

THIRD TUNA DATA WORKSHOP (TDW-3)

22-25 June 2009
Noumea, New Caledonia

WELCOMING ADDRESS

On behalf of the Director General, Director of Marine Resources and Oceanic Fisheries Programme Manager of the SPC, I would like to welcome participants to the 3rd Tuna Data Workshop. It is pleasing to see so many familiar faces again, as well as some new faces who are joining the TDW team for the first time. While most of you are from SPC member countries, we also have guest participants from the Philippines and **Indonesia**. We are also privileged to a fisheries expert from the FFA Secretariat join our group. Welcome to you all.

This is the third workshop of this type, which we hope will continue in the future as an annual event.

The main impetus for convening the First Tuna Data Workshop, held in October 2006, relates to the establishment of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission in 2004, and the resulting obligation for members and cooperating non-members of the Commission to provide tuna fishery data on annual basis.

This first workshop covered various topics including the introduction of the concept of the National Tuna Data Procedures document, presentations and group sessions on national and regional requirements for collecting data, and sessions discussing and categorizing the problems encountered throughout the region in establishing data collection systems. The first workshop also looked at best practices in managing data, and briefly introduced tools available for the dissemination of tuna fishery data.

The Second Tuna Data Workshop, held in April last year, concentrated on the methods for compiling and preparing annual catch estimates which were subsequently provided to the WCPFC – the work you achieved last year was a great success, as annual catches estimates from most of your countries were provided within the deadline of 30th April, which was a significant improvement on previous years.

The timing of the third workshop had been set to ensure that one of the participants' main outputs from this workshop will be to produce 2008 annual catch estimates for your national fleets, which can then be provided to the WCPFC before April 30th 2009. Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond our control, we were forced to postpone the third workshop and reschedule it to June at a new venue. We hope that the issues preventing us from holding the workshop in Noumea this year will be resolved as soon as possible, so that we can proceed in holding TDW-4 in Noumea during April next year.

This year, two of the most important topics will be an introduction to techniques for auditing and a review of what is required in the Part 1 of the Annual Report to the WCPFC, which will be required for SC5. There will be other interesting topics that we hope you will benefit from and take back home increased knowledge to use in your workplace.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank the donors for this workshop, the Japan Trust Fund, administered through the WCPFC and the provision of funds from the Division of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea, which is administered by UN/FAO, and the **GEF SCIFISH project**.

We hope this coming week will be enlightening and productive.

Thank you.