

**JOINT IATTC AND WCPFC-NC WORKING GROUP MEETING ON THE
MANAGEMENT OF PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA
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REPORT ON CMM 2024-01 (PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA)

IATTC-NC-JWG11-2026-DP07

KOREA

Implementation Report on the Conservation and Management Measure for Pacific Bluefin Tuna (CMM 2024-01)

June 15, 2026

Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea

Pursuant to paragraph 15 of the Conservation and Management Measure for Pacific Bluefin Tuna (CMM 2024-01), the Republic of Korea hereby reports on its implementation of CMM 2024-01 as follows:

A. Overview

In 2025, Korea's total available catch limit for Pacific Bluefin tuna (hereinafter referred to as "PBF") was 1,341.06 tons. Korea's annual initial catch limit for PBF less than 30kg was set at 718 tons—50% of its 2002-2004 annual average (1,435 tons) while that for PBF 30kg or larger was set at 501 tons. The unused amount of 2024 catch limit for PBF less than 30kg was 185.16 tons, 122.06 tons of which was carried forward to 2025.

The catch proportion of set net fishery has been increasing in recent years and the 2025 catch of 437.5 tons was the record high, accounting for 43% of the total catch. The catch of large PBF in 2025, 861.9 tons, was also the record high, accounting for 85.2% of the total catch. The offshore purse seine fishing vessels operated from March to December in the eastern and southern areas off the coast of Jeju island, and the PBF catch in set net fishery took place throughout the year along the East coast of Korean peninsula. In 2025, unlike in the previous year, large PBF catches by both the purse seine and set-net fisheries started in June.

B. Further Details of implementation

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

In 2025, eighteen (18) large-scale purse seiners caught PBF so the number of vessels was below the level of 2002-2004 annual average (30 vessels).

< The Number of Vessels Caught PBF from 2002 to 2004 >

Year	No. of Vessels
2002	32
2003	29
2004	29

Paragraph 3. Japan, Korea and Chinese Taipei shall, respectively, take measures necessary to ensure that its catches of Pacific bluefin tuna less than 30 kg and Pacific bluefin tuna 30 kg or larger shall not exceed the annual catch limits in the tables below, without prejudice to future agreement on allocation of TAC.

The Ministerial Directive on the Conservation and Management of Pacific Bluefin Tuna of the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of Korea requires that any PBF catches/releases/discards must be reported to the National Institute of Fisheries Science (NIFS) within 24 hours of the catch. Since 2005, Korean government has been cross-checking the reported PBF catches by Korean purse seiners and set net fishermen 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 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).

The aforementioned Directive requires that any catches of PBF must be reported along with the record of corresponding fishing activities to NIFS within 24 hours of the catch. In addition, all individuals of PBF caught are required to be sold only at designated consignment markets for the purpose of verification and prevention of any illegal trade.

If and when there is a risk of breaching the catch limit stipulated in the CMM, the government takes measures including the prohibition of fishing and landing of PBF, the closure of designated consignment markets for PBF and the suspension of issuing PBF statistical documents.

Paragraph 5. Any overage or underage of the catch limit shall be deducted from or may be added to the catch limit for the following year. The maximum underage that a CCM may carry over in any given year shall not exceed 17% of its annual initial catch limit.

In 2025, 443.75 tons of catch limit for small PBF was not utilized and 122.06 tons was carried forward to 2026.

Paragraph 9. CCMs shall report to the Executive Director by 15 June 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. CCMs shall report their annual catch limits and their annual catches of PBF, with adequate computation details, to present their implementation for paragraph 5 and 6, if the measures and arrangements in the said paragraphs and relevant footnotes applied. The Executive Director will compile this information each year into an appropriate format for the use of the Northern Committee.

< PBF catches (t) in 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 by size and fishery >

Year	smaller than 30kg				30kg or larger				Total
	Purse Seiner	set net	others	subtotal	Purse Seiner	set net	others	subtotal	
2022	144.7	214.7	6.4	365.8	509.0	6.7	0.0	515.7	881.5
2023	124.8	201.3	5.2	331.3	323.1	14.0	0.0	337.1	668.4
2024	39.3	285.3	23.7	348.3	399.5	21.5	0.0	421.1	769.4
2025	29.0	116.8	5.1	150.9	541.2	320.7	0.0	861.9*	1,012.8

* 181.6 tons of discard is included in the large PBF catch.

< Computation details for 2025 >

Initial catch limit (tons)	Large fish(≥30Kg)	Small fish(<30Kg) (a)	Total
	501	718	1,219
Unused catch limit carried forward from the previous year	Large fish	Small fish	Total
	0	122.06	122.06
Total available catch limit	Large fish (b)	Small fish (c)	Total
	501	840.06	1,341.06
Catch	Large fish (d)	Small fish (e)	Total
	861.9	150.9	1,012.8

Application of the conversion factor and Utilization of catch limit (tons)	
1) Maximum amount of small fish catch limit that can be utilized to catch large fish applying the conversion factor = (c) - (e)	689.16
2) Amount of large fish caught utilizing small fish catch limit, applying the conversion factor = (d) - (b)	360.9
3) Amount of small fish catch limit used to catch large fish = 3) x 0.68	245.41
4) Total amount of small fish catch limit utilized = (e) + 3)	396.31
5) Total amount of large fish catch limit utilized = (b)	501
6) Catch limit not utilized = (c) - 4)	443.75
7) Amount of catch limit carried forward to 2026 (17% of 718 tons)	122.06

Paragraph 10. CCMs shall intensify cooperation for effective implementation of this CMM, including juvenile catch reduction. For this purpose, CCMs will make every effort to prevent their

catch of age-0 fish (less than 2kg) from increasing beyond their 50% of 2002-2004 levels.

In the case of Korea, purse seine is the main gear type for pacific bluefin tuna fishing. Usually, more than 50% of Korea's total available catch limit is allocated to purse seine fisheries. Since the commercial value of age-0 fish is very low, our purse seine vessels will avoid catching age-0 fish. In any case, the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries instructed the relevant regional government and vessel operators not to catch age-0 fish to the extent possible. The other portion of Korea's catch limit is allocated to set net and other fisheries which do not target pacific bluefin tuna and which may catch age-0 fish regardless of their intention. For these fisheries, the fishers are instructed to release age-0 fish to the extent possible.

In 2025, the catch of age-0 fish (less than 2kg) reported through port-sampling and field surveys was 215.9kg.

Paragraph 11. CCMs, in particular those catching juvenile Pacific bluefin tuna, shall take measures to monitor and obtain prompt results of recruitment of juveniles each year.

The NIFS has been collecting eggs and larvae of fisheries resources which occur, spawn, and/or migrate in the Korean EEZ to study their bioecological characteristics. Due to the recent increase in the migration of large PBF into the Korean EEZ since 2019, NIFS has conducted surveys of PBF eggs and larvae, covering the waters from the southern coast of Jeju Island to the northern west areas off the East coast, using its research vessels.

Both eggs and larvae of Pacific bluefin tuna were first collected near Jeju Island in 2021, and then their spatial distribution has expanded into the areas off the East coast. In terms of vertical distribution, eggs were predominantly found in the surface layer (0–10 m), whereas larvae were mainly distributed at depths of 10–20m. Since then, both eggs and larvae were continuously observed in Korean coastal waters throughout 2025. Notably, compared with the results from 2021, samples collected in 2025 showed an expanded spatial distribution and an increasing trend in abundance.

Paragraph 12. 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 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 undermining the effectiveness of the CMM for PBF (e.g. overages of PBF juvenile catch limits).

In 2025, 236.4 tons of PBF (25.8 tons of fresh tuna and 210.6 tons of frozen tuna) was imported and 444 tons of PBF (112 tons of fresh tuna and 332 tons of frozen tuna) was exported to Japan. This is preliminary data and may be updated at a later stage.

14. 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 National Institute of Fisheries Science takes some of PBF sold at designated consignment markets as a sample to collect and analyze biological data (e.g. weight, length, stomach contents and otolith, etc.)

17. To enhance effectiveness of this measure, CCMs are encouraged to communicate with and work with the concerned IATTC contracting parties through the Joint IATTC and WCPFC-NC Working Group on the Management of Pacific Bluefin Tuna or bilaterally.

Korea engages in close consultations and cooperation with the concerned IATTC Contracting Parties through relevant meetings of WCPFC and IATTC as well as bilateral meetings, in order to enhance the effectiveness of this CMM.