



SPECIAL OFFICIALS FORUM FISHERIES COMMITTEE
127th Meeting

Majuro, Republic of Marshall Islands
3 July 2023

Agenda Item: 8

Paper No: FFC127-WP3

Title: Draft FFA Climate Change Strategy

Summary:

FFC126 welcomed progress made on the preparation of a draft Climate Change Strategy and agreed to establish a technical working group consisting of Members and the Secretariat to progress the Climate Change Strategy for Tuna Fisheries. A draft Strategy is presented for Officials' consideration.

Recommendations:

The Committee is invited to:

- (i) **Consider** the proposed Draft FFA Climate Change Strategy (**Attachment**)

Introduction

1. At FFC126 in May 2023, FFC Officials commended the work of the Inaugural Regional Meeting on Climate Change in the Context of Tuna Fisheries held in April and welcomed the progress made on the Draft Climate Change Strategy. Also, as advised in FFCMIN20-WP3 *Climate Change and Oceanic Fisheries*, FFC126 agreed to establish a technical working group consisting of Members and the Secretariat to progress the Climate Change Strategy for Tuna Fisheries with an update on key components provided for Ministers' consideration in July 2023.
2. This paper provides supplementary information on the work to develop the draft FFA Climate Change Strategy, including the outcomes of the working group.
3. In preparation for the meeting of the Technical Working Group and in close consultation with the FFC Chair, the Secretariat developed a revision of the key components of the FFA Climate Change Strategy. The revised strategy re-aligns all the information and feedback from Members' discussions at their April workshop and at FFC126 under 6 objectives. These objectives were set out in FFCMIN20-WP3 *Climate Change and Oceanic Fisheries* as early advice for Ministers. A number of specific strategies to achieve each objective were also developed.
4. On 23 June 2023, the working group met to review this draft Strategy. Useful feedback was provided by participants with key points including clearly specifying the need to strengthen Member's capacity to secure fisheries rights in a high seas WCPFC allocation framework, that properly reflects the projected redistribution of stocks, so that Members are not disproportionately impacted, sharing the knowledge on climate change impacts on the offshore fisheries to other national and regional offices, and the need to include collaboration among national offices responsible for accessing climate finances. The Secretariat further revised the draft Strategy to reflect this feedback. Under the direction of the FFC Chair, a meeting of FFA Officials was held on 1 July 2023 to consider this latest draft. Further key points were provided including the need to clarify the objective under Objective 2 Achieving Climate Justice.

Draft FFA Climate Change Strategy

5. The key elements of the draft FFA Climate Change Strategy (the Strategy) were built from the from FFCMIN18 and FFCMIN19 priorities:
 - a. The need for a coordinated regional approach to address climate change;
 - b. the need to build climate resilience on the collective fisheries;
 - c. the importance of strong governance systems to tackle climate change;
 - d. the importance of transitioning to adaptive fisheries management regimes;
 - e. the importance of cooperation with other CROP agencies to include fisheries in the climate change negotiations;
 - f. the urgency for enhanced ambition and action to ensure ongoing sustainability of, and benefit flow to Pacific Island countries from, tuna fisheries in the face of climate change.
6. The Purpose of the draft Strategy is to guide the FFA to prepare for, respond to the risk and impacts of climate change to Pacific Island offshore fisheries to ensure the fisheries and associated economic and social benefits are climate resilient.
7. The Strategy has 6 key objectives and associated strategies to deliver on each objective.
 1. Objective 1: Actioning Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience - *This first objective looks to increase the Members' resilience and adaptive capacity to secure fishing rights and manage offshore fisheries in an ecological sustainable manner in the face of*

FORUM FISHERIES COMMITTEE EYES ONLY

climate change. There are sub-objectives looking to improve ecological sustainability of the tuna fish stocks, define, secure and protects Members rights and improve economic and social benefits from offshore fisheries.

Sub-Objectives:

1.1 Ecological Sustainability

1.2 Well-defined rights, secured and protected.

1.3 Sustainable economic and social benefits

There are fourteen developed strategies under the above sub objectives to mobilise actions in enhancing members capacities in collecting, understanding and incorporating climate change information and science into efforts on securing Members maritime boundaries, establishing and defending rights in the offshore fisheries and maintaining and enhancing economic and social benefits for the Members from the offshore fisheries.

- 2. Objective 2: Achieving Climate Justice - This focuses on adequate compensation for our Members for the loss and damages induced by climate change on offshore fisheries resources. The Strategies focus on strengthening Members capacities in developing approaches and positions for negotiations on compensations, solutions and mechanisms to address loss and damage.*
- 3. Objective 3: Accessing Climate Finance - This focuses FFA Members access to climate finance sources to fund offshore related climate activities. The Strategies look at enhancing and strengthening Members capacities in developing climate finance plans and capacities to work with relevant in-country focal points and relevant CROP agencies and partners on climate financing.*
- 4. Objective 4: Contributing to Mitigation - This Objective commits the membership and the Secretariat to reducing GHG emissions from the offshore fisheries sector. The Strategies identified the support by the FFA Members to support broader national commitments to reducing GHG emissions and drive similar efforts at the regional and international level such as the WCFPC.*
- 5. Objective 5: Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening - This objective focuses on strengthening of the Members administrations and the Secretariat institutional resilience. These strategies focus on strengthening Members administrations and the Secretariat capacities to effectively implement the FFA Climate Change Strategy.*
- 6. Objective 6: Advocacy and Engagement - This objective focuses on enhancing FFA Members advocacy and engagement at national climate change policy development processes, in regional and international climate change discussions and negotiations to recognise climate change posed challenges faced by the offshore fisheries sector. The Strategies identified how to mobilise the FFA Members and the Secretariat in enhancing engagement and advocacy of offshore fisheries issues.*

Conclusion

- 8. Once endorsed, the Secretariat will work with Members to develop the implementation plan for this Strategy as a matter of priority.*
- 9. The Strategy will serve as a critical guide to Members and the Secretariat on their work on effective management and development of offshore fisheries in the climate change context. It is also a bold statement by FFA to the region and the world on recognising the advances in*

FORUM FISHERIES COMMITTEE EYES ONLY

Pacific efforts in combating threats and impacts of climate change and incorporating those important efforts in the everyday work of FFA.

Attachment



**DRAFT of ~~[Key components for a]~~
FFA Climate Change Strategy**

July 2023

To guarantee the future of our children, we will urgently advocate as a collective to reduce and prevent the causes and impacts of climate change and sea level rise; we will call for stronger global commitment to combat climate change; we will continue to pursue innovative measures to address climate change impacts and disaster risk; and with the support of our partners, we commit to ensuring net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

**2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent
Pacific Islands Forum Leaders, 51st meeting, July 2022**

Purpose

The purpose of this Strategy is to guide FFA to prepare for and respond to the risks **and impacts** of climate change to Pacific Island offshore fisheries, in order to ensure that these fisheries and associated economic and social benefits are climate resilient.

Context

“Recognising that climate change presents the single greatest threat to the livelihood, security and wellbeing of Pacific people, Leaders reaffirmed the importance of immediate urgent action to combat climate change”

Pacific Islands Forum Leaders, 49th meeting, September 2018

In response to the Pacific Island Forum Leaders directive, the Forum Fisheries Committee made Climate Change a standing agenda item at their next Governing Council meetings in 2019. At the same meeting, FFC Ministers adopted the FFA Strategic Plan 2020-2025 which included Outcome One that Offshore Fisheries are Ecologically Sustainable. A key strategy to achieve this outcome is to **understand and manage the impact of Climate Change on offshore fisheries**.

Climate change is predicted to impact offshore fisheries and have environmental, social, security and economic consequences across the region.

Climate change is already being felt in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO): the latest scientific information shows that the area of warm pool is expanding by greater latitudinal extent since 1900, particularly since GreenHouse Gas emissions have increased; and data of sea surface temperature (SST) shows that during the last 20 years, the mean annual SST across the WCPO area has increased 0.26C. These changes in ocean conditions have an impact on tuna and tuna like species life cycles, abundance and distribution and consequently affect fishing activities.

Recent modelling shows that continued GHG emissions are expected to cause substantial changes in the abundance and distributions of Skipjack, Yellowfin and Bigeye tunas within the Pacific Ocean Basin, with predicted shifts in biomass from the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) toward the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO), and from areas under national jurisdiction to the high seas. In particular, projections under the worst-case scenario (countries continue to emit GHG in *business as usual*, scenario) show a decrease in tuna biomass in the equatorial western and central Pacific Ocean by 2050 and an increase in abundance in the eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean and in some subtropical regions.

The magnitude of this estimated redistribution of tuna biomass is most significant for Skipjack tuna, but also evident for Yellowfin and Bigeye tuna. Future projections of south-Pacific Albacore are more uncertain but also indicate a distribution of biomass but over longer time frames than that estimated for the equatorial tuna species.

In a business as usual scenario, this redistribution may result in significant reductions in the economic benefits some PICs derive from these fisheries. The projected redistribution of tuna biomass is significantly reduced under a scenario of moderated global efforts of GHG emission reduction.

Projections for the end of the century show changes in biomass towards the eastern Pacific and poleward with declines of tuna biomass forecast for most of the Pacific Islands. In addition, the impact of climate change on bycatch species that can be of interest for food security projects the negative impact of fishing on most of the edible bycatch and the strengthening of this negative impact by climate change.

Given the all-encompassing and complex nature of climate change, our collective effort is required to prepare and respond to those threats by taking a proactive approach to managing the potential risks and increasing the resilience of offshore fisheries and associated benefits for the people who depend on them. This should be undertaken, maintaining a good understanding of the broader connected impacts of climate change in the region and associated economic, social, security and environmental implications.

Objectives and strategies can be pursued that will move towards climate-resilient pathways for sustainable development, while at the same time helping to improve livelihoods, social and economic well-being and effective environmental management.

There are 6 key objectives with associated specific strategies to deliver on each objective. FFA Members and the Secretariat will work closely in implementing these strategies, under the direction of the Forum Fisheries Committee.

- 1. Actioning Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience**
- 2. Achieving Climate Justice**
- 3. Accessing Climate Finance**
- 4. Contributing to Mitigation**
- 5. Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening**
- 6. Advocacy and Engagement**

Objective 1 - ACTIONING CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE

FFA Members increase their resilience and adaptive capacity to climate change by managing their fisheries in an ecologically sustainable manner, securing and protecting their rights, and maintaining the offshore fisheries' social and economical benefits despite climate change.

Sub Objective 1.1 – ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

FFA Members' offshore fisheries resources are managed in an ecologically sustainable manner in the face of climate change.

Strategies

1. Build FFA Members' capacity to assess climate change risks to offshore fisheries in order to prepare and respond to them at national, subregional and regional scales so that these resources remain ecologically sustainable .
2. Continue to support strong, defensible science and information to ensure and inform the development and adoption of climate-informed offshore fisheries related policies and management measures at the national level and arrangements at the subregional and regional level.
3. Implement and strengthen the current Climate Change Resolution at WCPFC into current and future Conservation and Management Measures, consistent with FFA members' climate change priorities for WCPO fisheries.
4. Ensure climate change representatives at national, subregional and regional levels are fully informed of the climate change impacts and projections for offshore fisheries to enable better engagement and representation through international processes. ~~the transmission of understood impacts, projections and implications in the offshore fisheries space in the Pacific, to respective climate change negotiating counterparts at country and regional level to facilitate informed negotiations under the Paris Agreement and UNFCCC processes.~~

Sub Objective 1.2 – WELL-DEFINED RIGHTS, SECURED AND PROTECTED

FFA Members' secure and are able to maintain well defined offshore fisheries rights taking into account climate change and that these rights remain secured and protected.

Strategies

5. Support the assessment of climate-induced risks to FFA Members' rights to their offshore fisheries resources and their associated economic and social benefits managed including identifying any adaptation policies that would be appropriate to addressing these.
6. Continue to strengthen FFA Members' capacity to define and secure rights to their offshore fisheries resources, including securing and protecting maritime boundaries and zones
7. Support a WCPFC allocation framework accounting for redistribution of stocks from the EEZ into the high seas.
8. Enhance global recognition and adoption of Zone-Based Management and protection of FFA Members' fisheries rights in new climate change scenarios.
9. Ensure the adaptability of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance systems and tools despite climate change threats.

Sub-objective 1.3 – SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BENEFITS

The economic and social benefits obtained by FFA Members from their offshore fisheries continue to grow in a sustainable manner, notwithstanding the impacts of climate change.

Strategies

10. Identify climate-induced threats to the economic and social benefits derived from FFA Members' offshore fisheries resources, and any adaptation and mitigation policies that would be appropriate to addressing these.
11. Continue to identify and progress opportunities to enhance social and economic returns to FFA Members from their offshore fisheries under climate change.
12. Drive the inclusion of equitable social and economic considerations in climate related policies and measures consistent with FFA Members' social and economic objectives and their developmental aspirations for WCPO tuna fisheries.
13. Integrate gender and social inclusion principles into climate change responses for offshore fisheries by prioritising equitable social and economic factors within climate-related policies and measures.

Objective 2 – ACHIEVING CLIMATE JUSTICE

FFA Members are adequately compensated for the loss and damage induced by climate change on their offshore fisheries resources.

FFA members receive adequate support so that solutions are found for climate change induced loss and damage to their offshore fisheries resources.

~~FFA members receive adequate support so that solutions are found for~~ can access support to avert, minimise and address climate change induced loss and damage to their offshore fisheries resources.

FFA members receive support, including solutions which compensate, to adequately avert, minimise and address the loss and damages from Climate Change to offshore fisheries]

Strategies

1. Support Members to develop and articulate well-thought out approaches and defensible positions and proposed solutions and mechanisms to present to the relevant fora.
2. Strengthen FFA Members' capacity to negotiate and access support to address climate induced loss and damage to offshore fishery resources

3. Strengthen FFA Members' capacity to negotiate and access compensation for climate change loss and damage on their offshore fishery resources and fisheries rights.
4. Strengthen FFA Members' capacity to liaise with partners and [engage with issues related to climate justice in](#) international fora, such as the WCPFC and the UNFCCC.

Objective 3- ACCESSING CLIMATE FINANCE

FFA Members' access climate finance from external sources to fund national and regional offshore fisheries related climate activities and initiatives.

Strategies

1. Enhance FFA Members' and FFA Secretariat's understanding of the processes and steps involved in mobilising climate finance to support Members' priorities.
2. Strengthen FFA Members' and FFA Secretariat's capacity to [access](#) sustainable climate finance mechanisms through a collaborative partnership approach with [their relevant counterparts in-country, such as focal points for climate financing and relevant CROP agencies and other partners.](#)
3. [Develop climate finance plans](#) to mobilise resources to support the Members and the Secretariat's work towards increasing the resilience of the offshore fisheries sector.

Objective 4 – CONTRIBUTING TO MITIGATION

FFA Members' offshore fisheries sector contributes to reducing GHG emissions.

Strategies

1. Enhance and support FFA Members capacity to meet national commitments to minimise FFA Members' offshore fisheries GHG emissions, including reporting of those efforts.
2. Evaluate the feasibility of development and implementation of mitigation measures for FFA Members' offshore fisheries.
3. Drive positive action at WCPFC towards commitments to GHG emission reductions.
4. Contribute to and support the development of science and technology for mitigation efficiency.
5. Assess and reduce the FFA Secretariat's emission profile.

Objective 5 – CAPACITY BUILDING AND INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

FFA Members' offshore fisheries are resilient to climate change through strong and effective national, and sub-regional fisheries organisations.

Strategies

1. Enhance the capacity of national fisheries administrations to increase the resilience of their offshore fisheries to climate change.
2. Strengthen the capacity of national fisheries administrations to engage with national climate change administrations for mainstreaming offshore fisheries into climate change policies.
3. Enhance FFA Members' capacity for stakeholder engagement and participation in climate change and fisheries decision-making processes.
4. Enhance the technical capability of FFA Members' and their fisheries to prepare for, and adapt to, the impacts of climate change.
5. Strengthen FFA Secretariat's capacity to support FFA Members' needs on offshore fishery-related climate change priorities, and to coordinate their engagement at national, regional and international fora.

Objective 6 – ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENT

FFA Members advocate and generate strong collaborative mechanisms and partnerships for increasing the resilience of the offshore fisheries and influence positive change.

Strategies

1. Strengthen FFA Members collaborative mechanisms and partnerships at all levels to engage in relevant regional and international fora on their offshore fishery-related climate change priorities.
2. Ensure that FFA Members' fishery-related climate change priorities influence regional and international fisheries related plans, policies, strategies and frameworks.
3. Enhance the collaboration within other RFMOs to help develop [workable solutions to address loss and damage induced](#) by climate change on offshore fisheries.
4. Strengthen FFA Members collaborative mechanisms and partnerships to engage relevant inter-governmental agencies at the national-level on their offshore fishery-related climate change priorities.
5. Identify how offshore fisheries conservation and management measures can be better integrated in Members' climate change agenda.
6. Ensure the significance of Members' offshore fisheries is advocated in other relevant climate change fora such as the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties.

IMPLEMENTATION

The FFA Secretariat will work with Members to develop an implementation plan as a matter of priority. This plan shall include key components such as how to progress risk assessments for the strategies, [monitoring, evaluation](#) and [reporting](#) on progress, and a review to take place after 5 years. This approach would form the basis for [prioritising the work of FFA on Climate Change, engagement with donors and partners](#) as well as engagement in the development of the Implementation Plan for the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and coordination with related regional architecture.

~~FFA will continue to work closely with SPC and other CROP agencies in understanding the impacts of climate change on offshore fisheries resources and means to address these in the context of the wider climate action agenda of the region to ensure maximum outcomes for members.~~