

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION**87TH MEETING (RESUMED)**

La Jolla, California USA
27-29 October 2014

PROPOSAL IATTC-87 I-3**SUBMITTED BY MEXICO****MEASURES FOR THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF
PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA IN THE EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN****SCIENTIFIC-TECHNICAL BASIS OF THE PROPOSAL**

Mexico has regulated and taken measures during the historical development of its bluefin fishery, among various forms; limiting the number of concessions involved in tuna farming and limiting their capacity, also the industry has voluntarily implemented measures succeeded in reducing the catch of small organisms, which due to their size are a waste in terms of biomass, economy and also population.

Mexico also, has the only fishery for bluefin tuna with 100% observer coverage. Thus, Mexico has been totally transparent and open in this North Pacific fishery, reporting its catches promptly to all the members of the IATTC and the amount of catches weekly once 50% of the corresponding quota was reached since 2012. When approaching the quota, adopted in the Commission, its reports were daily. No other fishery for this resource has such a transparent and timely system. Other fleets on the contrary report their catches with a time lag of months. At the international level, Mexico participates and cooperates in the groups for the assessment and analysis of this fishery such as the IATTC SAC, the ISC PBF-WG and also the WCPFC Northern Committee.

Given the current situation of the resource, Mexico adopted since 2012 (C12-09 and C13-02) a system of quotas and has been apparently the only country of those that fish for this resource that has closed its fishery, thus complying with the agreed conservation measures.

Thanks to these continuous efforts, as well as to the presence of observers and the mechanisms adopted in the IATTC, up-to-date information on Mexican catches is available which allowed the fishery to be closed in those years with the certainty of not exceeding the quota approved by the IATTC.

Mexico considers that the management of this resource should be based on a Recovery Plan that involves all the Parties and types of fisheries involved; however, this should be done in a comprehensive, fair, and just manner, where everyone adopts measures to improve the situation of the resource. This is necessary and imperative, because otherwise, the positive effects of the conservation measures are reduced and they would be ineffective. In fact, we believe that this has already happened with the implementation in the EPO of the measures for purse-seine vessels, since they did not include the sport fishery in the EPO and especially because those agreed in the WCPFC (CMM2010-04, CMM2012-06, CMM2013-09) did not achieve the objective of reducing fishing mortality; on the contrary, the fishing mortality increased according the ISC's analyses, which were presented at the meeting of the Northern Committee in 2014.

We consider that the proposal derived in the Northern Committee is incomplete, and is insufficient to improve the situation of bluefin tuna. The proposed reduction approach represents only 35% of the catch of tunas of less than 30 kg, relative to the catches in recent years 2010-2012 and is indicated inaccurately

as 50% relative to what was caught 14 years ago and that allows the catch of tunas to be maintained with greater weight to recent levels, allows the catches of greater than 30 kg to increase.

It also has to be taken into consideration that limiting the catch of certain sizes creates operational difficulties that are difficult to overcome in their implementation and in their compliance due to the selectivity of the fishing gears. It is therefore better and desirable from the point of view of management, and not only of conservation, to include in the Recovery Plan all ages liable to being caught.

This is one of the advantages of Mexico's proposal which includes a reduction of the catches of all sizes and in all fisheries so that the measures can perform as intended and do not serve to allow other fleets to catch proportionally more thus reducing the desired effect. Furthermore, due to the very low level of the spawning biomass, increasing their biomass is urgent since otherwise recruitment could be affected.

According to the analyses carried out by the IATTC scientific staff, Mexico's proposal will, in the coming years, generate a greater biomass than the proposal from the Northern Committee; thus reducing greater risks for the resource. According to the simulations carried out, this greater benefit would occur both in conditions of average recruitment (Figure 1a) and of low recruitment (Figure 1b) that has been reported and again warns about and points out the short-term urgency of protecting the full range of ages of juveniles and adults.

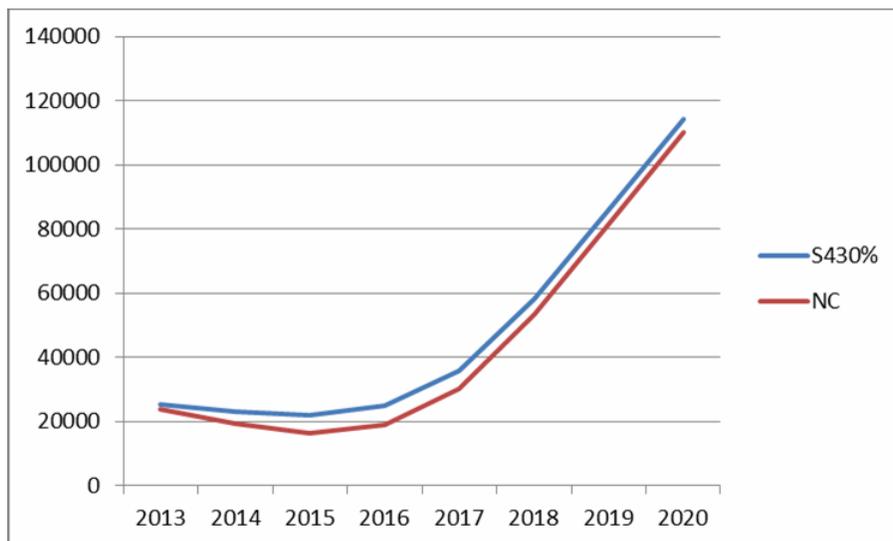


Figure 1a. Projection of scenario proposed by Mexico and of the Northern Committee with average recruitment

According to these same analyses, if there is a stock-recruitment relationship, the proposal presented by Mexico is the only one of those analyzed that has positive expectations of benefits. This relationship is considered a cause for concern by the IATTC scientific staff and that should be considered in management measures for this species (IATTC-87 INF-B).

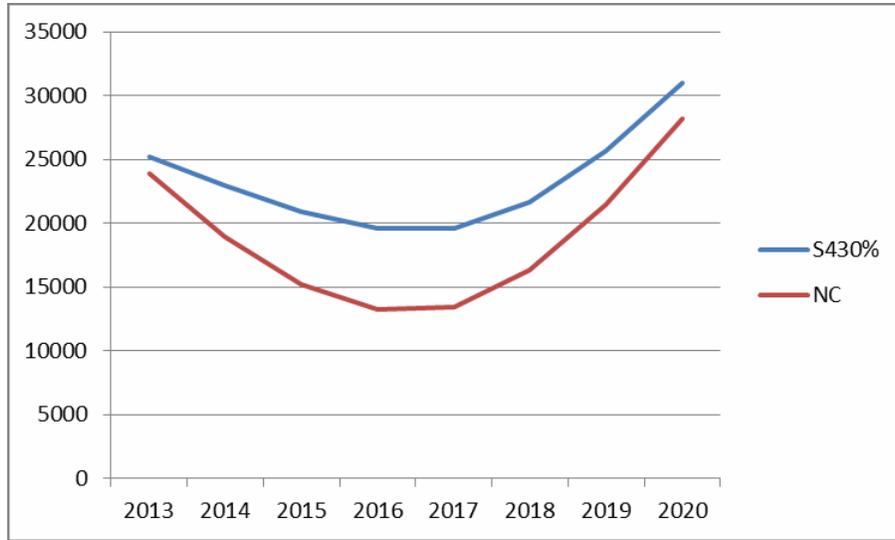


Figure 1b. Projection of scenario proposed by Mexico and of the Northern Committee with low recruitment

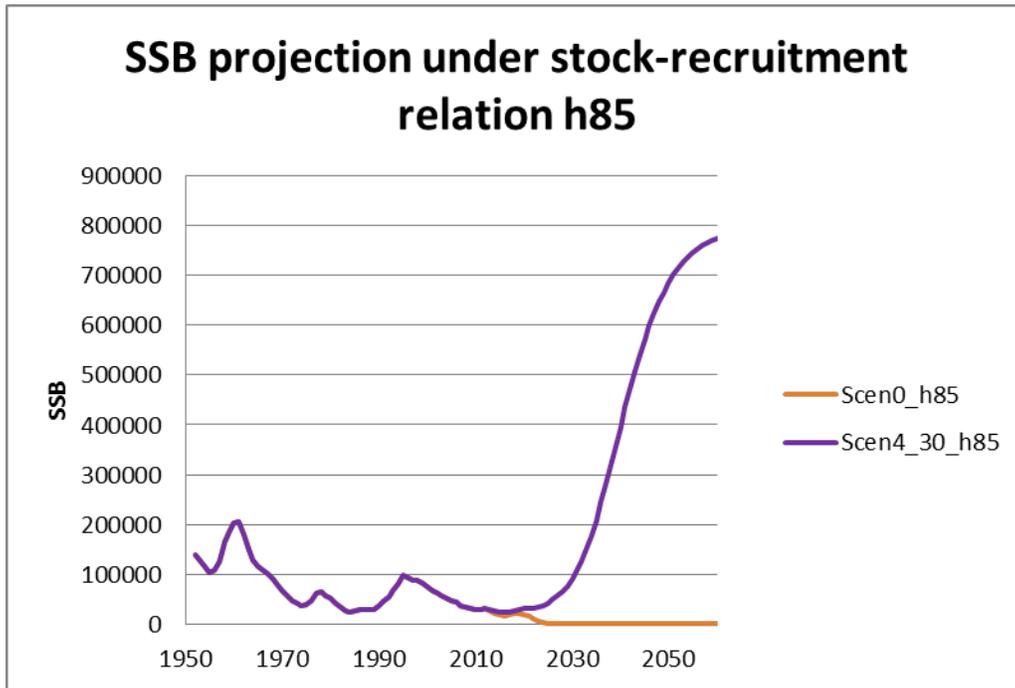


Figure 2. Projection of spawning biomass with a stock-recruitment relationship.