



## **E-Monitoring Process Standards Workshop – SPC and FFA**

**Noumea, 20 to 24 November 2017**

### **MCS Data Standards – FFA considerations**

#### **Overview**

The 20<sup>th</sup> FFA MCS Working Group (MCSWG20) was held in Honiara from 3 to 7 April 2017. The meeting discussed and workshopped a range of MCS activities and areas, including the development and implementation of e-reporting and e-monitoring.

At MCSWG20, FFA Members conducted a needs analysis to define what compliance or ‘MCS’ data and information they need and how it can be collected and supported through e-monitoring programs.

This paper sets out the information needs noted by MCSWG along with an initial consideration of how this data can be collected by e-monitoring and analysed to provide managers and MCS officers with the information they need.

#### **Regional Monitoring Strategy**

One focus area during MCSWG20 was on the development of the Regional Monitoring Strategy and the role of e-reporting and e-monitoring. The Regional Monitoring Strategy seeks to streamline and enhance national and regional independent fisheries monitoring and data collection amongst FFA members. It will primarily address the availability and quality of fisheries data required to conduct MCS activities.

The Strategy was considered by MCSWG20 and presented to the Forum Fisheries Committee (FFC) in May. FFC adopted the Strategy as a living document to guide FFA Members’ development and implementation of e-reporting and e-monitoring initiatives, and provide strategic direction to the region’s independent monitoring and data collection.

A key action identified within the Strategy is the development of standards that identify:

- a) what e-monitoring data is needed to support assessments, management and compliance;
- b) how that data is submitted and stored; and

- c) how consistency can be ensured between e-monitoring programs.

A copy of the Regional Monitoring Strategy is contained as **Attachment B** to this paper.

### **MCS data & compliance needs**

In the context of e-monitoring systems, MCSWG20 discussed FFA Members' compliance data needs and priorities that apply for both longline and purse seine. In particular, Members identified and discussed the following list of preliminary compliance data needs:

- Detect transshipments, bunkering and any occasion when another vessel pulls alongside a fishing vessel;
- Identify mis-reporting of catch, including failure to report discards and bycatch;
- Identifying inappropriate handling of protected species;
- Failure to comply with mandatory release requirements;
- Deploying fishing equipment in a prohibited/closed area or timeframe;
- Deployment of regulated fishing gear, or lack of deployment of required fishing gear, such as bycatch mitigation; and
- MARPOL offences.

In preparing this list, Members worked from a list provided by an initial list of compliance data needs prepared by the FFA Secretariat. As a result, Members did not focus on, or consider, what data were already collected by observers on board vessels. Observers are trained and certified to collect these data sets in accordance with Pacific Islands Regional Fisheries Observer (PIRFO) standards. Instead of considering the suite of data sets collected by observers, discussions focussed on what data were important to facilitate MCS analysis and activities, and which of these data could be collected by e-monitoring for identifying potential compliance issues.

During MCSWG20, Members acknowledged that defining compliance needs and priorities is important to ensure cameras and sensors can be setup on the boats to detect potential offences. Additionally, it is important that e-monitoring Analysts are tasked with documenting any potential offences and ensuring that appropriate alerts are given to national compliance officers to investigate.

In addition to the list above, Members identified the following compliance risks and needs for monitoring:

- Observer safety;
- FAD set / non-FAD set;
- Use of prohibited gear;
- Criminal behaviour;
  - Assaults and mistreatment of crew or observers;
  - Drug trafficking;
- Retrieving gear from another fishing vessel;
- Weight of fish transferred to carrier vessels (where possible e.g. on purse seine);
- Ensure fishing gear is stowed and not used in prohibited areas;

- Identify any transfer of people between boats;
- Identify other vessels in the area that should not be there (potentially difficult); and
- Identify observer misconduct.

Relevant to the current workshop, Members noted that standards for the use of e-monitoring are very important and these need to include standard procedures for e-monitoring that ensure data quality is maintained to acceptable levels for all countries. As such, the FFA Secretariat committed to considering these listed compliance issues and MCS data and ultimately develop them, with SPC, into draft regional standards. This line of work falls under the roles and responsibilities of the Data Collection Committee (DCC), and therefore close linkages and consultation with DCC, including with other relevant stakeholders, will be required.

Most of the identified MCS data needs are contained within existing observer forms (mainly GEN 1, 2, 3, 6). As a result, these are captured in the *Draft WCPFC E-Monitoring Standard Data Fields For Operational Longline Observer Data* developed in 2016. Those standards, which are to be reviewed and enhanced at the current workshop, outline data fields based on information collected under the current regional standard data collection forms. It is important that the standards also note how EM Analysts will report compliance issues and ensure that they are reported efficiently to relevant MCS officers. Similarly, MCS data and compliance considerations are equally relevant and applicable to purse seine monitoring and standards.

A preliminary table of the MCS data needs identified by MCSWG20, with corresponding examples of where this data is already collected in regional data collection forms, is included as **Attachment A** to this paper.

However, there are some MCS data types that are not captured by current regional standard data collection forms, or need to be expanded upon. These include:

- a) observer safety monitoring (i.e. independent monitoring of an observer's welfare and treatment by crew); and
- b) criminal activities connected to or associated with the vessel.

This can include actions conducted in the process of carrying out fishing activities such as assault and mistreatment of crew or observers. E-monitoring imagery will allow EM Analysts to observe the behaviour of observers/crew from which any misconduct claims from observers/crew can potentially be verified. Note that not all areas of a vessel can be monitored with imagery recording devices

Other criminal activity can be identified such as drug or human trafficking. These activities will have relevance to broader law enforcement agencies and activities.

### **E-monitoring to support Catch Documentation Schemes**

One additional area that was not raised by MCSWG20 was in relation to Catch Documentation Schemes (CDS). It is important to acknowledge the potential role and utility of e-monitoring to assist with CDS processes and some time is set aside for this during the workshop. In particular, e-monitoring can play an

important role in catch verification along the supply chain onboard both fishing vessels (e.g. cameras mounted in the wet deck area of a PS vessel can allow monitoring the loading of catch into wells) and fish carriers (sensors and cameras to verify if catch is transhipped). The key elements in a CDS are ensuring traceability of catch and demonstrating that it has been legally caught before export. Within the current scope of e-monitoring, it could be used to verify traceability onboard a fishing vessel and potentially onboard a carrier, but any shore based camera verification has not been considered.

Regarding legality, e-monitoring cannot currently be used to immediately verify all compliance issues before export as analysis of video footage can take weeks to months. However, when linked with licencing databases, one can verify whether the fish was caught by a legally licenced vessel and whether the vessel fished in authorised areas, during authorised times. There may be opportunities to provide other data and verify if transhipments occurred, and this will be discussed at the workshop.

### **Proposed approach**

Nearly all the compliance and data needs identified at MCSWG20 are already captured within existing observer forms, and many of these fields can be verified by the EM Analyst during review. MCSWG20 noted that it is crucial that this information be passed on to relevant compliance officers in a timely and consistent manner. Therefore, it is proposed that the standards also include a process for providing this information in such a way.

At this workshop, the aim is to finalise the list of e-monitoring data and associated standards. For MCS and compliance data, the following approach is proposed:

- Review the existing regional standard data collection forms and agree on what can be covered through e-monitoring and remove any other fields from the standards;
- Discuss if any additional or more detailed data can be collected through e-monitoring analysis, e.g. for transhipment events;
- Finalise process standards for how this data will be recorded and analysed;
- Develop a standard e-monitoring compliance report that is to be completed by the e-monitoring Analyst and provided to specified MCS officers at the end of an analysis;
- Review how e-monitoring could support Catch Documentation Schemes and develop potential recommendations.

Any discussions or outputs from the current workshop regarding MCS data needs or standards will be presented to MCSWG21.

## Attachment A

### MCS Data Needs (identified by MCSWG20) and corresponding regional standard data collection forms

*Note: the corresponding list of applicable regional standard data collection forms is not exhaustive. Instead, it highlights some of the key observer forms which collect relevant or similar information.*

MCS Data Needs	Comments & examples of relevant existing Data Collection Forms
Detect transshipments, bunkering and any occasion when another vessel pulls alongside a fishing vessel	GEN 1 – Form (VESSEL AND AIRCRAFT SIGHTINGS / FISH, BUNKERING and OTHER TRANSFERS LOGS)
Identify mis-reporting of catch, including failure to report discards and bycatch;	GEN 3 – LC a, b, c, d, e, f (Logsheet recording)
Identifying inappropriate handling of protected species;	GEN 2 – SSI Vessel Interactions
Failure to comply with mandatory release requirements;	GEN 3 – SSIs, WC – c (WCPFC CMMs) GEN 2 – SSI Observer journal & written report
Deploying fishing equipment in a prohibited/closed area or timeframe;	GEN 3 – NR a (fish in areas not permitted to fish), WC c (fish in FAD during FAD closure),
Deployment of regulated fishing gear, or lack of deployment of required fishing gear, such as bycatch mitigation	GEN 3 – NR c, WC a
MARPOL offences	GEN 6 (Pollution Report) GEN 3: PN – a, b, c, d (Pollution)
Observer safety	GEN 3 – RS a, b, d (Observer rights/ social behaviour)
FAD set/non FAD set	PS-2 (Daily Log) GEN 5 GEN 3 – WC – c (WCPFC CMMs) Information also possibly contained in Observer Journal
Use of prohibited gear	GEN 3, NR-c, Use a fishing method other than the method the vessel was designed or licensed
Criminal behaviour	<i>Note: Includes a range of activities depending on national laws e.g. assault, drug trafficking.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assaults and mistreatment of crew or observers</li> </ul>	GEN 3 – RS c (mistreat other crew) GEN 3 – RS a (assault, obstruct, resist, delay, refuse boarding ..etc with observer), RS d (failure to provide officer level standards)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drug trafficking</li> </ul>	No specific form, but could be noted in Observer Journal (however, this may expose observer to unacceptable risk).
Retrieving gear from another fishing vessel	GEN 1 (Vessel and aircraft sightings / fish, bunkering and other transfer logs) PS 2 (Daily Log) Information also possibly contained in Observer Journal
Weight of fish transferred to carrier vessels (where possible e.g. on purse seine)	GEN 1 – (Vessel and aircraft sightings / fish, bunkering and other transfer logs)

Ensure fishing gear is stowed and not used in prohibited areas	GEN 3 – NR - g
Identify any transfer of people between boats	GEN 1 – (Vessel and aircraft sightings / fish, bunkering and other transfer logs) Possibly collected in Observer Journal
Identify other vessels in the area that should not be there (potentially difficult)	GEN 1 – (Vessel and aircraft sightings / fish, bunkering and other transfer logs)
Identify observer misconduct	Vessel Report on Observer

**Attachment B**

**Regional Monitoring Strategy**