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ANNUAL REPORT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE E-REPORTING STANDARDS

WCPFC-TCC15-2019-RP10

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Paper by the Secretariat and SPC-OFP

Purpose

1. This paper reviews the background of WCPFC E-reporting standards development and provides an update on the level of voluntary uptake by CCMs in their data submissions to WCPFC to date.

Background

2. This paper responds to the task to the Secretariat under paragraph 7(c) of the E-reporting SSPs to “report annually on the performance of the Electronic reporting standards and their application, and as necessary, make recommendation for improvements or modifications.”
3. Over the past five years the Commission has been considering the application of E-reporting and E-monitoring for fisheries monitoring. In 2014, WCPFC held an E-Monitoring and E-reporting workshop at FFA Headquarters (Honiara, Solomon Islands) in 31 March – 1 April 2014 to discuss the potential for electronic reporting and electronic monitoring in the WCPO and to consider next steps for progressing these initiatives. The workshop noted that a key risk for the Commission is the lack of documented policies and standards for these technologies. The benefits of standardised reporting formats for data exchange were articulated in the consultant’s paper, **WCPFC10-2013-16_rev1**. Potential benefits identified at the time included but not limited to:
 - a. timely and enhanced data management;
 - b. facilitating data exchange between the Secretariat, CCMs, and regional bodies;
 - c. efficiently managing the increasing amounts of data received by the Secretariat; and
 - d. giving effect to t-RFMO recommendations on data harmonisation.

The potential risks of not having agreed WCPFC data standards included poor data coordination, increased data storage and transmission complexities, higher data security risk and increased long-term costs to the Commission and CCMs.

4. At WCPFC11 (December 2014) the Commission agreed that a priority task should be the development of draft standards, specifications and procedures for the use of electronic reporting and electronic monitoring technologies in WCPFC fisheries. To facilitate the development of these standards, specifications and procedures the Electronic Reporting and Electronic Monitoring Working Group (ERandEMWG) was established.
5. The first two meetings of the ERandEMWG prioritised the development and consideration of draft E-reporting standards, particularly for operational level catch and effort data and for observer data. The culmination of the past two ERandEMWG meetings was the adoption in December 2016 of “*The Standards, Specifications and Procedures for Electronic Reporting*” (E-reporting SSPs), this was adopted by the Commission in the form of a general decision to which other forms of E-reporting standards, once agreed would be included over time. A third meeting was held in 2018 that focused more on E-monitoring.
6. In December 2016, the Commission adopted the standards, specifications and procedures for Electronic reporting which include *E-reporting standards for operational catch and effort data* (WCPFC13 Summary Report paragraph 584 and Attachment T). Additionally, in December 2017 the *E-reporting standards for observer data* (WCPFC14 Summary Report paragraph 401 and Attachment T) were agreed for inclusion in the E-reporting SSPs. The standards for *E-reporting of high seas transshipment declarations and transshipment notices* was adopted in December 2018 (WCPFC15 Summary Report Attachment S). A table that summarises the status of the WCPFC E-reporting standards is provided in **Table 1**. Copies of the E-Reporting SSPs can be found on the WCPFC website at this link:= <https://www.wcpfc.int/electronic-reporting>

Table 1. Notes on the decisions by the Commission on the standards, specifications and procedures for Electronic Reporting (E-reporting SSPs)

Version	WCPFC decision reference	Description of updates	Effective date (Refer para 4)
1.0	<i>WCPFC15 Summary Report, Attachment S</i>	<i>For adoption of ER for high seas transshipment notices and declarations</i>	14 June 2019
2.0	<i>WCPFC14 Summary Report, Attachment T</i>	<i>For adoption of ER for observer data</i>	9 June 2018
1.0	<i>WCPFC13 Summary Report, Attachment T</i>	<i>For adoption of ER SSPs, for operational level catch and effort data</i>	9 June 2017

7. In December 2018, the Commission also agreed that “*with respect to maintaining adopted standards, matters of substance (such as major changes or new proposals) shall be considered in a manner consistent with already established processes for new*

proposals. The Secretariat shall administer minor changes to the SSPs that reflect decisions of the Commission by circulating a draft to all CCMs advising that the change had been made and would come into effect on a date at least consistent with that in the SSPs. CCMs shall be provided the opportunity to raise concerns and if so, the change becomes a matter of substance and will be handled as such.”

Comment on the voluntary uptake and/or performance of the E-reporting standards

8. At the time of preparing this paper, the WCPFC E-reporting SSPs related to the *E-reporting standards for operational catch and effort data* will have been in effect for a little more than twenty four months. The WCPFC E-reporting SSPs as it relates to the *E-reporting standards for observer data* have been in effect for twelve months. The *E-reporting standards for high seas transshipment declarations and high seas transshipment notices* have been in effect for a few months only. (refer Table 1)
9. Irrespective of the effective date, it should be noted that the various E-reporting standards are voluntary until such time the Commission decides to make them mandatory (refer E-reporting SSPs paragraph 3).

E-reporting Standards for operational level catch and effort data and observer data

10. Uptake of electronic reporting tools is continuing and developments over the past three years, include:
 - a) The Scientific Service Provider continues to receive E-Reported purse seine logsheet data from the PNA FIMS/iFIMS system that adhere directly to the WCPFC E-Reporting standards for operational catch/effort data; this system is mandatory for all purse seine fleets licensed to fish in the PNA waters. The PNA FIMS/iFIMS now accesses a web-based API developed by the Scientific Service Provider to undertake comprehensive data quality control to ensure a regional standard in the quality of their ER data. The coverage of the validated PNA iFIMS e-log data in the WCPFC databases has increased significantly in the past six months and is expected to further increase over the coming year as procedures for dealing with errors are established.
 - b) The submission of operational data for the Korean longline fleet for 2017 and 2018 is understood to be sourced from their E-Reporting system, although it does not adhere to the WCPFC E-Reporting standards at this stage.
 - c) There are several E-Reporting initiatives underway in the Pacific Islands countries that will result in an increase in coverage of LONGLINE operational data submissions adhering to the WCPFC E-Reporting standards in the future. For example, French Polynesia has successfully implemented the E-Reporting *Onboard* system on 25 vessels; this system is also being used by vessels in Fiji (5 vessels), New Caledonia (3 vessels), Tonga (3 vessels) and Samoa (3 vessels).

- d) There are a number of E-Monitoring initiatives currently underway throughout the region, and the current system used in Pacific Island countries (provided by the Technical Service Provider SATLINK) exports data that adheres directly to the WCPFC E-Reporting Observer Standards. To date, **longline E-Monitoring data comprising 286 trips (for 2017) and 137 trips (for 2018)** have been generated from this E-Monitoring system (adhering to the WCPFC E-Reporting observer standards) and loaded into the SPC regional observer database.
11. In terms of adherence to the adopted e-reporting standards, members are currently reporting as follows:
- a) All Pacific Island member countries of the Pacific Community (SPC) require domestic and foreign fleets licensed to fish in their waters to submit logsheets, which are then entered or imported into the WCPFC operational catch/effort database (using the TUFMAN 2 system); this system stores data consistent with the WCPFC E-Reporting standards for operational data. The submissions of **2018 operational purse seine data** that are aligned to the WCPFC E-reporting standards **represents 98% coverage**, and for **2018 operational longline data**, **represent coverage of 35%** (of all 2018 longline data submitted).
- b) All national observer programmes from Pacific Island member countries, the PNA-managed FSM Arrangement observer programme and the FFA-managed US Treaty Observer Programme have their observer data entered into the TUFMAN 2 system, which produces data for the WCPFC ROP database aligned to the WCPFC E-Reporting standards for observer data. The submissions of **2018 purse seine observer data** held in the WCPFC ROP database that are aligned to the WCPFC E-Reporting standards for observer data **represents 100% coverage**. There was a significant development over the past twelve months with several CCMs aligning their longline observer data submission to the WCPFC E-Reporting standards for observer data – Chinese Taipei, Korea and USA (Japan is also well advanced on using these guidelines). The submissions of **2018 longline observer data** held in the WCPFC ROP database that are aligned to the WCPFC E-Reporting standards for observer data **represents 82% coverage**, which is a considerable improvement on 2017 when this coverage level was only 29%.

E-reporting Standards for high seas transshipment declarations and notices

12. The Secretariat has developed a specific IT system to support E-reporting. Currently the WCPFC E-reporting system can receive E-reported data as per the WCPFC high seas transshipment declaration and notices E-reporting standards. An application that WCPFC has developed to support CCMs implementation of the E-reporting Standards for high seas transshipment declarations and transshipment notices is now operational. It runs on Windows computers, and Android and iPad tablets. The Secretariat has been using the Windows version since November 2018 to enter the high seas transshipment notifications and declarations that CCMs email to WCPFC.

13. In July 2019, the Secretariat completed an initial round of visits to demonstrate the WCPFC E-reporting Application to some interested CCMs. Meetings in Kaohsiung were held with Taiwan Fisheries Agency and a Vanuatu Fisheries Industry representative, and in Beijing a meeting was held with China Overseas Fisheries Association. The visits were positive, and each indicated they would have further internal consultations including with their industry, to further consider the voluntary use of the WCPFC E-reporting Application.
14. As tasked by WCPFC15, the Secretariat will commence some work involving CEFACT/FLUX in the last quarter of 2019. Based on the documentation provided by the European Union technicians, WCPFC plans to develop a proof of concept enhancement to the WCPFC high seas transshipment e-reporting data receipt module that will allow for notification reports, declaration reports and cancellations to be submitted to the data receipt module using the CEFACT/FLUX protocol¹. As a proof of concept, the intention is for the consultants to implement the minimum components necessary to receive the above message types. The proof of concept is also expected to provide the Secretariat with further information and detailed analyses so that it can better understand the extent of additional work necessary to implement all the data validation rules, correct validation error reporting and correct responses that presently are included as part of the WCPFC high seas transshipment e-reporting system. The Secretariat expect to receive an initial progress report in early December 2019.

Administrative notes

15. The application that WCPFC has developed to support CCMs implementation of the E-reporting Standards for high seas transshipment declarations and transshipment notices is now operational. The windows version of the application and user manual can be accessed from the WCPFC website at this link:= <https://www.wcpfc.int/e-reporting/tser> The Android version and IOS version is undergoing final testing / approval and will soon be available for download. By default, the submission of high seas transshipment notifications / declarations by e-reporting is disabled. A CCM wishing to use the e-reporting option must first contact the WCPFC Compliance Manager who will guide how to access that option.

Recommendation

16. TCC15 is invited to note this report.

¹ This will use a SOAP based XML data exchange format