

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES  
INCLUDING U.S.-CANADA ALBACORE TREATY FISHERY UPDATE

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) held a resumption of its Eighty-Seventh Meeting October 27-29, 2014, to consider two high-priority items not agreed to at the regular annual meeting in July 2014. The results of this meeting were reported supplementally at the November 2014 Council meeting. The IATTC adopted Resolution C-14-06, Conservation of Pacific Bluefin Tuna. This Resolution establishes a 2015-2016 600 mt commercial catch limit for U.S. vessels fishing in the Convention Area. It also states that “CPCs must take meaningful measures to reduce catches of Pacific bluefin tuna by sportfishing vessels operating under its jurisdiction to levels comparable to the levels of reduction applied under this resolution to the EPO commercial fisheries until such time that the stock is rebuilt.” In November 2014, the Council adopted recreational management measures consistent with this requirement. Federal and State rulemaking is currently ongoing to implement the Pacific bluefin bag limit, possession limit, and at-sea processing requirements adopted by the Council. The IATTC also adopted additional Resolutions, C-14-07 and C-14-08, addressing the appointment of the Executive Director.

The Eleventh Regular Session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC11) occurred December 1-5, 2014, in Apia, Samoa. Council Chair Dorothy Lowman attended as a U.S. Commissioner accompanied by Executive Director Donald McIsaac and Council Staff officer Kit Dahl. The WCPFC adopted seven Conservation and Management Measures. These Conservation and Management Measures are briefly described in Agenda Item H.2.a, Attachment 1. Ms. Lowman will report on the meeting and its outcomes.

At its November 2014 meeting the Council also requested that National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) prepare two “white papers,” one detailing recreational fisheries for Pacific bluefin tuna in other countries, and the second addressing anecdotal reports of increases in fishing capacity and shortcomings in formal catch reporting from China. Mr. Robert Turner, NMFS Assistant Regional Administrator, West Coast Region, wrote to Mr. David Hogan, Acting Director, Office of Marine Conservation, Department of State, requesting that the State Department work with relevant countries to obtain this information (attached as Agenda Item H.2.c, NMFS Report 2: Letter from Robert Turner to David Hogan Requesting Information). NMFS will report to the Council on any information obtained.

As discussed at the November 2014 Council meeting, the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) is planning a workshop on a management strategy evaluation (MSE) for North Pacific albacore scheduled for early April 2015. Informal discussions between Council staff and the ISC Chair at WCPFC11 revealed that this workshop is intended to only introduce and explain the concepts and methodologies involved in the management strategy evaluation. According to the report of the 2014 WCPFC Northern Committee meeting “The ISC Chair further indicated that the ISC ALBWG was tasked at ISC 14 to begin the MSE process on North Pacific albacore tuna and noted that a progress report will be presented, and input from managers will be requested at NC11.” There are

concerns that the MSE process is not synchronized with the NC schedule to complete a defined management approach at the NC13 meeting in 2017 (see Agenda Item H.2.a, Attachment 3). The Council may wish to develop recommendations to the U.S. delegations to ISC14 and NC11 on the North Pacific albacore MSE.

Regarding the U.S.-Canada Albacore Treaty, in 2014 the U.S. and Canada agreed on a three-year regime covering the 2014-2016 seasons. The terms of this regime were reported at the June 2014 Council meeting, see [Agenda Item E.1.b, Supplemental NMFS Report 3, June 2014](#). Negotiations on any subsequent arrangement are unlikely to begin before 2016. The U.S.-Canada Albacore Treaty Data Working Group has met periodically to exchange data on the fishery. At its last meeting, November 10, 2014, the Data Working Group finalized a data summary for the 2013 fishery. Council staff has sought clearance for public release of the data summary, but this was not granted by the advanced briefing book deadline.

Agenda Item H.2.a, Attachment 2 is an update through 2014 of Highly Migratory Species Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation Table 9, *Number of vessels, commercial landings (round mt), and ex-vessel revenue (current \$) of albacore and in the West Coast albacore surface hook-and-line (troll and baitboat) fishery (in U.S. west coast ports), Canadian and US vessels compared*. The 2014 data should be considered preliminary and reflect landings into U.S. west coast ports only.

Agenda Item H.2.b, NMFS Report previews a range of issues that may come up at Regional Fishery Management Organization meetings in the coming year. This information allows the Council to begin formulating recommendations for these upcoming meetings. Agenda Item H.2.c, NMFS Report includes a schedule of these meetings.

### **Council Action:**

#### **Consider Reports on International Activities and 2014 U.S.-Canada Albacore Fishery**

##### Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item H.2.a, Attachment 1: December 29, 2014, letter from Mr. Michael Tosatto, Regional Administrator, NMFS Pacific Islands Region, to Council Chairs Mr. Edwin Ebusui, Mr. Dan Hull, and Ms. Dorothy Lowman Reporting Outcomes of the Eleventh Regular Session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.
2. Agenda Item H.2.a, Attachment 2: Updated HMS SAFE Table 9.
3. Agenda Item H.2.a, Attachment 3: Attachment E to the Summary Report of the Tenth Regular Session of the Northern Committee, September 1-4, 2014.
4. Agenda Item H.2.c, NMFS Report on International Activities.
5. Agenda Item H.2.c, NMFS Report 2: Letter Robert Turner to David Hogan Requesting Information.

##### Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. Report on the WCPFC Meeting

Kit Dahl  
Dorothy Lowman

- c. Report of the National Marine Fisheries Service
- d. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- e. Public Comment
- f. **Council Action:** Consider Reports on International Activities and 2014 U.S.-Canada Albacore Fishery

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