



COMMISSION
TWELFTH REGULAR SESSION
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**CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURE ON A TARGET REFERENCE
POINT FOR WCPO SKIPJACK TUNA**

Conservation and Management Measure 2015-06

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC):

Recalling that the objective of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (the Convention) is to ensure through effective management, the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the highly migratory fish stocks of the Western and Central Pacific Ocean in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 and the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (UNFSA);

Recalling that Annex II of the UNFSA sets out guidelines for the application of precautionary reference points in conservation and management of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks;

Recalling also that in article 5 (c) of the Convention, members of the Commission have committed to apply the precautionary approach in accordance with the Convention and all relevant internationally agreed standards and recommended practices and procedures;

Further recalling that Article 6 1 (a) requires members of the Commission in their application of the precautionary approach to apply the guidelines set out in Annex II of the UNFSA and determine, on the basis of the best scientific information available, stock-specific reference points and the action to be taken if they are exceeded;

Noting that the Commission has adopted a Conservation and Management Measure on Establishing a Harvest Strategy for Key Fisheries and Stocks in The Western and Central Pacific Ocean;

Desiring to make progress on the development of a harvest strategy for fisheries for WCPO skipjack tuna through the adoption of a Target Reference Point for this stock;

Adopts, in accordance with Article 10 of the Convention, the following conservation and management measure on a target reference point for WCPO skipjack tuna.

1. The target reference point for the WCPO skipjack tuna stock shall initially be 50 per cent of the estimated recent average spawning biomass in the absence of fishing, ($SB_{F=0, t1-t2}$).
2. This target reference point shall be an interim target reference point until it is reviewed in accordance with paragraph 8 below.
3. The method to be used in estimating the recent average spawning biomass in the absence of fishing shall be the same as that adopted by the Commission for the limit reference point for WCPO skipjack tuna, i.e.
 - a) The time window shall have a length of ten years and be based on the last ten years used in the most recent skipjack stock assessment, i.e. $t1=y_{last}-10$ to $t2=y_{last}-1$ where y_{last} is the last year used in the assessment; and
 - b) The estimation shall be based on the most recent skipjack stock assessment model estimates of recruitment that have been adjusted to reflect conditions without fishing according to the stock recruitment relationship.
4. Conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission shall aim at maintaining the WCPO skipjack tuna stock at the target reference point level on average.
5. The Scientific Committee shall refer to the target reference point in its assessment of the status of the WCPO skipjack tuna stock and in reporting to the Commission on management advice and implications for this stock.
6. The Commission shall use the target reference in the formulation of a harvest control rule and a harvest strategy for fisheries targeting WCPO skipjack tuna in accordance with CMM 2014-06. The harvest control rule shall be designed such that the management control to be implemented would result in the biomass-based target reference point being achieved on average in the long term, taking account of uncertainty.
7. The Commission shall consider and pay particular attention to any future recommendations of the Scientific Committee relating to the target reference point, including any recommendations with respect to potential spatial impacts of fishing on the stock, including possible local depletion or range contraction.
8. The target reference point shall be reviewed by the Commission no later than 2019, and may be reviewed at any time relevant new information is made available, such as any time a new stock assessment is prepared.
