

**INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION**

**SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**NINTH MEETING**

La Jolla, California (USA)

14-18 May 2018

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**The Commission for the Conservation and Management of  
Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean**

**Northern Committee  
Thirteenth Regular Session**

August 28 – September 1, 2017

Busan, Korea

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**Results of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Joint IATTC-WCPFC NC working group meeting on the  
management of Pacific bluefin tuna**

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The second joint IATTC-WCPFC NC working group meeting on the management of PBF was held in Busan, Korea from August 28 - 31, 2017 as an informal meeting. WCPFC NC members, some IATTC members, and observers participated in the meeting. The main results and conclusions of the meeting are as follows. Participants supported this report to be forwarded to NC13 and IATTC for further discussion.

- 1) **Designation of Co-chairs**  
M. Miyahara (Japan) and D. Lowman (USA) were elected co-chairs of the meeting.
- 2) **Adoption of agenda**  
Adopted agenda is attached (Annex 1).
- 3) **Consideration and development of rebuilding strategy and long-term precautionary management framework, including Emergency Rule (Item 7) and CDS (Item 8)**  
The Joint WG discussed the rebuilding strategy and long-term precautionary management framework based on proposals from Japan (NC13-DP-11) and the USA (NC13-DP-13). The Joint WG revised the Japanese proposal and agreed to support it as a conclusion of the meeting (Outcomes of the meeting: Annex 2). The Joint WG requested co-chairs to forward it to NC13 and IATTC for further consideration.
- 4) **Review of current management measures in both IATTC and WCPFC**  
The Joint WG reviewed the existing management measures and concluded that no revision is necessary except for those to incorporate the establishment of possible harvest strategy mentioned 3) above.
- 5) **Next meeting**  
The Joint WG confirmed the usefulness of the Join Working Group between WCPFC NC and IATTC for the discussion on the management of PBF and supported its continuation. In order to enhance the effectiveness, it was suggested to hold the Joint Working Group meeting in conjunction with IATTC annual meeting as well.  
The Joint WG agreed to hold the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of Joint WG in conjunction with NC14. Current co-chairs were requested to continue and to construct draft agenda for the next meeting. The Joint WG further agreed to request co-chairs to evaluate feasibility to hold the future Joint WG meeting in conjunction with IATTC annual meeting.

**Joint IATTC-WCPFC NC Working Group Meeting on the  
Management of Pacific Bluefin Tuna**

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**AGENDA**

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1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Designation of Co-chair
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Review of updated information on Pacific bluefin tuna provided by the ISC17 and recommendations from IATTC
5. Consideration and development of rebuilding strategy (second rebuilding target and timeline, etc.) and long-term precautionary management framework (management objectives, limit and target reference points, harvest control rules, etc.)
6. Review of current management measures in both IATTC and WCPFC
7. Emergency rule
8. Catch document scheme
9. Next meeting
10. Other business
11. Close of Meeting

**Joint IATTC-WCPFC NC Working Group Meeting on the  
Management of Pacific Bluefin Tuna**

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**Outcomes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Joint IATTC-WCPFC NC working group on the management of PBF**

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The Joint IATTC-WCPFC NC Working Group on the Management of PBF recommends that the IATTC and WCPFC NC consider incorporating the following provisions in their decisions:

**1. Recruitment scenario used in Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) projection**

- (1) The low recruitment scenario (resampling from the relatively low recruitment period (1980-1989)) or the recent recruitment scenario (resampling from the last 10 years), whichever is lower, should be used for the ISC's SSB projections until 2024 or the SSB reaches the historical median (the median point estimate for 1952-2014 as specified by ISC), whichever is earlier.
- (2) The recruitment scenario to be used for the SSB projections after 2024 or the SSB has reached the historical median should be tentatively the average recruitment scenario (resampling from the entire recruitment period).
- (3) ISC will be requested to periodically evaluate whether the scenarios in paragraph (1) and (2) are reasonable given current conditions and make recommendation on whether a different scenario should be used. If ISC recommends a different scenario, this should be considered.

**2. Management until reaching the historical median**

- (1) The management objective is to rebuild the SSB to the historical median by 2024 with at least 60% probability.
- (2) For this purpose, interim harvest control rules below should be applied based on the results of stock assessments and SSB projections to be conducted by ISC.
  - (a) If the SSB projection indicates that the probability of achieving the historical median by 2024 is less than 60%, management measures should be modified to increase it to at least 60%. Modification of management measures may be (i) a reduction (in %) in the catch limit for fish smaller than 30 kg (hereinafter called "small fish") or (ii) a transfer of part of the catch limit for small fish to the catch limit for fish 30 kg or larger (hereinafter called "large fish"). For this purpose, ISC will be requested, if necessary, to provide different combinations of these two measures so as to achieve 60% probability.
  - (b) If the SSB projection indicates that the probability of achieving the historical median by 2024 is at 75% or larger, the IATTC and WCPFC may increase their catch limits as long as the probability is maintained at 70% or larger, and the probability of reaching the second rebuilding

target by the agreed deadline remains at least 60%. For this purpose, ISC will be requested, if necessary, to provide relevant information on potential catch limit increases.

### **3. Management after reaching the historical median**

- (1) The management objective after reaching the historical median should be to rebuild the SSB to  $20\%SSB_{F=0}$ <sup>1</sup> within 10 years of reaching the historical median or by 2034, whichever is earlier, with at least 60% probability. However, if (i) the SSB reaches the historical median earlier than 2024; (ii) ISC recommends a recruitment scenario lower than the average recruitment scenario; and (iii) the SSB projections indicate that the next rebuilding target will not be achieved within 10 years with at least 60% probability under the rebuilding plan in place at that time, the deadline for rebuilding to  $20\%SSB_{F=0}$  may be extended to 2034 at the latest. Also, if the joint working group recommends that  $20\%SSB_{F=0}$  is not appropriate as the second rebuilding target, taking into account scientific advice from ISC, IATTC or WCPFC SC and socioeconomic factors, another objective may be established.
- (2) Harvest control rules to be applied during this period should be decided, taking into account the implementation of the interim harvest control rules referred to in paragraph 2. (2).

### **4. Management after reaching $20\%SSB_{F=0}$**

- (1) ISC is requested to start the work to develop MSE for Pacific Bluefin Tuna from 2019 and finalize it with a goal of completing by 2024. During this MSE development period until 2024, ISC will conduct assessments in 2018, 2020 and 2022.
- (2) The joint working group will start to discuss in 2018 and aim to finalize no later than 2019 a guideline for MSE including at least one candidate Target Reference Point (TRP), two candidate Limit Reference Points (LRPs) and candidate harvest control rules (HCRs) to be provided to ISC. Those candidate TRP, LRPs and HCRs will be tested and changed if appropriate during the MSE development process.
- (3) For preparation of the joint working group meeting in 2019, ISC will be requested to organize workshops in early 2018 and 2019 to support the identification of specific management objectives including level of risks and timelines. The workshops will consist of managers, scientists and stakeholders, taking into account any recommendation of the joint working group, which should be a relatively small number of representatives as was in the albacore WS.
- (4) At least two experts will be identified and additional funds are encouraged to be provided for ISC MSE work for Pacific Bluefin Tuna.

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<sup>1</sup>  $SSB_{F=0}$  is the expected spawning stock biomass under average recruitment conditions without fishing.

## **5. Emergency Rule**

In order to cope with the adverse effects on the rebuilding of the stock due to drastic drops of recruitment:

- (1) The joint working group will annually review all the available data and information including recruitment data provided by ISC and National Reports.
- (2) ISC will be requested to conduct in 2019, and periodically thereafter as resources permit and if drops in recruitment are detected, projections to see if any additional measure is necessary to achieve the initial rebuilding target by 2024 with at least 60% probability.

## **6. Catch Documentation Scheme**

Joint WG agreed the draft concept of Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS, Appendix A) to be forwarded to WCPFC and IATTC for further consideration.

## Development of a Catch Document Scheme for Pacific Bluefin Tuna

### Background

At the 1st joint working group meeting between NC and IATTC, held in Fukuoka, Japan from August 29 to September 1, 2016, participants supported to advance the work on the Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS) in the next joint working group meeting, in line with the development of overarching CDS framework by WCPFC and taking into account of the existing CDS by other RFMOs.

### 1. Objective of the Catch Document Scheme

The objective of CDS is to combat IUU fishing for Pacific Bluefin Tuna (PBF) by providing a means of preventing PBF and its products identified as caught by or originating from IUU fishing activities from moving through the commodity chain and ultimately entering markets.

### 2. Use of electronic scheme

Whether CDS will be a paper based scheme, an electronic scheme or a gradual transition from a paper based one to an electronic one should be first decided since the requirement of each scheme would be quite different.

### 3. Basic elements to be included in the draft conservation and management measure (CMM)

It is considered that at least the following elements should be considered in drafting CMM.

- (1) Objective
- (2) General provision
- (3) Definition of terms
- (4) Validation authorities and validating process of catch documents and re-export certificates
- (5) Verification authorities and verifying process for import and re-import
- (6) How to handle PBF caught by artisanal fisheries
- (7) How to handle PBF caught by recreational or sport fisheries
- (8) Use of tagging as a condition for exemption of validation
- (9) Communication between exporting members and importing members
- (10) Communication between members and the Secretariat
- (11) Role of the Secretariat
- (12) Relationship with non-members
- (13) Relationship with other CDSs and similar programs
- (14) Consideration to developing members
- (15) Schedule for introduction
- (16) Attachment
  - (i) Catch document forms
  - (ii) Re-export certificate forms
  - (iii) Instruction sheets for how to fill out forms
  - (iv) List of data to be extracted and compiled by the Secretariat

#### **4. Work plan**

The following schedule may need to be modified, depending on the progress on the WCPFC CDS for tropical tunas.

- 2017 The joint working group will submit this concept paper to the NC and IATTC for endorsement. NC will send the WCPFC annual meeting the recommendation to endorse the paper.
  
- 2018 The joint working group will hold a technical meeting, preferably around its meeting, to materialize the concept paper into a draft CMM. The joint working group will report the progress to the WCPFC via NC and the IATTC, respectively.
  
- 2019 The joint working group will hold a second technical meeting to improve the draft CMM. The joint working group will report the progress to the WCPFC via NC and the IATTC, respectively.
  
- 2020 The joint working group will hold a third technical meeting to finalize the draft CMM. Once it is finalized, the joint working group will submit it to the NC and the IATTC for adoption. The NC will send the WCPFC the recommendation to adopt it.

