

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS TO REGIONAL FISHERY MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

At the April 2008 meeting, the Council made recommendations to the U.S. delegation to the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) for positions the U.S. should advance at the upcoming 78th meeting (June 23-27, 2008). Attachment 1 is the letter describing those recommendations, which was sent to Rod McInnis, National Marine Fisheries Service Southwest Regional Administrator and a U.S. Commissioner to the IATTC. The Council left open the possibility of making additional recommendations based on information coming out of the IATTC's 9th Stock Assessment Review Meeting, which occurred May 12-16, 2008.

Attachments 2 and 3 are the stock assessments for yellowfin and bigeye tunas resulting from the 9th Stock Assessment Review Meeting (the executive summary is included with the printed materials; the full assessments are posted on the Council's web site and included on the briefing book CD-ROM). Both of these stocks have been declared subject to overfishing by the Secretary of Commerce. To date the IATTC has been unable to adopt a new resolution containing conservation measures for yellowfin and bigeye tunas to replace Resolution C-06-02, which expired at the end of 2007. Attachment 4 is an IATTC staff paper describing the effect of the previous resolution and projected changes to spawning stock biomass in the absence of a comparable new resolution. Attachment 5 summarizes the various conservation proposals made at the 75th, 76th, and 77th IATTC meetings. As noted, the IATTC was unable to adopt a conservation resolution based on these proposals. There is a strong desire that the IATTC adopt an effective conservation resolution at their 78th meeting.

The Northern Committee is a subsidiary body of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, responsible for making recommendations for Highly Migratory Species (HMS) stocks occurring principally north of 20° N latitude. Currently this body has identified as their responsibility the North Pacific stocks of albacore tuna, bluefin tuna, and swordfish. The Northern Committee may request scientific information and advice regarding these fish stocks from the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species (ISC). As reported at the September 2007 Council meeting, the 7th plenary meeting of the ISC adopted a stock assessment for albacore tuna. It indicated that spawning stock biomass is at historically high levels but that current fishing mortality is high relative to most reference points. The current F would gradually reduce spawning stock biomass to the long term average by the mid 2010s. The ISC recommended the development and adoption of reference points for determining albacore stock status and guiding the development of management measures. The Northern Committee took this under advisement with the intention of developing proposals for their 2008 meeting. In April 2008 the Council was briefed on the ISC's stock assessment results for striped marlin, which indicates that the stock is substantially depleted. The Northern Committee has not adopted striped marlin as a stock under its purview, because there are questions as to whether striped marlin in fact principally occur north of 20° N latitude. However, there have been calls for them to take on striped marlin so that management measures can be coordinated across the North Pacific.

The Northern Committee will hold its 4th annual meeting September 9-11, 2008. Any conservation recommendations they make are presented to the 5th regular session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, December 8-12, 2008. Because the next Northern

Committee meeting occurs at the same time as the Council's September meeting, the only opportunity for the Council to develop positions for consideration by the Northern Committee is at this meeting.

Council Action:

1. Approve recommendations on HMS management to the Northern Committee of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item D.2.a, Attachment 1: Letter to Rodney McInnis containing Council's recommendations to the U.S. delegation to the IATTC.
2. Agenda Item D.2.a, Attachment 2: Document SARM-9-06a Status Of Yellowfin Tuna in the Eastern Pacific Ocean in 2007 and Outlook For The Future (Executive Summary; complete document on web and CD-ROM).
3. Agenda Item D.2.a, Attachment 3: Document SARM-9-06b Status Of Bigeye Tuna in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (Executive Summary; complete document on web and CD-ROM).
4. Agenda Item D.2.a, Attachment 4: Document SARM-9-06c Evaluation of the Effect of Resolutions C-04-09 and C-06-02.
5. Agenda Item D.2.a, Attachment 5: Document SARM-9-05 Summary of Conservation Proposals.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview Kit Dahl
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Approve Recommendations on HMS Management to the Northern Committee of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission

PFMC
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