

1<sup>st</sup> October, 2021

ATTN: Heads of Delegation to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)

**XX Supply Chain Companies call on the WCPFC to urgently implement Harvest Strategies supported by Harvest Control Rules for tuna stocks**

The WCPFC is leading on the development of RFMO harvest strategies<sup>1</sup> through its Work Plan<sup>2</sup> and is currently the only RFMO with all “healthy<sup>3</sup>” tuna stocks. Adoption of Harvest Strategies on the timeline of the current WCPFC Work Plan is a prime opportunity for the WCPFC to demonstrate its continued leadership and progressive management to preserve the health of tuna fisheries that are a vital source of economic development and food security for the region.

The undersigned group of concerned companies strongly urge the WCPFC to accelerate action to develop comprehensive harvest strategies across all tuna stocks as stated in CMM 2020-01 to:

- Ensure the continued healthy state of WCPO tuna fisheries;
- Avoid the risk of suspension of Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certifications.

Specifically, in 2021:

- Adopt Target Reference Points for bigeye and yellowfin;
- Adopt a list of candidate management procedures for skipjack & albacore;
- Establish a scientist/manager dialogue group for consideration of harvest strategy issues and hold its first meeting in 2022.

In addition to meeting the WCPFC’s own Work Plan, adhering to best practices of modern fisheries management, and being consistent with the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement and the Food and Agricultural Organization Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, harvest strategies are an essential component of the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative’s (GSSI) benchmarking tool.

There are 22 GSSI-recognised MSC certified tuna fisheries in the region, as well as an additional 5 fisheries currently seeking MSC certification, representing over two million tonnes of certified and potentially certified WCPFC tuna within the supply chain each year.

Meeting the deadlines in the WCPFC Harvest Strategy Work Plan for skipjack, yellowfin, bigeye and South Pacific albacore tuna stocks are necessary for MSC-certified fisheries to resolve existing conditions to maintain certification. In fact, it requires interim decisions to be passed by WCPFC in December 2021. The MSC has published a [factsheet](#) that outlines this situation.

As companies with strategic interests in global tuna fisheries, we urge you to take action to ensure that the WCPFC makes significant progress this year and next in establishing robust harvest strategies, including harvest control rules, and that these harvest strategies are adopted at the WCPFC Commission meeting in December 2022.

We the undersigned organizations look forward to the continued leadership of the WCPFC and encourage you to accelerate progress on this critical issue to deliver on the current Work Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Also known as management procedures.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/wcpfc17-att-h/indicative-work-plan-adoption-harvest-strategies-under-cmm-2014-06>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/00/overview-stocks-interest-wcpfc>

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Yours faithfully,