

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

104th MEETING

Lisbon, Portugal

31 August -04 September 2026

PROPOSAL IATTC-104 H-1

SUBMITTED BY JAPAN

RESOLUTION C-26-XX

INTERIM PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered on the occasion of its 104th 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);

Recalling the outcomes of the Joint IATTC-WCPFC Northern Committee (NC) Working Group meetings;

Resolves as follows:

Objective and Implementation of the Interim Management Procedure (MP)

1. The objective of the MP for Pacific bluefin tuna is to ensure that:
 - a. fishing mortality (F) is maintained at or below F_{TARGET} with a probability of at least 50 percent;
 - b. spawning stock biomass (SSB) is maintained above the Limit Reference Point (LRP), with a probability of at least 90%; and
 - c. an equitable balance in proportional fishery impact between the Western Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) and the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) is being achieved gradually;
 - d. average annual catch in all fisheries across the WCPO and EPO is increased; and changes in overall catch limits between management periods are limited
2. The IATTC-WCPFC Northern Committee Joint Working Group on the Management of Pacific bluefin tuna (JWG) is held annually to provide recommendations on catch limits and other relevant measures to the WCPFC-NC and IATTC, respectively, to implement a CMM/ Resolution for each two-year period in the schedule as described in paragraph 7 below. Catch limits and other relevant measures may be adjusted for each two-year period and shall be consistent with the MP output and the objectives of this CMM/ Resolution.

Reference Points

3. The reference points are:
 - a. Target reference point (TRP): $F_{27.5\%SPR}$, which is the fishing intensity (F) level that results

- in the stock producing 27.5% of spawning potential ratio (SPR).
- b. Threshold reference point ($SSB_{\text{threshold}}$): $20\%SSB_{F=0}$, which is 20% of the unfished SSB at equilibrium condition.
 - c. Limit reference point (LRP): $7.7\%SSB_{F=0}$, which is 7.7% of the unfished SSB at equilibrium condition.

Scope and design of the MP

4. The MP applies to all fisheries taking Pacific bluefin tuna within both Commission areas. The MP (and this CMM/ Resolution) determines the total annual catches of large Pacific bluefin tuna (30 kg or larger in body weight), and small Pacific bluefin tuna (less than 30kg in body weight) to be taken within the WCPFC Convention Area, as well as the total annual catch of Pacific bluefin tuna to be taken within the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO), assuming the relative fishing mortality among fishery segments and selectivity at age in 2015-2022. The 2-year implementation CMM/ Resolution will establish the management arrangements for achieving this.

Elements of the MP

- 5. The MP includes:
 - a. The Harvest Control Rule set out in Annex I;
 - b. The Estimation Model using the settings set out in Annex II; and
 - c. The exceptional circumstances set out in Annex III.

Schedule and Roles of the JWG, the Commissions, the Subsidiary Bodies and the ISC

- 6. The ISC shall run the MP, perform stock assessments, and support the JWG and relevant bodies of the WCPFC and the IATTC in monitoring, analysis and review of performance of the MP.
- 7. The JWG shall review the Pacific Bluefin Tuna Management Arrangements and make recommendations to the WCPFC NC and the IATTC for their consideration in a repeating 2-year schedule as follows:

Year	ISC	JWG	WCPFC Northern Committee (NC)	WCPFC and IATTC Commissions
2026	Calculate the TAC based on MP run in 2025 for application to the period 2027-2028. Provide advice to the JWG and WCPFC/ IATTC subsidiary bodies¹ on the MP and implementing measures.	Provide recommendations to the WCPFC NC and the IATTC on the MP and implementing measures for 2027-2028.	Provide recommendations to the WCPFC on the MP and implementing CMM for 2027-2028.	Review and adopt the MP and implementing measures for 2027-2028.

¹ WCPFC and IATTC subsidiary bodies, including WCPFC SC and IATTC SAC, may provide input to the JWG and/or the WCPFC and IATTC, respectively, through existing consultation processes.

2027	Perform stock health check using updated data and the 2024 stock assessment model. Evaluate the performance of the MP through the formal MSE simulation. Examine Exceptional Circumstances.	Review outputs of the health check		Apply the Management Arrangements CMM / Resolution.
2028	Run the MP for application to the period 2029-2030. Examine Exceptional Circumstances. Provide advice to the JWG and WCPFC/ IATTC subsidiary bodies on the MP outputs for application to the period 2029-2030.	Review implementation of the implementing measures. Provide recommendations to the WCPFC NC and the IATTC on revised implementing measures, taking into account the output of the MP for application to the period 2029-2030.	Review implementation of the implementing CMM Provide recommendations to the WCPFC on a revised implementing CMM , taking into account the output of the MP for application to the period 2029-2030.	Adopt a revised implementing CMM for 2029-2030.
2029	Examine Exceptional Circumstances	Review implementation of the implementing measures and provide recommendations to the WCPFC NC and the IATTC.	Review implementation of the implementing CMM	Continue to apply the implementing measures.

2030	Perform benchmark stock assessment. Run the MP for application to the period 2031-2032. Examine Exceptional Circumstances Provide advice to the JWG and WCPFC/ IATTC subsidiary bodies on the MP outputs for application to the period 2031-2032.	Review implementation of the implementing measures. Provide recommendations to the WCPFC NC and the IATTC, taking into account the output of the MP for application to the period 2031-2032.	Review implementation of the implementing CMM Provide recommendations to the WCPFC , taking into account the output of the MP for application to the period 2031 – 2032.	Adopt the revision of the implementing measures for 2031-2032.
2031	Develop operating models for MP simulation based on the 2030 stock assessment. Examine Exceptional Circumstances	Review implementation of the implementing measures and provide recommendations to the WCPFC NC and the IATTC.	Review implementation of the implementing CMM	Continue to apply the implementing measures.
2032	Run MP simulation based on the 2030 stock assessment. Run the MP for application to the period 2033-2034. Examine Exceptional Circumstances	Review outputs of the MP simulation . Review the PBF MP, and consider if changes are necessary. Provide recommendations to the WCPFC NC and the IATTC, taking into account the output of the MP for application to the period 2033-2034.	Review outputs of the MP simulation. Review if changes are needed to the MP. Provide recommendations to the WCPFC NC and the IATTC, taking into account the output of the MP for application to the period 2033-2034.	Review the PBF MP, and consider amending it if necessary . Adopt the revision of implementing measures for 2033-2034.

Management Strategy Evaluation

8. The MP is established with reference to candidate MPs that have been simulation tested to determine their likely performance against a range of plausible scenarios. These scenarios and the details of the testing procedure are provided in IATTC-NC-JWGI03-2026/IP-01. The results of the evaluations are outlined in the same document and are available online at: <https://connect.fisheries.noaa.gov/ISCPBF-MSE-tool/>. The ISC will evaluate the performance of the MP through the formal MSE simulation in 2027.

9. A stepwise approach shall be taken in proportional fishery impact between the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) and the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) as follows:

- 80(WCPO):20(EPO) for 2027-2028;
- 79(WCPO):21(EPO) for 2029-2030;
- 78(WCPO):22(EPO) for 2031-2032.

For 2027-2028, notwithstanding paragraph 2 of ANNEX 1 HARVEST CONTROL RULE, the maximum change in catch limits shall be 35%, instead of 25%, which results in an additional 1,187 mt of WCPO large fish catch limit. 40 mt of WCPO large fish catch limit will be allocated to the United States in the relevant WCPFC Conservation and Management Measure. 1,147 mt of WCPO large fish catch limit will be transferred to 757 mt of EPO catch limit with the application of conversion factor (0.66).

Allocation

10. Allocation is not included in or affected by the MP.

Over-Harvest/Under-Harvest

11. Over-harvest of catch limits established in Resolutions on conservation and management of Pacific bluefin tuna shall be deducted from the applicable catch limits for the following management period [or biennium]. In years when a resolution establishing catch limits expires, the over-harvest shall be deducted from catch limits established in the next resolution.

12. An under-harvest of catch limits established in Resolutions on conservation and management of Pacific Bluefin tuna may be added to the applicable catch limit in the following management period [or biennium] and shall not exceed 17% of the initial catch limit.

Review and Final Provisions

13. The WCPFC and IATTC Commissions shall review this MP in 2032 to ensure that the various provisions are having the intended effect. The Commissions may amend the MP based on the results of this review.

14. This measure replaces WCPFC HS 2023-03 and IATTC Resolution C-23-01. This measure shall come into effect on 1 January 2027. and shall remain in effect until 31 December 2032 unless otherwise decided by both Commissions, in accordance with Paragraph 9 above.

ANNEX 1: HARVEST CONTROL RULE

1. The harvest control rule (HCR) as outlined in Figure 1 is defined by parameters related to stock status (the ratio of $SSB_{current}$ to $SSB_{F=0}$) and fishing intensity (SPR), as provided in Table 1, $SSB_{current}$ and $SSB_{F=0}$ refer to spawning stock biomass in the terminal year and unfished spawning stock biomass at equilibrium condition, respectively, both estimated by the estimation model. The output from the harvest control rule is an $F\%SPR$ that is used to calculate future TAC along with the age structures of PBF, the relative fishing mortality across fleets and fleet selectivity at age. Features of HCR include:

- If $SSB_{current}/SSB_{F=0}$ is above or equal to the threshold reference point, fishing intensity shall be maintained at the F_{target} .
- If $SSB_{current}/SSB_{F=0}$ is below threshold reference point, and is above the LRP, fishing intensity shall be reduced to a level in accordance with following formula:

$$F = \frac{F_{target} - F_{min}}{Threshold\ reference\ point - LRP} \times \left(\frac{SSB_{current}}{SSB_{F=0}} - LRP \right) + F_{min}$$
- If $SSB_{current}/SSB_{F=0}$ is at or below the LRP, fishing intensity shall be set at F_{min} .

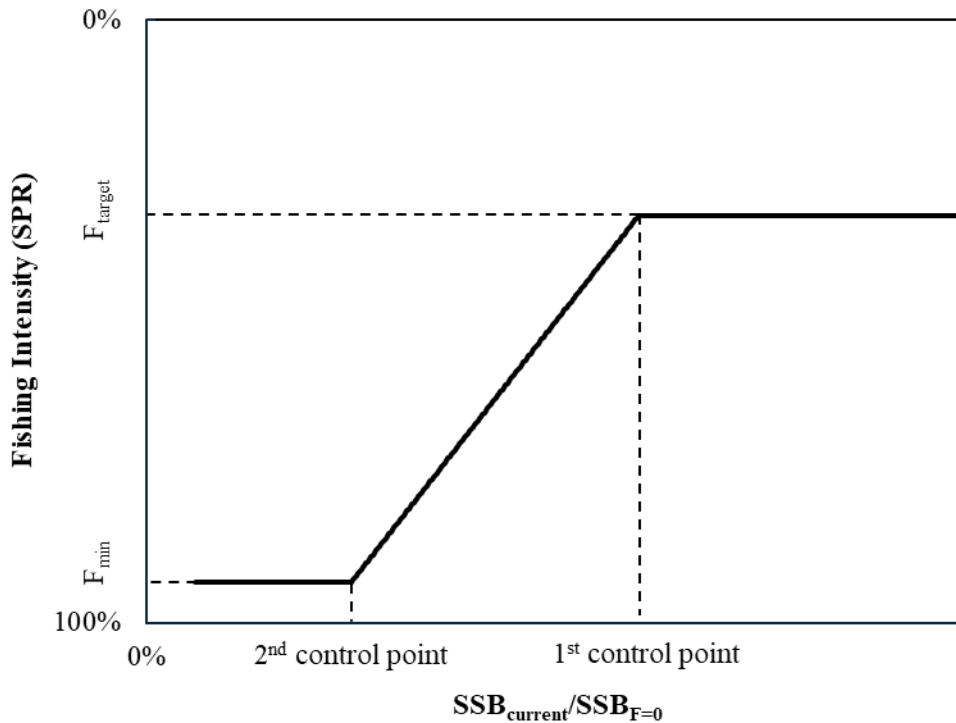


Figure 1: Illustration of the harvest control rule with target reference point (F_{target}), Threshold reference point and LRP, and the minimum allowed fishing intensity (F_{min}).

Table 1. Harvest Control Rule parameters

Parameter	TRP	1st Control Point (ThRP)	2nd Control Point (LRP)	Fmin
	F27.5%SPR	20%SSBF=0	7.7%SSBF=0	F70% SPR

2. The maximum changes in catch limits for each fishery segment indicated by the HCR between any 2-year management period shall be 25% relative to the catch limits specified by the MP for the previous 2-year period unless $SSB_{current}/SSB_{F=0}$ is below LRP.

ANNEX 2: ESTIMATION MODEL

1. Stock status ($SSB_{\text{current}} / SSB_{F=0}$), age structure of PBF in the terminal year, and relative fishing mortality by fleet and fleet selectivity at age are estimated within the MP using a stock synthesis (SS3; Methot and Wetzel 2013) based quasi age-structured-production-model. The model takes into account annual recruitment variation and size selectivity of the key fleets (ASPM-R+; ISC 2025).
2. The ASPM-R+ estimation model adopts the same demographic assumptions as the 2024 PBF stock assessment base-case model. Input data include updated longline CPUE-based abundance indices, updated catch time series for all fleets, and size-composition data for fleets associated with the longline indices. The model estimates population scale, initial conditions, annual recruitment deviations, and longline fleet selectivity. Estimates of $SSB_{\text{current}} / SSB_{F=0}$, terminal-year age structure, and relative fishing mortality by fleet, and fleet selectivity at age for 2015–2022 are derived from the model outputs.
3. The ASPM-R+ estimation model first estimates the average fishing mortality over 2015–2022 and then the corresponding multiplier required to achieve the $F\%SPR$ specified by the HCR. Using these estimates, together with terminal-year numbers at age, natural mortality, and weight at age derived from the estimation model, the future TAC for each fishery segment is then calculated.

ANNEX 3: CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

1. Exceptional circumstances are defined as the occurrence of events that are outside the range of scenarios considered for testing the MP. In the case of such events, it may be necessary to re-evaluate the MP or, in severe cases where there is considered to be a risk to the stock, take remedial action. Exceptional circumstances are not a mechanism for making regular, small adjustments to the MP, but rather should be invoked where, through an agreed process, the operation of the MP has been demonstrated to be highly risky or inappropriate. This Annex provides guidance on the process for determining whether exceptional circumstances exist and the necessary actions but does not provide firm definitions of all possible exceptional circumstances.

Process to determine if exceptional circumstances exist:

2. The ISC will update CPUE every year, continue to update the estimation model for the scheduled MP run, and conduct stock assessments for the stock with updated data sources. The ISC will also conduct research to examine new evidence about the current stock status and environmental conditions.

3. Examples of what might constitute exceptional circumstances for PBF include, but are not limited to:

- a. Stock and Fleet Dynamics: Evidence from stock assessment estimates that the stock is in a state not previously simulated in the MSE (e.g., current SSB estimates are outside the range of uncertainty, or new evidence about the biology of the stock is presented). In addition, consider evidence that the fleet structure or fishing operations have changed substantially.
- b. Application: Data collection required to produce the stock assessment is no longer available and/or appropriate to apply the adopted MP.
- c. Implementation: The implementation of the management action is substantially different from what is prescribed by the MPs. For example, the total removals by the fishery differ substantially from what is prescribed by the MPs. TAC overage is not included here, as it is controllable through management actions.

4. Based on the general elements above, indicators are summarized in Table 1.

Process for action in the event of exceptional circumstances:

5. Having determined that there is evidence for exceptional circumstances, the ISC shall provide advice to the JWG, WCPFC NC and IATTC including, but not limited to:

- a. The nature, severity and potential impacts of the exceptional circumstances;
- b. Potential impacts on the performance of the MP;
- c. Potential actions to address the exceptional circumstances, such as a change in the MP, additional research, updates to the MSE framework for PBF or other recommendations as appropriate.

Table 1: Elements, indicators, and defined reference ranges used to evaluate whether the stock is experiencing exceptional circumstances beyond those considered in the Pacific bluefin tuna management strategy evaluation.

Element	Indicator	Range	Evaluation Schedule
Stock and Fleet Dynamics	Depletion of stock biomass	In any year estimates fall outside the range of uncertainty simulated by the operating models (OMs) used in the MSE.	EM update or stock assessment
	Fishing intensity ($F_{\%SPR}$) where SPR is the spawning potential ratio		
	Longline CPUE	In any year estimates fall outside the range of uncertainty simulated by the MSE.	Every year when CPUE is updated.
	Changes in fleet dynamics or selectivity	Any substantial differences from the structure and parameterization used in the OMs of the most recent MSE	As new evidence and research is presented and accepted by the PBFWG
	Biological parameters		
	Recruitment drop	Recruitment index shows a consistent low trend.	Every year when CPUE is updated.
Application	EM or Stock assessment	EM or Stock assessment is not producible or estimates are unreliable.	EM update or stock assessment
	Realized catch or effort	If there is evidence that catch or effort outside of management, such as discard mortality or by new fleets, is greater than assumed in the MSE.	As new evidence and research is presented and accepted by the PBFWG