



COMMISSION
FOURTEENTH REGULAR SESSION
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INTERIM HARVEST STRATEGY FOR NORTH PACIFIC ALBACORE FISHERY

Harvest Strategy 2017-01

This Interim Harvest Strategy replaces the “precautionary management framework for north pacific albacore” adopted at the 11th regular session of the Commission, which is based on the recommendation of the Northern Committee at its 10th regular session.

1. Interim management objective

The management objective for the North Pacific albacore fishery is to maintain the biomass, with reasonable variability, around its current level in order to allow recent exploitation levels to continue and with a low risk of breaching the limit reference point.

2. Biological reference points

Based on ISC’s stock assessment advice and following the hierarchical approach adopted by the Commission, North Pacific albacore is to be treated as a Level 2 stock. The following is based on an average recruitment scenario:

- The limit reference point (LRP) for this stock is established at $20\%SSB_{current F=0}$.

This LRP is consistent with the Annex II of the UN Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA) and recent WCPFC decisions on LRPs for the three tropical tuna species and South Pacific albacore, where $20\%SSB_{current F=0}$ was adopted. If this point is breached, management actions will be taken to return the stock to a predetermined level as outlined in the subsequent section on Decision Rules.

- The target reference point (TRP) for this stock will be determined following a comprehensive analysis under a management strategy evaluation (MSE) approach as outlined in section 4 on “Future Work”. Historical fishing activity, anticipated fishing activity, and the source of increased fishing mortality will also be considered when evaluating a suitable TRP. Socioeconomic factors, as per UNFSA Article 6.3.c., will be further considered. The existing conservation and management measure (CMM) for the stock (WCPFC 2005-03) establishes through limits on current effort an overall management regime for the stock.

3. Decision rules

NC recommends a management strategy for the stock that ensures that the risk of the biomass decreasing below the LRP is low.

LRP rule: In the event that, based on information from ISC, the spawning stock size decreases below the LRP at any time, NC will, at its next regular session or intersessionally if warranted, adopt a reasonable timeline, but no longer than 10 years, for rebuilding the spawning stock to at least the LRP and recommend a CMM that can be expected to achieve such rebuilding within that timeline. NC will take into account historical fishing activity and the source of increased fishing mortality when developing management strategies to rebuild the stock, including in establishing effort reductions. NC will further consider socioeconomic factors, as per UNFSA Article 6.3.c., as well as which NC members, if any, contributed to exceeding the LRP.

4. Future work

This framework may be periodically reviewed and revised. To support such revisions, NC endorses the ongoing development and implementation of an MSE for the stock and fishery, which would yield new information that would enhance the robustness of this framework.