

NMFS HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES REPORT FOR THE MARCH, 2013 COUNCIL
MEETING - EXCERPT

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE SOUTHWEST REGIONAL OFFICE
UPDATE ON LEGAL AND REGULATORY ACTIVITIES

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Implementation of IATTC Resolution C-04-06 on Vessel Monitoring Systems

NMFS Southwest Region (SWR) previously reported that IATTC Resolution C-04-06 requires that parties with tuna-fishing vessels 24 meters or more in length establish a satellite-based vessel monitoring system (VMS). NMFS SWR had planned to wait for final rulemaking on the High Seas Fishing Compliance Act (HSFCA) revised regulations before moving forward on implementing Resolution C-04-06. However progress on the HSFCA rulemaking has slowed, thus the SWR requests that the Council add to a future agenda discussion regarding the mechanism by which implementation of this Resolution would occur. Implementation of Resolution C-04-06 could occur one of two ways: under the Tuna Conventions Act of 1950 or under the Magnuson-Stevens Act through the Council process by regulation under the HMS Plan.

Background

IATTC Resolution C-04-06 will affect all vessels authorized by NMFS to fish for tuna in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) that are 24 meters or greater in length. In 2012, 15 West Coast commercial vessels of this size class landed tuna or tuna-like species. Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the number of West Coast vessels potentially impacted by Resolution C-04-06. Table 1 addresses only the vessels that landed tuna or tuna-like species in the years 2002-2012.

Table 1. Number of U.S. West Coast vessels authorized to fish in the EPO at least 24 meters in length that landed tuna or tuna-like species from 2002 through 2012. The gear types include multi-purpose, troll/jig, and purse seine from the coastal pelagic species fleet.

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Number of vessels	11	11	8	7	8	7	6	12	9	11	15

Table 2. Number of U.S. West Coast vessels 24 meters or greater in length currently authorized to fish in the Eastern Pacific Ocean. Purse seine vessels are in the coastal pelagic species (CPS) fleet.

Gear-type	Number of Vessels
Multi-purpose	21
Troll/Jig	9
Purse seine (CPS)	2
Charter	22
TOTAL	54

Some vessels that landed tuna or tuna-like species in the EPO have a Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Area Endorsement, which require that the vessels have operational VMS prior to receiving the endorsement. Four vessels with WCPFC area endorsements landed tuna or tuna-like species in 2012; seven from 2002 through 2012. Provisions of Resolution C-04-06 are consistent with VMS requirements of WCPO fisheries. Finally, the VMS provisions of IATTC Resolution C-04-06 are also consistent with current VMS requirements in the groundfish fleet.

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PFMC
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