



Celebrating 40 years of Cooperation

## **REGIONAL LONGLINE FISHERIES ELECTRONIC MONITORING POLICY**

FFC Adopted

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## Acronyms, terms and definitions

Term	Definition
Data Review Centre	Office facility used to analyse e-monitoring records and record e-monitoring data.
EM Analyst	A person qualified to analyse e-monitoring records and record e-monitoring data in accordance with the EM standard and analysis procedures.
EM Analysis Rate	The proportion of e-monitored records that are analysed.
EM Certifier	An individual or organisation which has been accredited by the appropriate authority to inspect and approve e-monitoring systems for use.
EM Data	Data produced through analysis of e-monitoring records that conforms with the data standards specified in the SSPs.
EM Coverage	The proportion of vessels licenced to fish in areas under national jurisdiction and the adjacent high seas that have an e-monitoring system installed and operational.
EM Programme	A process administered by a national fisheries regulator(s) that includes the use of EM systems on vessels to independently collect and verify fisheries data and information.
EM Record	Imagery and sensor data recorded by an e-monitoring system that can be analysed to produce e-monitoring data.
EM System	An EM system is all the vessel and shore-based components supporting the acquisition, analysis and reporting of EM Records.
EM Service Provider	A third-party provider of EM technical and logistical services.
PIRFO	Pacific Islands Regional Fisheries Observer.
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing.
Regional agency	A regional or sub-regional organisation that supports FFA member national EM Programmes and EM Systems.
SSPs	Standards, Specifications and Procedures

## REGIONAL LONGLINE FISHERIES ELECTRONIC MONITORING POLICY

### 1.0 Introduction

Electronic monitoring (EM) provides an additional complementary tool that is being integrated to the existing suite of FFA member country fishery monitoring systems. It is intended to strengthen the availability of quality<sup>1</sup> data and information from fisheries that have historically supported low levels of monitoring. As a result, it will contribute to on-going FFA member country initiatives to secure sustainable tuna fisheries in the WCPO region.

This nationally driven, regionally harmonised and coordinated Policy describes the purpose and application of EM by FFA member countries. It includes EM programmes with both scientific- and compliance-related objectives. Cost-effectiveness is also a key objective.

### 2.0 Purpose

The purpose of EM in the longline fishery in FFA member countries is to complement other monitoring tools in place in the region. It will improve the monitoring of national and regional longline fisheries, and so strengthen overall fisheries management, by addressing gaps in data collection and verification in the longline fishery.

The purpose of this EM Policy is to describe a regional framework that, *inter alia*:

- a) supports collective action at a strategic level;
- b) promotes a level playing field in relation to the implementation of EM and mitigates against market distortions; and
- c) facilitates economies of scale for national and regional benefit.

### 3.0 Scope

This EM Policy applies to EM on longline vessels operating in areas under the national jurisdiction of FFA member countries and the adjacent high seas.

### 4.0 Objectives

With an overarching objective to strengthen fisheries management, this EM Policy aims to:

- improve the availability and accessibility of quality-assured information for scientific and compliance purposes; and
- contribute to improving economic viability of longline fisheries.

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<sup>1</sup> Improving data quality, for example, by progressively addressing human recording/reporting errors utilising automated devices/sensors (e.g. automated date/time/positions through integration of GPS).

## 5.0 Principles

Principles that will guide the national and regional implementation of EM Programmes will include that EM:

- is supported in national laws and regulations;
- avoids a disproportionate burden to FFA member countries;
- adopts a standards-based approach described in SSPs;
- will be regionally harmonised as elaborated in the SSPs;
- will be integrated with, and complementary to, other monitoring initiatives of FFA member countries<sup>2</sup>;
- will support FFA member countries' engagement and leadership in the WCPFC;
- will be cost effective and demonstrate net benefits;
- will prioritise data security, ownership and confidentiality;
- will be equitably applied across all fleets<sup>3</sup> operating within national jurisdictions and/or the high seas; and
- be independent and impartial.

## 6.0 Institutional roles, responsibilities and relationships

FFA Secretariat will:

- promote the implementation of EM on longline vessels in accordance with this EM Policy;
- work with FFA member countries to promote the adoption of EM as a compulsory requirement for all longline vessels licenced by WCPFC flag States to fish and/or tranship on the high seas,
- where possible, provide assistance to FFA member countries in the adoption and implementation of national EM policies and strategies, review of national legislation, development of data sharing arrangements and associated capacity building,
- promote the best-practice analysis and utilisation of EM compliance-related data for regional decision-making,
- support FFA member country efforts to integrate EM with existing MCS tools,
- provide advice and support to Members in EM cost-benefit analyses and the adoption of cost-effective data viewing management systems,

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<sup>2</sup> Including, but not limited to the MTCs, the FFA Regional Register, port State measures (PSM), at-sea and in-port transshipment monitoring, port sampling, aerial and maritime surveillance, vessel monitoring systems (VMS), catch documentation schemes (CDS), logbook reporting including electronically and WCPFC systems such as its VMS, regional observer programme, vessel register and transshipment measures.

<sup>3</sup> The application of EM to national small-scale longline vessels operating solely within national jurisdictions will be a national decision.

SPC will:

- support data management systems that facilitate data extraction for analytical purposes,
- provide assistance to national-level EM data management systems, quality assurance, associated data sharing and analysis,
- collaborate with third-party technical EM service providers as required and under the direction of member countries,

FFA Secretariat, SPC and PNAO will:

- collaborate to promote the adoption of standardised and harmonised EM systems,
- collaborate to provide technical support and training to Data Review Centres,
- coordinate to promote WCPFC recognition and adoption of FFA member country EM programme scientific and compliance data standards.
- coordinate with EM Service Providers in exploring options for investment in EM artificial intelligence, machine learning and other cost-effective developments,
- coordinate in the development and delivery of training in analytical applications and procedures.

Coordination and cooperation between SPC, FFA and PNAO will primarily be through the Data Collection Committee (DCC).

## **7.0 Standards**

FFA members will adopt regional SSPs to support this Policy. This Policy does not prejudice the right of individual FFA member countries to adopt additional SSPs for their national EM Programmes.

### **7.1 EM Systems**

#### **7.1.1 Fishing vessels**

FFA member countries will establish minimum standards for EM Systems on board longline fishing vessels.

Depending on the EM program structure and objectives, FFA member countries, flag State entities, vessel operators, a third party, or a combination thereof, may be responsible for acquiring, installing, and maintaining EM systems on fishing vessels.

#### **7.1.2 Data Review Centres**

FFA member countries will establish minimum standards for EM Systems in Data Review Centres.

FFA member countries may internalise EM Records analysis through the establishment of Data Review Centres or contract a third party to provide viewing services or for acquiring, installing, and maintaining EM Systems in Data Review Centres.

A Data Review Centre may provide national, sub-regional or regional services.

## **7.2 EM Records and EM Data management**

EM Records and EM Data management requirements will be determined by the EM Programme's objectives.

EM Records and EM Data will comply with regionally agreed data standards and formats as reviewed from time to time.

### **7.2.1 Coverage and analysis rates**

The default will be 100% EM Coverage – all licensed longline vessels will have accredited vessel-components of the EM System installed and operational.

Each FFA member country will adopt EM Analysis Rates necessary to meet EM Programme objectives cost-efficiently and equitably.

A risk-based approach will be applied to EM Analysis Rates to satisfy compliance objectives.

EM Analysis Rates may also be driven by market demands.

The target EM Analysis Rate will be:

1. 20% - for vessels operating in national waters but not landing catch into domestic ports
2. 10% (at a minimum) – for domestic vessels landing catch into domestic ports

EM Analysis Rates will be periodically reviewed.

### **7.2.2 EM Records transmission**

FFA member countries will adopt protocols for transmission of EM Records between vessels and Data Review Centres. The protocols should describe, *inter alia*, agreements to accommodate longline vessels that fish in multiple EEZs.

FFA member countries will continue to seek cost-effective and timely avenues to transfer EM Records securely as technology evolves.

### **7.2.3 EM Records analysis and quality assurance**

FFA member countries will adopt standards for EM Records analysis and quality assurance.



FFA member countries will be responsible for EM Records analysis acknowledging they may decide to have the analysis undertaken in-house or contracted to a third party, under appropriate commercial arrangements.

#### *7.2.4 EM Records and EM Data storage*

FFA member countries will adopt standards for the storage of EM Records and EM Data.

### **7.3 EM Records and EM Data ownership and access**

EM Records and EM Data are owned by the licensing FFA member country.

Subject to formal data sharing arrangements<sup>4</sup>, EM Records and EM Data may be shared among the FFA member countries concerned where a vessel fishes in more than one EEZ during one trip.

FFA member countries will share EM Data with Pacific island regional and sub-regional agencies, subject to agreed data exchange rules relating to access and use. FFA member countries will determine the protocols for EM Data flow to the sub-regional and regional agencies.

EM Records and EM Data may be shared with the vessel owner and/or the flag State, subject to data exchange and sharing arrangements.

FFA member countries will establish protocols for EM Records and EM Data retention and disposal.

### **7.4 EM Records and EM Data security and confidentiality**

FFA member countries will adopt standards for the security and confidentiality of EM Records and EM Data.

The standards will ensure that the evidentiary integrity of EM Records and EM Data are not compromised, and chain-of-custody is recorded and auditable.

The confidentiality of EM Records will be subject to the same procedures, systems and protocols as apply to other fisheries data and information generated from FFA member country fisheries including logsheets, VMS and observer data.

## **8.0 Compliance audits**

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<sup>4</sup> May utilize existing data sharing arrangements.

FFA member countries will develop a cost-effective auditing framework and arrange periodic audits by authorised personnel to ensure EM systems are consistent with the standards developed in accordance with this Policy.

## **9.0 EM Systems support and maintenance**

FFA member countries will adopt standards and protocols for EM Systems' support and maintenance.

## **10.0 Integrity of EM Systems**

FFA member countries will develop protocols to ensure the integrity of the EM Systems such as deterring and responding to potential non-compliant activity and anomalous events.

Security mechanisms to deter tampering will be critical to ensuring the integrity of EM Systems.

## **11.0 Training and capacity building**

FFA member countries will develop standardised training for EM Systems' use and application.

FFA member countries will promote cost-effective training and capacity building in the use of EM Systems.

FFA member countries will utilise SPC, FFA and PNAO to ensure training is adequate.

The selection, training and qualifications provided to EM Analysts will draw on the experience of the PIRFO, amongst other training standards.

## **12.0 Legal framework**

Domestic legislation and policies will support the implementation of EM in FFA member countries.

## **13.0 Financial considerations**

Guiding principles to financially support EM in FFA member countries include:

### *User pays arrangements*

FFA member countries will investigate appropriate financing provisions to support EM arrangements, including full or partial cost-recovery of both the direct and attributable indirect costs of providing the service.

### *Equity in recovery*

For those costs considered recoverable, cost recovery arrangements will spread costs equitably amongst users of the service. FFA member countries shall establish a fee-for-service arrangement, as appropriate, in relation to EM services.

#### *Minimising financial exposure and risk*

Cost recovery arrangements will be structured to minimise financial exposure for fisheries agencies, and national governments, and minimise the risk that services will be delivered for which payment is unable to be made.

#### *Incentives to encourage voluntary compliance*

Incentives should be built into cost recovery arrangements to encourage voluntary compliance. As a general rule, incentives should be proportionate to the reduction in costs associated with compliant behaviour.

#### *Efficiency in service delivery*

Where a particular service is to be delivered by FFA member countries as a monopoly provider, there is an obligation to ensure the service is delivered efficiently to keep costs as low as possible.

#### *Transparency and accountability*

As a monopoly provider of services, FFA member countries have a responsibility to be transparent about the nature and level of costs being recovered and accountable for their use.

#### *Simplicity*

Cost recovery arrangements should be uncomplicated.

More specific policies may be required at the operational level to guide the practical recovery of costs.

In recognition of the socio-economic benefits to the national economy provided by domestic fishing vessels, special consideration may be applied to cost recovery arrangements for these vessels.

### **14.0 Approach to implementation of EM**

In considering implementation of EM, FFA member countries will, *inter alia*, take account of:

- benefits, costs and associated risks; and
- strategic engagement in the WCPFC, including the adoption of EM standards and the status of implementation of EM on the high seas.

### **15.0 Review**

This Policy, and associated SSPs, will be reviewed periodically by FFA member countries.