



COMMISSION
FOURTEENTH REGULAR SESSION
Honolulu, Hawaii, United States of America
9 – 14 December 2018

INDONESIA'S BIGEYE TUNA CATCH LIMITS IN LONGLINE FISHERIES

WCPFC18-2018-DP29
10 December 2018
1415

Paper by Indonesia

10 December 2018

Feleti Teo
Executive Director
Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
PO Box 2356, Kolonia
Federated States of Micronesia

Dear Feleti,

Indonesia's Bigeye Tuna Catch Limits in Longline Fisheries

Regarding the issue to review the CMM 2017-01 Conservation and Management Measure for bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack tuna in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean focusing on bigeye longline catch limit, Indonesia's views are as follows:

1. Indonesia appreciates the work that has been done by the Commission to carry out conservation and management of tuna resources. These fisheries are very important to Indonesia for livelihoods, food security, and economic development opportunities. The result of the latest bigeye stock assessment in 2017 suggests that WCPFC conservation efforts have been successful.
2. Indonesia recognizes this achievement, noting that bigeye in previous years was overfished and subject to overfishing. In those years, Indonesia agreed that various efforts were necessary to reduce catches of bigeye tuna, and agreed to a reduction of Indonesia's longline quota in 2013 to contribute to the necessary rebuilding. However, the new stock assessment of bigeye has shown an improved stock status. Indonesia is cautiously optimistic about this, but also recognizes the importance of fisheries being carried out in a sustainable manner. Therefore, various efforts to increase the catch should not be conducted until the next assessment of bigeye stock, and current state should be maintained.
3. In this vein, Indonesia is concerned and disappointed with current efforts to reduce the bigeye longline catch limit of Indonesia, which has been in place since 2013 when the stock status of bigeye was quite poor.
4. Indonesia has the historical catch data, which is estimated transparently and collaboratively, involving various stakeholders including international scientists and WCPFC experts. Based on historical data, Indonesia's bigeye longline catches in 2004 was 5,521 tons (referred to WPEA-SM workshop report of Indonesia annual catch estimates 2004 – 2017).
5. In recent years, Indonesia has not caught its full bigeye longline catch limit, however this does not mean that Indonesia is unable to use this catch limit for the people's benefit.

Several significant improvement programs are being carried out by Indonesia, particularly on the implementation of the precautionary approach and efforts to eradicate IUU Fishing caused by Commercial Fisheries involving foreign fishing vessels. The policy to eradicate IUU Fishing in Indonesia will obviously provide better foundation for Indonesia to utilize tuna resource in the future. We invite other countries in the Pacific region to support all IUU Fishing eradication activities as done by Indonesia which as it has been proven to encourage the restoration of fisheries throughout Indonesia.

6. As one of the coastal developing states bordering to the Pacific Ocean, more than a million people of Indonesia are living in the coastal areas whose lives depend on these fisheries. As such, the unused quota of the Indonesia bigeye longline catch limit for Indonesia should be considered by the Commission a contribution for the conservation/rebuilding of the bigeye stock for overall WCPO, protecting sources of food security and livelihoods of many nations, especially for the Indonesian small-scale fisheries.
7. Furthermore, Indonesia reiterates that any proposal for reducing the bigeye catch limit of Indonesia cannot be accommodated where the Indonesian longline fisheries are dominated by small-scale fleets and fishers. Indonesia is the only developing coastal state with an allocation of longline caught bigeye tuna, and reducing the Indonesia allocation in a time when there is a healthy stock status would not be in line with protecting development aspirations or the rights of coastal developing states – issues that are critical to Indonesia and many other developing coastal states within the WCPFC.
8. Indonesia acknowledges the interest of other members to meet the needs of their local industry. In this regard, Indonesia stands ready to cooperate with all CCMs to ensure the comprehensive and equitable management of the bigeye stock, and all other stocks to ensure these fisheries can benefit our coastal communities into the future.
9. Lastly, Indonesia is of the view that it is the right of any individual CCM to use, or not use, their allocated quota in accordance with international regulations and in line with prevailing national policy.