

INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There are two particularly significant issues related to international highly migratory species management, both involving North Pacific albacore tuna, that the Council will consider. Background information on these issues is provided below.

International Management Framework for North Pacific Albacore

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Northern Committee (NC) has included in its workplan for the coming years, 2012-2015, the development of a precautionary framework for the management of North Pacific albacore. The Council's Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) provided a comprehensive report on international albacore management in March 2012 (Agenda Item B.2.b, HMSMT Report, March 2012), which is a valuable reference document on this topic.

The next NC meeting (NC8) is scheduled for September 3-6, 2012, in Nagasaki, Japan. According to their workplan, the NC will discuss the precautionary framework at this meeting. The meeting report from NC7 describes the management framework as "including agreed upon biological limit and target reference points and decision rules should those reference points be exceeded." Agenda Item E.2.a, Attachment 1 summarizes the schedule the NC laid out in the workplan for developing the management framework and incorporating it into a new or revised conservation measure for North Pacific albacore.

At the March 2012 meeting the Council tasked the HMSMT to work with the HMS Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) and Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) HMS Subcommittee to further develop information to allow the Council to provide input on the development of a management framework at the June 2012 meeting. The attached HMSMT Report provides information on biological reference points and potential management measures for North Pacific albacore. The HMSMT plans to meet with the HMSAS and the SSC at the June Council meeting and will submit a supplemental report discussing the outcome of these consultations.

The IATTC has also begun considering management frameworks for HMS, including albacore. At the Third Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee (May 15-18, 2012), the Secretariat presented a paper *Reference Points, Decision Rules, and Management Strategy Evaluation for Tunas and Associated Species in the Eastern Pacific Ocean*. This paper is included as Agenda Item E.2.a, Attachment 2. Any conservation measure ultimately adopted by the WCPFC would need a complementary measure from the IATTC to be effective in the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

This meeting is the opportunity for the Council to develop any recommendations for early U.S. positions on the NC albacore management framework. The NC will be discussing the management framework at their upcoming meeting, which occurs before the next Council meeting.

Although not directly related to North Pacific albacore, Agenda Item E.2.a, Attachment 3 is a letter from Michael Tosatto, Regional Administrator for the NMFS Pacific Islands Region, reporting outcomes of the Eighth Regular Session of the WCPFC. This meeting was originally scheduled for December 2011 but delayed to March 2012 because of the need to change the venue.

U.S.-Canada Albacore Treaty

At the November 2011 and March 2012 meetings the Council was briefed on and discussed development of a new fishing regime pursuant to the [U.S.-Canada Albacore Treaty](#). The fishing regime, described in Annex C of the Treaty, governs reciprocal access to each country's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) by albacore vessels from the other country. At the December 1, 2011, bilateral negotiation session in Vancouver, BC, no agreement was reached on a replacement for the regime that was to expire with the cessation of fishing in 2011 unless mutually renewed, according to the terms of the treaty. At the March 2012 meeting the Council recommended suspension of reciprocal access in 2012 to "allow stakeholders and managers to better assess the information and data needed to address the long-term reciprocal privileges under the treaty." However, it was noted that an additional bilateral negotiation session on this issue, previously anticipated to occur prior to the March Council meeting, was expected to occur in mid-April 2012. (Agenda Item E.2.a, Attachment 4 is a March 13, 2012 letter sent to Mr. Sam Rauch, Acting Assistant Administrator, NOAA Fisheries, with the Council's recommendation.)

Delegations from the U.S. and Canada met May 23-24, 2012, in Portland, Oregon, to discuss development of a replacement regime. Agenda Item B.2.b, NMFS Report, is a summary of these discussions provided by NMFS SWR. Canada put forward three proposals. One would promote "fleet etiquette" to address problems with aggressive behavior on the fishing grounds. A second proposal would freeze the list of 110 Canadian vessels authorized to fish in the U.S. EEZ for the duration of any regime. Applications for changes due to *force majeure* or replacement of retired vessels would be subject to a review process and limits are placed on increases in vessel length. The third proposal establishes a bilateral mechanism for industry funding of albacore-related research. However, no agreement was reached on a replacement regime. At the conclusion of the meeting the U.S. delegation head stated that it was very unlikely that a regime would be agreed to for 2012 based primarily on the rationale that there was insufficient time to complete a comprehensive evaluation of the benefits of reciprocal access. However, it was noted that completion of an orderly discussion of issues could lead to agreement on a reciprocal fishing regime for future years.

Council Action:

Make recommendations to the U.S. delegation to the WCPFC Northern Committee on U.S. positions, especially with respect to the proposed precautionary framework for North Pacific albacore tuna management. 2) Make recommendations on the Fishing Regime pursuant to the U.S.-Canada Albacore Treaty, as necessary.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item E.2.a, Attachment 1: Northern Committee Schedule for Development of International Management Framework for North Pacific Albacore Tuna and Associated Conservation Measure.
2. Agenda Item E.2.a, Attachment 2: Reference Points, Decision Rules, and Management Strategy Evaluation for Tunas and Associated Species in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (IATTC Document SAC-03-09) by Mark Maunder.
3. Agenda Item E.2.a, Attachment 3: April 17, 2012, Letter from Michael Tosatto, NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Administrator, to Council Chair Dan Wolford Reporting Outcomes of the Eighth Regular Session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.
4. Agenda Item E.2.a, Attachment 4: March 13, 2012, Letter from Dr. Donald O. McIsaac to Mr. Samuel Rauch III.
5. Agenda Item E.2.b, NMFS Report: Report on International Management Activities.
6. Agenda Item E.2.b, HMSMT Report.
7. Agenda Item E.2.c, Public Comment.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview Kit Dahl
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Adopt, as Necessary, Recommendations for 1) Highly Migratory Species under the Purview of the WCPFC, Especially in Regard to Albacore Tuna, and 2) the Fishery Regime Pursuant to the U.S.-Canada Albacore Treaty

PFMC
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