

**IATTC-WCPFC NC JOINT WORKING GROUP MEETING ON THE
MANAGEMENT OF PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA
ELEVENTH SESSION (JWG-11)**

8 – 11 July 2026
Nagasaki, Japan (Hybrid)

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURE FOR
PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA (CMM 2024-01)**

**IATTC-NC-JWG11-2026-DP01
24 June 2026**

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Proposal by the Republic of Korea to Amend the Conservation and Management Measure for Pacific Bluefin Tuna

1. Purpose

The Republic of Korea submits this proposal to establish a more equitable, transparent and workable framework for the allocation and implementation of Pacific bluefin tuna catch limits in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.

The stock has recovered substantially through the collective conservation efforts of participating Members. The benefits arising from that recovery should be shared in a fair and equitable manner, while maintaining the long-term sustainability of the stock.

2. Fair and equitable allocation

Existing national catch limits were developed largely on the basis of catches during the 2002–2004 reference period and were expressly established without prejudice to a future agreement on the allocation of total allowable catch.

Historical fishing patterns remain relevant, but they should not constitute the sole or permanent basis for allocation. Applying the same percentage increase to substantially unequal national limits would reproduce and further widen existing disparities, with Members holding larger historical allocations receiving most of the additional fishing opportunities.

In Korea's view, achieving a genuinely fair and equitable balance would ultimately require a comprehensive reconsideration and redistribution of existing national catch limits, taking into account the full range of allocation criteria under the WCPF Convention and current fishery circumstances.

Nevertheless, recognizing the practical difficulty of reaching agreement on a comprehensive redistribution at this stage, and in the spirit of compromise, Korea proposes that existing national catch limits remain unchanged and that the increase in the WCPO catch limit for Pacific bluefin tuna 30 kg or larger be allocated equally among the three CCMs currently subject to national large-fish catch limits.

This approach would:

- preserve existing national catch limits;
- apply only to newly available fishing opportunities;
- prevent the further widening of existing disparities; and
- provide a simple, transparent and workable basis for agreement.

The proposed equal allocation of the increase is therefore a pragmatic compromise and is without prejudice to a future comprehensive review of existing national allocations.

3. Coastal State interests

The proposal recognizes the sovereign rights, legitimate fishing interests and management responsibilities of

coastal States in whose areas under national jurisdiction Pacific bluefin tuna occur.

Changes in the abundance and distribution of the stock have created significant challenges for coastal and non-target fisheries, particularly where existing national limits are insufficient to accommodate recurring or unavoidable catches.

The proposal does not seek to establish an exclusive entitlement based on the occurrence of the stock in national waters. It seeks to ensure that coastal State interests, management responsibilities and the needs of coastal communities are properly considered in future allocation reviews.

4. Conversion factor

The proposal seeks to adjust the conversion factor applied when a catch limit for Pacific bluefin tuna less than 30 kg is used to catch fish 30 kg or larger.

The current factor of 0.68 was established on a precautionary basis during the stock-rebuilding period. Recent information provided by the ISC indicates substantial differences in fishing impact per unit of catch among fishery sectors and provides an updated scientific basis for reconsidering the current factor.

Korea therefore proposes that the conversion factor be adjusted in light of the most recent ISC information, without specifying a particular numerical value at this stage. The revised factor should be agreed on the basis of the best available scientific information, while maintaining an appropriate level of precaution and ensuring that the overall fishing impact is not increased.

An updated conversion factor would better reflect current scientific understanding, encourage the harvest of larger fish and support more efficient use of existing catch limits without undermining the conservation objectives of the measure.

5. Fishing-effort limits

The proposal also seeks to address the application of the 2002–2004 fishing-effort baseline to a CCM that had no fishing activity using a particular gear type during that period.

A strict application of the historical baseline could permanently prevent such a CCM from introducing that gear type, even where all catches remain within its binding national catch limits. This would preserve historical differences in fleet structure regardless of subsequent changes in stock distribution, fishing practices, technology and domestic management needs.

Korea therefore proposes that a CCM with no fishing effort using a particular gear type during the baseline period be permitted to authorize a limited number of vessels using that gear type, subject to advance notification, effective monitoring and annual reporting.

This flexibility would not create additional catch entitlement or increase the CCM's applicable catch limit. All catches would remain subject to the same national catch limits under the measure.

The proposed approach would prevent the historical effort baseline from operating as a permanent prohibition on the development or diversification of a CCM's fisheries. It could also facilitate the introduction of fishing methods that improve size selectivity, reduce juvenile catch or respond more effectively to changes in stock distribution.

Where catches remain subject to effective and enforceable limits, limited flexibility in the composition of fishing effort can be provided without undermining the conservation objectives of the measure.

6. Management flexibility

The proposal includes measures to improve practical implementation while maintaining conservation effectiveness and accountability.

These measures include:

- allowing catch limits to be managed over a multi-year management period;
- allowing catches in individual years to vary within the total catch limit for that management period;
- carrying any unused portion of a management-period catch limit forward to the subsequent management period;
- providing greater carry-forward flexibility for CCMs with relatively small catch limits; and
- requiring continued annual monitoring, reporting and transparent calculation of all adjustments.

A CCM's total initial catch limit for a management period would be the sum of its annual initial catch limits for each year of that period. Where a conversion factor is applied, the applicable total catch limit would be adjusted accordingly. Each CCM would remain responsible for ensuring that its cumulative catch during the management period does not exceed its total catch limit for that period.

These arrangements would address interannual variability in the occurrence and catch of Pacific bluefin tuna and allow available fishing opportunities to be used more efficiently, without increasing the overall fishing impact authorized under the measure.

7. Conclusion

The long-term credibility and durability of the Pacific bluefin tuna management framework will depend not only on its biological performance, but also on whether Members consider the allocation and implementation of fishing opportunities to be fair, equitable and workable.

Korea remains committed to the conservation and sustainable use of Pacific bluefin tuna. Korea considers that a balanced outcome should:

- protect the recovery of the stock;
- provide a fair and equitable balance of fishing opportunities;
- avoid the further entrenchment of historical disparities;
- reflect the legitimate interests and responsibilities of coastal States; and
- provide sufficient flexibility for effective domestic implementation.

The proposal seeks to provide a practical basis for achieving these objectives and for securing broad and durable support for the future management framework.

CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURE FOR PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA

Conservation and Management Measure 2024-01

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC):

Recognizing that WCPFC6 adopted Conservation and Management Measure for Pacific bluefin tuna (CMM 2009-07) and the measure was revised ~~twelve~~^{thirteen} times since then (CMM 2010-04, CMM 2012-06, CMM 2013-09, CMM 2014-04, CMM 2015-04, CMM 2016-04, CMM 2017-08, CMM 2018-02, CMM 2019-02, CMM 2020-02, CMM 2021-02 ~~and~~, CMM 2023-02 ^{and CMM 2024-01}) based on the conservation advice from the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) on this stock;

Noting the latest stock assessment provided by ISC in 2024, indicating the following:

- Spawning stock biomass (SSB) has increased substantially in the last 12 years, and achieved its second rebuilding target ($20\%SSB_{F=0}$) in 2021;
- A substantial decrease in estimated F has been observed in ages 0-2 in 2020-2022 relative to 2002-2004 and 2012-2014;
- Since the early 1990s, the WCPO purse seine fisheries, in particular those targeting small fish (age 0-1) have had an increasing impact on the spawning stock biomass, but its impact has reduced in recent years;
- Harvesting small fish has a greater impact on future spawning stock biomass than harvesting large fish of the same amount;
- The projection results indicate that increases of catch limits are possible while maintaining SSB greater than $20\%SSB_{F=0}$ with a 60% probability under several scenarios requested by JWG8, and while allowing SSB to steadily increase above the second rebuilding target under additionally requested certain scenarios ; and
- The projection results also indicate that the maximum allowable transfer from small fish catch limits to large fish catch limits utilizing the conversion factor has a positive effect on future SSB.

Noting the conservation advice from the ISC that research on a recruitment index for the stock assessment should be pursued, and maintenance of a reliable adult abundance index should be ensured;

Recalling that paragraph (4) of the Article 22 of the WCPFC Convention, which requires cooperation between the Commission and the IATTC to reach agreement to harmonize CMMs for fish stocks such as Pacific bluefin tuna that occur in the convention areas of both organizations;

Also recalling Article 10 (1) (a) of the WCPF Convention, which provides that the Commission may determine the total allowable catch or total level of fishing effort within the Convention Area for such highly migratory fish stocks and decide and adopt such other conservation and management measures and recommendations as may be necessary to ensure the long-term sustainability of such stocks

without prejudice to the sovereign rights of coastal States for the purpose of exploring and exploiting, conserving and managing highly migratory fish stocks within areas under national jurisdiction;

Recalling further Articles 4, 7, 8 and 10 of the WCPF Convention, including that:

- the functions of the Commission are without prejudice to the sovereign rights of coastal States for the purpose of exploring and exploiting, conserving and managing highly migratory fish stocks within areas under national jurisdiction;
- coastal States apply conservation and management principles within areas under national jurisdiction in the exercise of those sovereign rights;
- compatible measures shall take into account the extent to which stocks occur and are fished in areas under national jurisdiction and the respective dependence of coastal States on the stocks concerned; and
- allocation criteria shall take into account, inter alia, present fishing patterns, contributions to conservation and management, compliance records, the needs of coastal communities and the fishing interests and aspirations of coastal States in whose areas of national jurisdiction the stocks occur;

Acknowledging that the national catch limits contained in CMM 2024-01 were expressly established without prejudice to a future agreement on the allocation of total allowable catch;

Conscious of the need to identify, analyze and respond to the impacts of climate change on the tuna and tuna-like species in the North Pacific Ocean in a timely manner to enhance the effectiveness of the conservation and management for the species;

Adopts, in accordance with Article 10 of the WCPFC Convention that:

General Provision

1. This conservation and management measure ~~has been prepared to implement the Harvest Strategy for Pacific Bluefin Tuna Fisheries (Harvest Strategy 2023-02), and the Northern Committee shall periodically review and recommend revisions to this measure as needed to implement the Harvest Strategy~~ shall apply to implement the Management Procedure for Pacific Bluefin Tuna (CMM 2026-XX).

~~Management measures~~ Catch and Effort Management

2. CCMs shall take measures necessary to ensure that total fishing effort by their vessel fishing, except for recreational fishing vessels, for Pacific bluefin tuna in the area north of the 20° N shall stay below the 2002–2004 annual average levels, without prejudice to future consideration of baseline periods.
3. Notwithstanding paragraph 2, where a CCM had no fishing effort using a particular gear type during the 2002-2004 baseline period, that CCM may authorize its vessels using that gear type to fish for Pacific bluefin tuna, provided that the CCM:
 - a. ensures that all catches remain within its applicable catch limits under this measure;
 - b. notifies the Executive Director in advance of the number and gear type of the vessels concerned;
 - c. register the vessels to the WCPFC List of Authorized Vessels;
 - ~~a.~~ d. report annually on the fishing effort and catches of those vessels

- ~~2.~~ 4. For 2027 and 2028, 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.

Pacific Bluefin tuna less than 30kg

	2002-2004 average annual level	Annual initial catch limit in 2027	Annual initial catch limit in 2028
Japan	8,015 metric tons	4,407 metric tons	4,407 metric tons
Korea	1,435 metric tons	718 metric tons	718 metric tons

Pacific Bluefin tuna 30kg or larger

	2002-2004 average annual level	Annual initial catch limit in 2027	Annual initial catch limit in 2028
Japan	4,882 metric tons	8,421 9,410 metric tons	9,410 metric tons
Korea	0 metric tons	501 1,490 metric tons	1,490 metric tons
Chinese Taipei	1,709 metric tons	2,947 3,936 metric tons	3,936 metric tons

~~3.5.~~ CCMs with a base line catch (2002-2004 average annual level) of 10 tons or less of Pacific bluefin tuna 30 kg or larger may increase their catch as long as it does not exceed 10 metric tons per year. [For 2027 and 2028, the catch limit of Pacific bluefin tuna 30 kg or larger for New Zealand shall be \[200\] metric tonnes per year and for Australia \[40\] metric tonnes per year, taking into account their nature as bycatch fisheries conducted in their waters in the Southern hemisphere.](#)¹

6. CCMs are encouraged to conduct research activities to collect reliable indices of recruitment stock and adult spawning stock. Notwithstanding paragraph ~~34~~ and ~~45~~, setting a catch limit dedicated for research activities to develop and maintain indices may be considered by WCPFC through the Northern Committee based on research plans reviewed and supported by the ISC.

Multi-year Management

~~7. 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. Within the two-year management period of 2027-2028, A CCM may use in either year any portion of the catch limit attributable to the other year, provided that its cumulative catch during the management period does not exceed its total catch limit for that two-year period.~~¹

[8. Any overage in a CCM's applicable catch limit at the end of a management period shall be deducted from that CCM's catch limit for the immediately subsequent management period.](#)

[9. Any underage in a CCM's applicable catch limit at the end of a management period may be carried forward and added to that CCM's catch limit for the immediately subsequent management period.](#)

~~4.10.~~ CCMs described in paragraph ~~3-4~~ may use part of the catch limit for Pacific bluefin tuna smaller than 30kg stipulated in paragraph 3 above to catch Pacific bluefin tuna 30kg or larger in the same year. In

¹ [Notwithstanding paragraph 7 and 9, Korea may add 323 metric tons of its unused 2025 catch limit for Pacific bluefin tuna less than 30 kg to its catch limit for 2027 or to its first biennial management period commencing in 2027. The amount carried forward under this paragraph may be used to catch Pacific bluefin tuna 30 kg or larger in accordance with paragraph 10. This special arrangement does not create any precedent in future management.](#)

this case, the amount of catch 30kg or larger shall be counted against the catch limit for Pacific bluefin tuna smaller than 30kg.² CCMs shall not use the catch limit for Pacific bluefin tuna 30kg or larger to catch Pacific bluefin tuna smaller than 30kg.

~~5.1. CCMs are encouraged to conduct research activities to collect reliable indices of recruitment stock and adult spawning stock. Notwithstanding paragraph 3 and 4, setting a catch limit dedicated for research activities to develop and maintain indices may be considered by WCPFC through the Northern Committee based on research plans reviewed and supported by the ISC.~~

~~6.11.~~ All CCMs except Japan shall implement the limits in paragraph ~~34 and 5~~ on a calendar-year basis. Japan shall implement the limits using a management year other than the calendar year for some of its fisheries and have its implementation assessed with respect to its management year. To facilitate the assessment, Japan shall:

a. Use the following management years:

1. For its fisheries licensed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, use the calendar year as the management year.
2. For its other fisheries, use 1 April – 31 March as the management year.³

~~b.~~ In its annual reports for PBF, for each category described in a.1 and a.2 above, complete the required reporting template for both the management year and calendar year clearly identifying fisheries for each management year.

Reporting, Monitoring and Cooperation

~~7.12.~~ 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 years, 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 ~~5-7, 8, 9 and 106~~, 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.

~~8.13.~~ 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, without prejudice to future consideration of baseline periods.

~~9.14.~~ CCMs, in particular those catching juvenile Pacific bluefin tuna, shall take measures to monitor and obtain prompt results of recruitment of juveniles each year.

~~10.15.~~ 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 ~~3-4 and 5~~ above. CCMs shall cooperate for this purpose.

² A CCM may count the amount of catch 30kg or larger adjusted with the conversion factor [0.68] (catch 30kg or larger multiplied by [0.68]) against the catch limit for Pacific bluefin tuna smaller than 30kg.

³ For the category described a.2 of paragraph ~~7.11~~, the TCC shall assess in year 20XX its implementation during the management year that starts 1 April 20XX-1 (e.g., in the 2020 compliance review, the TCC will assess Japan's implementation for its fisheries licensed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries during calendar-year 2019 and for its other fisheries during 1 April 2019 through 31 March 2020).

~~11.~~16. CCMs shall cooperate to establish a catch documentation scheme (CDS) to be applied to Pacific bluefin tuna in accordance with the **Attachment** of this CMM.

~~12.~~17. 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.

~~13.~~18. CCMs shall report to the Executive Director by 15 June annually measures they used to implement paragraphs ~~2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14 and 17~~2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13 and 14 of this CMM. CCMs shall also monitor the international trade of the products derived from Pacific bluefin tuna and report the results to the Executive Director by 15 June annually. The Northern Committee shall annually review those reports CCMs submit pursuant to this paragraph and if necessary, advise a CCM to take an action for enhancing its compliance with this CMM.

~~14.~~19. The WCPFC Executive Director shall communicate this CMM to the IATTC Secretariat and its contracting parties whose fishing vessels engage in fishing for Pacific bluefin tuna in EPO and request them to take equivalent measures in conformity with this CMM.

~~15.~~20. 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.

~~16.~~21. The provisions of paragraphs 2 and ~~3~~4 shall not prejudice the legitimate rights and obligations under international law of those small island developing State Members and participating territories in the Convention Area whose current fishing activity for Pacific bluefin tuna is limited, but that have a real interest in fishing for the species, that may wish to develop their own fisheries for Pacific bluefin tuna in the future.

~~17.~~22. The provisions of paragraph ~~18-21~~ shall not provide a basis for an increase in fishing effort by fishing vessels owned or operated by interests outside such developing coastal State, particularly Small Island Developing State Members or participating territories, unless such fishing is conducted in support of efforts by such Members and territories to develop their own domestic fisheries.

~~18. This CMM replaces CMM 2023-02. On the basis of a new stock assessment conducted by ISC, the harvest strategy based on the management strategy evaluation expected to be completed in 2025, fair and equitable balance of fishing opportunities between the WCPO and the EPO as well as among Members, and other pertinent information such as the impact of climate change, as appropriate, this CMM shall be reviewed and may be amended as appropriate in 2026.~~

23. The Northern Committee shall review the allocation of WCPO Pacific Bluefin Tuna catch limits no later than 2028 and at regular intervals thereafter.

The review shall take into account, inter alia:

a. the status of the stock and the applicable management procedure;

b. past and present fishing patterns and practices;

c. the needs of coastal communities;

d. changes in the distribution of Pacific bluefin tuna;

e. the extent to which the stock occurs and is caught in areas under national jurisdiction;

- f. unavoidable catches in non-target coastal fisheries and the capacity of existing national catch limits to accommodate such catches; and
- g. the fishing interests, management responsibilities and aspirations of coastal States.

~~19.~~24. This CMM replaces CMM 2024-01.

Development of a Catch Document Scheme for Pacific Bluefin Tuna

Background

At the 1st joint working group meeting between NC and IATTC, held in Fukuoka, Japan from August 29 to September 1, 2016, participants supported to advance the work on the Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS) in the next joint working group meeting, in line with the development of overarching CDS framework by WCPFC and taking into account of the existing CDS by other RFMOs.

1. Objective of the Catch Document Scheme

The objective of CDS is to combat IUU fishing for Pacific Bluefin Tuna (PBF) by providing a means of preventing PBF and its products identified as caught by or originating from IUU fishing activities from moving through the commodity chain and ultimately entering markets.

2. Use of electronic scheme

Whether CDS will be a paper based scheme, an electronic scheme or a gradual transition from a paper based one to an electronic one should be first decided since the requirement of each scheme would be quite different.

3. Basic elements to be included in the draft conservation and management measure (CMM)

It is considered that at least the following elements should be considered in drafting CMM.

- (1) Objective
- (2) General provision
- (3) Definition of terms
- (4) Validation authorities and validating process of catch documents and re-export certificates
- (5) Verification authorities and verifying process for import and re-import
- (6) How to handle PBF caught by artisanal fisheries
- (7) How to handle PBF caught by recreational or sport fisheries
- (8) Use of tagging as a condition for exemption of validation
- (9) Communication between exporting members and importing members
- (10) Communication between members and the Secretariat
- (11) Role of the Secretariat
- (12) Relationship with non-members
- (13) Relationship with other CDSs and similar programs
- (14) Consideration to developing members
- (15) Schedule for introduction
- (16) Attachment
 - (i) Catch document forms
 - (ii) Re-export certificate forms
 - (iii) Instruction sheets for how to fill out forms
 - (iv) List of data to be extracted and compiled by the Secretariat

4. Work plan

The following schedule may need to be modified, depending on the progress on the WCPFC CDS for tropical tunas.

- 2017 The joint working group will submit this concept paper to the NC and IATTC for endorsement. NC will send the WCPFC annual meeting the recommendation to endorse the paper.
- 2018 The joint working group will hold a technical meeting, preferably around its meeting, to materialize the concept paper into a draft CMM. The joint working group will report the progress to the WCPFC via NC and the IATTC, respectively.
- 2019 The joint working group will hold a second technical meeting to improve the draft CMM. The joint working group will report the progress to the WCPFC via NC and the IATTC, respectively.
- 20XX The joint working group will hold a third technical meeting to finalize the draft CMM. Once it is finalized, the joint working group will submit it to the NC and the IATTC for adoption. The NC will send the WCPFC the recommendation to adopt it.