

ALBACORE MANAGEMENT PLANNING

At the September 2005 meeting the Council was briefed on the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) resolution concerning northern albacore tuna. It calls on parties to “ensure the level of fishing effort by their vessels fishing North Pacific albacore tuna is not increased.” This resolution is in response to concerns about current levels of fishing mortality on this stock. The first Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report for the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for U.S. West Coast Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species (HMS) indicates that overfishing is occurring on this stock (see Section 5.3.1 and Table 5-1). (The HMS SAFE Report will be made available at the November Council meeting.) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has not yet formally declared overfishing is occurring pursuant to §304(e)(1) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. NMFS will report on recent developments with respect to the stock in order to facilitate Council discussion (Agenda Item J.4.b, Attachment 1).

This agenda item is an opportunity for the Council to discuss possible management options in light of the IATTC resolution and the possibility that NMFS will declare overfishing is occurring. One action that has been mentioned in previous discussions on this topic is the development and implementation of a limited entry program for the West Coast albacore fishery under the Council’s HMS FMP. The Council may wish to solicit input from and/or provide direction to its advisory bodies on this type of action, and solicit comments from affected fisheries and the public as well.

Council Action:

Council Discussion and Guidance on Planning Albacore Management Activities.

Reference Materials:

Agenda Item J.4.b, Attachment 1: Management of North Pacific Albacore

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. NMFS Report
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- d. Public Comment
- e. Council Discussion and Guidance on Planning
Albacore Management Activities

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