

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

90TH MEETING

La Jolla, California (USA)

27 June- 1 July 2016

PROPOSAL IATTC-90 F-1

SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED STATES

MEASURES FOR THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA IN THE EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN, 2017-2018

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) gathered in La Jolla, California (USA), on the occasion of its 90th 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);

Expressing concern that the latest stock assessment of 2016 by the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) shows the following:

- Although the spawning stock biomass appears to have grown slightly in the last few years, it is smaller than estimated in 2014, in both absolute size and relative to its estimated size in the absence of fishing; and,
- Spawning stock biomass remains near the historic low point;

Noting that the IATTC Scientific Staff recommends extending the current management measures in C-14-06 an additional two years, as well as conserving not only juveniles, but also the spawning population;

Recalling that Article VII, paragraph 1(c) of the Antigua Convention provides that the Commission shall “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 compatible management measures throughout the range of the Pacific bluefin tuna resource to contribute to the rebuilding of the stock;

Putting on record again that greater than 80% of the impact on the spawning stock biomass of Pacific bluefin tuna results from WCPO fisheries, and urging joint action with the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) to recover the stock;

Urging all IATTC Members and Cooperating non-Members (CPCs) involved in this fishery to participate in a fair and equitable manner, and without exceptions, in the discussion and adoption of conservation measures applicable to the stock throughout its entire range;

Mindful that these measures are intended as an interim step towards assuring sustainability of the Pacific

bluefin tuna resource, consistent with the precautionary approach, and that future conservation measures should be based not only on these interim measures, but also on the development of future scientific information and advice of the ISC and the IATTC scientific staff;

Noting that the IATTC has adopted mandatory conservation and management measures for bluefin tuna for 2012-2016, and that the measures resulted in reducing catches in the EPO;

Recalling that the Commission has adopted interim limit and target reference points for tropical tunas, but not for Pacific bluefin;

Noting that the WCPFC has adopted an initial rebuilding target, and a workplan for the adoption of reference points and decisions rules for Pacific bluefin;

Recognizing the need for a basin-wide rebuilding plan for Pacific bluefin and a long-term management framework for the stock and associated fisheries;

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

Resolves as follows:

Long-term Management Framework

1. The Commission shall work to develop a rebuilding plan. The Commission shall do so by adopting catch limits and other necessary management measures that, based on information provided by the IATTC Scientific Staff and the ISC, are expected to achieve the rebuilding plan. Implementation and progress of this plan shall be reviewed at least every two years, and catch limits and other management measures shall be modified, if necessary, based on the review.
2. As part of the future rebuilding plan, no later than the IATTC meeting in 2017, the Commission, with advice from the IATTC Scientific staff and SAC, shall develop candidate long-term management objectives and limit reference points for Pacific bluefin tuna. No later than the IATTC meeting in 2018, the Commission shall select long-term management objectives, and one or more limit reference points, and a list of candidate harvest control rules. The Commission shall select a harvest control rule consistent with a rebuilding plan adopted at the earliest possible date.
3. The Commission should also adopt one or more target reference points for Pacific bluefin tuna at the earliest possible date.
4. The decisions made in respect to Paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 shall be designed so as to conserve and recover the Pacific bluefin tuna stock, and, to the extent feasible, be comparable to those made by the WCPFC. This cooperative process should be informed by the joint IATTC/WCPFC meeting to be held in 2016. Additionally, the decisions made with respect to Paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 shall be evaluated when new stock assessment or management strategy evaluation results become available.
5. To enhance the effectiveness of this resolution and Pacific-wide progress towards rebuilding the Pacific bluefin tuna stock, CPCs are encouraged to coordinate with the concerned WCPFC members bilaterally. Additionally, the IATTC shall coordinate with the WCPFC to reduce catch in regions where Pacific bluefin tuna are known to spawn.
6. CPCs shall continue to cooperate to establish a catch documentation scheme for Pacific bluefin tuna that is, if possible, electronic.

Catch Limits and Reporting

7. Each CPC shall report sport fishery catches of Pacific bluefin tuna semi-annually to the Director.

CPCs shall continue their current management of sport fisheries.

8. During 2017 and 2018, 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 maximum annual catch rate of 3,300 metric tons per year by all CPCs combined. No CPC shall exceed 3,500 metric tons in 2017.
9. Any CPC other than Mexico with historical commercial catches of Pacific bluefin in the Convention Area may catch 600 metric tons of Pacific bluefin in 2017 and 2018, combined. This catch (i.e., 600 metric tons) is included within the catch referenced in paragraph 8.
10. The limits described in paragraphs 8 and 9 apply to Pacific bluefin tuna of all sizes, not only to fish of less than 30 kg.
11. CPCs shall take the necessary measures to ensure that the catch limits specified in paragraphs 8 and 9 are not exceeded in 2017 and 2018.
12. CPCs shall report to the Director when their catch has reached 80%, 90%, and 100% of the limits specified in paragraphs 8 and 9.
13. At the 2017 annual meeting, the Commission shall evaluate the effectiveness of this resolution taking into consideration the results of the ISC's 2016 Pacific bluefin tuna stock assessment, and conservation and management measures for Pacific bluefin tuna adopted by the WCPFC.