

**Proposal by the United States of America and Canada  
to the  
Thirteenth Regular Session of the Northern Committee**

**Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the  
Western and Central Pacific Ocean**

The United States and Canada propose that the Northern Committee forward the following recommendations to the Commission at its 14<sup>th</sup> Regular Session.

The Northern Committee recommends that the Commission adopt the attached revision to the title of previously adopted precautionary management framework for North Pacific albacore, so that it may be recognized as a harvest strategy. In addition, the Northern Committee recommends that the Commission direct the Secretariat to make this harvest strategy available, as a stand-alone harvest strategy document, on a web page dedicated to this and other harvest strategies, including interim harvest strategies, agreed to by the Commission.

**Northern Committee  
Tenth Regular Session**

**Fukuoka, Japan  
1–4 September 2014**

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**INTERIM HARVEST STRATEGY PRECAUTIONARY MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR  
NORTH PACIFIC ALBACORE FISHERY**

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**Introduction**

~~At the Sixth Regular Session of the Northern Committee, and consistent with Article VI of the WCPFC Convention, Canada submitted a paper (WCPFC-NC6-DP02) on the development of a precautionary approach based fishery management regime for the northern stocks. Building on this paper, the Seventh Regular Session of the Northern Committee agreed to a three year work programme to develop a precautionary approach based management framework for North Pacific albacore.~~

~~The Ninth Regular Session of the Northern Committee determined that it was best to delay discussions on the framework until the completion of the 2014 North Pacific albacore stock assessment. In July 2014, the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) concluded that the North Pacific albacore stock is “healthy and that current productivity is sufficient to sustain recent exploitation levels, assuming average historical recruitment in both the short and long term”. The ISC also provided further advice regarding candidate limit and target reference points.~~

Based on the ~~advice from the ISC,~~recommendation of the Northern Committee (NC) at its 10<sup>th</sup> regular session, this harvest strategy was adopted by the Commission at its 11<sup>th</sup> regular session as a ~~recommends~~ the following “precautionary management framework for NP albacore”.

**1. Management objective**

The management objective for the North Pacific albacore fishery is to maintain the biomass, with reasonable variability, around its current level in order to allow recent exploitation levels to continue and with a low risk of breaching the limit reference point.

**2. Biological reference points**

Based on ISC’s 2014 stock assessment advice and following the hierarchical approach adopted by the Commission, North Pacific albacore is to be treated as a Level 2 stock. The following is based on an average recruitment scenario:

- The limit reference point (LRP) for this stock is established at 20%SSB<sub>current</sub>  $F=0$ .

This LRP is consistent with the Annex II of the UN Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA) and recent WCPFC decisions on LRPs for the three tropical tuna species and South Pacific albacore, where 20%SSB<sub>current</sub>  $F=0$  was adopted. If this point is breached, management actions will be taken to return the stock to a predetermined level as outlined in the subsequent section on Decision Rules.

~~This LRP replaces the current interim limit which was previously established by the NC as  $F_{SSB}$ .~~

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- The target reference point (TRP) for this stock will be determined following a comprehensive analysis, ~~if appropriate,~~ under a management strategy evaluation (MSE) approach as outlined in section 4 on “Future Work”. Historical fishing activity, anticipated fishing activity, and the source of increased fishing mortality will also be considered when evaluating a suitable TRP. Socioeconomic factors, as per UNFSA Article 6.3.c., will be further considered. The existing conservation and management measure (CMM) for the stock (WCPFC 2005-03) establishes through limits on current effort an overall management regime for the stock.

### 3. Decision rules

NC recommends a management strategy for the stock that ensures that the risk of the biomass decreasing below the LRP is low.

LRP rule: In the event that, based on information from ISC, the spawning stock size decreases below the LRP at any time, NC will, at its next regular session or intersessionally if warranted, adopt a reasonable timeline, but no longer than 10 years, for rebuilding the spawning stock to at least the LRP and recommend a CMM that can be expected to achieve such rebuilding within that timeline. NC will take into account historical fishing activity and the source of increased fishing mortality when developing management strategies to rebuild the stock, including in establishing effort reductions. NC will further consider socioeconomic factors, as per UNFSA Article 6.3.c., as well as which NC members, if any, contributed to exceeding the LRP.

### 4. Future work

This framework ~~may~~ shall be periodically reviewed and revised, ~~following the 2017 ISC stock assessment of North Pacific albacore. In the interim~~ To support such revisions, NC endorses the ongoing development and implementation of ~~would support~~ an MSE, ~~if appropriate,~~ for the stock and fishery, which would ~~to~~ yield new information that would enhance the robustness of this framework. ~~This framework shall be reviewed following the 2017 ISC stock assessment of North Pacific albacore.~~