

## **Framework for a Precautionary Management Approach for North Pacific Albacore**

Preliminary Draft Proposal  
Version U.S. 2, August 2013

The following should be considered an early draft seed effort of a North Pacific Albacore precautionary management approach framework document, with the expectation that it will evolve or engender a similar document to fulfill the schedule in the Northern Committee Work Programme. This draft document is organized according to the following section headers, each of which contains a description of the future content of such a section (blue font) or draft language proposed by the US for consideration (black font).

**Purpose**

**Goals and Objectives**

**Scope**

**Fishery Data Requirements**

**Biological Reference Points**

**Fishery Decision Control Rules**

**Fishery Management Measures**

**Exceptions, Reviews, and Enforcement**

**Assumptions and Attachments**

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**Purpose**

This section should contain a Purpose Statement reflecting the precautionary intent and justification reasoning on the Northern Committee (NC) record, together with appropriate refinements.

**Goals and Objectives**

The goals and objectives of this North Pacific Albacore Precautionary Management Approach Framework (APMA) are as follows.

1. Maintain the long-term conservation and sustainable catch of North Pacific Albacore (NP Albacore) by implementing precautionary fishery management strategies that significantly reduce the risk of overfishing; provide for rapid recovery from an overfished condition, should it occur; and achieve an optimum level of average yield relative to the biologically sustainable maximum.
2. Implement harvest strategies that are robust with respect to scientific and management uncertainty.
3. Establish measures to facilitate rapid and successful implementation of any necessary future management actions, in an equitable manner to all Members, Co-operating Non-Members, and if appropriate, Participating Territories (CCM) fishing for NP Albacore or incidentally taking NP Albacore, and in a manner that provides a disincentive to any CCM that does not comply with the provisions of this APMA.
4. Maintain and support long-term economic and social benefits to the various NP Albacore fishery participants of CCMs.

5. Provide a long-term, stable supply of high-quality NP Albacore to consumers.
6. Implement measures to adequately account and manage for total fishery related mortalities, including directed and incidental fishery impacts, including discarded fish not landed.

### **Scope**

This PMA applies directly to CCM with registered or authorized vessels fishing for NP Albacore, and is structured to apply also to those with vessels that have incidental or non-directed catches as well as those with vessels that do not now but may enter directed or incidental fisheries in the future.

This APMA is intended to align with essentially similar precautionary approach elements presumed at some point to be adopted by the IATTC for waters of its jurisdiction (see IATTC Resolution C-13-03, points 5 and 6).

### **Fishery Data Requirements**

This section should describe and list catch and effort accounting and reporting necessities, and any associated fishery data obligations, of all CCM fishing for or otherwise catching NP Albacore. It will note WCPFC CMMs (such as 2005-03) and IATTC Resolutions as appropriate and replicate critical wording as appropriate.

### **Biological Reference Points**

This section should have a description of the specific proposal for reference points, with citation to an Appendix that would include background material and candidate reference points the proposal was selected from.

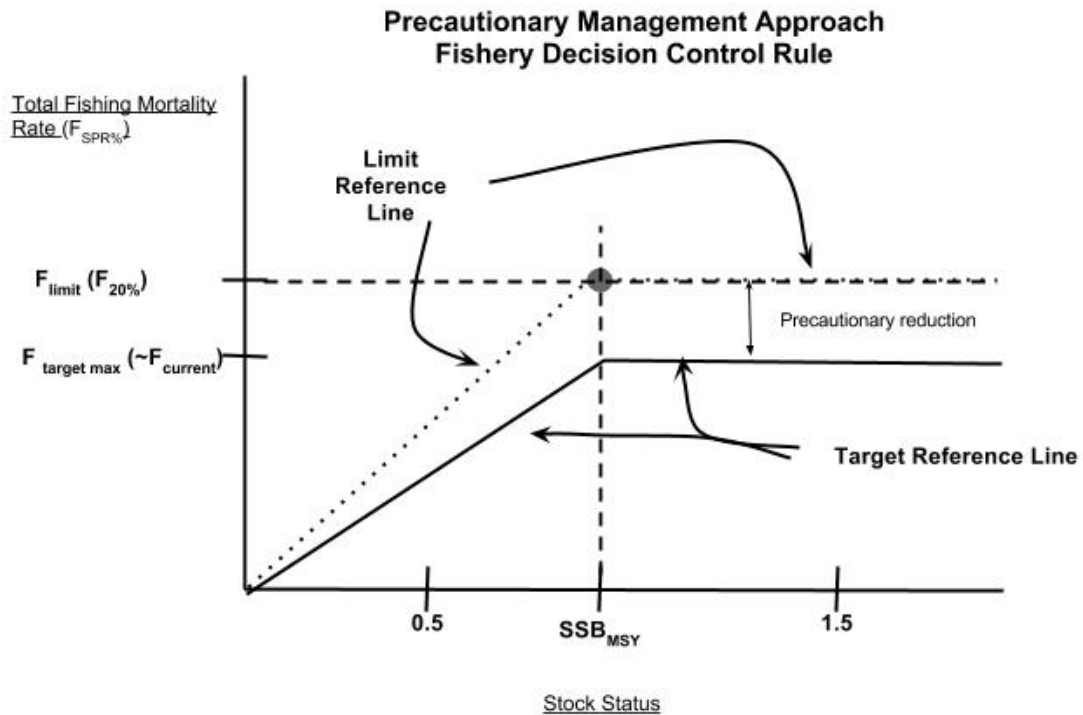
This section should provide specifics of both fishery limit and stock status biological reference points proposed to be adopted by this APMA. The draft fishery limit reference point proposed in this document, in the spirit of a starter for serious discussions, is an SPR-based F limit:  $F_{20\%}$ .  $F_{current}$  would also be presented as a reference point, with the selection of a recent base period defining “current” to be completed at some future point. A reference point of  $F_{target\ max}$ , a primary precautionary buffer feature of this approach, would also be discussed in an introductory manner in this section, relative to a fuller description within the Fishery Decision Control Rules section. The draft proposal for primary stock status reference point is  $SSB_{MSY}$ .

### **Fishery Decision Control Rules**

This section should include introductory narrative that notes the decision control rule is intended to cover the current stock status, considered to be in good condition, as well as situations where the stock status increases, the stock status is declining, and the stock status collapses unexpectedly. The introductory narrative should also include reference to the precautionary target catch buffer concept relative to the limit reference point of  $F_{20\%}$ .

The graphic below represents a fishery decision control rule for the total aggregate catch, with the Y axis showing SPR fishing rates and the X axis showing stock status. The horizontal dashed line is intended to represent the best available scientific estimate of the biological reference point associated with the aggregate sustainable spawning-adult-equivalent SPR fishing rate, while the vertical dashed line is

intended to represent the maximum yield spawner biomass point. Thus, the diagonal dotted line is intended to represent a limit reference associated with overfishing at spawner biomass levels less than the MSY point. The solid line represents the precautionary fishing target rates to be observed by aggregate CCMs. The target fishing rate intercepts the X axis at zero in recognition of the need for an incidental *de minimis* catch at stock collapse levels.



This section should describe the precautionary buffer concept in specific detail and what it is supposed to accomplish as a cushion for management and scientific uncertainty. As a seed idea to promote further dialogue, this buffer should be considered as a straight percentage, such as 5% or 20%, representing a contemporary estimate of uncertainty, as opposed to a formulaic calculation based on annual or updated assessments of management precision and stock assessment or other scientific variability.

Individual CCM fishery decision control rules are to be based on a similar CCM-specific graph with fishing rates that are a subset of the total aggregate fishing rate. CCM-specific "partial F" fishing rates should be developed at some point reflective of base period data, together with a description of how a CCM specific fishing rate translates to an annual catch via a stock assessment; a three year average catch limit should also be considered. It also would be useful to construct an Appendix showing three hypothetical CCM-specific catch limits associated with three hypothetical stock assessments.

There are no detailed fishery decision rules associated with fishing effort, such as a vessel-day scheme, because this APMA relies on catch control as the essential mechanism. However, there is an overarching management measure described below precluding significant increases in net effort capacity by any CCM directed at NP Albacore.

## **Fishery Management Measures**

This section should describe the use of a total allowable catch (TAC) for each CCM and associated fishery management measures responsive to fishery decision control rule thresholds. It should include the concept that incidental non-target catches are to be accounted for and taken off the top of each CCM's TAC. The following represent some things that could be included at some future point.

### Stock Category: Current stock status (good) and if stock status increases

#### Catch Management Measure

- Insert definition as to what this category is relative to X axis on the control rule graph, and how it translates to an individual CCM catch level, across gear types.
- This section should provide for the flexibility for each CCM to manage for its individual  $F_{\text{target}}$  catch limit, be it via seasonal closures, area closures, quotas, or other measures it is confident can control total catch.
- At some point in the future, this subsection should address the question of catch management precision, such as consideration of an annual slippage allowance for  $F_{\text{target}}$  exceedance with three year averaging; carry-over and overage payback provisions, etc.

#### Effort Management Measure

- This section will describe a provision intended to accomplish no net increase in fishing effort or capacity. While this could be viewed as a "no new boats" concept that allows for replacement of vessels lost or decommissioned, effort measurements may be in metrics different than vessel or tonnage capacity, e.g. vessel days fished, hooks deployed, etc. The intent of this effort management measure is to prevent acute increases in fishing effort while relying on catch-based management measures as the primary management measure.

### Stock Category: Declining stock status and collapsed stock status

#### Catch MM

#### Effort MM

## **Exceptions, Reviews, and Enforcement**

This section should describe the principle that full accounting of fishery impacts to NP Albacore, with no exceptions or exclusions such as artisanal fishery exceptions. In the event there is a claim under WCPFC Article 30 from small island developing States, arrangements for full accounting and compliance with the overall fishery control rule need to be assured.

There shall be an effectiveness review of this APMA after every NP Albacore stock assessment, or after five years in the event a stock assessment is delayed for that period of time.

Compliance monitoring reporting and enforcement shall be done in accordance with proposed CMM 2012-2, presuming it is finalized and adopted in a timely manner. However, if there is not clarity within CMM 2012-2, Section VI, paragraph 23 by August, 2014 about a penalty for exceeding the allowable catch limit, insufficiency in reporting directed catch amounts, or the building of new boats directed towards entering this fishery, then the Northern Committee shall develop penalty language to accomplish Goal 3 above regarding (1) insuring equitable treatment for those countries that comply and (2) instituting an obvious disincentive for significant non-compliance.

## **Assumptions and Attachments**