

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON UPDATE ON AND
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES
(ALBACORE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK)

In June 2011, the Council tasked the Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) and HMS Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) to begin developing a proactive management framework for North Pacific albacore (NPA), which could be proposed at the international level through U.S. delegations. In July 2011, the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) adopted a stock assessment that suggested overfishing is not occurring and the stock of NPA is not overfished.

At their September 2011 meeting, the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Northern Committee (NC) set a goal of developing a management framework for NPA in advance of the 2014 stock assessment. Their intent is to establish a precautionary management framework to support any necessary revisions to the conservation measure addressing NPA (CMM 2005-03). In June 2005, the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) adopted resolution C-05-02, which has the same objective with respect to constraining fishing effort; it too could be revised pending a new stock assessment. The NC work plan generally parallels direction the Council provided to the HMSMT and HMSAS; that work plan has three elements applicable to international management:

- Better estimate NPA catch and related fishing effort by member nations;
- Develop reference points consistent with the management framework;
- Develop decision rules specify actions to be taken in the event a particular reference point is breached.

The Council could engage in this process in the following ways:

- Develop recommendations for target and limit reference points consistent with U.S. policy and the HMS FMP management framework.
- Identify consistent control rules and related management measures that do not disproportionately or inequitably constrain U.S. fisheries.
- Specify how international measures could be implemented domestically, should fishery constraints be implemented at the international level.

The HMSMT believes that the development of a proactive framework would be beneficial in preparing the U.S. to consider alternative responses to potential future proposals and management requirements that arise in the international arena. This could include promoting consistency between the NC work plan and complementary IATTC activities. Should the Council wish to have the HMSMT proceed with the development of a suite of alternatives we recommend the following timeline (see next page). These alternatives could include, and may not be limited to, recommending measures to regulate fishing mortality at the domestic level, and effort- and/or catch-based management strategies internationally.

| Date | Task / Product |
|----------------|---|
| March 2012 | - Brief Council regarding progress and understanding of assignment and offer a draft work plan for consideration and additional guidance. |
| Spring 2012 | - Draft alternatives for domestic management measures in consultation with the HMSAS. |
| June 2012 | - Brief the Council on progress and seek additional guidance as needed. |
| September 2012 | - Council consideration of a suite of alternatives for domestic management measures that would compliment any international proposal. |
| November 2012 | - Report back to the Pacific Council regarding stakeholder input and provide revised alternatives that address relevant comments. |
| March 2013 | - Draft decision document with suite of alternatives reflecting the incorporation of relevant public comment and direction of the Pacific Council. - Begin considering international measures consistent with the timeline used in the domestic process. |
| April 2013 | - Finalize Decision Document to incorporate direction from the Council. Solicit public comment. |
| June 2013 | - Advise Council on input to the U.S. delegation for the 2013 NC meeting regarding the management framework as well as meetings of the IATTC where management measures are discussed. |

PFMC
03/01/12