



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
National Oceanic and Atmospheric
ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE**
Pacific Islands Regional Office
1845 Wasp Blvd. Bldg. 176
Honolulu, Hawaii 96818
(808) 725-5000 • Fax (808) 725-5215

Agenda Item I.2
Supplemental Attachment 3
March 2024

February 9, 2024

Mr. Taulapapa William Sword, Chair
Western Pacific Fishery Management Council
1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1400
Honolulu, HI 96813

Ms. Angel Drobica, Chair
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
605 West 4th Avenue, Suite 306
Anchorage, AK 99601-2252

Mr. Brad Pettinger, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, OR 97220-1384

Dear Chairs Sword, Drobica, and Pettinger:

The United States participated in the Twentieth Regular Session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (Commission) in Rarotonga, Cook Islands from December 4 - 8, 2023. The provisional outcomes of the Commission meeting are available on the [Commission's website](#). The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) would like to provide its initial assessment of the regulatory actions that may need to be implemented based on the decisions of the Commission.

Conservation and Management Measure (CMM) for Tropical Tunas

The Commission adopted a revised Conservation and Management Measure for Tropical Tunas (CMM 2023-01). The revisions that would likely require new regulatory action include: (1) updating the provisions that shorten the fish aggregating device (FAD) closure periods for all purse seine fishing vessels; and (2) modifying the U.S. longline bigeye tuna catch limit. Regarding the bigeye tuna catch limit, the numerical limit would change from 3,554 metric tons (t) to 6,554 t, by essentially combining the 3,554 t limit with the 3,000 metric tons of tuna that historically were authorized to be allocated to U.S. vessels operating pursuant to agreements with the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Such agreements are no longer authorized under CMM 2023-01. NMFS is planning to implement these regulations under the authority of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Convention Implementation Act.



Other substantive decisions by the Commission, none of which require regulatory action, include:

- adopted a Conservation and Management Measure for Pacific Bluefin tuna (CMM 2023-02), revising the conversion factor between small and large fish catch limits;
- adopted a revised Harvest Strategy (HS) for Pacific Bluefin tuna fisheries (HS 2023-02), including new harvest control rules;
- adopted a Conservation and Management Measure for North Pacific swordfish (CMM 2023-03), clarifying annually reported information;
- agreed to a revised interim target reference point for South Pacific albacore;
- adopted a revised HS for the North Pacific albacore fishery (HS 2023-01), including new harvest control rules; and
- adopted CMM 2023-04 on a Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS), extending the CMS through 2026.

If you have any questions regarding any of the above listed decisions, please contact Jason Philibotte at 1-808-725-5032 or jason.philibotte@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,



Sarah Malloy
Acting Regional Administrator

cc: Jennifer Quan, Regional Administrator, West Coast Region
Jon Kurland, Regional Administrator, Alaska Region
Charles Littnan, Ph.D., Director, Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center
Kristen C. Koch, Director, Southwest Fisheries Science Center