

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON YELLOWFIN
TUNA OVERFISHING RESPONSE

The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) reviewed Agenda Item J.3 and received an update from Amber Rhodes (National Marine Fisheries Service) on the topic.

Due to Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) staff's precaution regarding the high level of uncertainty associated with the latest stock assessment update (2019) for yellowfin tuna in the IATTC Convention Area, the HMSAS recommends the Council determine the 2019 EPO yellowfin tuna assessment update is not the best scientific information available. We highlight the tropical tuna work plan prepared by IATTC scientific staff, which is designed to address the uncertainty and will inform the preparation of the 2020 Benchmark stock assessment. The IATTC manages this fishery to operate at F_{MSY} ; therefore we recommend the Council take a no action approach until the 2020 benchmark stock assessment is completed. The work plan also looks beyond 2020 with an eye towards continuing to improve the assessments.

We note that U.S. catch of yellowfin tuna in the EPO for the time period 2015–2017 was less than 3 percent of the total catch in the Eastern Pacific Ocean. With the marginal value of overfishing in 2018 (0.01 percent), we feel no additional action is necessary.

PFMC
06/22/19