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Report on CMM 2017-08 (Pacific bluefin tuna)

WCPFC-NC14-2018/DP-06

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Implementation Report on the Conservation and Management Measure to Establish a Multi-annual Plan to Rebuild Pacific Bluefin Tuna

(CMM 2017-08)

July 25, 2018

Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea

Pursuant to paragraphs 4 and 10 of the Conservation and Management Measure to Establish a Multi-annual Plan to Rebuild Pacific Bluefin Tuna (CMM 2017-08), the Republic of Korea hereby reports on its implementation of the CMM.

Para 2 (1) and (2). Effort Control and Juvenile Catch Reduction

Paragraph 2. CCMs shall take measures necessary to ensure that:

- (1) Total fishing effort by their vessel fishing for Pacific bluefin tuna in the area north of the 20° N shall stay below the 2002–2004 annual average levels.
- (2) All catches of Pacific bluefin tuna less than 30 kg shall be reduced to 50% of the 2002-2004 annual average levels. Any overage of the catch limit shall be deducted from the catch limit for the following year.

Para 2 (1) Effort Control:

In 2017, twenty-four (24) large-scale purse seiners caught Pacific bluefin tuna (hereinafter “PBF”), which are below the level of 2002-2004 annual average (30 vessels). The number of vessels (24) remains the same as of August 2018.

<Table 1. The number of vessels caught PBF from 2002 to 2004>

The Number of Vessels Caught PBF from 2002 to 2004	
2002	32
2003	29
2004	29

Para 2 (2) Juvenile (age 0-3/ less than 30kg) Catch Reduction

Institutional Framework for Compliance

In accordance with the *Ministerial Directive on the Conservation and Management of Pacific bluefin Tuna of the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of Korea*, which ensures the national implementation of CMM 2017-08, the Korean government sets Korea’s annual catch limit for PBF less than 30kg (age 0-3) to 50% (718tonnes) of Korea’s 2002-2004 annual average

(1,435tonnes). The Directive requires that any PBF catches must be reported to the National Institute of Fisheries Science (NIFS) within 24 hours of the catch. Since 2005, the government has been crosschecking the reported PBF catches by Korean purse seiners with the sales log sheets maintained at designated consignment markets for the purpose of verification.

Major requirements of the Ministerial Directive also include:

- ✓ The efforts for PBF and the catches of juvenile PBF shall stay below the level prescribed by the relevant conservation and management measures of the WCPFC;
- ✓ Catches of PBF (e.g. target/non-target, quantities) shall be reported to the government, and be sold only at a designated consignment market; and
- ✓ When total PBF juvenile catches are deemed to approach or exceed its annual catch limit, the government shall take necessary measures to prevent the total catches from exceeding the catch limit (e.g. prohibition of PBF catches and closure of designated consignment market for PBF).

In addition, when 80-90 percent of the annual catch limit for juvenile has been exhausted, the government immediately prohibits any sales of PBF in both domestic and international markets through the closure of designated consignment markets for PBF and statistical documents.

Compliance Information for the Reporting Year (2017 Calendar year)

Despite the government's effort, however, an overage of 469 tonnes of PBF 30kg or larger occurred in 2016. In this regard, Korea announced its voluntary payback plan at the 13th Regular Session of the Commission: 50% (235 tonnes) of the total overage will be equally deducted from each year's catch limit for PBF less than 30kg over the period of 2017 to 2021 (47 tonnes each year for a period of five years). Following this plan, 47 tonnes were deducted in 2017, making the 2017 catch limit 671 tonnes. In 2017, 72.1 tonnes were overrun, and this was also subsequently deducted from the 2018 catch limit.

Para 3 Catch Management on Non-juvenile PBF

Paragraph 3.

CCMs shall take measures necessary to ensure that all catches of Pacific Bluefin tuna 30kg or larger shall not be increased from the 2002-2004 annual average levels. Any overage of the catch limit shall be deducted from the catch limit for the following year. However, in 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 CCMs may use part of the catch limit for Pacific bluefin tuna smaller than 30 kg stipulated in paragraph 2 (2) above to catch Pacific bluefin tuna 30 kg or larger in the same year. In this case, the amount of catch 30 kg or larger shall be counted against the catch limit for Pacific bluefin tuna smaller than 30 kg. CCMs shall not use the catch limit for Pacific bluefin tuna 30 kg or larger to catch Pacific bluefin tuna smaller than 30 kg. The ISC is requested to review, in its work referred to in Section 5 of Harvest Strategy, the

implications of this special provision in terms of PBF mortality and stock rebuilding probabilities in 2020. Based on that review, in 2020 the Northern Committee will determine whether it should be continued past 2020, and if so, recommend changes to the CMM as appropriate.

In 2017, Korean purse seiners and set nets caught 73 tonnes of PBF 30kg or larger as part of its catch limit stipulated by paragraph 2 (2) of CMM 2017-08 as allowed by the special provision in paragraph 3 of the CMM.

Para 4 Reporting Requirements for 2002-2004 Baseline Effort and 3-year Catch Level

Paragraph 4. CCMs shall report their 2002–2004 baseline fishing effort and <30 kg and >=30kg catch levels for 2013 and 2014, by fishery, as referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3, to the Executive Director by 31 July 2015. CCMs shall also report to the Executive Director by 31 July each year their fishing effort and <30 kg and >=30 kg catch levels, by fishery, for the previous 3 year, accounting for all catches, including discards.

The baseline effort (2002-2004) of the Korean large-scale purse seine fleet was 30 vessels (32/2002; 29/2003; and 29/2004), the reference point under which Korea’s efforts are being kept pursuant to paragraph 2(1) of CMM2017-08.

PBF catches for the previous 3 year are as follows:

In 2015, 677 tonnes of PBF were caught in total, comprising 676 tonnes of PBF less than 30kg and 1 ton of PFF 30kg or larger. The larger PBF catches were made by large-scale purse seiners and set net fisheries.

In 2016, 1,028 tonnes of PBF were caught in total, comprising 559 tonnes of PBF less than 30kg and 469 ton of PFF 30kg or larger. The larger PBF catches were made by large-scale purse seiners and set net fisheries.

In 2017, 743 tonnes of PBF were caught in total, comprising 670 tonnes of PBF less than 30kg and 73 ton of PFF 30kg or larger. This resulted in 72.1 tonnes of overrun in 2017, which was deducted from the catch limit for 2018.

<Table 2. PBF catches (tonnes) in 2014, 2015 and 2016 per size and fishery type>

Year	less than 30kg				30kg or larger		
	purse seiner	set net	others	subtotal	purse seiner	set net	subtotal
-							
2015	675.1	0.8	0.4	676.3	0.7	0.3	1
2016	554.7	1.7	3.0	559.4	469.1	0.05	469.1
2017	661.0	3.39	5.81	670.2	72.86	0.06	72.92

Para 6 Juvenile Monitoring

Paragraph 6. CCMs, in particular those catching juvenile Pacific bluefin tuna, shall take measures to monitor and obtain prompt results of recruitment of juveniles each year.

NIFS has been collecting the eggs and larvae of fisheries resources that occur and spawn in and migrate through the EEZ of Korea in order to study their biological characteristics. The 2017 survey found no egg or larva of PBF. NIFS will continue to monitor the recruitment of juveniles of PBF in the EEZ of Korea through the collection of eggs and larvae.

Para 7 Prevention of PBF Trade that Contravenes the CMM

Paragraph 7. Consistent with their rights and obligations under international law, and in accordance with domestic laws and regulations, CCMs shall, to the extent possible, take measures necessary to prevent commercial transaction of Pacific bluefin tuna and its products that undermine the effectiveness of this CMM, especially measures prescribed in the paragraph 3 and 4 above. CCMs shall cooperate for this purpose.

Korea's *Ministerial Directive on the Conservation and Management of Pacific Bluefin Tuna* requires that all PBF caught by Korean vessels be sold only at designated consignment fish markets in order to prevent any commercial transaction of PBF and its products that could undermine the effectiveness of the CMM. The international trade of PBF is also being monitored through statistical documents accompanied by PBF exported to foreign markets, mostly the Japanese market.

Also, the government takes measures including the prohibition of fishing and landing of PBF and the closure of designated consignment markets for PBF and statistical documents, if and when there is a risk of seriously undermining the effectiveness of the CMM for PBF (e.g. overages of PBF juvenile catch limits).

Para 9 Strengthening Data Collection System

Paragraph 9. CCMs shall also take measures necessary to strengthen monitoring and data collecting system for Pacific Bluefin tuna fisheries and farming in order to improve the data quality and timeliness of all the data reporting.

The government requires designated consignment market representatives and port-samplers to report the records of PBF sales and biological data (e.g. length, weight) to the government, respectively. Since 2015, all fishers have been required to report to the government any catches of PBF within 24 hours of the catch. The NIFS takes some of PBF sold in designated consignment markets as a sample to collect and analyze biological data (e.g. weight, length,

stomach contents and otolith, etc.) From 2016, the NIFS has been collecting tissue samples for close-kin analyses. NIFS will begin research to develop a gene marker for PBF from 2018 using samples collected over three years (2016-2018).

Para 12. Cooperation with the IATTC Contracting Parties

Paragraph 12. To enhance effectiveness of this measure, CCMs are encouraged to communicate with and, if appropriate, work with the concerned IATTC contracting parties bilaterally.

So far, no formal bilateral arrangement on PBF with the IATTC Contracting Parties has been made. However, Korea stands ready to fully cooperate with the IATTC Contracting Parties to observe this CMM.