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HARVEST CONTROL RULES (HCRS) AND REFERENCE POINTS

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Harvest Control Rules (HCRs) and Reference Points

HCRs are a set of well-defined management actions to be taken in response to changes in stock status with respect to target and limit reference points. Unless there is a pre-agreed upon action plan for avoiding overfishing or for rebuilding an overfished stock, long negotiations lead to delayed action or inaction. This delay can lead to further damage to the stock, requiring even more aggressive curtailing of fishing. The adoption of HCRs is a key aspect of modern fisheries management, and is also a requirement of several eco-label certification programs.

ISSF endorses the application of the Precautionary Approach using clear target and limit reference points and HCRs, as called for by the UN Fish Stocks Agreement and by some RFMO Conventions. While most tuna RFMOs have at least begun consideration of limit reference points through their science committees, none have fully implemented these measures. ISSF urges all tuna RFMOs to adopt stock-specific limit and target reference points and HCRs. This is one of the most important actions that RFMO members can take to ensure the long-term sustainability of tuna stocks.

Resources

Harvest Control Rules, Reference Points and Harvest Management Plans <http://youtu.be/BAS4MeI2G2A>

Overcoming a negative trajectory for tuna <http://iss-foundation.org/2011/12/12/overcoming-a-negative-trajectory-for-tuna/>