Attachment 3

Australia’s Response to WCPFC Annual Report Part 2, Questions 077-084

The Annual Report Part 2 questions 077-084, relating to requirements to assist SIDS and Territories (CMM 2013-6 and CMM 2013-07), are covered by this response.

Australia’s support to the region (encompassing assistance and capacity development to SIDS and Territories)

Australia’s aid program, administered by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), continues to support the development aspirations of Pacific Island countries and the importance of fisheries to economic growth and food security in the region.

Australia funds the Forum Fisheries Agency ($5 million per year) to help Pacific islands countries manage and monitor fishing fleets; and the Pacific Community ($2.4 million per year for its fisheries division) to provide scientific information and support for fisheries management.

The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) has commenced the second phase of a Community Based Fisheries Management initiative to promote the sustainable use of coastal resources. This is a DFAT-funded AUD$6 million (plus AUD$2 million from ACIAR) project over four years with the aim of scaling out first phase achievements, aligned with implementation of the Pacific’s New Song for Coastal Fisheries.

Through Geoscience Australia and the Attorney General’s Department, Australia provides legal and technical support to Pacific island countries to delineate their maritime boundaries and deposit them with the UN ($2 million 2017-20). This is a priority first step towards securing maritime jurisdiction in the face of climate change impacts, such as sea level rise.

Australia supports the Pacific to advocate for the sustainable development, management and conservation of the ocean and its resources (AU$1.38 million co-funding with New Zealand for the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner to support regional advocacy and coordination on climate and ocean issues).

Through the Forum Fisheries Agency, the Australian Fisheries Management Authority and the Attorney General’s Department, Australia is providing legal and operational support for Pacific island countries to ratify and implement the Niue Treaty Subsidiary Arrangement (NTSA) to address illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing ($4.4. million, 2017-21).

Australia continues to implement the *Pacific Maritime Security Program* (PMSP) as a centrepiece of our defence engagement in the Pacific. The PMSP provides Australian Government funded capabilities to Pacific nations as sovereign assets to enhance their capacity to provide protection and surveillance of their own resources. The PMSP includes gifted patrol boats, operational funding support and funded civilian aerial surveillance at an overall program cost of AU$2 billion over 30 years. Construction of the replacement patrol boats is underway, with the first delivery scheduled for 2018 and rolling out through 2023. Planning is underway for the aerial surveillance and regional coordination components. The implementation of the PMSP will make a significant contribution to developing the capacity of SIDS to manage and conserve fisheries resources, including through supporting the regional implementation of the Niue Treaty Subsidiary Agreement.

Implementation of the CMM on special requirements of SIDS and Territories

Australia supports the issue of disproportionate burden on SIDS and Territories becoming a standard part of all Commission discussions though we note with concern that some proposals considered at previous WCPFC meetings did not include an assessment of the proposal under CMM2013-06. Australia encourages all CCMs to continue to rigorously apply the checklist to proposals, and further encourages CCMs to engage with FFA on these issues.

Australia is pleased with the implementation of the capacity development identification requirements in the Compliance Monitoring Scheme. Australia will continue to work with SIDS and Territories through the above-listed programs, and through other fora such as the FFA MCS Working Group, to assist SIDS and Territories with capacity development.

In 2018, Australia will continue to chair a Special Requirements Fund (SRF) Intersessional Working Group. This working group was established to review current guidelines for the SRF including its scope of use, prioritization, allocation authority, securing of funding at an appropriate level, and transparency of operation.