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Media Release – Outcomes of the 21st Session of the WCPFC

The Chief Executive Officer of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) Office, Dr. Sangaalofa Clark, welcomed the outcomes of the 21st meeting of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission that was held in Suva, Fiji from 28 November to 3 December 2024. She noted the powerful achievements of the Commission after 21 years of collaboration and hard work by Commission Members and the Secretariat.

SPC, the Commission's scientific services provider, had advised that all the major tuna stocks continued to be healthy and the levels of fishing for them are estimated to be sustainable. This is good news to consumers of tuna products from the region, which would continue to supply most of the global demand for canned tuna from sustainable WCPO tuna fisheries. In addition, the depleted bluefin stock appeared to be recovering well, and the Commission was able to approve increases in catch limits for this stock.

Dr Clark also noted the importance of the conclusion of the global precedent-setting measure on crew labour standards. This measure is aimed at ensuring that those who labour on tuna vessels in the WCPO are provided a safe working environment and decent working and living conditions.

There was also progress in some other areas at this session including the adoption of electronic monitoring standards and extended protection for cetaceans. However, the Commission had again failed to take steps to strengthen the management of longline fishing in the high seas.

Dr. Clark expressed warm appreciation to the Government and people of Fiji for the successful hosting of the meeting. She also expressed appreciation for the effective guidance of the meeting by the Commission Chair, Dr. Josie Tamate, the great progress being made in the work of the WCPFC Secretariat under Ms. Rhea Moss-Christian, and the friendly and effective support provided for the meeting by the team from Fiji.