

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) offers the following comments and recommendations as an addendum to its Supplemental HMSAS Report 1 under Agenda Item G.2, International Management Activities.

South Pacific Albacore

The HMSAS supports continued U.S. engagement in the WCPFC-IATTC Joint Working Group on the Management of South Pacific Albacore Tuna Fisheries and the South Pacific Albacore Allocation Process. As of June 2026, the SPA process has entered a critical implementation phase following adoption of the Harvest Strategy through WCPFC Conservation and Management Measure (CMM) 2025-01. While the HMSAS supports precautionary, science-based management of SPA and continued U.S. participation in the WCPFC and IATTC processes, significant questions remain regarding implementation and allocation. Decisions made during this phase will shape the availability and character of future fishing opportunities for the U.S. West Coast surface fleet participating in the SPA fishery. These efforts should not come at the expense of small-scale U.S. fisheries that have historically harvested a very small share of the stock while providing important economic, cultural, and community benefits. The HMSAS notes the U.S. troll fleet current participation levels may not accurately reflect the fleet's historical participation, future potential, or economic importance to West Coast fishing communities.

The Council's previous recommendations emphasizing preservation of meaningful seasonal access for the U.S. troll fleet, recognition of differences between longline and surface gears, and limitations on transferability of fishing opportunity remain highly relevant as implementation measures are developed and should continue to guide U.S. participation in ongoing negotiations.

As allocation discussions move forward, **the HMSAS recommends** that:

- **Allocation frameworks recognize both historical participation and future fishing opportunity and consider reference years that are favorable to the US surface fishery.** Meaningful seasonal access for the U.S. troll fleet should be maintained and opportunities for future participation and fleet rebuilding be preserved.
- **The U.S. delegation actively pursue recognition of the U.S. South Pacific albacore troll fleet as an artisanal, small-scale surface fishery** characterized by owner-operated vessels, highly selective fishing methods, low bycatch rates, extensive reporting, and strong economic and cultural ties to West Coast fishing communities.
- **Management measures recognize the substantial differences among fishing sectors,** including differences in catch volume, selectivity, bycatch impacts, monitoring requirements, and overall contribution to fishing mortality. That implementation measures focus primarily on fisheries responsible for the overwhelming majority of South Pacific albacore removals.

- **Transferability provisions be reasonably constrained to prevent excessive consolidation of fishing opportunity**, preserve active fishing communities, and ensure that conservation benefits are not undermined through unrestricted transfers, leasing arrangements, or chartering provisions.

Additionally, the HMSAS remains concerned about the assumption in CMM 2025-01 assumes that the EPO, excluding the overlap area will cap catch at 18,000 mt per year. **The HMSAS recommends a reevaluation of that assumption to determine its correctness.**

PFMC
06/14/26