22st Regular Session of the Western Central Pacific Fisheries Northern Committee, Eleventh Joint IATTC-NC Working Group Meeting on PBF Management:

Nagasaki, Japan – July 8 – 14, 2026

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) would like to thank the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) and Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) for the opportunity to attend the 22st Regular Session of the Northern Committee and Eleventh Joint IATTC-NC Working Group Meeting on PBF Management (JWG) as an observer and to address the critically important role that PBF management plays in the proper management of the Pacific Ocean fisheries.

Technical reports of all scientific and management bodies responsible for management of the Pacific bluefin tuna stock, including the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) and the IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), indicate that the Pacific Bluefin tuna stock is recovering at a higher rate than management targets and spawning stock biomass (SSB) was10 times higher than the historical low.

The updated stock assessment by the ISC in 2024 confirmed that

① The stock has recovered to 144,000 ton (23.2% SSB_0) and achieved at the second rebuilding target (20% SSB_0) in 2021 earlier than the target year.
② The stock is not overfished relative to the biomass-based limit reference points adopted for other species in WCPFC (20% SSB_0)
③ The stock is not subject to overfishing relative to some of F-based reference points proposed for tuna species, including SPR 20%.

In addition, the JWG has deliberated on the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE), Harvest Control Rule (HCR), and reference points (RP) to prevent bluefin tuna from being overfished again. At the JWG Intersessional Meeting in March

2026, the JWG proposed to continue discussion on the long-term harvest strategy with these elements.

- F-target: FSPR 27.5%,
- Control Point 1 (ThRP): 20% $SSB_{F=0}$,
- Control Point 2 (7.7% $SSB_{F=0}$),
- No. of Control Points: 2,
- Fmin: SPR70%,
- Review: MP will be reviewed after 6 years (3 x 2-year cycles)

WWF remains deeply concerned that overfishing will occur exposing the Pacific bluefin tuna stock again to the risk of collapse in the absence of robust management measures to address the impact of IUU fishing. Such as scenario will have severe economic consequences on the economies and communities depending on this resource.

WWF recommends that the WCPFC and IATTC:

- Establishing Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) with a precautionary Limit and Target Reference Point for Pacific Bluefin tuna by 2026 based on the result of JWG Intersessional Meeting in March 2026 ;
- Developing detailed measures and work plans for monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) of Pacific bluefin tuna. In particular, establish standardized reporting procedures for bycatch and discards, and strengthen reporting and monitoring of caging at farms;
- Developing Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS) by 2026 as a measure to improve the accuracy of stock assessments and reduce the risk of IUU fishing by strengthening monitoring of Pacific bluefin tuna., and
- Improving transparency in Pacific bluefin tuna fisheries by the phase in of 100% observer (human or electronic) on all industrial vessels targeting or catching Pacific bluefin tuna. Both IATTC and WCPFC have adopted minimum standards for electronic monitoring systems (EM), that offer a good alternative to human observers.

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