

## BLUEFIN TUNA MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR 2015-2016 FISHERIES

At its September 2014 meeting, the Council adopted a range of alternatives and identified a preliminary preferred alternative (PPA) for daily-bag-limits and associated possession limits for Pacific bluefin tuna caught in recreational fisheries in Federal waters off the coast of California. The Council also adopted a range of alternatives for processing of recreationally caught tuna at sea. The attached draft Environmental Assessment (Attachment 1) describes the alternatives and a preliminary analysis of their impacts. The Council's PPA is as follows:

The recreational daily-bag-limit for bluefin caught in Federal waters off California would be reduced to two fish, with a corresponding possession limit of up to six fish for multi-day trips (three or more days). The recreational possession limit would have to be supported by proper documentation (i.e., California declaration form, commercial passenger fishing vessel [CPFV] logbook records, or multi-day license). The possession limit would apply to fishing vessels in the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) even with respect to fish harvested outside the U.S. EEZ. Therefore, a vessel that fished in Mexico waters could land no more than six fish even if the Mexico bag limit is higher than the U.S. bag limit.

For trips under three days (i.e., either one or two days), the daily-bag-limit is multiplied the number of days fishing to determine the possession limit, i.e., for a two-fish bag limit the possession limit for a one-day trip would be two fish and for a two-day trip, four fish. A day is defined as a 24 hour period from the time of departure. Thus a trip spanning two calendar days could count as only one day for the purpose of enforcing possession limits.

NOAA Office of Law Enforcement may provide comment on how the preferred daily-bag-limit for U.S. waters would be applied uniformly, even for fishing in Mexico waters, in order to make the proposed action enforceable. How the proposal will be implemented in this regard has not yet been determined.

The concern with processing tuna at sea is whether different tuna species can be distinguished once processing has occurred since the bag limit for Pacific bluefin tuna would be different from bag limits for other tuna species. The Council's PPA for at-sea processing is: Filleting of tuna at sea would be authorized in a manner that allows for both the species and the quantity of tuna taken aboard a vessel to be determined. Industry representatives are meeting with enforcement officials to discuss language that provide for adequate determination and specifics. The Enforcement Consultants will report on the outcome of these consultations.

At this meeting the Council is scheduled to take final action, which is to identify their final preferred alternatives for recreational bag limits and possession limits and requirements for processing recreationally caught tuna at sea.

### **Council Action:**

**Adopt Final Preferred Alternatives for Bluefin Tuna Management Measures for 2015-2016 Fisheries**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item I.3.a, Attachment 1: Daily-bag-limits, Possession Limits, and At-Sea Processing of Pacific Bluefin Tuna in California Recreational Fisheries, Draft Environmental Assessment

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview Kit Dahl
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Adopt Final Preferred Alternatives for Bluefin Tuna Management Measures for 2015-2016 Fisheries

PFMC  
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