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November 16, 2017

Mr. Phil Anderson, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council
1100 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, Oregon 97220

Re: Agenda Item H.2: Recommendations for International Management Activities

Dear Chair Anderson and Members of the Council:

We are writing to thank the Council for its support shown at the September meeting for immediate action to more effectively manage the U.S. commercial Pacific bluefin tuna fishery and avoid any further quota overages. As the U.S. has shown to be a leader for the conservation of the species, both domestically and internationally, it is vital that steps are taken to ensure continued compliance with international regulations and obligations. We appreciate that the Council, NOAA Fisheries, the HMS Management Team, and the HMS Advisory Subpanel have recognized the need for swift action to address the matter.

In light of the need to improve both the effectiveness and timeliness of management of the fishery, as well as to comply with the 2018 quota, we ask the Council to consider the following actions:

- Implement a small trip limit of 1 to 2 metric tons for the 2018 Pacific bluefin tuna commercial fishing season;
- Explore the feasibility of modifying existing regulations to allow for immediate closure of the U.S. commercial fishery if an overage is predicted;
- Require that logbook entries, landing receipts, or fish tickets for all U.S. commercial vessels targeting Pacific bluefin be submitted directly to NOAA Fisheries within 24 hours of landing; and
- Recommend that the U.S. delegations to the WCPFC and IATTC support development of an electronic Catch Document Scheme (CDS) with the objective to increase the effectiveness and timeliness of catch reporting and tracking.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rachel Hopkins', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rachel Hopkins
Interim Director, Global Tuna Conservation

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Shively', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Shively
Project Director, U.S. Oceans, Pacific