



**DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW WCPFC TROPICAL TUNA MEASURE
WORKSHOP 1 (TTMW1)
Electronic Meeting
26-30 April 2021**

**JAPAN'S PROPOSAL TO THE FIRST WORKSHOP ON THE NEW TROPICAL TUNA
MEASURE**

**WCPFC-TTMW1-2021-DP03
26 March 2021**

Submitted by Japan

Japan's proposal to the first Workshop on the New Tropical Tuna Measure

Japan would like to submit a proposal for consideration to the first Workshop on Development of a New Tropical Tuna Measure (herein after referred to as “Workshop 1”) in relation to “Management Objectives (Agenda 3)” and “Analysis and Information required from the Scientific Services Provider (SSP) (Agenda 7)”. We understand that revisions to the current CMM will be considered at later stages, based on the outcome of Workshop 1 as well as analysis and information to be provided by SSP.

A SIDS' and territories' impact assessment required under CMM 2013-06 is provided in Annex.

I. Management Objectives (Agenda 3)

General principle

1 Fishing activities in the WCPFC Convention area are very diverse; a wide variety of fishing vessels from small to large-scale ones using different types of fishing gears conduct fishing for tropical tuna species across the region. In principle, management objectives need to be established taking into account the interest and viability of such varied fisheries in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention. It is not appropriate to set management objectives which result in allowing only a part of the fisheries to be economically viable while others cannot survive. In this sense, we are of the view that, when establishing management objectives, not only biological factors but also socio-economic factors need to be fully considered.

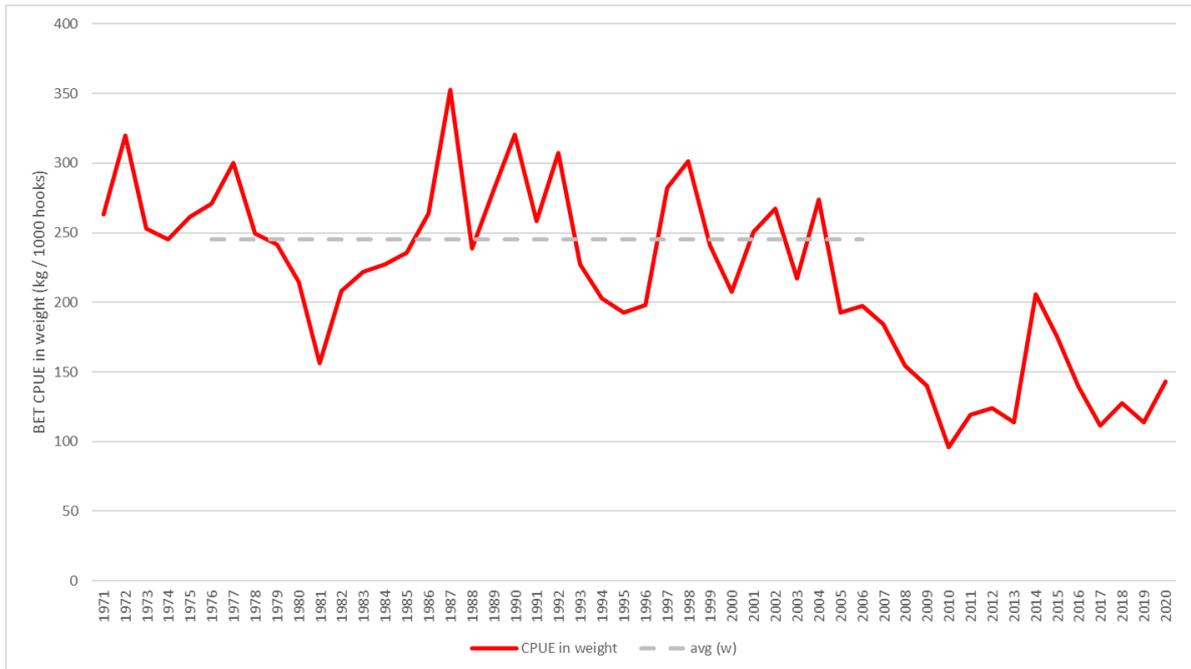
2 In order to translate management objectives to specific Commission's actions, it is important to agree on specific target reference points (TRPs). This will also support the pathway for the adoption of harvest strategies, as agreed in WCPFC17 last year.

3 The interim TRP for southern Albacore is one of the examples that TRPs were set on the basis of socio-economic factors. The TRP for southern Albacore was agreed in 2018 at as high as $56\%SSB_{F=0}$, in response to the needs by artisanal fisheries from certain CCMs so that all the southern longline fisheries including artisanal ones are given reasonable chances of maintaining their economic viability, which Japan also supported. We would like to seek similar consideration by CCMs when the Commission establishes TRPs of tropical tunas.

Bigeye tuna

4 According to the latest 2020 stock assessment, the stock status of bigeye tuna was assessed to be in the green zone that means biologically healthy. However, its biomass level has been constantly declining for decades, and the recent biomass levels are insufficient for certain fisheries relying on bigeye tuna. More specifically, CPUEs of our longline fishery, whose main target is bigeye tuna, have been low in recent years, and as a result, their economic conditions have been severely affected.

5 The graph below shows the CPUE time series of our large-scale longline fishery in the tropical area (20 °S–20 °N) of WCPO, it had been relatively high and stable between 1970s and mid-2000s, after which it sharply declined and has not recovered since then. The economic conditions of our longline vessels have shown the similar worsening trend since mid-2000s, our proposed management objective for bigeye tuna is a biomass level that restores and achieves the CPUE level between 1970s and mid-2000s.



6 For the reasons above, we would like to propose the following three (3) TRP candidates of bigeye tuna. We will examine further which of them is the most appropriate, based on the analysis by SSP as proposed in paragraph 10 below.

- i. *Depletion ratio (%SSB_{F=0}) which is projected to achieve 1976-2006 average spawning biomass*
(Note: this should be calculated based on fishing mortality by fishery of 1976-2006 average)
- ii. *Average and median of spawning biomass from 1976 to 2006*
- iii. *Average and median of depletion ratio (%SSB_{F=0}) from 1976 to 2006*

Skipjack tuna

7 According to the latest 2019 stock assessment, the stock status of skipjack tuna was assessed to be in the green zone which means biologically healthy. However, its recent biomass level is not sufficient for some traditional fisheries, including our coastal fisheries operating around the edge of its migration area.

8 The current interim TRP of 50%SSB_{F=0} was agreed at WCPFC12 in 2015. Our original proposal was 60%SSB_{F=0} with a view to addressing poor migration caused by local depletion and/or range contraction. After a series of discussion, in the interests of preventing deterioration of the stock due to prolongation of the argument, we accepted the compromise to agree on an interim TRP of 50%SSB_{F=0}, as proposed by other CCMs, on the expectation that the interim TRP would contribute to preventing further decline of the stock.

9 With respect to the discussion that the interim TRP 50%SSB_{F=0} needs to be “technically adjusted” in order to reflect changes in the stock assessments between 2014 and 2019, we need to recall that the interim TRP of 50%SSB_{F=0} was proposed and agreed in accordance with SC10 advice, namely “the Commission take action to avoid further increases in fishing mortality and to keep the skipjack tuna stock around the current levels, with tighter purse-seine control rules¹” (underline added). In making “technical adjustment”, therefore, we would like to request SSP to recalculate the tables in WCPFC17-2020-11 by applying the above-mentioned logic to the 2019 assessment; more specifically, we would like SSP to add a column of “Change in fishing mortality from 2012 level” in Table 2 and the other related tables of the document. We understand that one of the proposals, 42%SSB_{F=0}, was calculated to be consistent with the level of the fishing effort for skipjack in 2012. Considering “effort creep” has been occurring, we believe that a calculation related to TRP should be based on “fishing mortality” rather than “fishing effort”.

II. Analysis and Information required from the Scientific Services Provider (Agenda 7)

TRP

10 For bigeye tuna:

- i. A calculation of TRP candidates, as proposed in paragraph 6 (i)-(iii) above
- ii. A calculation of fishing mortalities, as proportions to recent levels, which are projected to achieve each TRP candidate in paragraph 10 (i) above (Overall; by fishing gear; by region used in stock assessment)

11 For skipjack tuna:

- i. A calculation of the tables in WCPFC17-2020-11, as proposed in paragraph 9 above
- ii. A calculation of recent fishing mortality levels as proportions to 2012 levels (Overall; by fishing gear; by region used in stock assessment)

Others

12 Analysis on projected change in fishing mortality by species, when one-month FAD closure is added for; (i) high seas in the area between 20°N and 20°S, and (ii) exclusive economic zones in the area between 20°N and 20°S, respectively.

¹ Paragraph 56, Report of 10th Regular Session of the Scientific Committee.

13 With regard to a definition FAD, the following provision was applied in 2019; “In applying the provisions of paragraphs 16 and 17, any set where small amounts of plastic or small garbage that do not have a tracking buoy attached are detected shall not be considered to be a FAD set for the purposes of the FAD closure.” According to SSP’s evaluation in the document submitted to WCPFC16 in 2019 (WCPFC16-2019-17), it was concluded that “(T)his evaluation suggests the impact can be assumed to be negligible.” We therefore request an update of the evaluation and/or additional information, if any.

14 Evaluation of impact related to a full range of exemptions contained in the current CMM, in terms of fishing mortality and/or depletion ratio (%SSBF=0) for each species.

CMM 2013-06 Criteria

In accordance with CMM2013-06 (Conservation and Management Measure on the criteria for the consideration of Conservation and Management proposals), the following assessment has been undertaken.

a. Who is required to implement the proposal?

The current CMM (CMM 2020-01) is addressed to all CCMs.

b. Which CCMs would this proposal impact and in what way(s) and what proportion?

c. Are there linkages with other proposals or instruments in other regional fisheries management organizations or international organizations that reduce the burden of implementation?

d. Does the proposal affect development opportunities for SIDS?

e. Does the proposal affect SIDS domestic access to resources and development aspirations?

f. What resources, including financial and human capacity, are needed by SIDS to implement the proposal?

g. What mitigation measures are included in the proposal?

h. What assistance mechanisms and associated timeframe, including training and financial support, are included in the proposal to avoid a disproportionate burden on SIDS?

A proposal to revise the current CMM will be considered later, based on the discussion on management objectives as well as results of analyses and information to be provided by SSP. The assessment for b) to h) above will be made when the proposal is prepared.