



GTA Response to the IATTC 100th Session Proposals

2022

GLOBAL TUNA ALLIANCE

Introduction

The 100th Session of the IATTC takes place from 1st-5th August in Phoenix, Arizona.

The agenda includes proposals for harvest control rules for North Pacific albacore, observers and electronic monitoring, transshipment, and changes on the management objectives of tropical tunas.

These are all areas the Global Tuna Alliance (GTA) is seeking action on. All the proposals are available on the IATTC website.

The GTA applauds the leadership shown by the CPCs who have submitted proposals.

HARVEST STRATEGIES

NORTH PACIFIC ALBACORE

- According to the latest (2020) North Pacific albacore tuna stock assessment, the current estimate of spawning stock biomass (SSB) is approximately 46 % of dynamic unfished SSB (SSB0_d) – more than three times the estimate of SSBMSY. The stock is currently managed through effort controls by both the IATTC and WCPFC.
- Following the conclusion of a management strategy evaluation (MSE) process for north Pacific albacore last year, the IATTC and WCPFC now have the responsibility to integrate the MSE results into binding decisions aimed at ensuring the long-term conservation and management of this important species throughout its distribution in both convention areas.

The Canada Proposal

- Canada recommends adopting the proposed harvest strategy which includes the following elements:
 - Quantitative management objectives,
 - Reference points (limit, threshold, and target)
 - Acceptable levels of risk of not breaching the limit reference point
 - Monitoring strategy
 - Harvest control rules establishing specific actions to be taken relative to the reference points.
- **The GTA supports this effort to adopt harvest strategies**



HARVEST STRATEGIES

TROPICAL TUNAS

- The IATTC scientific staff indicates that the appropriateness of the operational HCR currently used with regard to the limit reference points for tropical tunas has not been investigated in depth.
- Therefore, a more comprehensive management strategy evaluation (MSE) is necessary to evaluate the HCR; and alternative HCRs should be considered that include hard and soft limit reference points, that use reference points based on biomass, and that establish well-defined scientific management recommendations in the case that the reference points are exceeded.

The Ecuador Proposal

- The Ecuador proposal notes that the appropriateness of the operational HCR currently used regarding the limit reference points has not been investigated in depth.
- The proposal is to include Sproxy-MSY and Fproxy-MSY respectively, when they cannot be reliably estimated (or otherwise specified) from parameters estimated within the assessment model.
- Also establishes that the selection of the proxies for SMSY and FMSY must take into account the uncertainty in the assessment model and the resilience (or lack thereof) of the species, and that the proxy reference points shall be interim target reference points until a reliable parametric estimate is obtained from the assessment model.
- **The GTA welcomes this effort to develop new alternatives to establish reference points when there is uncertainty about the reliability of the models used for the stock assessment.**

TRANSSHIPMENT

- 2020 recorded the highest transshipments reported annually within the IATTC Convention Area at 760 events: totaling 49,208 t (37% greater than in 2019). Albacore (53%) and bigeye tuna (21%) are two of the most transshipped species in the EPO.
- The current restrictions on transshipment observers due to COVID-19, further highlight the importance of updating and strengthening the current IATTC transshipment measure to ensure that any future restrictions won't have such a large impact on data collection and monitoring.

The EU Proposal

- The EU is proposing to strengthen the current conservation measure to increase monitoring and allow authorities to better track and audit data on transshipped catch as follows:
 - Require that transshipment declarations be sent to all relevant authorities (flag, coastal, and port State authorities, and the IATTC Secretariat) upon completion of the transshipment. This will facilitate cross-checking and improve data reliability.
 - Require catch location and time data be collected along with the transshipment declaration form and provide a publicly available list of fishing vessels authorized to transship.
 - Take heed of the Scientific Advisory Committee advice to ensure that shark species transshipped are reported.
 - Revise the transshipment declaration to require the inclusion of IMO numbers for all eligible vessels.

The Ecuador Proposal

- Ecuador is proposing that all transshipment operations must take place in ports for large-scale tuna longline fishing vessels.
- **The GTA supports the EU proposal and hopes that during the discussion with other CPCs Ecuador could support 100% observer coverage for at-sea transshipment.**

OBSERVER AND ELECTRONIC MONITORING

- The recommendations of the Working Group on Bycatch to the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) at its 9th meeting in May 2019, recommends “Revise Resolution C-11-08 to increase longline observer coverage on vessels >20 m LOA to 20% (from the current 5%) and consider ways to supplement observer requirements with electronic monitoring.”
- The SAC recommends that the Electronic Monitoring (EM) initiatives implemented on purse seiners, both Classes 1-5 and Class 6, which will improve data collection for the purse-seine fleet, are also tested in the longline fleet.
- Currently a 100% of the large purse-seine vessels that fish in the Convention Area are required to carry 100% scientific observers aboard.

The Ecuador Proposal

- Each Member and Cooperating non-Member (CPC) shall ensure that active longline vessels greater than 20 meters length overall carry human observers or electronic monitoring systems, in accordance with the following timeline:
 - 1 January 2023 10%
 - 1 January 2024 20%
 - 1 January 2025 50%
 - 1 January 2026 100%
- **The GTA supports Ecuador’s proposal.**

Conclusion

The 100th session of the IATTC has a real opportunity to advance tuna fisheries management and sustainability.

All CPCs need to play their part for the greater good of the fisheries.

The market will be watching the outcomes with interest.



CONTACT

Albert Arthur
Director of Outreach & Engagement
albert@globaltunaalliance.com

Dr. Tom Pickerell
Executive Director
tom@globaltunaalliance.com

Brought to you by
Mindfully Wired Communications