
DRAFT RESOLUTION ON NORTH PACIFIC ALBACORE

WCPFC/Comm.2/DP.12
21st November 2005

Proposal submitted by the United States

Members and Cooperating Non-Members of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Convention (WCPFC):

Observing that the best scientific evidence on the status of North Pacific albacore, as reported by the 19th North Pacific Albacore Workshop, held in 2004, and the 5th Meeting of the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean, in March 2005, indicates that the current fishing mortality rate appears to be high relative to commonly used reference points, which is a cause for concern regarding the future status of the stock;

Recognizing that North Pacific albacore migrate between the WCPF Convention Area and the Antigua Convention Area in the eastern Pacific Ocean and that some WCPF Commission members' fisheries for North Pacific albacore straddle these two areas;

Further recognizing that the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) resolved at its 73rd meeting, in June 2005, that the total level of fishing effort for North Pacific albacore in the eastern Pacific Ocean not be increased beyond then-current levels;

Aware that the IATTC resolved that all of its members and cooperating parties should call upon the members of the WCPF Commission to consider, at their earliest opportunity, taking such action as may be necessary to ensure the effective conservation and management of North Pacific albacore in the WCPF Convention Area, including, as necessary, measures to reduce fishing effort to levels commensurate with the long-term sustainability of the resource;

Recalling that the IATTC has requested the WCPF Commission to take measures for North Pacific albacore similar to those that the IATTC has taken;

Acknowledging the importance of cooperating and consulting with the IATTC in order to achieve a consistent set of conservation and management measures for fish stocks that occur in the convention areas of both organizations and for areas of overlap between the two conventions, as provided for in Article 22(4) of the WCPF Convention and Article XXIV of the Antigua Convention;

Taking into consideration the recommendations of the Northern Committee with respect to North Pacific albacore;

Resolve as follows:

1. The total level of fishing effort for North Pacific albacore in the WCPF Convention Area not be increased beyond current levels;
2. Members and Cooperating Non-Members shall take necessary measures to ensure that the level of fishing effort by their vessels fishing for North Pacific albacore in the WCPF Convention Area is not increased beyond current levels;
3. Members and Cooperating Non-Members shall report to the WCPF Commission on a semi-annual basis: (1) all catches of albacore north of the equator and (2) all fishing effort north of the equator in fisheries directed at albacore. The reports for both catch and fishing effort shall be made by gear type and within and outside the WCPF Convention Area. Catches shall be reported in terms of weight. Fishing effort shall be reported in terms of the most relevant measures for a given gear type, including at a minimum for all gear types, the number of vessel-days fished. The reports for the first half of each calendar year shall be submitted no later than the following December 31 and reports for the second half of the year shall be submitted no later than the following June 30;
4. Members and Cooperating Non-Members shall, through the Northern Committee, and in coordination with the WCPF Commission's Scientific Committee and, as appropriate, other international and national scientific bodies conducting scientific reviews of this stock, monitor the status of North Pacific albacore and fisheries that harvest the stock. At the third session of the WCPF Commission, in 2006, the Northern Committee shall report on the status of fisheries for the stock and, as necessary, present any further recommendations for the conservation and management of the stock to the Commission;
5. The Executive Director shall communicate this resolution to the IATTC and request that, in accordance with Article 22 of the WCPF Convention, the two commissions engage in consultations to further develop and, as soon as practicable, adopt consistent conservation and management measures for North Pacific albacore, including any reporting or other measures needed to ensure compliance with such agreed measures.