

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON
INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) participated in a joint discussion with the HMS Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) on considerations for new Pacific bluefin tuna (PBF) trip limits. The HMSMT appreciates the expertise of HMSAS members who provided detailed perspectives on fishermen’s decision making when targeting PBF using various gear types. Table 1 below demonstrates that recent landings of PBF have not fully utilized the annual catch limits. An initial limit higher than 30 mt (status quo) could incentivize more purse seine fishing effort than is currently undertaken. The HMSMT is supportive of the HMSAS recommendation for a 50 or 60 metric ton (mt) initial limit.

We also concur that seasonal adjustment of “buffer points” where the trip limits are lowered is a useful management tool for avoiding scenarios where high purse seine effort early in the year triggers an early reduction in the trip limit, but then lower-volume gears do not catch the remainder of the annual limit.

Table 1. Recent annual landings (mt) of PBF relative to catch limits.

Year	Landed Weight	Catch Limit	% Utilization
2019	275	425	65%
2020	233	356	65%
2021	218	425	51%
2022	369	523	71%
2023	186	720	26%