

CANADIAN CONSULATE REPORT ON U.S.-CANADA ALBACORE TREATY AREA

Statement to the PFMC

March 12, 2016

My name is Patrick Higgins from the Consulate General of Canada. On behalf of the Government of Canada, I would like to thank the Council for once again considering the issue of the Canada-United States Pacific Albacore Tuna Treaty and accepting my comments. The Treaty is of significant value in providing the basis for a well-managed shared resource.

As many of you know, the Consulate also represented Canada at this meeting in 2013. At that time, we spoke of the importance of the Treaty and the mutual benefits that it provides to the U.S. and Canada. Primary among these benefits is a well-managed shared resource.

Canada was pleased to see the Treaty's resumption in 2013 and from 2014 to 2016, a period during which there were positive relations on the water and the bilateral management regime was effective and beneficial to our respective fishing industries.

The Treaty has been important for the Canadian albacore industry and Canada is firmly committed to seeking its renewal beyond 2016. This fishery supports hundreds of Canadian jobs, providing benefits to many coastal communities.

However, benefits derived from the Treaty are not exclusive to Canada and the agreement is of considerable value to the United States, and this value clearly seems to be increasing. From 2013 to 2015, albacore fishing in Canadian waters was quite lucrative on account of warmer waters in the

North Pacific Ocean off the coast of British Columbia. Accordingly, a yearly increase of U.S. vessels entering Canadian waters under the Treaty to fish and to access port has been observed during these years. In fact, the number of unique U.S. vessels occurring in Canadian waters has now surpassed the number of Canadian vessels in US waters.

Looking forward, ocean conditions have been favourable for a northward migration of albacore into Canadian waters, which could mean even greater opportunities for U.S. vessels under a renewed fishing regime.

In addition to the specific mutual benefits of the Treaty, Canada views its continuation as an important component of our strong bilateral fisheries relationship that touches many other high value stocks such as salmon, halibut and hake.

The Treaty also provides our countries with a solid foundation for cooperation in the international organizations that are responsible for the management of North Pacific albacore. Canada and the U.S. have worked together as leaders within these international organizations to help ensure sustainable Albacore tuna fisheries throughout the North Pacific. This is in no small part due to the good working relationship and common understanding that are products of engaging one another under the Treaty.

It is Canada's sincere hope that we will be able to begin a fruitful negotiation process later this year for a renewed regime in 2017 and that the PFMC will support this process.

Thank you.