



PACIFIC ISLANDS

REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR SHARKS:

Guidance for Pacific Island Countries and Territories on the Conservation and Management of Sharks

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FOREWORD

The Regional Plan of Action for Sharks (RPOA Sharks) is a collaborative project between the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). The initiative was funded under Part VII of the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement with the support of the Republic of Palau, the Republic of Kiribati and Papua New Guinea.

The development of the Pacific Islands RPOA Sharks was a response to both the International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks and to the Conservation and Management Measure (CMM) for Sharks adopted by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) of which the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) are members. The former encourages assessments and management of shark fisheries and the latter imposes obligations on the PICTs to implement measures compatible with those imposed on the high seas in the Pacific Ocean.

The RPOA Sharks is not intended to prescribe specific actions to be taken nationally or regionally by the PICTs. Rather, the intent of the RPOA Sharks is to provide guidance to the PICTs as to how to assess their shark fisheries, how to ensure that management arrangements for sharks within their waters meet the requirements of the WCPFC CMM and to identify what other initiatives, such as improved data collection and research, might be necessary in order to ensure the long-term sustainable management of sharks in their waters and the region more generally.

It is hoped that the PICTs will find the information and the analysis contained in the RPOA useful in determining what actions can be taken collaboratively and individually to maintain and improve the status of shark stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.

The FFA, SPC and SPREP are keen to work with the PICTs to consider and implement actions proposed in the RPOA.



Figure 1: Location of the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs)

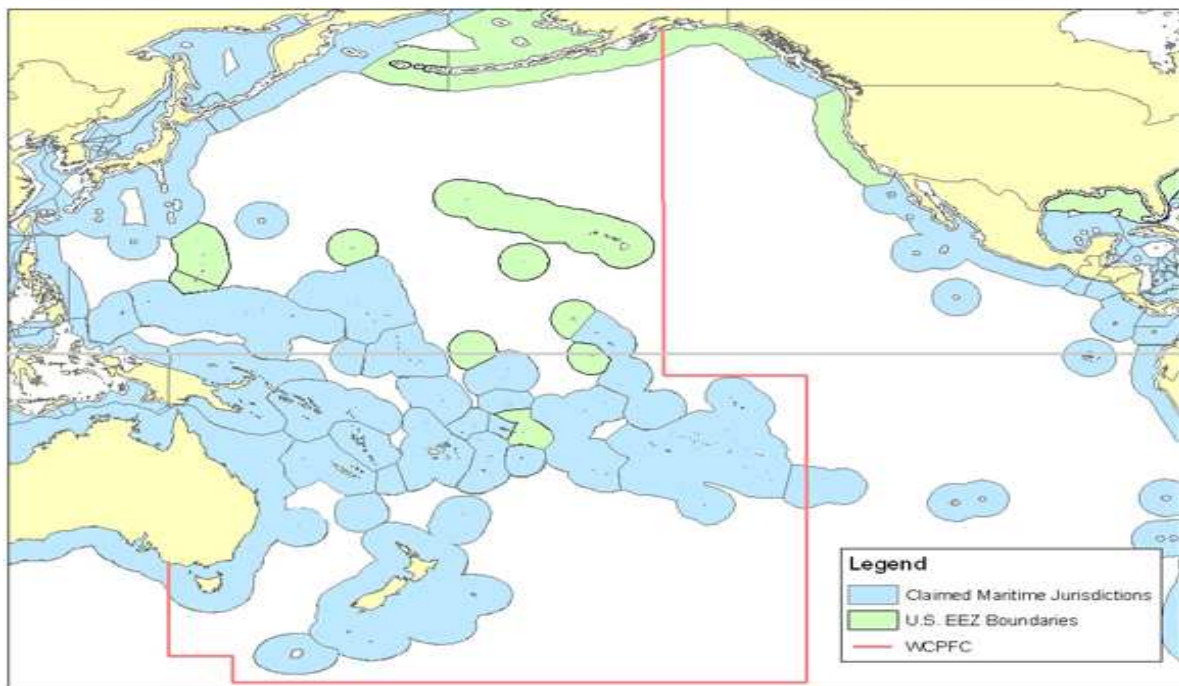


Figure 2: WCPFC Convention Area and claimed maritime boundaries of the PICTs

Source: NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (2009). *WCPFC Boundary*. Available at:
http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/IFD/ifd_wcpfc_map.html.

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