

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) Annual Meeting Outcomes

The IATTC met in Lima, Peru during July 14-18, 2014 for its 87th annual meeting. The IATTC adopted amendments to strengthen its measures for the use of vessel monitoring systems (VMS), International Maritime Numbers as unique vessel identifiers (UVIs) for large vessels (a U.S. proposed requirement), and the 2015 Commission budget. NMFS published a proposed rule in February 2014 (79 FR 7152) that implements a VMS Resolution (C-04-06) previously adopted by the Commission. In light of the new Resolution (C-14-02) NMFS is considering changes to the Final Rule to reflect provisions in C-14-02 that will enter into force in 2016. NMFS is also considering new provisions related to the UVI Resolution and intends to implement changes by 2016.

The Commission also agreed to request that IATTC scientific staff conduct a management strategy evaluation (MSE) for candidate target and limit reference points and a decision framework using the proposal by the United States on North Pacific albacore as a guide. The U.S. proposal was removed from the list of potential resolutions and appended to the meeting minutes as guidelines for the Commission staff's work. The Commission ultimately agreed to limit the work to tropical tunas.

There were a number of IATTC agenda topics not resolved and therefore deferred to an extraordinary meeting of the Commission to be held in mid-to-late October 2014. These include: (1) management measures for Pacific bluefin tuna for 2015 and beyond because, despite several side bilateral meetings between the U.S., Mexico and Japan no consensus was reached; (2) the long-standing capacity disputes noted in IATTC Resolution C-02-03, which remain unresolved, along with a long-term plan to address fishing vessel capacity; (3) an amendment to Resolution C-05-07 on fishing activities that lead to IUU listing; and (4) the election of the IATTC Commission Director.

U.S. Mexico Bilateral Meeting

The 27th Meeting of the Fishing Authorities of Mexico and the United States was held July 25, 2014 in Mazatlán, Sinaloa, Mexico. Russell Smith, NOAA Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Fisheries, served as head of the U.S. delegation. The meeting topics ranged from collaborative enforcement issues to continuing discussions on conservation and management measures for Pacific bluefin tuna in both the IATTC and WCPFC Convention Areas. In addition to the Bilateral meeting, two scientific meetings were held: MexUS-Pacifico (lead by Dr. Cisco Werner of the SWFSC) and MexUS-Golfo (lead by the SEFSC).