

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

93RD MEETING

**San Diego, California (USA)
24, 27 – 30 August 2018**

PROPOSAL IATTC-93 M-3

SUBMITTED BY MEXICO

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION C-16-08 MEASURES FOR
THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF PACIFIC BLUEFIN
TUNA IN THE EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN**

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in La Jolla, California (USA), on the occasion of its 93th Meeting:

Taking into account that the stock of Pacific bluefin tuna is caught in both the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) and the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO);

Considering that the Members of the IATTC, through resolutions and voluntary actions, have achieved 40% reductions in the catch of bluefin tuna for the entire range of age classes available in the EPO since 2012 with the objective of urging comparable conservation actions in the WCPO fishery, but, in the IATTC Members' opinion, without the WCPFC taking the actions sought by the IATTC;

Noting that in 2018 the IATTC scientific staff recommended maintaining the management measures established in the current resolution [C-16-08] for two more years, and urged the WCPFC to take additional measures to reduce the catch of adults in order to reduce the immediate risk for recruitment of a low abundance of breeding stock;

Noting also that the fishing mortality of young Pacific bluefin tuna (age 0 to age 2) has been reduced, and that it is likely ($\geq 98\%$) that the first recovery objective be reached, if present fishing and environmental conditions continue;

Noting that the Pacific bluefin tuna stock is still reduced (3.3% of SSB₀), and that the results of the preliminary assessment indicate that, although no target or limit reference points have been adopted, it is likely that the population is overfished and it is likely that overfishing is occurring;

Recognizing the latest recommendation of the scientific staff of the Commission, derived from the last meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee in May 2018, which states the following: "Increased catches based on the scenarios analyzed are possible under the harvest strategy prepared by the joint tRFMO working group. The choice of catch scenario should take into account the desired rebuilding rate and the distribution of catch between small and large bluefin."

Recalling that Article VII, paragraph 1 (c) of the Antigua Convention stipulates that the Commission must "adopt measures that are based on the best scientific evidence available to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the fish stocks covered by this Convention and to maintain or restore the populations of harvested species at levels of abundance which can produce the maximum sustainable yield, (...)"

Affirming that it is necessary to adopt comparable and effective management measures in both Commissions (IATTC and WCPFC) which have the responsibility and competence over this

resource in order to reduce the fishing mortality throughout the range of the resource in order to contribute to the rebuilding of the stock;

Noting again that over 84% of the impacts of fishing on Pacific bluefin tuna spawning biomass result from fisheries in the WCPO, and urging joint action with the WCPFC;

Stressing the concern that the measures adopted in the EPO alone will not achieve the objective of this resolution if effective and substantial measures are not taken by both Commissions for all fisheries concerned;

Desirous that combined conservation and management measures by the WCPFC and the IATTC, together with other voluntary measures aimed at reducing fishing mortality, should be implemented to improve the condition of the Pacific bluefin tuna stock;

Considering the recommendations made by the Seventh Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee, which recommended strengthening scientific cooperation with the WCPFC and promoting the adoption of harmonized conservation measures for bluefin and bigeye tunas in both organizations;

Resolves as follows:

Part I. Long term management framework

1. The Commission recognizes that the management objective of the IATTC is to maintain or re-establish fish stocks at levels capable of producing MSY, and shall implement a provisional recovery plan through the adoption of an initial (first) goal of recovery of BPR_{med,1952-2014} (the point estimate of the median of 1952-2014) to be achieved before 2024 with a probability of at least 60%. The Commission should do so by adopting catch limits and other necessary management measures with which it is expected, based on the information provided by the IATTC scientific staff, the recommendations of the SAC and the ISC, that the recovery goal is achieved, but also recognizing the need for compatible and comparable measures and goals in both the IATTC and the WCPFC. The implementation and development of this plan will be reviewed based, in part, on updates of the stock assessments and projections of the BPR that will be carried out by the ISC in 2020 and the advice of the scientific staff of the IATTC; and the management measures shall be modified, if necessary, based on the review.

2. No later than the IATTC meeting in 2020, taking into account the results of the Joint IATTC – WCPFC NC Working Group, the Commission shall consider and develop reference points and harvesting control rules for the long-term management of Pacific bluefin tuna, which should be comparable to those adopted by the WCPFC.

3. Decisions taken in relation to paragraphs 1, and 2 of Part I shall be designed to conserve and recover the Pacific bluefin tuna stock, and be comparable to those taken by the WCPFC, or preferably be the same. The Joint IATTC/ WCPFC NC Working Group should contribute to this process, which could include the results of extraction scenarios to be evaluated by the ISC, as agreed at the first meeting of the Joint IATTC/ WCPFC NC Working Group that was held from August 29 to September 2, 2016¹. In addition, the effectiveness of the decisions made with respect to paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part I shall be evaluated by the ISC, the scientific staff of the IATTC, and the SAC when the results of the new stock or stocks assessments or the evaluation of a management strategy are available.

4. To enhance the effectiveness of this resolution and Pacific-wide progress towards the recovery of the Pacific bluefin tuna stock, CPCs are encouraged to communicate with and, if appropriate, work with the concerned WCPFC members bilaterally

5. CPCs shall, where possible and to the extent feasible, work bilaterally and / or multilaterally to ensure that the objectives and timetables in this resolution are successfully achieved.

6. CPCs should continue to cooperate to develop an electronic bluefin tuna Catch Documentation System (CDS), if possible. Decisions related to a CDS for Pacific bluefin tuna, specifically, should be informed, in part, by the meetings of the Joint IATTC/WCPFC NC Working Group.

Part II. Management measures for 2019-2020

1. Each CPC shall report the catches of the bluefin tuna sport fishery semi-annually to the Director. CPCs will continue their current management of sport fishing in accordance with paragraph 5 of resolution C-18-06.

2. During 2019 and 2020, in the IATTC Convention Area, total commercial catches of Pacific bluefin tuna by all CPCs shall not exceed 6,600 metric tons, for an effective annual catch of 3,300 metric tons in each year for all CPCs altogether. In the event that the total actual catch in 2019 is either above or below 3,300 metric tons, the catch limit for 2020 shall be adjusted accordingly to ensure that the total catch for both years does not exceed 6,600 metric tons.

3. Any CPC other than Mexico with historical commercial catches of Pacific bluefin in the Convention Area may catch up to 600 metric tons of Pacific bluefin in 2019 and 2020 combined, but no more than 475 metric tons in either year. Any catch under this paragraph will be subtracted from the catch limit (i.e 600 metric tons) referred to in paragraph 2 of Part II (6,600 metric tons).

4. Any total limit underage of a CPC in a given year may be transferred to the following year. However, under no circumstances may the transferred underage exceed 10% of the total limit.

5. If, during the applicable management period, and during each subsequent management period, any CPC exceeds its catch with respect to the total limit, during the next management period, 100% of the amount of excess catch with respect to the total limit will be deducted from its initial limit.

6. In the event that the WCPFC approves an increase in the catch limit in its Convention area, a proportional increase applicable to the limit allocated to the EPO will automatically enter into force.

7. CPCs should attempt to manage catches by vessels under their respective national jurisdiction in the way and through the mechanisms that may be applied, with the aim of reducing the proportion of fish weighing less than 30 kg in the catch to 50% of the total catch, taking into consideration the scientific advice of the ISC and the staff of the IATTC.

8. At the annual meeting of the IATTC in 2020, the scientific staff will present the actual results of the 2019 fishing season for review by the Commission. CPCs shall take the necessary measures to ensure that the catch limits specified in paragraphs 9 and 10 are not exceeded in 2019 and 2020.

9. Each CPC shall report its catches to the Director in a timely fashion, weekly. The Director will send a first notice to the CPCs when 50% of the limit of the effective maximum annual catch amount of 3,300 t is reached. He will likewise send similar notices when 60%, 70%, and 80% of the limit quota is reached. When 90% is reached, the Director will send the corresponding notice to all CPCs, with a projection of when the limit quota established in paragraph 1 will be reached, and the CPCs will take the necessary internal measures to avoid exceeding the limit.

10. In 2020, the IATTC scientific staff will present an assessment of the effectiveness of this resolution, also taking into account the results of the most recent assessment of the Pacific bluefin

tuna stock conducted by the ISC, and the conservation and management measures for Pacific bluefin tuna adopted by the WCPFC. The Commission will consider new management measures for 2021 and, possibly, thereafter based on the results of the evaluation..