



FFA

Regional Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Strategy

2010-2015

(Adopted by FFC74, May, 2010)

Context

1. Harvests in the western and central Pacific Ocean were valued at over US\$3.7 billion in 2007 and represented over 55% of the world's tuna production. While some of this catch was taken in the northern Pacific, the vast majority is taken in and around the waters of the 17 Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) members. The continued health and productivity of these resources will be central to meeting the future socio-economic well being and development aspirations of the Pacific Island people.
2. The central role of oceanic fisheries resources to the future food security and development aspirations of Pacific Island peoples was recognized by Leaders in the *2007 Vava'u Declaration* who agreed regional fisheries resources “remain a key driver for sustainable economic growth in the region... and they must therefore be supported by responsible and effective stewardship.”
3. Illegal, unreported, unregulated (IUU) fishing and other activities that undermine fisheries management frameworks have the potential to significantly erode the benefits to Pacific Island people associated with the harvest of oceanic fisheries.¹ The estimated average annual IUU catch in the WCPO at between 786,000t and 1,730,000t and US\$707million and US\$1557 million during the 2000-2003 period.²
4. While many FFA MCS initiatives exist to deter IUU in the EEZ and on the High Seas, significant gaps exist that undermine fisheries management measures and the integrity of scientific and management information upon which those measures are based. Previous FFA workshops and meetings and the recent MRAG report have identified a real need to improve coordination and cooperation both within and between FFA Members, and, in a wider context, with other members of the Commission of existing MCS programmes, personnel and assets. Action to strengthen existing MCS arrangements is consistent with Leaders' recognition in the *Vava'u Declaration* on “the imperative need for us to take immediate and decisive collective action to ensure that, within the next three to five years, we secure our peoples' future livelihoods, regional food security, and the environmental sustainability of our seas and their ecosystems”

Mandate

5. In recognition of the need for comprehensive monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) arrangements to ensure the integrity of fisheries management frameworks, Forum Leaders committed themselves and their governments to “the development, with the assistance of the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), a comprehensive regional monitoring, control and surveillance strategy.”

Purpose and Scope

6. The primary purpose of this strategy is to support compliance with fisheries management frameworks and associated measures at national, sub-regional, regional and

¹ The term IUU is used in its broadest sense and is not restricted to IUU fishing by foreign, unlicensed vessels.

² Agnew DJ, Pearce J, Pramod G, Peatman T, Watson R, et al. (2009) Estimating the Worldwide Extent of Illegal Fishing. PLoS ONE 4(2): e4570. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0004570

WCPFC Commission levels to ensure the long term sustainability of oceanic fish stocks and associated economic benefits flowing from them to Pacific Island Countries.

7. This Strategy is consistent with the *Regional Management Tuna Development Strategy* (RMTDS) approved by FFC70 that has as its twin goals the “sustainable oceanic fish stocks and ecosystems” and “economic growth from tuna fisheries”. One of the strategic objectives of the RTMDS is “enhanced MCS, integrated with fisheries management planning and implementation which is the first goal of this strategy.” The second goal of this strategy is to contribute to other relevant strategic objectives contained in the *Regional Tuna and Management Development Strategy*.³

8. The RMCSS like the RTMDS, was developed based on determining national needs, and then identifying ways to meet these through a variety of means, including direct national assistance and regional and sub-regional coordination and cooperation. The primary focus of this Strategy is on the Cook Islands, Fiji Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

Regional Cooperation and Coordination: National Implementation

9. Regional cooperation in fisheries between FFA Members has led to the achievement of significant management and development gains that would not have been achieved by countries working alone. The achievement of FFA members’ regional goals for their tuna fisheries depends heavily upon the effective implementation by national governments of a comprehensive range of management and associated MCS measures, recognising the diversity of national and sub-regional circumstances and priorities.

10. In this strategy countries have collectively identified outcomes that will require both regional collaboration and cooperation as well national action. While a wide range of MCS interventions are outlined, the strategy recognises that MCS risks and priorities will differ between members and not all strategic objectives, outcomes and activities will be applicable to all Members. In simple terms, ‘one size will not fit all. It will be for the individual country to identify and develop an effective MCS programme using its own national and/or sub-regional Implementation Plans, cooperating regionally and sub-regionally where appropriate.

11. The Strategy is a “living document” and will, through periodic review, be responsive to the changing priorities of the countries and tuna fisheries as a whole. It acknowledges the diversity and range of MCS risks and responses as well as “interconnectivity” of actions and outcomes. It recognises that there are wider linkages than simply fisheries MCS with opportunities for national inter-agency and international cooperation with common thematic areas such as customs, defence, environment (e.g. – pollution), immigration and quarantine.

● _____
³ Relevant strategic objectives as described in the RTMADs include under **Goal 1** (i) increased integration of scientific advice in decision making; (ii) Improved fisheries management planning; (iii) Enhanced in zone management arrangements;(iv) increased stock-wide management; (v) Reduced illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing; (vii) Increased technical management capacity; (viii);

Under **Goal Two** (i) Improved fisheries access arrangements; (ii) Enhanced cooperative regional arrangements; (iii) Increased social benefits; (iv) Improved overall harvest strategies; (v) Increasing control over fishing in the Pacific Islands region; (vi) Increased use of rights-based approaches; (vii) Increased market and trade opportunities; (viii) Increased capacity to realise commercial opportunities

Vision

12. An efficient and effective MCS framework in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean region which supports the sustainable management of tuna resources and maximizes the economic returns and social and developmental benefits, while minimising adverse environmental impact.

Goals

1. Enhanced MCS, integrated with fisheries management planning and implementation
2. Contribute to other strategic objectives as described in the Regional Tuna and Management Development Strategy.⁴

Goal 1: Enhanced MCS, integrated with fisheries management planning and implementation

Goal 1; Strategic Objective 1 – National MCS frameworks based on best practice risk assessment

13. Given the dynamic nature of risk, national MCS frameworks should be based on best practice risk assessment noting that there is a need to improve the coverage and quality of information to underpin future risk assessments across the region. A key focus of the RMCSS will be on continually improving the availability and quality of information accessible to national and regional officials upon which to assess relative risk and plan MCS activities.

14. The RMCSS will enhance national MCS programmes, while also acknowledging that regional and sub-regional approaches are essential to given the highly mobile nature of IUU fishing. In optimizing arrangements, strong recognition will be given to the uniqueness of each country's MCS needs and priorities and arrangements developed to suit its particular circumstances.

Outcomes

G1SO1.1	National MCS coordination committees established and operational.
G1SO1.2	Understanding of MCS obligations.
G1SO1.3	Compliance risk levels identified.
G1SO1.4	MCS frameworks are current and have responded to change effectively through monitoring and evaluation.
G1SO1.5	Legislation that meets/exceeds international requirements.
G1SO1.6	Subregional /Regional frameworks that meet/exceed international requirements.
G1SO1.8	International agreement obligations met through member coordination.

• _____

Goal 1; Strategic Objective 2- Improved Management of information useful for MCS purposes

15. Robust systems for the collection, processing, secure storage and exchange of information are essential to an effective, integrated MCS regime necessary to support fisheries management strategies. There is an urgent need to improve the coverage and quality of information to underpin future risk assessments and improve MCS implementation across the region.

16. Weaknesses in data management and MCS co-ordination are the key obstacles to effective implementation of MCS obligations at the national level. Improved information sharing and analysis would improve MCS performance (e.g. by better targeting surveillance and response assets). In light of this, an important focus of the RMCSS will be on supporting measures to enhance information management and analysis at the national and regional levels. The enhancement of information management systems, including the establishment of ‘compliance analysis engines’ at the national levels and a Regional Information Management Facility at the regional level will be undertaken. Improved information management systems will be supported by improved analytical capability at both levels.

Outcomes

GISO2.1	Data needs analysis completed to determine priority data for collection.
GISO2.2	All agencies associated with MCS aware of responsibilities in respect of individual tasks and requirements for effective coordination.
GISO2.3	Active collection plans in process/implemented.
GISO2.4	Data collection terminology and formats standardised ⁵
GISO1.5	Increased coverage and timeliness of operational level/fine scale data.
GISO2.6	MCS data is available, accessible and disseminated for specific fisheries management and other appropriate uses.
GISO2.7	Analysed data for tactical, strategic, MCS, scientific purposes.
GISO2.8	Enhanced regional/sub-regional coordination of MCS data and information useful for MCS purposes

Goal 1; Strategic Objective 3– Improved integration of MCS advice in fisheries management planning

17. While the RMCSS will seek to significantly improve performance across all aspects of MCS, strong recognition should be given to the importance of basic monitoring and control functions in supporting effective fisheries management. It is imperative that MCS tools, networks and measures are linked to and are driven by fisheries management measures and their outcomes.

Outcomes

GISO3.1	Clear statements of management measures and MCS objectives allied to the measures as well as requirements and prohibitions that will be enforced.
GISO3.2	Greater opportunities for practitioners to share experience and findings, particularly with regard

⁵ Complementing the work of the Regional Forms Committee of the SPC/FFA

	to high priority issues.
G1SO3.3	Improved fisheries science through more timely and reliable data provision.
G1SO3.4	Flow and exchange of information between fisheries management and MCS

Goal 1; Strategic Objective 4 – Improved understanding of the drivers and level of compliant and non-compliant behaviour

18. The Strategy will seek to assist members identify the drivers as well as the processes that will enable members to promote compliant behaviour. The MRAG Study identified excess capacity in an environment of weak MCS as a key driver of risk. It concluded that excess capacity may increase competition for legitimate access rights and push up access fees delivering an economic benefit for FFA members. However on the other hand it concluded that overcapacity (a) in the absence of adequate controls to limit fishing mortality may result in unsustainable impacts on stocks, and (b) in the absence of effective MCS arrangements to ensure adherence to control measures, may act as a key driver of non-compliance.

Outcomes

G1SO4.1	Drivers of compliant/non-compliant behaviour assessed
G1SO4.2	Range of intervention choices available to Members
G1SO4.3	MCS responses delivered in a manner allowing continued assessment of indicators against benchmarks.
G1SO4.4	Improved links between industry and government to understand fishery and market dynamics as drivers of MCS needs and responses

Goal 1; Strategic Objective 5 – Capacity and capability to respond to risk/information/intelligence including human resources/institutional set-up and enforcement assets

19. While technology, information and hardware assets play an important role, arguably the most important assets in any MCS regime are its people. These projects have identified a range of actions that would strengthen national and regional MCS regimes, many of which will require capacity building initiatives. In addition, the projects have highlighted the benefits associated with regionally consistent forms of training and certification to promote the efficient use of shared resources across the region, as well as to achieve high levels of compliance with international MCS obligations (e.g. WCPFC obligations). Given the training and capacity building implications associated with these needs, an important consideration in developing the Strategy will be the requirement for appropriate programs to strengthen human capacity across the region. The core elements of a program will be developed, based on needs highlighted in these studies.

Outcomes

G1SO5.1	Existing and emerging capacity and capability MCS deficiencies identified.
G1SO5.2	MCS staffing and resourcing requirements aligned to risk identified and resourced approaches to closing those gaps instituted.
G1SO5.3	Sustainability of human and other resources ensured (succession planning)
G1SO5.4	Regional and sub-regional approaches implemented to augment national capacity where

	appropriate
G1SO5.5	Use of existing surveillance and enforcement assets optimised.
G1SO5.6	Appropriate levels of investment in surveillance and enforcement assets.

Goal 1; Strategic Objective 6 – Increased focus on voluntary compliance and innovative tools for awareness, enforcement, detection and penalty

20. High levels of voluntary compliance will directly assist with the cost effective deployment of MCS resources. Voluntary compliance can be achieved through either incentives or deterrents, or a combination of both. Voluntary compliance is likely to be highest where there are high levels of understanding of, and support for, fisheries management arrangements amongst industry. A range of possible measures to engender understanding and support are available, including the use of participatory planning techniques, market based incentives, annual ‘induction’ sessions for fishing masters. Support for management arrangements will also be strengthened where arrangements are practical and able to be complied with reasonably and without undue impact on fishing and associated operations. To this end, liaising with industry to understand their operations and influence key drivers and behaviour will be important. Projects supporting the involvement of MCS practitioners in the design and development of fisheries management arrangements are important. The RMCSS will support the use of innovative technology and techniques to encourage compliance and detect and respond to non-compliance over and above the tools and programs in current use. This includes tailoring MCS activities for application throughout the supply chain.

Outcomes

G1SO6.1	Communication and extension strategies in place to engage industry (throughout supply chain) to promote enhanced understanding of management measures and their rationale.
G1SO6.2	Flag States engaged and committed to assist through encouraging compliance and responding to non-compliance.
G1SO6.3	Decreased reliance on regulatory/punitive actions in MCS.

Goal 2: Contribute to other strategic objectives as described in the RTMADS

Goal 2; Strategic Objective 1 – Enhanced influence on WCPFC measures for high seas/convention area

21. The establishment of the WCPFC has brought with it a new suite of important opportunities and obligations for FFA members. As a bloc representing over 50% of the membership, and accounting for over 70% of the catch in the Convention Area, FFA members have an unparalleled and heretofore unavailable opportunity to shape fisheries management arrangements and supporting MCS regimes in high seas areas adjacent to their EEZs. At the same time, membership of the WCPFC has brought with it a range of new compliance and reporting obligations that require resourcing and support. Given the shared nature of stocks across the region, a fully functional and effective WCPFC that includes a

high seas MCS regime complementary and supportive of in zone arrangements will be critical in achieving regional fisheries goals. In light of this, an important focus of the Regional MCS Strategy will be guiding and supporting FFA members' strategic engagement in the WCPFC on MCS related matters.

Outcomes

G2SO1.1	WCPFC decisions reflect FFA member priorities as articulated in the principles underpinning the RTMADS and RMCSS.
G2SO1.2	Regional and sub-regional MCS programmes promoted and accepted as the best practice standard for WCPO.
G2SO1.3	Compliance monitoring processes developed to measure implementation and efficacy of CMMs.
G2SO1.4	Enhanced leadership role for FFA members in terms of global best practice.

Goal 2; Strategic Objective 2 – Increased MCS coverage in support of fisheries management outcomes through application of MCS tools via market based measures and mechanisms

22. Historically much MCS focus has been at the level of the catching vessel, however increasing attention is now being paid to the role of supply chains in facilitating IUU activity. Weaknesses exist throughout the supply chain (under-reporting by catching vessels, illegal transshipping, weaknesses in port monitoring and control) and there is a need to strengthen catch monitoring and validation from the catching vessel to market. A number of possible approaches to improve catch monitoring and validation throughout the supply chain are available. These include the establishment of a comprehensive catch documentation scheme (CDS), strengthening of transshipment regulations including a requirement for 100% observer coverage on carrier vessels, improvements to national port inspection regimes and the establishment of national ‘compliance analysis engines’ to efficiently cross-verify various sources of information on catch. Potential to further strengthen compliance on catch taken from FFA members waters and landed in foreign ports also exists under the FAO Port State Measures Agreement currently being developed. Strengthening MCS throughout the supply chain will contribute to both regional goals by reducing opportunities for the laundering of illegally taken catches, while also strengthening the quality of the information upon which to base fisheries management decisions.

Outcomes

G2SO2.1	Additional MCS measures identified and enforced through targeting alternative opportunities (rather than at the fishing vessel level alone)
G2SO2.2	Traceability and certification schemes developed (eg...Catch documentation scheme) for key species developed and implemented to support Member MCS programmes as well as meeting market requirements.

Goal 2; Strategic Objective 3 – Cost efficient and effective MCS programmes

23. The use of risk based approaches to target MCS responses and resources will be at the heart of the RMCSS. As noted in the risk assessment, the FFA region is characterized by very large EEZs, highly valuable tuna resources and, with few exceptions, limited resources with which to undertake MCS. As a result there is a need to ensure that available resources and opportunities are used most cost effectively and efficiently, while continually assessing new techniques.

Outcomes

G2SO3.1	Transparency and accountability in the development and implementation of MCS measures
G2SO3.2	Cost minimised whilst maintaining desired level of compliance
G2SO3.3	Cooperative approaches/operations utilised to increase MCS coverage for given investment
G2SO3.4	Costs reduced using innovative and appropriate technology
G2SO3.5	Increased economic benefits from fisheries that can be demonstrated as sustainably managed

Regular Monitoring and Review

24. The successful implementation of the RMCSS, as with the RTMADS and Pacific Plan, is primarily dependent on the support, political commitment and actions of Member countries, development partners and other stake-holders including industry, especially to allow integration of regional approaches into national fisheries planning at the country level.

25. Given the rapidly changing nature of some risks, the significant inter-annual variability in key drivers and the importance of current risk assessments in compliance planning, the regional risk assessment and compliance reviews will be updated annually. This task will be undertaken by the FFA in conjunction with, and input from the MCS Working Group. The regional information management framework will assist in supporting future risk assessments.

26. A framework for monitoring and evaluation of national, sub-regional and regional progress against the Goals will be developed. Noting the large number of reports that members countries are already required to submit to FFA, WCPFC, the Forum and other organisations, there is a strong need to streamline reporting under this Strategy to ensure that performance can be adequately assessed and refined with a minimum impost on members.

27. Transparency and accountability will be paramount. Systems and procedures will be developed to monitor the implementation and performance of measures under the RMCSS. At the same time, the RMCSS will also remain under review to ensure it is responsive to changes in the fishery and progress shall be communicated to policy makers and decision makers to drive the further implementation of the strategy.

28. At the national level, the progress of the Strategy will be measured during reviews of the through an annual compliance audit using the MRAG Compliance Audit of 2009 as the baseline from which progress shall be measured.

29. At the regional level, coordination of, and support for, implementation of this Strategy is, in the first instance, the responsibility of the FFA Secretariat. Technical guidance will be provided by the MCSWG, with policy oversight and guidance provided by the Forum Fisheries Committee. High level policy /political MCS issues will refer to Ministerial FFC.
30. Sustainable implementation of the RMCSS over the long term will provide significant challenges, particularly in terms of resourcing and national capacity. A resourcing strategy will be developed for long term funding.
31. Significantly, These processes will ensure that Members' needs are kept to the forefront as the RMCSS is implemented.