

AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

98TH MEETING

(By videoconference)
23 – 27 August 2021

PROPOSAL IATTC-98 G-1

SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED STATES

**MEASURES FOR THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF
PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA IN THE EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN, 2021-
2024**

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) gathered virtually, on the occasion of its 98th Meeting:

Taking into account that the stock of Pacific bluefin tuna is caught in both the western and central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) and the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO);

Recognizing that the 2020 stock assessment of Pacific bluefin tuna by the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) shows the following:

- *The spawning stock biomass (SSB) in 2018 is estimated to be 4.5% of unfished SSB (i.e., the depletion ratio, which is the ratio of SSB in 2018 relative to the theoretical unfished SSB);*
- *The stock is overfished and is subject to overfishing relative to most of the commonly used reference points; and SSB is below 20%SSBF=0, which is the second rebuilding target adopted by the IATTC and WCPFC.*

Taking into consideration that IATTC Members, through resolutions and voluntary actions, have, since 2012, effected 40% reductions in the catch of Pacific bluefin tuna across the entire range of age classes available in the EPO;

Considering that in 2021 the IATTC Scientific Staff and Scientific Advisory Committee noted in their recommendations that increased catches based on the scenarios analyzed are possible under the harvest strategy prepared by the Joint IATTC-WCPFC Northern Committee Working Group on Pacific bluefin tuna. The choice of catch scenario should take into account the desired rebuilding rate and the distribution of catch between small and large Pacific bluefin tuna;

Recalling that Article VII, paragraph 1(c) of the Antigua Convention provides that the Commission shall “adopt measures that are based on the best scientific evidence available to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the fish stocks covered by this Convention and to maintain or restore the populations of harvested species at levels of abundance which can produce the maximum sustainable yield...”;

Urging all IATTC Members and Cooperating Non-Members (CPCs) involved in this fishery to participate in a fair and equitable manner, and without exceptions, in the discussion and adoption of conservation measures applicable to the stock throughout its entire range;

Mindful that these measures are intended as an interim step towards assuring sustainability of the Pacific bluefin tuna resource, consistent with the precautionary approach, and the objectives of the long-term management framework for the conservation and management of Pacific bluefin tuna in the EPO;

Noting that the IATTC has adopted mandatory conservation and management measures for Pacific bluefin tuna for 2012-2021, and that the measures resulted in reducing catches in the EPO;

Desirous that combined conservation and management measures by the WCPFC and the IATTC, together with other voluntary measures aimed at controlling fishing mortality, should be implemented to better the condition of the Pacific bluefin tuna stock; **and,**

Recognizing that conservation and management measures by WCPFC and IATTC should be considered in cooperation between the two RFMOs taking into account historical and future projected proportional fishery impacts on SSB between fisheries in the EPO and fisheries in the WCPO.

Resolves as follows:

1. The Commission shall implement this Resolution in accordance with the long-term management objectives of Pacific bluefin tuna in paragraph 1 of Resolution C-18-02 [Amendment to Resolution C-16-08].
2. Each CPC shall report sport fishery catches of Pacific bluefin tuna semi-annually to the Director. Each CPC shall continue to ensure that catches of Pacific bluefin tuna by sportfishing vessels operating under its jurisdiction are reduced in a manner commensurate with reductions in commercial catches.
3. During 2021-2022, in the IATTC Convention Area, combined total commercial catches of Pacific bluefin tuna by all CPCs shall not exceed the catch limit of 7,295 metric tons. During 2023-2024, in the IATTC Convention Area, combined total commercial catches of Pacific bluefin tuna by all CPCs shall not exceed the catch limit of 7,990 metric tons.
4. During 2021-2022, the United States may catch up to [XX] metric tons. During 2023-2024, the United States may catch up to [XX] metric tons. The United States may catch up to [insert catch limit] metric tons in a single year. The catch limits for the United States will be subtracted and reserved from the total catch limits in paragraph 3 for the exclusive use of the United States.
5. During 2021-2022, Mexico may catch up to [insert catch limit] metric tons. During 2023-2024, Mexico may catch up to [XX] metric tons. Mexico may catch up to [XX] metric tons in a single year. The catch limits for Mexico will be subtracted and reserved from the total catch limits in paragraph 3 for the exclusive use of Mexico.
6. Any over-harvest shall be deducted from the catch limit in the following year in accordance with Paragraph 3 of Resolution C-18-02. Over-harvest of the biennial catch limits established in Resolution C-18-01 shall be deducted from 2021-2022 catch limits applicable to this Resolution. Over-harvest of the biennial catch limit applicable to 2021-2022 in this Resolution shall be deducted from the catch limits in this Resolution applicable to 2023-2024.
7. Under-harvest of biennial catch limits established in Resolution C-18-01 shall be added to catch limits in this Resolution applicable to 2021-2022 in accordance with Paragraph 5 of Resolution C-18-02. Under-harvest of biennial catch limits established in this Resolution applicable to 2021-2022 shall be added to the catch limit established in this Resolution applicable to 2023-2024, in accordance with Paragraph 5 of Resolution C-18-02.
8. CPCs should endeavor to manage catches by vessels under their respective national jurisdictions in such a manner and through such mechanisms as might be applied, with the objective of reducing the proportion of fish of less than 30 kg in the catch toward 50% of total catch, taking into consideration the scientific advice of the ISC and the IATTC staff. At the annual meeting of the IATTC in 2022, 2023 and 2024, the Scientific Staff shall present the results of the previous year's fishing season in this regard for the Commission's review. CPCs shall take the necessary measures to ensure that the catch limits specified in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 are not exceeded, without prejudging the adoption by the CPCs of additional management and conservation measures within their national jurisdiction.
9. In each year from 2021-2024, each CPC shall report its catches to the Director weekly after 50% of its annual catch limit in each year is reached.

10. The Director will send out notices to all CPCs when 75% and 90% of the limits in Paragraphs 3, 4 or 5 have been reached. The Director will send out a notice to all CPCs when the limits in Paragraphs 3, 4 or 5 have been reached. CPCs shall take the necessary internal measures to avoid exceeding the limits established in Paragraphs 3, 4 or 5.
11. By January 31 of each year in 2021-2024, the Director shall notify all CPCs of the catch limit for each year in 2021-2024 established in Paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of this resolution that accounts for any over-harvest or under-harvest in accordance with Paragraphs 6 and 7 of this Resolution, and Paragraphs 3 and 4 of Resolution C-18-02.
12. In each year in 2021-2024, the IATTC Scientific Staff shall present an assessment to the Scientific Advisory Committee of the effectiveness of this resolution also taking into consideration the results of the ISC's latest Pacific bluefin tuna stock assessment, harvest scenario projections performed by the ISC, and conservation and management measures for Pacific bluefin tuna adopted by the WCPFC. The Commission shall review and consider revising the management measures established in this Resolution based on the best available information, including the latest assessment, recruitment information, projections or other relevant information, as well as outcomes of the Joint IATTC-WCPFC NC Working Group on Pacific bluefin tuna.