

## RECOMMEND INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

At the June and September Council meetings it was noted that the timing and format of regional fishery management organization meetings had been thrown into disarray due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) has conducted online meetings of its subsidiary bodies and announced arrangements for the annual Commission meeting. The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) Chair has proposed holding the 95<sup>th</sup> annual Commission meeting online November 30 to December 4.

Since the September Council meeting, the 5<sup>th</sup> IATTC – WCPFC Northern Committee Joint Working Group on Pacific Bluefin Tuna Management (IATTC-WCPFC NC JWG) occurred as a virtual meeting on October 5 and 6 followed by the online Sixteenth Regular Session of the NC (NC16) on October 7. These meetings were conducted in streamlined daily 3-hour sessions. Attachment 1 is the Chairs' summary of the IATTC-WCPFC NC JWG meeting.

The JWG discussed proposed amendments to Conservation and Management Measure CMM 2019-02 for Pacific Bluefin Tuna presented by Japan, which would have increased catch limits (see Attachment 1, Annex C). The JWG did not support this proposal, given the difficulty in negotiating the details in a virtual setting, and instead recommended a rollover of the current measure (see Attachment 1, Annex D). The JWG also reviewed a draft proposal for a 1-year rollover of the current IATTC Resolution C-18-01, Measures for the Conservation of Pacific Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, 2019-2020 (see Attachment 1, Annex E). Since the current measure established a 2-year catch limit with certain provisions for maximum catch in any one year, the catch limits would have to be adjusted to apply to 1-year only.

The NC recommended WCPFC adopt the revised CMM for Pacific Bluefin Tuna for one year roll-over (see Attachment 1, Annex D). The NC also discussed revised estimates of North Pacific albacore catch and effort by Vanuatu pursuant to CMM-2019-03 and reported in NC16-WP-01. This included a change to Vanuatu's estimate for the 2002-2004 baseline period used as the limit expressed in the measure (“...ensure that the level of fishing effort by their vessels fishing for North Pacific albacore in the WCPFC Convention Area is not increased beyond 2002-2004 annual average levels.”) The U.S.A expressed concern because Vanuatu used a single year, 2004, rather than the stipulated 3-year period to calculate its baseline limit. The U.S.A suggested it may be necessary to amend CMM 2019-03 to make the reporting requirements clearer. The NC encouraged members to hold intersessional discussions and prepare proposals for amending CMM 2019-03 as appropriate, and agreed to hold further discussions at NC17. If available, the NC16 report will be provided in a supplemental attachment.

The Permanent Advisory Committee to Advise the U.S. Commissioners to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC PAC) met online October 14-16, 2020, to consider recommendations for the purpose of developing U.S. policies, positions, and negotiating strategies with respect to U.S. participation in the Seventeenth Regular Session of the WCPFC (WCPFC17), which is scheduled to occur online December 8-15, 2020. (Attachment 2 is the provisional annotated agenda for WCPFC17.) WCPFC PAC recommendations are provided in Attachment 3.

Aside for adoption of a resolution for Pacific bluefin tuna, IATTC must negotiate a successor to IATTC Resolution C-17-02 on tropical tunas (i.e., yellowfin, bigeye, and skipjack tuna), which expires at the end of the 2020 calendar year, at its 95<sup>th</sup> annual meeting.

At the September Council meeting the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel noted in relation to Pacific bluefin tuna management “While we may not know the particulars of a potential IATTC Resolution for our November meeting, we believe there are numerous issues related to the U.S. fishery which should be discussed” ([Agenda Item E.1.a, Supplemental HMSAS Report 1](#), September 2020). The Council may wish to make recommendations for changes to the trip limit management regime for 2021, bearing in mind any implications of a 1-year Resolution on catch limits.

**Council Action:**

**Provide Recommendations on U.S. Positions at Upcoming Meetings of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and Other Forums, as Appropriate.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item I.2, Attachment 1: Chairs’ Summary of the 5th Joint IATTC and WCPFC-NC Working Group Meeting on the Management of Pacific Bluefin Tuna.
2. Agenda Item I.2, Attachment 2: Provisional Annotated Agenda, Seventeenth Regular Session of the WCPFC.
3. Agenda Item I.2, Attachment 3: Recommendations from the Permanent Advisory Committee to the U.S. Section to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Web Conference - October 14-16, 2020.
4. If received, Public Comments are electronic only ([see e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- I.2 Recommend International Management Activities Kit Dahl
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
  - b. Public Comment
  - c. **Council Action:** Provide Recommendations on U.S. Positions at Upcoming Meetings of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and Other Forums, as Appropriate

PFMC  
10/20/20