



**FIRST MEETING OF THE INTERSESSIONAL WORKING GROUP TO REVIEW THE
TRANSHIPMENT MEASURE (CMM 2009-06) (TS-IWG)**

Electronic Meeting
17 May 2023

**INFORMATION PAPER PROVIDING INITIAL POINTS FOR PHASE 3 OF THE
TRANSHIPMENT INFORMATION ANALYSIS**

**WCPFC-TS-IWG01-2023-TIA_update
16 May 2023**

Paper by the Secretariat, SPC-OFP and TS-IWG Co-Chairs

Background

Phase 1 Data Preparation and Phase 2 Data Compilation and Analysis

SPC has completed the Stage 1 data preparation and Stage 2 data compilation and analysis for the purse seine and longline fisheries, noting that some of the requested data and data analysis is not relevant to the purse seine fishery in terms of WCPFC data.

Summary sheets setting out what has been prepared are within each of the Stage 2 reports; pages 1-6 of the purse seine report (WCPFC-TS-IWG01-2023-TIA_PS) and pages 4-19 of the longline report (WCPFC-TS-IWG01-2023-TIA_LL). Observations and recommendations in relation to the data and improvements that could be made to enhance data collection to support quality assurance of reported data for scientific and monitoring purposes have also been made. These are preliminary and can be refined with time and linkage to wider compliance considerations depending on the TS-IWGs desire for further elaboration.

There are some additional presentations of transshipment related information available through some work the Secretariat has in hand to enhance future Transshipment Annual Reports for TCC that overlap this with the data analysis as well as provide some slightly new information on trends in the parties involved in transshipments and the destinations for unloading of transhipped fish and fish products. There are also some presentations of public domain data sources providing transshipment related information that have been prepared by Observer participants, including some which have been circulated through the <https://www.wcpfc.int/iwg-transshipment> page.

Initial Points: Phase 3 Qualitative Study, Literature Review, Policy Analysis

Some preliminary key points relating to Phase 3 questions from the TS-IWG [Scope of Work](#) are attached. Further refinement and detail of these points is possible depending on the TS-IWGs guidance on the nature of the elaboration required.

Attachment

Phase 3

Qualitative Study, Literature Review, Policy Analysis

- [What challenges did flag CCMs or vessels report with implementing CMM 2009-06?](#)

This aspect is only relevant to the longline related high seas transhipments that are reported to the Commission as there is no routine purse seine transhipment reporting to the Commission. The only reporting on other than high seas longline transhipment reporting is through Annual Report Part 1.

Information is included in each of the Secretariat's Annual Reports on Transhipment Reporting which includes tables and references to issues where there are missing notifications or declarations. These issues have reduced over time given the Secretariat's work with CCMs during each year on missing reports. This is a part of a 'pre-CMR' process where the Secretariat provides information to ensure that CCMs transhipment records are complete and consistent with those provided to the Commission through the Transhipment E-Reporting system (TSER).

The issues can become apparent during the Secretariat review of reporting in Annual Report Part 2 which is compared to the CCMs Annual Report Part 1. The source of this error can be caused through missing communications between the flag state authorities and their companies or agents (the Commission may receive transhipment reports not notified to flag state or vice versa).

The Secretariat is working to expand the use of direct electronic reporting to reduce the potential for missed reports occurring through, for example, email issues and is also working to demonstrate the Transhipment Analysis tool to CCMs. This tool allows CCMs to routinely monitor their companies reporting and to self-identify and resolve reporting issues rather than be reliant on the Secretariat's review.

Additional benefits can be gained from enabling stronger coordination and sharing of data with RFMOs that have overlapping responsibilities particularly IATTC, CCSBT, SPRFMO and NPFC. While NPFC and SPRFMO targets different fisheries, there are vessels that operate in both areas and some of the measures that apply in each establish different rules. WCPFC and CCSBT have agreed to a [Memorandum of Cooperation on the endorsement of WCPFC ROP observers for observing SBT on the high seas in the WCPF Convention Area \(2017\)](#),

What is less clear is the extent to which potential transhipments that are not reported occurs. This is evident from the nature of ad hoc data requests during MCS operational activity however, as sufficient evidence is able to be developed, such instances should result in the creation of an Article 25 (2) case file.

Currently, apart from VMS positions for the vessels involved, there is no information with which to independently verify the occurrence of a transshipment event. To do so would require an independent source of data and information such as the locations and timing of transshipments, the species composition of transshipments, destination ports for unloading etc with which self-reporting and other data sources such as VMS and port state inspections could be compared. Further information is provided in response to the following question.

- [What is the nature and coverage of independent monitoring of transshipment events \(including associated data flows\) reported to the WCPFC Secretariat? Are there any apparent trends over time? What information are transshipment observers reporting? Are there discrepancies in what is reported?](#)

As noted above, there is no data submitted to the Secretariat generated from independent monitoring of transshipment events involving high seas longline vessels or the carriers involved. Also, it should be noted that the Secretariat does not receive information on in-port transshipments from purse seine vessels.

Implementation of the WCPFC19 decision to require high seas transshipment reporting to the Commission by observers is underway. Experience and lessons from other RFMOs with this monitoring such as IATTC are valuable however, it will still take time to fully specify observer data fields and protocols in the WCPFC ROP context. In addition, processes for the use of this data in Commission scientific, and monitoring and compliance processes have not yet been discussed but are likely to be considered during the process to review the CMM.

The Secretariat has preliminary systems in place to assist with identifying potential missing reports of transshipment's based on existing data holdings, but work is required to refine these systems and to consider appropriate processes that flow from the analysis of this information where information indicates follow-up with members is required for data quality and completeness.

There is the potential for the work flowing from TCC18 decisions for work by the IWG-ROP in considering data gaps, the work of the ERandEM WG and the work to consider how to improve the ability to verify data to collectively support a framework to that will improve the Commission's ability to enhance the monitoring of transshipments across the supply chain. In 2021, the Secretariat commissioned a desktop study investigating high-level options for the WCPFC Secretariat's role in at-sea transshipment Electronic-Monitoring ([WCPFC18-2021-IP10](#)). This study documents current data flows for monitoring at-sea transshipments and considers options for a WCPFC Secretariat role in Regional Electronic Monitoring.

The TS-IWG has also received a report from WWF "*Observer Reporting of Transshipments in the WCPFC*" ([WCPFC-TCC15-2019-OP06](#)) which contains information about the similarities between IOTC, ICCAT, IATTC and CCSBT in their approach and data forms for transshipment monitoring by observers, and highlights points of differences with WCPFC.

- Are transshipment observers from different observer programs reporting the same information from transshipment events?

The Commission at WCPFC19 meeting (December 2022) adopted *Minimum Data fields for Observer Transshipment Monitoring* ([suppl CMM 2009-06-3](#)) as data fields to be collected by transshipment observers during transshipment events, as of 1 April 2023 (WCPFC19 Summary Report paragraph 466 (i)). WCPFC19 further agreed to require that “For transshipment on the high seas, transshipment ROP providers shall send the agreed *Minimum Data fields for Observer Transshipment Monitoring* ([suppl CMM 2009-06-3](#)) to the Commission Secretariat within 90 days of the disembarkation of the observer from the carrier.” (WCPFC19 Summary Report paragraph 466 (ii)).

In early 2023, the WCPFC Secretariat and SPC-OFP had an opportunity to meet with IATTC Secretariat and the coordinator of the IATTC’s Transshipment Observer Programme, to discuss experiences and approaches to support transshipment observer reporting. There is further opportunity to generally contrast and compare transshipment requirements and processes in other tuna RFMOs and to consider any issues that may be apparent through data exchange within the limitations of the data rules and procedures. As part of the implementation of transshipment observer reporting during 2023, there will be an opportunity to review the data and process occurring in WCPFC CCMs who currently operate transshipment observer reporting. The IWG-ROP has also been tasked to review the agreed *Minimum Data fields for Observer Transshipment Monitoring* ([suppl CMM 2009-06-3](#)) and consider whether any revisions are necessary.

The Chair of the FFA/SPC and PNAO DCC, has also indicated that there is work underway to carry out an assessment comparing RFMO transshipment observer report data fields. This review is likely to be available in the near future.

- What are the benefits, limitations, and estimated costs to WCPFC of using different tools such as AIS, VMS, observer coverage, electronic monitoring and other technologies to monitor at-sea transshipment activities?

A number of tools provide the opportunity for overlapping (but not duplicate) data that would assist in verifying the quality of transshipment data that is an input to Commission decisions. While the Secretariat receives and stores reports and seeks to ensure all reports for any one high seas transshipment event are received, there are limited processes to consider the quality and completeness of reported data. A number of tools that would assist are already being considered by the Commission, such as EM, ER.

Currently, the Secretariat has developed some systems that are supported by existing data sets particularly VMS to identify potential transshipments or location related issues with transshipments and note the potential for consideration of tools generated through port state inspection processes depending on the extent inspection information flows permit. The nature

of observer coverage and the extent to which observer coverage is independent can also be considered, for example where the same observer is consistently deployed on the same vessel or where the observer is from the flag state of the offloading vessel (where that is the only observer) and from the carrier flag state.

The work by the Secretariat in response to WCPFC19 tasking to develop a paper in 2023 relating to improved ability to verify information will provide a strong platform for an assessment of benefits (WCPFC19 Summary Report paragraph 351 (ii)). WCPFC19 also endorsed the TCC18 recommendation that the Commission prioritize the development of additional data collection mechanisms for some obligations to allow for more timely and verifiable data to feed into the CMR process. TCC18 had noted in particular there is ongoing work related to ER&EM and transshipment reporting that will allow for more verifiable data to feed into the CMR process.” (WCPFC19 Summary Report paragraph 351 (ii)). The 2021 desktop study investigating high-level options for the WCPFC Secretariat’s role in at-sea transshipment Electronic-Monitoring ([WCPFC18-2021-IP10](#)) may also inform these considerations.

WCPFC19 also endorsed the following recommendation of TCC18 related to ROP Minimum Transshipment Observer Data, which was to note that the “Commission has already adopted ER standards for observer data and that the development of standards for ER by transshipment observers or providers in 2023 could significantly shorten the required timeline for ER of transshipment observer data to the Secretariat.” (WCPFC19 Summary Report, paragraph 467).

It will be important to consider the processes that support the development of additional tools and processes to ensure the use of the data is optimised as a means to inform the Commission of its performance against objectives, and to inform discussions on any issues.

- What are the benefits, limitations, and estimated costs to WCPFC of implementing a regional observer program specifically for carrier vessels, managed and administered by an independent organization similar to transshipment observer programs in the IOTC, ICCAT and IATTC?

A study carried out by PEW ([Transshipment in the Western and Central Pacific | The Pew Charitable Trusts \(pewtrusts.org\)](#)) provides information that considers this matter.

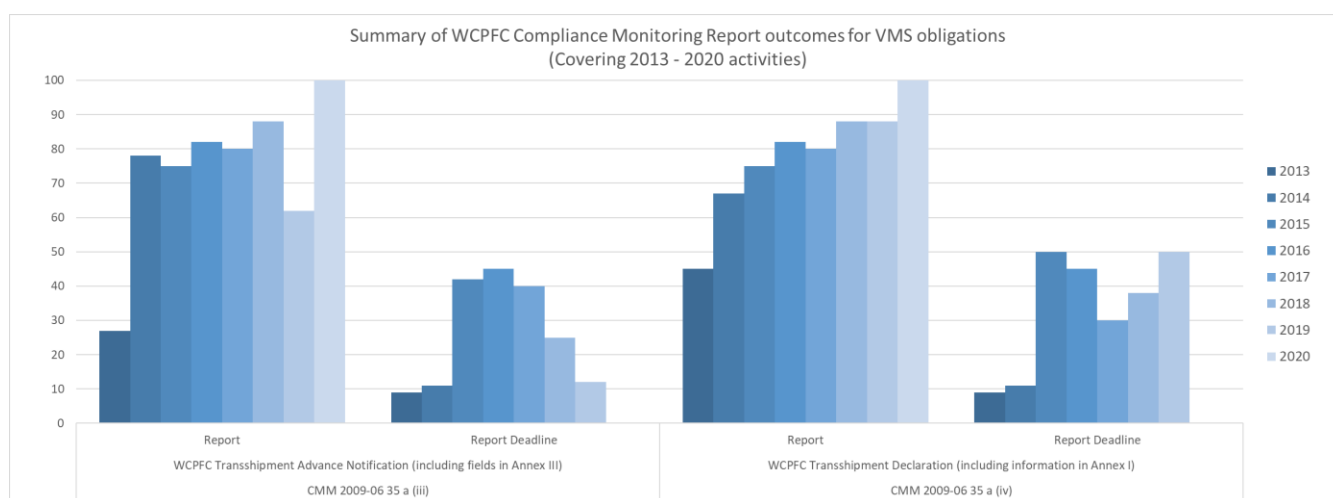
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The 2021 desktop study investigating high-level options for the WCPFC Secretariat’s role in at-sea transshipment Electronic-Monitoring (WCPFC18-2021-IP10) may also provide useful context to inform these considerations.

- What is the rate of CCM submission of advance notifications and reporting as required by CMM 2009-06, as set out in the Compliance Monitoring Reports or other reports complied by the Commission (e.g., for the TCC)? Are there any apparent trends over time?

As noted above and reported in the transshipment Annual Report and through the CMR process (see Figure 1 below), the rates of submission and complete reporting for most CCMs involved, is high with any issues resolved in discussion with the Secretariat. This work would be reduced as CCMs gain more use from online systems to routinely enter reports as well as monitor for issues (as reference above). There are potentially more issues with late submissions based on the required timeframes for the supply of notifications in particular where details of transshipment events change to the extent that new notifications are required.

Figure 1: Summary of final WCPFC Compliance Monitoring Report Outcomes for Transshipment notifications and declaration submissions (2014 – 2021¹)



One impediment to the use of direct e-reporting for CCMs with smaller administrations involved in transshipments is the need for greater use of efficient tools such as e-reporting. There is a need to consider technical assistance for greater streamlining of data entry and interoperability across national, subregional and WCPFC systems in respect of data flows for CCM reporting, which can assist and support CCMs with the uptake of e-reporting tools.

¹ RY2021 data included in 2023 once final decisions on the CMR are made at WCPFC20

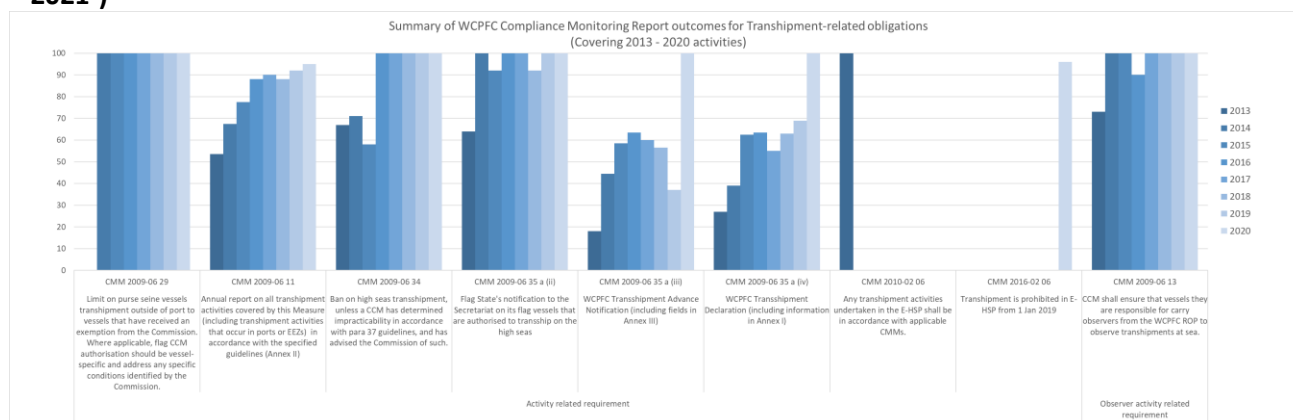
- What is the rate of compliance with requirements in CMM 2009-06, including reporting requirements for all transshipment activities, by offloading and receiving vessel flag CCMs? Are there any apparent trends over time?

This information is reflected in the CMR outcomes which show that for most members, compliance with transshipment reporting requirements is now consistently high for those obligations reported on.

- Are there requirements in CMM 2009-06 that are not being achieved by a flag CCM?

The below figure was included as Figure 5 in TCC18 Annual Report on Transshipment ([WCPFC-TCC18-2022-RP03](#)), and this provides a summary of the outcomes from the CMR process to date for obligations that have been reviewed through the Compliance Monitoring Scheme process.

Figure 2: Summary of final WCPFC Compliance Monitoring Report Outcomes for Transshipment (2014 – 2021²)



Further work to assess obligations that are not part of the CMR process would be required to respond more fully to this question and to consider independent reports.

- Among other objectives, Article 29 of the Convention provides that “the members of the Commission shall encourage their fishing vessels, to the extent practicable, to conduct transshipment in port.” How effective has CMM 2009-06 been towards achieving Article 29’s objectives? What is the data collection coverage for in-port, EEZ, and high seas transshipment events?

There is little information that has been provided to the Secretariat with which to assess what steps have been taken by CCMs to meet this objective or to be able to identify the

² RY2021 data included in 2023 once final decisions on the CMR are made at WCPFC20

considerations that mean it is not optimal or practical for vessels to conduct transshipment in port.

Some information is provided in Executive Director and CCM reports which have reviewed available information related to impracticability. There are three reports that have been submitted to the TS-IWG for consideration:

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|--------------------------|--|
| WCPFC-TCC9-2013-17 | Guidelines for determining impracticability - high seas transshipment |
| WCPFC-TCC12-2016-15_rev2 | Draft Guidelines on Impracticability of Transshipment (Rev 2) |
| WCPFC-TCC14-2018-DP05 | The Impracticability Exemption to the WCPFC's Prohibition on Transshipment on the High Seas RMI |

As noted above, the information on high seas longline transshipments is solely through CCM self-reporting of transshipment notifications and declarations. There is no data collection relating to in-port or EEZ transshipments except in rare cases when individuals may include the Secretariat in general correspondence or when provided as information to supplement h data requests from CCMs and non-CCMs to support consideration of port entry applications or port inspections.

- [Are there data gaps that impeded the effectiveness of regulating and monitoring transshipment activity, and what additional data should be collected to improve the effectiveness of regulating and monitoring transshipment activity?](#)

The information provided in the Phase 2 data analysis and compilation and WCPFC19 paper on Implementing Observer Monitoring of Transshipments ([WCPFC19-2022-32](#)) highlight that there are gaps that, if addressed, would significantly assist in the effectiveness of regulating and monitoring transshipment activity. These relate to key data, time and position of transshipment, catch and species related information and destination/port of unloading in particular. This would allow cross verification of data that could identify trends and any issues in implementation CMM 2009-06 and support growing CCM activity in relation to port state measures. It would also support the improved data quality reviews of catch logbook data. These factors are consistent with the objective of CMM 2009-06 as set out in paragraph 14.

As there is currently no review of the completeness of transshipment reports, ensuring that all data fields were completed would also assist. One example is data on any fish on board prior to a transshipment which is frequently not completed to identify fish or to confirm no fish in holds given the occurrence of a recent full unload.

As also noted above, the consideration of exchanges of information between WCPFC and other Pacific Basin RFMOs with overlapping areas would also provide information on trends and the extent of activity across the wider Pacific given that a number of CCMs and vessels are common.

There is also further information to support consideration of improvements to data collection set out in the the [FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Transshipment](#) adopted under the framework of the FAO Code of Conduct in July 2022, a resource for organisations such as RFMOs which aims to assist in the development and review of transshipment regulations and their integration within the broader regulatory framework.

In reference to the FC-3 Guideline form, WCPFC19 has also tasked the TS-IWG and IWG-ROP to consider the data fields required to be collected by carrier vessels to complement the data to be collected by observers as referenced in agreed *Minimum Data fields for Observer Transshipment Monitoring* ([suppl. CMM 2009-06-3](#)) (WCPFC19 Summary Report paragraph 466 (v)).
