



**DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW WCPFC TROPICAL TUNA MEASURE
WORKSHOP 1 (TTMW1)
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REPUBLIC OF KOREA'S VIEWS ON THE TROPICAL TUNA MEASURE

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Submitted by the Republic of Korea

Republic of Korea's Views on the Tropical Tuna Measure

I. General Position

In the early stages of the discussions of conservation and management measure for tropical tunas, the bigeye tuna stock was in the worst situation among the three tropical species. All of the three tropical tuna stocks are now in the green zone in the Kobe plot and in the case of bigeye tuna, the Commission even seems to be overachieving the current interim objective, i.e. the average $SB/SB_{F=0}$ for 2012-2015.

Although the Republic of Korea does not have any specific TRP or management objective to propose at this point, our view on the tropical tunas is that there has been a certain improvement in the stock status in general and those stocks have been managed in a sustainable manner, at least for the last ten years or so. Therefore, we believe that the time is ripe for the Commission to consider some level of increase of fishing opportunities for tropical tuna fisheries.

The Republic of Korea sees the management objective and the associated total allowable catch/effort level as a package. We do not necessarily object to the idea of adopting a new objective but whether or not the Commission adopts a new one, our expectation is that the objective applicable to 2022 and thereafter should allow the Commission to consider a certain level of increase of fishing opportunities, at least for the short-term time frame.

At the same time, however, we do not deem it appropriate for the Commission to adopt a management objective that may give rise to a drastic change in the international tuna markets or fishing industries. The Commission should also give a due consideration to the uncertainties in the stock assessment and the possible scenarios, future recruitments in particular.

In the meantime, the Republic of Korea strongly believes that there should not be any kind of open-ended exemptions under any circumstances. If certain catch limits or effort limits apply to particular CCMs only while some other CCMs fish without any limits, it practically means that the Commission, as a whole, does not have any limits. For example, the total purse seine fishing effort in the high seas rather increased continuously in recent ten years (table 2, WCPFC-TTMW1-2021-IP02) even though the CCMs that are subject to table 2 of the Attachment 1 of the tropical tuna measure substantially reduced their fishing effort in the high seas. The Commission may wish to take differentiated approaches in setting catch reduction level or applicable catch limit for each CCM based on relevant factors including whether or not a certain CCM is SIDS but in any case, there must be certain limit for each and every CCM. Otherwise, any conservation and management measure simply would not work as it is intended.

Once the Commission concludes that there have been improvements in stock status and

decides to increase the overall catch/effort limits, the reduced fishing opportunities of the CCMs that have been subject to longline bigeye tuna catch limits and/or purse seine fishing effort limits in the high seas in particular should be recovered to some extent towards their historical levels.

II. Request for Additional Scientific Analyses

The Republic of Korea submitted two proposals on the definition of FAD or the rules for FAD closure period to past Commission meetings, namely WCPFC15-2018-DP17 and WCPFC16-2019-DP16_rev1. We still believe that any floating object that does not have a tracking buoy attached shall not be considered to be a FAD for the purpose of the FAD closure.

Also, the United States of America proposed last year(WCPFC17-2020-DP02) that the FAD set prohibition shall only apply to FAD sets that are made within a 1/2 nautical mile of a FAD and the Republic of Korea fully supports this proposed change because the existing “one nautical mile” rule, combined with the current definition of FAD, creates a number of unintended non-compliance cases.

As a follow-up to those proposals, we would like to propose that the Commission task the Scientific Service Provider to conduct the following analyses :

- a. Quantify, for the FAD closure period, the impact of the exclusion of floating objects that do not have a tracking buoy attached from the definition of FAD, in terms of the number of sets made on such floating objects and catches taken by species in 2018 and 2019. What would be the equivalent length of FAD closure?
- b. Evaluate the expected impact or implication of the proposed “1/2 nautical mile” rule on the tropical tuna stock

In addition, in order to identify other possible candidate TRPs, the Republic of Korea requests that the SSP conduct analyses and provide the following information to the Commission :

- a. For Skipjack, corresponding change in biomass, PS effort from 2007-2009 average, median total equilibrium yield (as a percentage of MSY) and the risk of falling below the LRP under baseline fishery conditions for the five median depletion levels(50%, 48%, 46%, 44% and 42% $SB_{F=0}$)
- b. For bigeye tuna, what the average 2007-2009 fishing level would mean in terms of median depletion level and the corresponding change in spawning biomass from 2012-2015 average, under both recent and long-term recruitment conditions