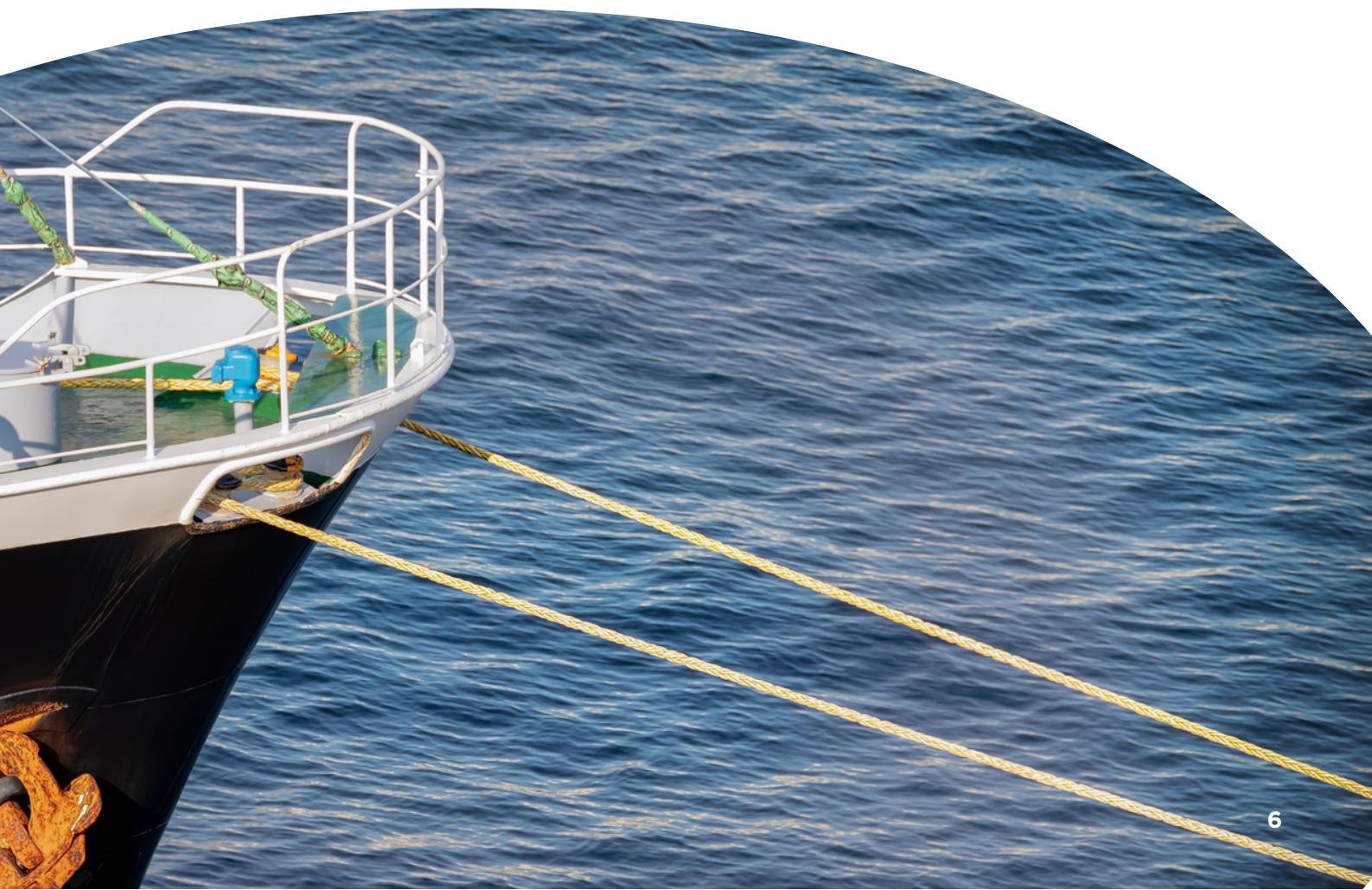
LABOUR STANDARDS FOR CREW ON FISHING VESSELS

What is the issue?

- The seafood supply chain, and their customers, are concerned about ongoing instances of poor labour conditions and reports of human rights abuses on board fishing vessels.
- The GTA is fully supportive of the work of the Crew Welfare Intersessional working group to advance the issue under the leadership of New Zealand and Indonesia in support of transitioning WCPFC Resolution 2018-01 on Labour Standards for Crew on Fishing Vessels into a formal, binding CMM.

What are we calling for?

- WCPFC to support the proposed CMM on Labour Standards for crew on fishing vessels.





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