

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet in June 2017 ahead of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) meeting in July. Prior to the June Council meeting, the IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee, the U.S. Scientific Advisory Subcommittee, and the U.S. General Advisory Committee will have met, and U.S. priorities highlighted in the supplemental National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) report (see [Agenda Item J.5.b, Supplemental NMFS Report](#)) will have been further developed. As in the past, NMFS will provide updates on those developments in the Council briefing book. Below, the Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) highlights previous discussions surrounding those preliminary priorities. The Council can provide recommendations to NMFS at this time, but may wish to withhold recommendations until the June Council meeting when further information is available.

Tropical Tuna Conservation and Management

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) will again take up tropical tuna conservation for 2018 and beyond at its 92nd Meeting of the IATTC in July; it is anticipated that the bigeye tuna (BET) longline catch limit will be discussed. The HMSMT provided input on this issue in March 2016 ([Agenda Item F.4.c, Supplemental HMSMT Report](#)), stating that it was in support of maintaining management measures outlined in IATTC Resolution C-13-01 (*Multiannual Program for the Conservation of Tuna in the Eastern Pacific Ocean During 2014-2016*) and carried over into C-17-01 (*Conservation of Tuna in the Eastern Pacific Ocean During 2017*), provided the status of the stocks remains unchanged. It is expected that a stock assessment update for 2017 will be available in May for the IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee meeting. The Council will be able to review the stock assessment update at that time and provide recommendations, if any, during the June 2017 meeting.

Pacific Bluefin Tuna Rebuilding and Stakeholder Meeting

As explained in [Agenda Item J.5, Supplemental Attachment 4](#), participants of the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean stakeholder meeting are expected to discuss the performance of harvest scenarios relative to a number of rebuilding targets. These scenarios could inform the choice of a second rebuilding target to be reached by 2030, which will be considered for adoption in 2017 by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and by the IATTC in 2018. At the September 2016 Council meeting, the HMSMT recommended that the U.S. continue to pursue a rebuilding target of maximum sustainable yield and suggested commenting on the results of the evaluation of the harvest scenarios at the June 2017 Council meeting, at which time the results should be available (see [Agenda Item J.1.a, Supplemental HMSMT Report](#)).

IATTC Bycatch Working Group

The HMSMT was briefed by NMFS and learned of an upcoming Bycatch Working Group (WG) meeting scheduled for May 5 and 6, 2017. At the June 2016 IATTC meeting, the U.S. proposed convening this WG to discuss improving sea turtle bycatch mitigation with a special emphasis on leatherback sea turtles. This WG meeting is an opportunity for the U.S. to work with the

international community to develop practices intended to minimize fishing impacts to sea turtles. The HMSMT supports U.S. efforts to reduce fishing impacts to sea turtles, which is consistent with goals to level the playing field for U.S. fishermen and would support necessary efforts in the international policy arena to reduce fishing impacts on sea turtles.

PFMC
03/12/17