Current global measures for FADs

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Summary

This presentation provides an overview of current global measures for fish aggregating devices (FADs) in the four tuna-Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (t-RFMOs) to inform discussions on consistency between the t-RFMOs and future FAD management. The use of FADs has increased substantially in fisheries for tunas in the past two decades. The types of FADs vary and can range from artificial to natural FADs, drifting to anchored, and maybe equipped with tracking devices. The t-RFMOs all utilize fisheries management measures, such as catch or effort controls, with the objective of maintaining fishing at sustainable levels. These catch or effort measures also regulate fishing on FADs, by controlling fishing. For example, when a catch limit for bigeye or yellowfin tuna is reached, fishing on FADs for these species is closed. In addition, time/area closures also limit fishing on FADs. More recently, the t-RFMOs have begun adopting specific FAD measures. The measures include data collection requirements, marking requirements, active FAD limits, and designs to reduce entanglements. Although all of the t-RFMOs have adopted active FAD limits, there is variations in the adoption of other measures such as designs to reduce entanglements. Discussions on future FAD management may include biodegradable FADs, deployment limits, and beaching events.