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**PREPARATORY CONFERENCE FOR THE COMMISSION FOR  
THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF HIGHLY  
MIGRATORY FISH STOCKS IN THE WESTERN AND  
CENTRAL PACIFIC**

First session  
Christchurch, New Zealand  
23 – 28 April, 2001

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**WORKING GROUP II: SCIENTIFIC STRUCTURE AND PROVISION OF INTERIM  
SCIENTIFIC ADVICE**

**Terms of Reference**

Consistent with paragraph 7 of Resolution I, the Chair of the Preparatory Conference has established this working group to address the issues associated with the provision of scientific advice to the Commission. In addition there is a need for the working group to address issues associated with interim advice to the Preparatory Conference consistent with paragraph 10 of Resolution I and encouraging participation by the small island States in the scientific work of the Commission

The nature of some of the issues is such that there is a need for the working group, at an early stage, to develop a method of work or work program that will enable issues to be identified and the necessary background information or expert advice sought in order enable decisions to be made as early as possible.

With respect to articles 12 and 13 the tasks of the working group include identification of the Commission's needs with respect to:

- Science and in particular stock assessment and advice on stock status in the short term and ongoing;
- Data requirements, including current gaps in data coverage and standards for data collection and management;
- Research priorities, and research planning and coordination;
- Review of assessments, analyses and other scientific work.

The Working Group should identify for the Preparatory Conference various options or mechanisms, including the use of existing organizations and arrangements, by which the requirements of articles 12 and 13 can be provided.

Resolution I identifies the need for the Preparatory Conference to seek provisional advice on the status of the four main tuna stocks (bigeye, skipjack, South Pacific albacore and yellowfin). With respect to this matter, the working group should determine a process by which the Preparatory Conference can receive and review information on the status of these and northern stocks in an efficient and cost effective manner, including the extent to which existing information can fulfill these needs.

In providing advice to the Preparatory Conference the Working Group should, in consultation with Working Group I, identify the costs associated with the various mechanisms and processes identified.

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