



## International Consultations on the Establishment of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation

### General Data Specification/ Standardisation Issues to be Considered by the DIWG

#### Introduction

There is a lack of consistency and clear specifications associated with a number of the existing data standards. It would be useful if some of these ambiguities are resolved prior to the Interim Secretariat finalising the details of its database standards with its preferred service provider.

For example, there is an inconsistency between the types of data/ units of measure that have been requested in the “Interim measures adopted by Participants in Negotiations to Establish the South Pacific Regional Management Organisation” and “Standards for the collection, reporting, verification and exchange of data” agreed at the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting in Renaca, Chile.

There is also a need to clarify which standard measures should be used to record vessel length, weight, etc in order to facilitate better data consistency over time.

These issues/ points of clarification are noted below for discussion amongst DIWG Participants.

#### Issues for Consideration

##### **Item 1: Vessel GT vs GRT**

The document “Interim measures adopted by Participants in Negotiations to Establish the South Pacific Regional Management Organisation” notes:

*“Participants will communicate by 1 January 2008 to the interim Secretariat the total level of GT recorded in the Area in 2007 for those vessels flying their flag actively fishing in 2007.”*

The vessel standards in the document “Standards for the collection, reporting, verification and exchange of data - 30 April 2007” (Annex 4) note that vessel tonnage should be provided to the Interim Secretariat in **GRT** units.

## **For Discussion**

Which is the most appropriate/logical unit of measure to use to record vessel tonnage?

### **Item 2: Standard Information to Provide with all Data Submissions**

Data which has been submitted to the Interim Secretariat by Participants to date has not always been clearly labelled. In the future, Participants will be able to submit data via a website, and this will provide a means of ensuring that data is submitted in a standardised way.

In the interim, fishing activity data submitted to the Interim Secretariat should be clearly labelled to indicate/confirm:

- i) Time is recorded in UTC (as specified in Annex 5, specifications for the exchange of data – 1)
- ii) Appropriate FAO 3 letter species codes are utilised (Annex 5, specifications for the exchange of data – 3a)
- iii) Appropriate unit(s) of measure for catch data are utilised, i.e. kg (as specified in Annex 5, specifications for the exchange of data – 4a)
- iv) The time period to which the data applies is specified, i.e. the year
- v) Either the submission includes only high seas data or alternatively that it also includes data from territorial waters under national jurisdiction
- vi) The data source.

## **For Discussion**

Would it be useful for the Interim Secretariat to provide a template for Participants to fill out and attach to any data submissions they make prior to the Web submission tool being made available.

### **Item 3: Greater Clarification of Vessel Data Reporting Standards (Annex 4)**

- i) Date stamping of vessel variables

For general reporting purposes, changes in vessel name (f), flag (h), length (m) and GRT/ GT (p) are more meaningful if they can be associated with start and end dates, as these variables may change over time.

**For Discussion**

Should past or future changes in vessel name, flag, length, etc be provided with associated start and end dates where these dates are available?

## ii) Length measurements

Various standards of length measurement can be used to record vessel length – e.g. to date both vessel LOA and LBP have been provided to the Interim Secretariat.

**For Discussion**

Can a specific standard of length measurement be agreed which should be supplied in all future data submissions?

**Item 4: Annex 5 (2) – Specifications for the exchange of data**

Part 2) of the standards in Annex 5 states that:

2. *Degrees, Minutes and Seconds are to be used to describe locations. Where locations are required to be provided at the 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a degree resolution, this is to be achieved by rounding to the nearest 6 seconds.*

It has been suggested that this standard be revised as there appears to be an issue associated with the reference to “seconds”. Location to 1/10 of a degree can be achieved by rounding to the nearest 6 minutes, not to the nearest 6 seconds.

**For Discussion**

Do Participants agree that the reference to “6 seconds” be removed and replaced to avoid ambiguities? It could be replaced with either a reference to degrees and rounding to the nearest “6 minutes”, or alternatively by requesting that data is provided with a decimal minute component.

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**Item 5: Greater Clarification of General Positional and Date/Time (UTC) Data Standards**

There appears to be no agreed specific format for Participants to use when submitting positional information to the Interim Secretariat. An agreed format would be useful to ensure consistency between datasets submitted by different Participants.

In addition, can UTC date/time can be recorded in different formats?

**For Discussion**

Suggest a standard format/ notation to use when submitting positional data such as longitude and latitude, and UTC date/time data to the Interim Secretariat.