

**COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS ON CONSERVATION MEASURES TO BE
CONSIDERED BY THE INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION**

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) will hold its annual meeting June 18–29 in Cancun, Mexico. Both the Pacific-wide bigeye tuna stock and the separate eastern and western Pacific yellowfin tuna stocks continue to be subject to overfishing and may be approaching or have reached an overfished condition. They have also been declared subject to overfishing by the Secretary of Commerce. Because U.S. catches are modest in comparison to other national fleets, the problem can only be resolved through multi-lateral agreements made at the IATTC.

The previous agenda item outlined procedures whereby the Council could provide recommendations on a regular basis that would contribute to any positions U.S. delegations might advance at the regional fishery management organization (RFMO) level. Furthermore, because measures to end overfishing must be adopted at this level, providing such recommendations is a key component of any Council effort to respond to the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act for these stocks. It may be recalled that the Council developed recommendations at the April 2006 meeting which were sent to the National Marine Fisheries Service Southwest Regional Administrator for consideration by the U.S. delegation in advance of the June 2006 IATTC meeting. Although the Council has not yet finalized a formal operating procedure covering the development of such recommendations, it is still possible and appropriate to do so under the current agenda topic.

As outlined in Agenda Item J.4.a, Attachment 1, more information relative to conservation measures will become available from the May 7–11 meeting of the IATTC's Stock Assessment Working Group. For that reason, the Council may wish to revisit any recommendations it develops now at the June Council meeting. However, one of the problems with delaying consideration to that time is that the IATTC meeting occurs the following week, making the typical, formal process of communicating recommendations by letter impractical. The Council may wish to discuss other mechanisms for providing of advice to the U.S. delegation. Several key members of the U.S. delegation (Mr. David Hogan and Mr. Rod McInnis) sit on the Council. Additional members of the delegation could be invited to the June Council meeting in order to facilitate a discussion on recommended positions the delegation may take before the IATTC.

To summarize, at this meeting the Council may wish to develop a preliminary set of recommendations for the U.S. delegation to the IATTC relative to bigeye and yellowfin tuna overfishing (and any other relevant issues). These recommendations could be formally forwarded to the NFMS Southwest Region Administrator and the chairman of the General Advisory Committee (which is scheduled to meet on May 30). In addition to the preliminary recommendations, the letter could include a request for a joint meeting of the Council and the U.S. delegation (or key members thereof) at the June Council meeting in order to verbally communicate any changes or refinements to the Council's recommendations.

Council Task:

Identify recommendations to the U.S. delegation to the IATTC on measures to conserve bigeye and yellowfin tuna. Consider mechanisms to allow refinement of these recommendations at the June 2007 Council meeting.

Reference Materials:

None.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview Kit Dahl
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Identify recommendations to the U.S. delegation to the IATTC on measures to conserve bigeye and yellowfin tuna.

PFMC

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