

WESTERN FISHBOAT OWNERS ASSOCIATION



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Guillermo A. Compeán
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission
8901 La Jolla Shores Drive
La Jolla CA 92037-1508, USA
Fax: 858-546-7133
info@iattc.org

Re: Position on Harvest Control Rules /BRP's Albacore Tuna

Dear Mr. Compeán:

Western Fishboat Owners Association (WFOA) would like to address some issues concerning albacore tuna and the potential management issues which the IATTC is likely to address now and in the future.

WFOA's troll and pole albacore fishery underwent certification in 2008 by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) as sustainable and well-managed and have a pending re-certification in 2015. We believe in uniform and equitable international management in the spirit of U.S. law and fisheries management. A multilateral approach to sustainable and fair fisheries management should always be a serious goal of all RFMO's and domestic management bodies.

American Albacore Fishing Association (AAFA) which had their pole and troll albacore fishery certified a couple years prior to WFOA's was recently re-certified. One of their requirements is to "work actively to promote the development and determination of appropriate target and limit reference points." WFOA fully expects to have the similar requirements on our upcoming re-certification which we agree with, and have been promoting for a number of years.

Meanwhile, WFOA and AAFA are in discussions on merging the two U.S. albacore troll and pole certifications into one as they are the same fishery. If this were to occur I am certain WFOA would adopt the same goals under the AAFA certification. The new certificate holder/s would most likely develop a paper with recommendations on reference points and harvest control rules. If we did not merge the two certifications, then those would also be the goals of WFOA in the long run.

WFOA supports the establishment of scientifically based harvest control rules for all tunas. In this regard it is particularly important to fund and develop collaborative research programs with the

harvester's advice and support into the life histories of, and other aspects of the albacore stock. Not only is this critical for harvest control rules, but it is also important for accurate assessments.

While WFOA fully and actively supports the IATTC's scientific staff's early development of harvest control rules, we have certain concerns that both IATTC and WCPFC BRPs and HCRs when agreed upon or are either the same across the entire Pacific, or if it is not possible to obtain a consensus on the same points and rules, that they compliment each other and are not in conflict.

Thus, we would like to compliment the IATTC the on this progress and we look forward to promoting, through our efforts as members of the U.S. delegation, and through the status as an IATTC Observer and an international environmental non-governmental organization of the American Fisherman's Research Foundation which the WFOA funds. We commit ourselves to these goals and outcomes that will insure a sustainable and fair managed albacore fishery across its range.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wayne Heikkila". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wayne Heikkila
Executive Director

cc: Bill Fox - U.S. Commissioner
Donald Hansen - U.S. Commissioner
Rod McInnis - U.S. Commissioner
Ed Stockwell - U.S. Commissioner