

RFMOs and Observers Onboard Program in Combatting IUU Fishing on the High seas

Practical Workshop on Strengthening Fisheries Observer Programs
for Effective Combating of IUU Fishing in Southeast Asia

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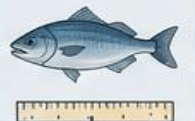
FISHERIES OBSERVER ONBOARD

Fisheries observers collect independent scientific data to promote sustainable fisheries and support management and conservation measures.



MONITORING FISHING ACTIVITIES

Record fishing operations including date, time, location, gear type and effort.



CATCH DATA COLLECTION

Identify and record species, measure size, and estimate catch quantity.



BYCATCH & DISCARDS

Record bycatch species and quantity, and fate of discards.



COMPLIANCE MONITORING

Ensure compliance with fisheries regulations and conservation measures.



DATA REPORTING

Compile and submit accurate data for fisheries management and stock assessment.

Mission: Observer, Record and Report



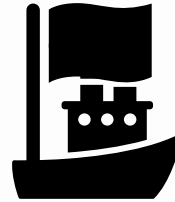
Legal Frameworks and Development of Observer Onboard



1982

UNCLOS

Art. 62(4)(g)



Flag
States

1995

UN Fish Stocks
Agreement

Art18,
Annex1Art6



1986

FAO Observer
Program
Operation Manual

Coastal States

2001

FAO IPOA-IUU

States

National/Regional/
International

RFMOs Fisheries Observer Program/National Observer Program



1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

- **Article 62(4)** Nationals of other States fishing in EEZ of coastal States shall comply with the conservation measures and with the other terms and conditions established in the laws and regulations of the coastal State.

(g) the placing of observers or trainees on board such vessels by the coastal State;



Coastal States

1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA)

Article 18 - UNFSA provides for measures to be taken by a flag state that include requirements for recording and timely reporting of vessel position, catch of target and non-target species, fishing effort and other relevant fisheries data through such means as the implementation of national, subregional and regional observer programs.

In UNFSA, Annex 1, Article 6, observer programmes are advocated as a suitable means to verify fishery data in sub-regional or RFMOs.



Straddling Fish Stocks: Can be found both within a country's national jurisdiction and in the adjacent high seas.

Examples: cod, halibut, pollock, jack mackerel and squid



Highly Migratory Fish Stocks: Regularly travel long distances through high seas areas and areas under national jurisdiction.

Examples: tuna, swordfish and oceanic sharks





Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

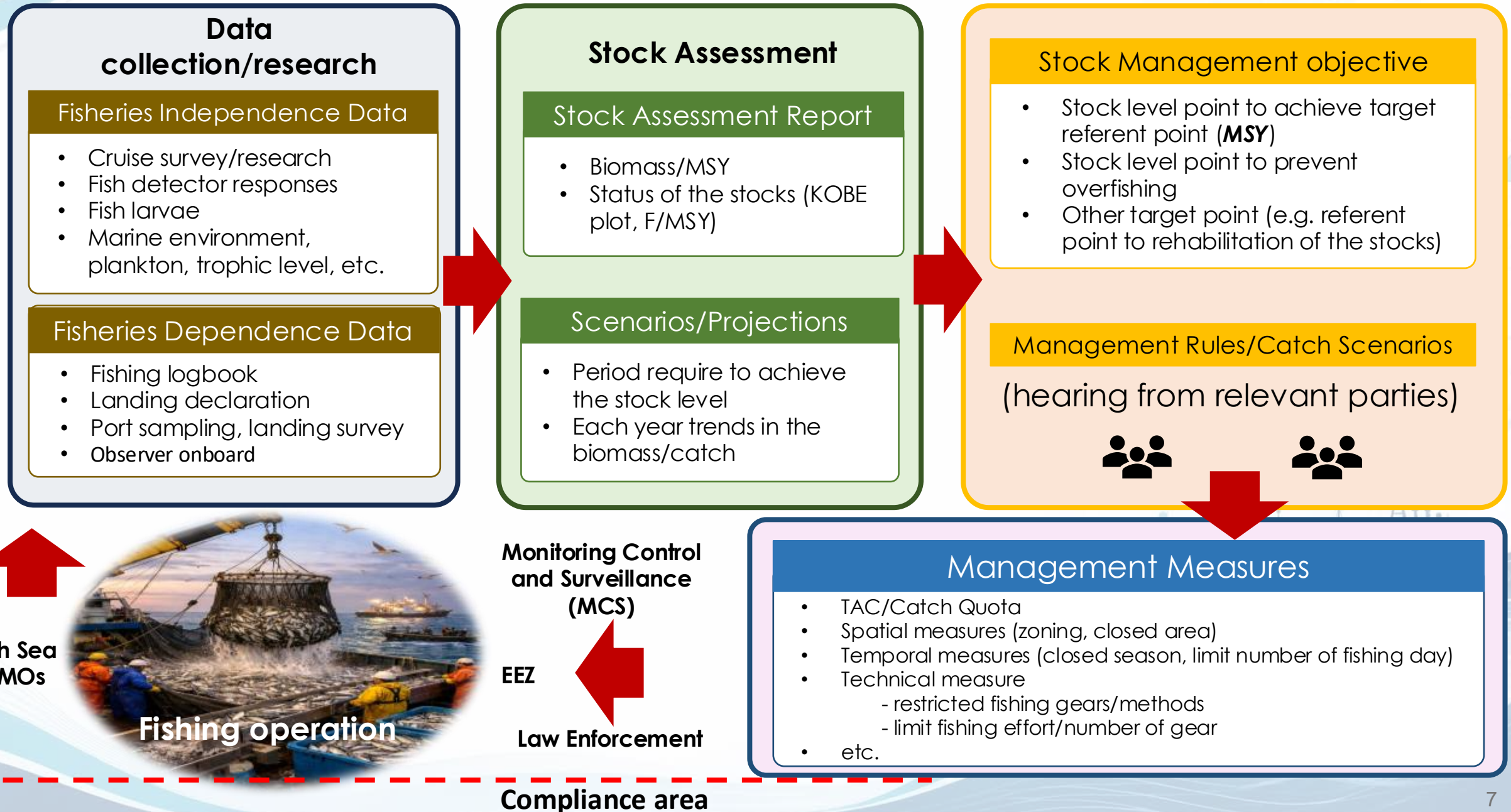
INTERNATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION
TO PREVENT, DETER AND ELIMINATE
ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED AND
UNREGULATED FISHING



2001 FAO IPOA-IUU

Section 24.4- on Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS), states are encouraged to implement, where appropriate, observer programmes in accordance with relevant national, regional or international standards.

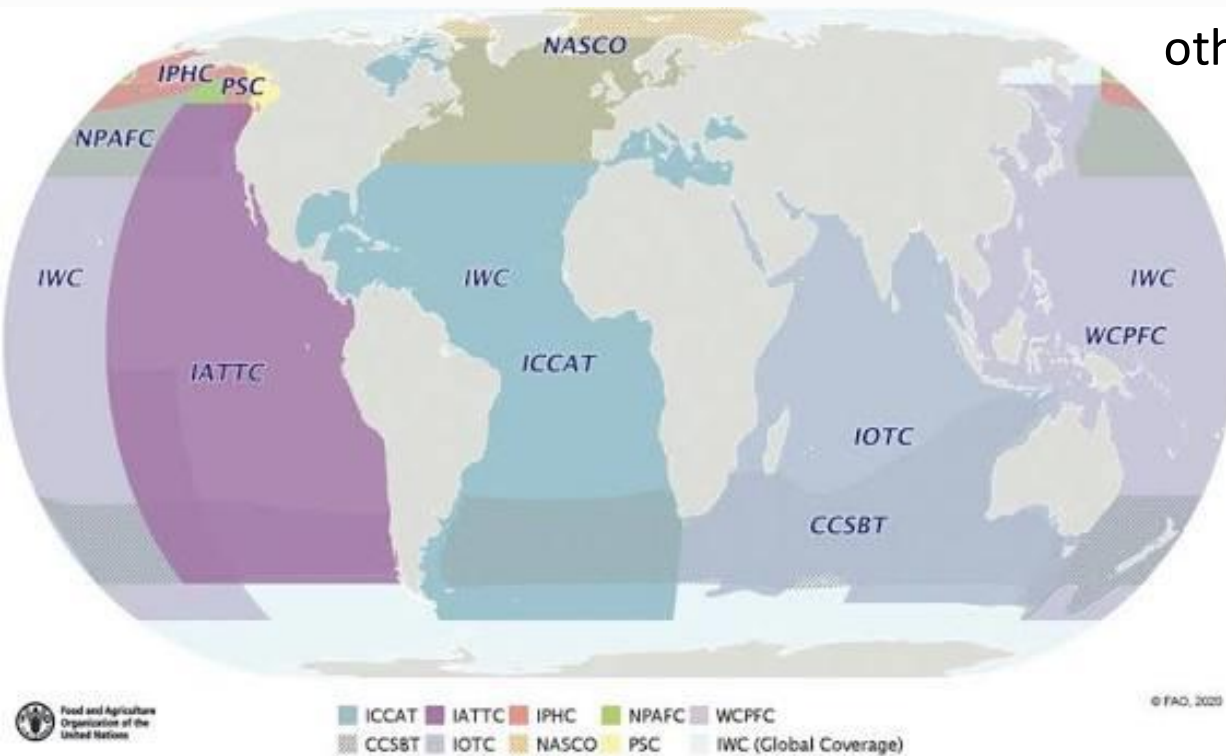




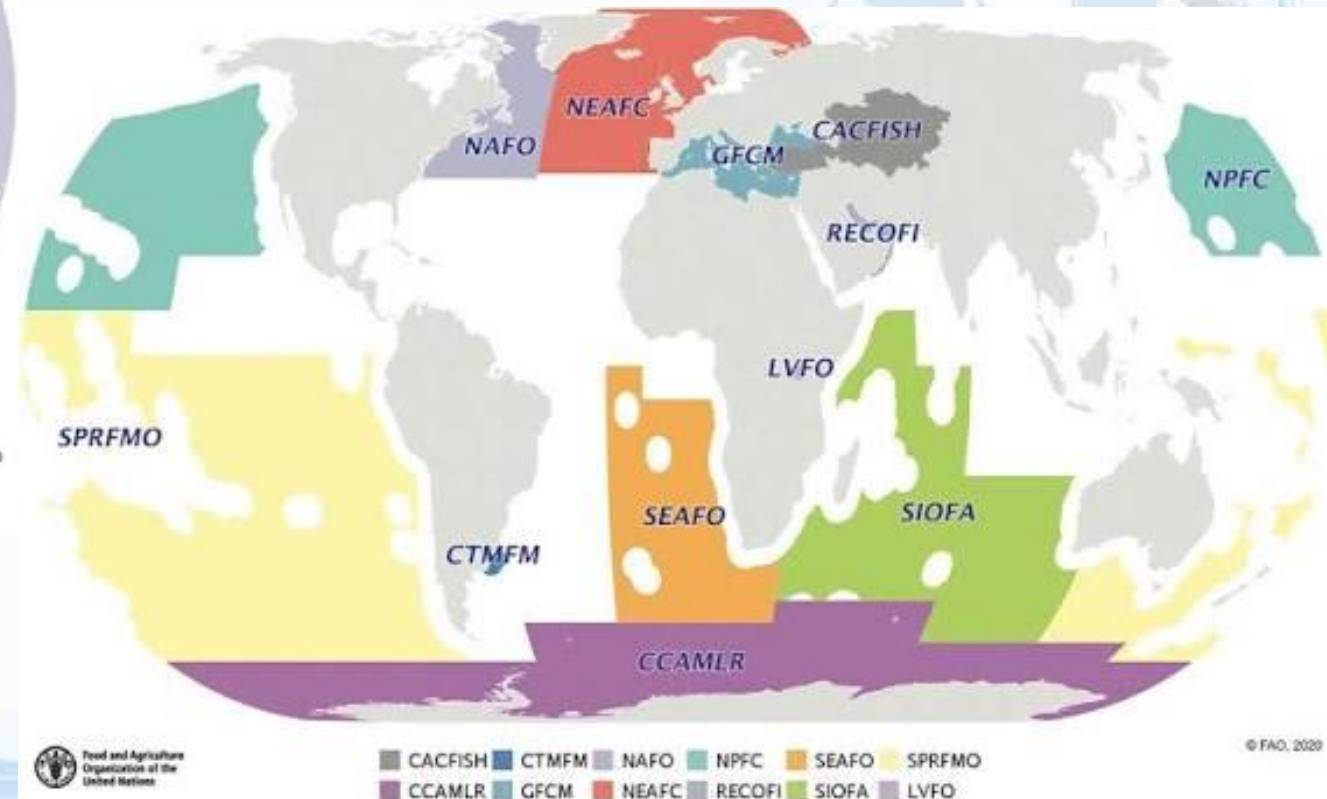
Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs)

establish based on the provision of UNCLOS that in utilization of resources on the Highseas, the States shall cooperate with other in conservation and management of the resources

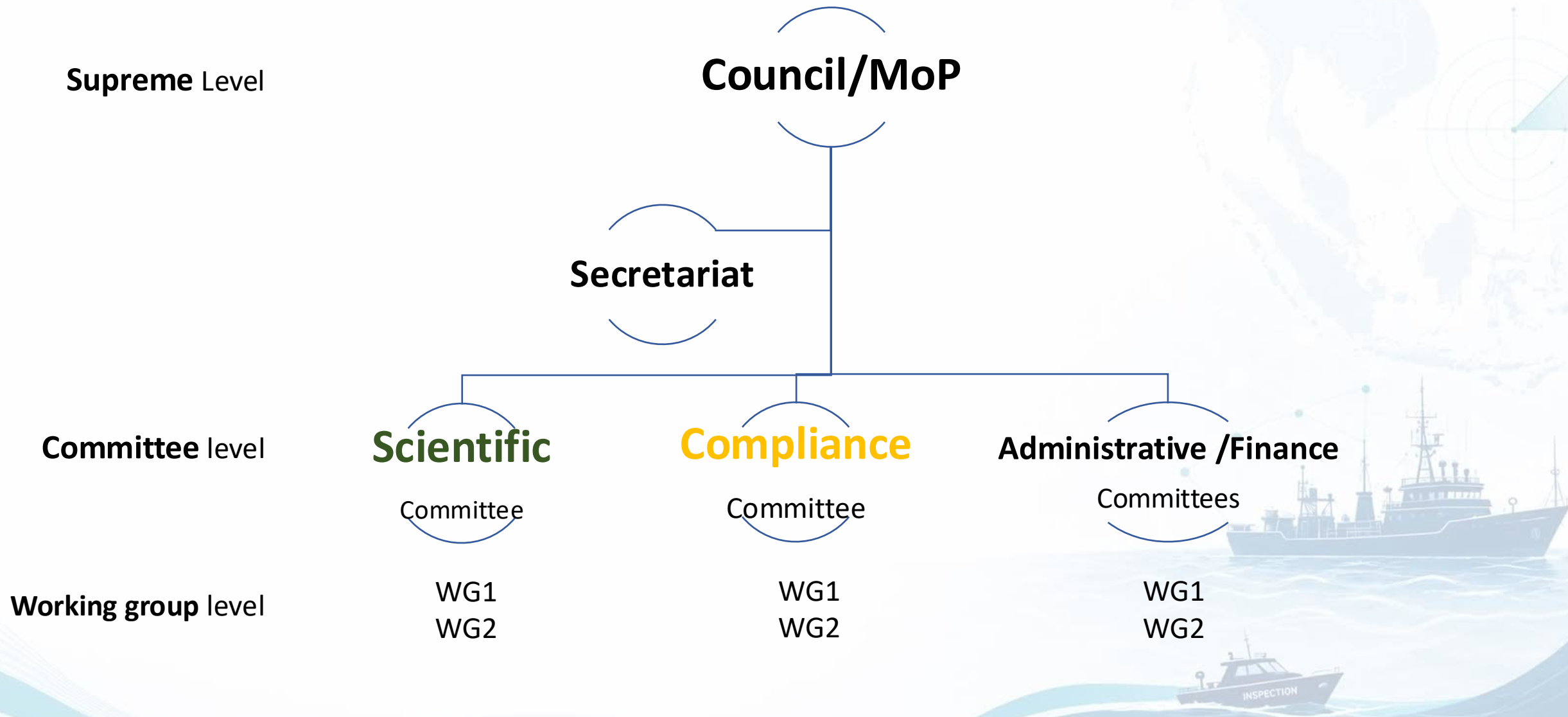
Species Specific RFMOs



General Species RFMOs



General Structure of RFMOs



RFMOs establish standards, rules, and procedures to ensure the effective implementation of observer onboard schemes to carryout the scientific and compliance mandate.

Scientific matter

- Catch/bycatch
- species identification and species composition
- length-weight data for use in assessments
- Fishing gear
- Fishing effort/time
- Retained/Discard/Released fish
- Fishing ground
- VMEs e.g. coral, endemic species, ETPs
- Etc.

Compliance matter

- compliance to the implementing rules in place
 - Quota
 - Species of authorization
 - Area of authorization
 - Fishing gear of authorization
 - Transshipment at sea/ in port



RFMOs Implementing Rules on Observer Onboard

IOTC Resolutions

- **Res.09/04 IOTC Regional Observer Scheme (ROS)** aims to collect verified catch data and scientific information related to tuna and tuna like species in the IOTC area
- **Res. 23/08** On electronic monitoring standards for IOTC fisheries
- **Res 25/05** On establishing a programme for transshipment by large-scale fishing vessels

SIOFA CMM

- **CMM 01(2025)** for the Interim Management of Bottom Fishing in the Agreement Area
 - **Scientific observer coverage**
- **CMM 02(2025)** for the Collection, Reporting, Verification and Exchange of Data relating to fishing activities in the Agreement Area (Data Standards)
 - **Scientific Observer Data**

WCPFC CMM

- **CMM 2018-05** governs the Regional Observer Programme (ROP).
 - It requires fishing vessels operating on the high seas or in the waters of multiple coastal states to carry authorized independent observers on board to collect verified catch data and monitor compliance; Observer Coverage
- **CMM 2009-06** on the regulation of transshipment. **Bans most transfers at sea** while creating tight rules for port transfers and rare high-seas exceptions
 - **Observer Coverage:** Boats must carry an observer from the Regional Observer Program to watch the transfer.

INSPECTION

observer onboard schemes in RFMOs involves several key components

- Standards and Procedures
- Minimum Observer Coverage
- Alternative/Complementary Programs
- Data Requirement and Data Reporting
- Obligations of the Commission, subsidiary bodies, Parties, and relevant
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- Assessment/Evaluation of the compliance
- Review and revise





THANK YOU

