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North Pacific Albacore Tuna Pole & Line and Troll/Jig Fishery

Certificate No: MSC-F-31371

2nd Surveillance Report

August 6th, 2021

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| Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) | MRAG Americas, Inc. |
| Assessment team | Amanda Stern-Pirlot, Erin Wilson and Dr. Max Stocker |
| Fishery client | American Albacore Fishing Association (AAFA) and Western Fishboat Owners' Association (WFOA) |
| Assessment type | Second regular surveillance |
| Author name | Amanda Stern-Pirlot, Erin Wilson and Dr. Max Stocker |
| Date | August 6 th , 2021 |

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2 Glossary

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| AFRF | American Fishermen's Research Foundation |
| ALBWG | Albacore Working Group |
| CCS | California Current System |
| CEA | Cooperative Enforcement Agreements |
| CEP | Cooperative Enforcement Program |
| CI | Confidence Interval |
| CMM | Conservation and Management Measures |
| CPC | Contracting Party or Cooperating non-Contracting Party |
| CPUE | Catch Per Unit Effort |
| DFO | Department of Fisheries and Oceans (Canada) |
| DWG | Data Working Group |
| EFH | Essential Fish Habitat |
| F | Fishing Mortality |
| FMP | Fishery Management Plan |
| HCR | Harvest Control Rules |
| HMS | Highly Migratory Species |
| IATTC | Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission |
| JEA | Joint Enforcement Agreements |
| ISC | International Scientific Committee |
| ISSF | International Seafood Sustainability Foundation |
| LRP | Limited Reference Point |
| M | Natural Mortality |
| MSE | Management Strategy Evaluation |
| MSY | Maximum Sustainable Yield |
| NC | Northern Committee |
| NMFS | National Marine Fisheries Service |
| NPALB | North Pacific Albacore |
| OLE | Office of Law Enforcement |
| OSP | Oregon State Police |
| PFMC | Pacific Fishery Management Council |
| SAC | Scientific Advisory Committee |
| SPC | Pacific Community |
| SPR | Spawning Potential Ratio |
| SS | Stock Synthesis |
| SSB | Spawning Stock Biomass |
| SWFSC | Southwest Fisheries Science Center |
| TRP | Target Reference Point |
| UoA | Unit of Assessment |
| UoC | Unit of Certification |
| WCPFC | Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission |
| WDFW | Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife |

3 Executive summary

The AAFA & WFOA North Pacific Albacore Tuna Pole & Line and Troll/Jig Fishery was originally certified in August 2007, and has completed two reassessments, with the most recent certification occurring in June 2018 (Stern-Pirlot, Stocker and Wilson, 2018). This report contains the findings of the second surveillance cycle in relation to this fishery. A remote surveillance audit site visit was carried out May 24th – 27th 2021.

No issues were identified, and no changes in the fishery occurred that would result in a change in certification from the reassessment. The fishery had no new conditions, and the single open Condition has been judged to be on target. Change to the client action plan and condition deadline are indicated in the relevant section of the report and are a result of MSC's approval of a variation to align harvest control rule conditions deadlines across all RFMO-managed stocks, and a recent derogation by the MSC to extend deadlines on management-related conditions by one year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. No performance indicators were rescored.

MRAG Americas confirms that this fishery continues to meet the MSC Fisheries Standard and shall remain certified.

4 Report details

4.1 Surveillance information

Table 1 Surveillance information

| | | |
|---|---|------------------|
| 1 | Fishery name | |
| | AAFA and WFOA North Pacific albacore tuna | |
| 2 | Unit(s) of Assessment (UoA) | |
| | Albacore tuna (<i>Thunnus alalunga</i>) Hooks and lines – trolling lines Northeast Pacific (FAO Area 67) | |
| 3 | Date certified | Date of expiry |
| | 14 June 2018 | 13 December 2023 |
| 4 | Surveillance level and type | |
| | Level 5, Off-site Surveillance program has changed. See Appendix 2 for details. | |
| 5 | Surveillance number | |
| | 1st Surveillance | |
| | 2nd Surveillance | X |
| | 3rd Surveillance | |
| | 4th Surveillance | |
| | Other (expedited etc) | |
| 6 | Surveillance team leader | |
| | Ms. Amanda Stern-Pirlot (Team leader and Principle 2). Amanda is an M.Sc graduate of the University of Bremen, Center for Marine Tropical Ecology (ZMT) in marine ecology and fisheries biology. Ms. Stern-Pirlot joined MRAG Americas in mid-June 2014 as MSC Certification Manager (now Director of the Fishery Certification Division) and is currently serving on several different assessment teams as team leader and team member. She has worked together with other scientists, conservationists, fisheries managers and producer groups on international fisheries sustainability issues for over 15 years. With the Institute for Marine Research (IFM-GEOMAR) in Kiel, Germany, she led a work package on simple indicators for sustainable within the EU-funded international cooperation project INCOFISH, followed by five years within the Standards Department at the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) in London, developing standards, policies and assessment methods informed by best practices in fisheries management around the globe. Most recently she has worked with the Alaska pollock industry as a resources analyst, within the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council process, focusing on bycatch and ecosystem-based management issues, and managing the day-to-day operations of the offshore pollock cooperative. She has co-authored a | |

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| | <p>dozen publications on fisheries sustainability in the developing world and the functioning of the MSC as an instrument for transforming fisheries to a sustainable basis.</p> <p>MRAG Americas confirms that Ms. Stern-Pirlot meets the competency criteria in Annex PC for team leader as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• She has an appropriate university degree and more than five years' experience in management and research in fisheries;• She has passed the MSC team leader training;• She has the required competencies described in Table PC1, section 2;• She has passed the MSC Traceability training module;• She meets ISO 19011 training requirements;• She has undertaken two fishery assessments as a team member in the last five years, and• She has experience in applying different types of interviewing and facilitation techniques and is able to effectively communicate with clients and other stakeholders. <p>In addition, she has the appropriate skills and experience required to serve as a Principle 2 assessor as described in FCP Annex PC table PC3.</p> <p>MRAG Americas confirms that Ms. Stern-Pirlot has no conflicts of interest in relation to the fishery under assessment.</p> |
| 7 | <p>Surveillance team members <i>[remove if not applicable]</i></p> <p>Ms. Erin Wilson (Principle 3). Ms. Wilson joined MRAG Americas, Inc. in February 2015, where she currently works as a Senior Fisheries Consultant and Program Manager. She has worked as a team member for several MSC assessments and conducts routine audits for the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF). Prior to joining MRAG Americas, she worked at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) as a Natural Resource Specialist and Biological Technician for the Oregon Marine Reserves. She has collaborated on a multitude of projects that focus on marine science and conservation in both a biological and social science aspect. She received a M.Sc. in Marine Resource Management from Oregon State University and a B.S. in Zoology (with a marine emphasis) from Colorado State University, along with a Spanish minor.</p> <p>MRAG Americas confirms that Ms. Wilson meets the competency criteria in Annex PC for team members as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• She has an appropriate university degree and more than three years' experience in management and research in fisheries;• She has undertaken at least two MSC fishery assessments or surveillance site visits in the last five years;• She has passed the MSC team leader and team member training in the last 5 years;• She is able to score a fishery using the default assessment tree and describe how conditions are set and monitored;• She has passed the MSC Traceability training module. <p>In addition, she has the appropriate skills and experience required to serve as a Principle 3 assessor as described in FCP Annex PC table PC3, and MRAG Americas confirms she has no conflicts of interest in relation to the fishery under assessment.</p> <p>Dr. Max Stocker (Principle 1). Dr. Stocker has 40 years of extensive experience in fisheries science. He is currently Consultant for CABs working on Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) fisheries certification surveillance audits and assessment projects. From 1978-2006, Dr. Stocker held the position of research scientist with DFO at the Pacific Biological Station in Nanaimo B.C. conducting population dynamic studies, conducting peer reviewed stock assessments of many marine species, and communicating results to fisheries managers and stakeholders. Before his retirement from DFO in 2006 he was the lead Canadian scientist for highly migratory species for the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) and the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC). He served as co-chair of the Stock Assessment Working Group of the Scientific Committee of the WCPFC and chaired the ISC Albacore Working Group. He authored and co-authored over 90 scientific papers and reports and made over 50 presentations in national and international scientific meetings. Dr. Stocker chaired the Pacific Scientific Advice Review Committee</p> |

| | |
|----|---|
| | <p>(PSARC) for many years and edited and published over 30 advisory documents on the stock status of marine species and the implications of harvest management on these stocks. Additionally, Dr. Stocker served as in-house stock assessment consultant to the New Zealand Fishing Industry Board in the early 1990s conducting peer reviewed stock assessments, participating in the peer review process, and advising the Board on inshore and deepwater fisheries.</p> <p>MRAG Americas confirms that Dr. Stocker meets the competency criteria in Annex PC for team members as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• He has an appropriate university degree and more than five years' experience in management and research in fisheries;• He has undertaken at least two MSC fishery assessments or surveillance site visits in the last five years;• He is able to score a fishery using the default assessment tree and describe how conditions are set and monitored. <p>In addition, he has the appropriate skills and experience required to serve as a Principle 1 assessor as described in FCP Annex PC table PC3, and MRAG Americas confirms he has no conflicts of interest in relation to the fishery under assessment.</p> <p>A discussion between team members regarding conflict of interest and biases was held and none were identified.</p> |
| 8 | <p>Audit/review time and location</p> <p>A remote surveillance audit was held May 24th - 27th, and June 7th, 2021.</p> <p>The MSC's Derogation 3: Covid-19 Fishery and Chain of Custody Remote Auditing enables CABs to conduct reassessments and surveillance audits remotely when "International, national, or local travel restrictions that impact the assessment team or auditor or certificate holder."</p> <p>https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html</p> |
| 9 | <p>Assessment and review activities</p> <p>The surveillance reviewed any changes in science and management and monitored progress against the single open condition.</p> |
| 10 | <p>Stakeholder opportunities</p> <p>Participate in the site visit: all team members are available to meet in person or remotely (FCP v2.2 7.28.15.b).</p> <p>Provide input or comments to the team regarding the Surveillance Audit. Stakeholders must use the MSC Template for Stakeholder Input into Surveillance Audits v1.0</p> |

4.2 Background

4.2.1 Operations overview and impacts from COVID-19

As with most of the fisheries in 2020, the general operations of the North Pacific Albacore fishery experienced an overall negative impact from COVID-19. Because COVID-19 closed all the restaurants, their market was reported to be extremely tough in 2020. Weather conditions also caused the fish to be further out than the smaller vessels could go after. Dockside monitoring and precautionary protocols were put in place to keep people safe. The Council and Science Center reported that the impacts from COVID-19 were not too severe as meetings were still held virtually and most of the staff were able to work from home. COVID-19 did delay the tagging program; however, it was noted that this program may be postponed anyway due to the lack of useful results.

4.2.2 Changes to scientific base of information-including stock assessments

Principle 1

Changes to the scientific base of information since the 1st surveillance audit conducted in 2019 (MRAG, 2019) are reviewed in this section of the report. The Public Certification Report of the 2nd re-assessment was published in 2018 (Stern-Pirlot, Stocker and Wilson, 2018).

Fishery observations

The U.S.A. albacore troll and pole-and-line fishery in the North Pacific Ocean started in the early 1900s. The fishery currently operates in waters between the U.S.A. West Coast and 140°W longitude (Figure 1). Fishing usually starts in May or June and ends in October or November. In 2019, there were 552 U.S. albacore troll vessels fishing in the north Pacific Ocean, up from 452 in 2018 (ISC, 2020b).

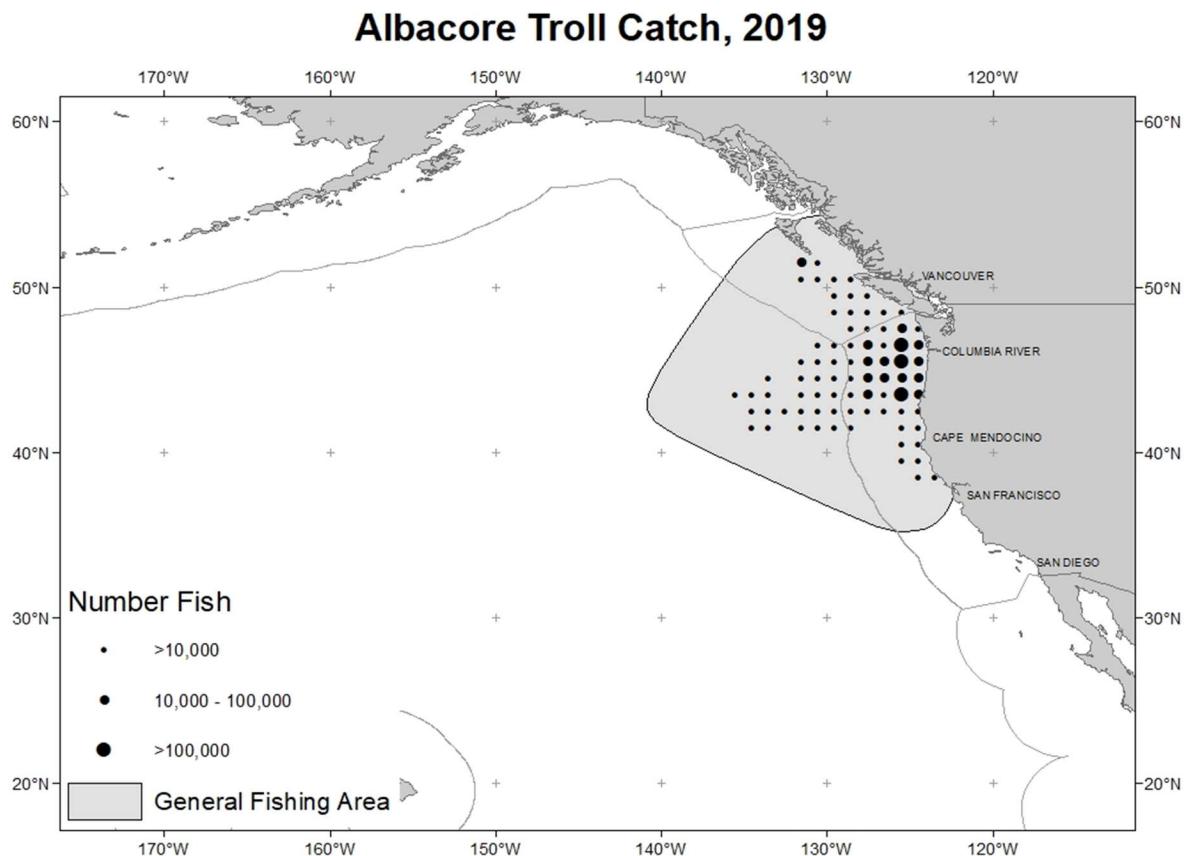


Figure 1 Spatial distribution of reported logbook fishing catch by the 2019 U.S. albacore troll and pole-and-line fishery in number of fish. The size of circles is proportional to the amount of catch. Catch in some areas is not shown in order to preserve data confidentiality (ISC, 2020b).

The U.S.A. troll and pole-and-line fishery catches almost exclusively albacore. There are minor bycatches of Pacific bluefin tuna (*Thunnus orientalis*), eastern Pacific bonito (*Sarda chiliensis lineolata*), yellowtail (*Seriola lalandi*), and mahi mahi (*Coryphaena hippurus*). Since 1985, the albacore catch has ranged from a low of 1,845 t in 1991 to a high of 16,962 t in 1996 (ISC, 2020b). In 2018 and 2019 the troll fleet caught 7,728 t and 7,797 t of albacore, respectively (ISC, 2020b). The albacore catch by sport vessels was 1,364 t in 2019 compared to 381 t in 2018 and 371 t in 2017 (ISC, 2020b).

Generally, sizes of albacore caught in the albacore troll and pole and line fishery range between 55 cm fork length (8.5 pounds) and 90 cm (32 pounds). Weight distribution of the catch for 2019 is shown in Figure 2. State fishery personnel collect the size data according to sampling instructions provided by NOAA Fisheries, who maintain the database.

Cooperative fishermen also collect size data on selected fishing trips to augment data collected through the port sampling program (ISC, 2020b).

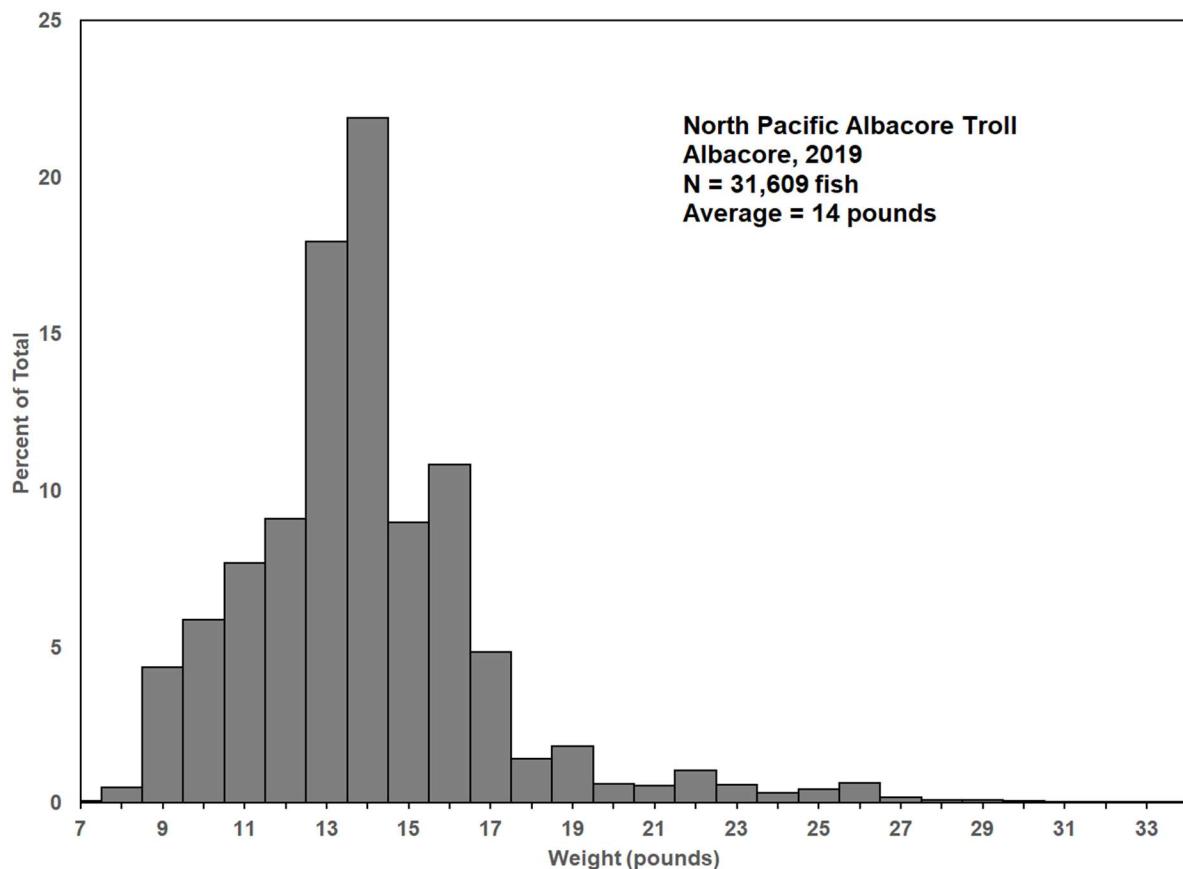


Figure 2 . Size distribution of albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) caught by the 2019 U.S. albacore troll and pole-and-line fishery (ISC, 2020b).

In total 51,688 t of North Pacific albacore were caught in 2019 (ISC, 2020c). Of the 51,688 t caught 28,167 t of albacore were caught by the troll and pole-and line fleet (UoA catch), and 7,798 t were caught by 552 vessels that are members of the client group (UoC catch) (ISC, 2020b). In 2018 a total of 49,850 t of albacore were caught by the troll and pole and line fleet (UoA catch), and 7,728 t were caught by members of the client group (UoC catch) (Table 3).

The Northern Committee (NC) of the WCPFC reviewed the summary table of members' updated information on North Pacific Albacore fishing effort data (WCPFC, 2020a; Attachment E). NC noted that there have been significant data gaps for prior years, including the 2002-2004 reference period. In some areas the effort reported was for the entire area north of the equator, not just north of 20 degrees north. To resolve this problem the NC encouraged members to hold intersessional discussions and prepare proposals for amending CMM 2019-03 as appropriate and agreed to hold further discussions at NC17 (WCPFC, 2020a).

For 2019, the United States reported 11,094 and 11,013 vessel days of fishing effort in the North Pacific for 2018 and 2019 respectively. (WCPFC, 2020a; Attachment E). These US effort levels are below the average effort levels for 2002-2004 of 13,311 vessel days which shall not be increased according to CMM 2019-03, which replaces CMM 2005-03 (WCPFC, 2019).

2020 Stock Assessment

Since the 1st Surveillance Audit (MRAG, 2019), the Albacore Working Group (ALBWG) of the International Scientific Committee for Tuna-and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) conducted a new stock assessment in 2020 (ISC, 2020a). The ALBWG held an electronic workshop on 5 – 14 and 20 April 2020 (eastern Pacific time) and 6 – 15 and 21 April 2020 (western Pacific time). The objectives of the workshop were to: (1) complete a new assessment of the North Pacific albacore tuna stock, and (2) to provide scientific information on current stock status, future trends and research needs of North Pacific albacore tuna (ISC, 2020c).

ISC (2020d) provides a record of discussions and decisions of the ALBWG during the electronic workshop in which the 2020 stock assessment of North Pacific albacore was conducted. Nine working papers were submitted to the workshop. The working papers are publicly available through the ISC website (<http://isc.fra.go.jp/>).

The 2020 stock assessment modelling period was from 1994 to 2018. All north Pacific catch and size composition data from ISC member and non-member states were compiled for the assessment. Important changes were made to the base case model in this assessment compared to the previous assessment in 2017 (ISC, 2020a):

- Input sample sizes of the size composition data were allowed to vary between fisheries and over time, depending on the sampling that occurred, because of improvements in data preparation;
- The primary Japan pole-and-line fisheries were subdivided into seasonal fisheries, and the selectivity of the two most important Japanese pole-and-line fisheries were allowed to vary annually; and
- The Japan longline fisheries that caught albacore in the main spawning area were also subdivided into seasonal fisheries with separate selectivity patterns.

The stock was assessed using a length-based, age-, and sex-structured Stock Synthesis (SS Version 3.30.14.08) model. The model assumed that there is instantaneous mixing of albacore on a quarterly basis. Biological parameters including growth, natural mortality (M) and stock-recruitment steepness, were the same as for the 2017 assessment (ISC, 2017). The base case model was fitted to the F09 index (1996-2018) and all representative size composition data in a likelihood-based statistical framework.

The ISC Plenary endorsed the North Pacific Albacore stock assessment and considers it to be the best available scientific information on the stock (ISC, 2020c).

Stock status

The following stock status summary was adopted from the 2020 stock assessment of North Pacific albacore prepared by the ALBWG (ISC, 2020a). The total biomass estimates in the first quarter, which includes all age-1+ male and female albacore, have also fluctuated during the assessment period, ranging from a low of 617,363 t in 2016 to a high of 916,529 t in 1995. Estimated total stock biomass (males and female at age-1+) shows a declining trend at the beginning of the time series until 2000. From 2000-2018 the biomass trend is relatively stable. (Figure 3) (ISC, 2020a).

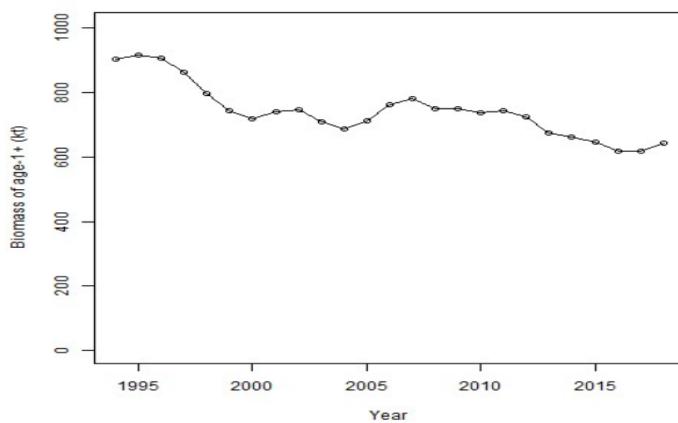


Figure 3 Maximum likelihood estimates of total age-1+ biomass of North Pacific albacore tuna (*Thunnus alalunga*). Estimates of total biomass are based on estimates from Quarter 1 of each year. (ISC, 2020a).

Estimated female spawning stock biomass (SSB) exhibits a similar population trend to the total stock biomass trend, with an initial decline until 2003 followed by fluctuations without a clear trend through 2018 (Figure 4). In 2018 (terminal year of the assessment), female SSB was estimated to be $58,858 \pm 15,871$ t. The LRP (20%SSB_{current, F=0}) adopted by the WCPFC is based on dynamic SSB₀ and has fluctuated between 24,870 to 31,001 t during the assessment period (1994-2018). The maximum likelihood estimate of female SSB has been above the LRP throughout the assessment period (ISC, 2020a).

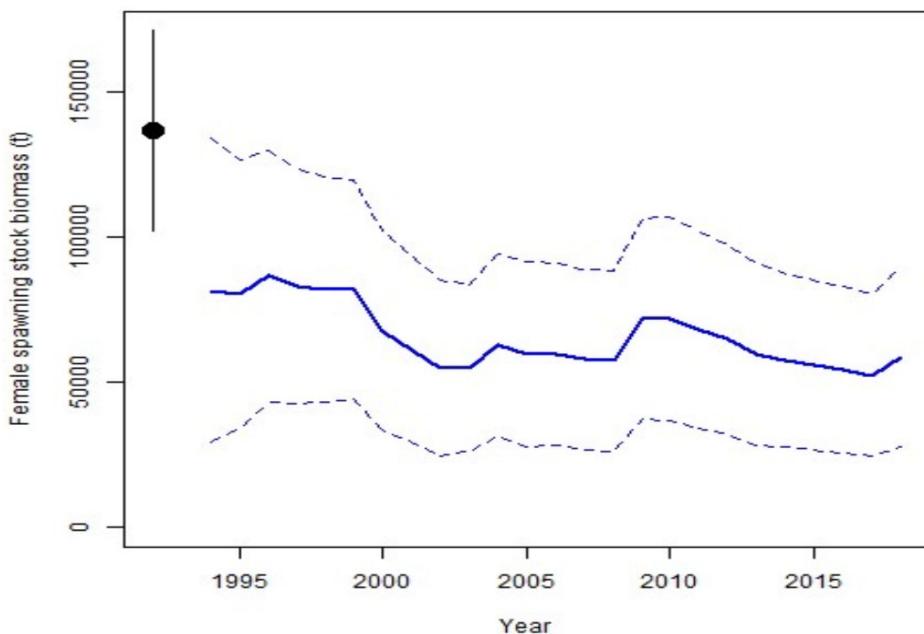


Figure 4 Maximum likelihood estimates of female spawning biomass (SSB) (solid blue line) of north Pacific albacore tuna (*Thunnus alalunga*). Dashed lines indicate 95% confidence intervals of female SSB. Closed black circle and error bars are the maximum likelihood estimate and 95% confidence intervals of unfished female spawning biomass, SSB_0 . Estimates of female SSB are based on estimates from Quarter 2 of each year (ISC, 2020a).

Estimated recruitment reached historical lows in 2014 (~125 million fish; 95% CI: 69 – 180 million fish) and 2015 (~113 million fish; 95% CI: 56 – 170 million fish) (Figure 5). These historically low recruitments may have contributed to relatively low catches of fisheries catching juvenile albacore in recent years. It is currently unclear whether recruitment improved after 2015 because recruitment during the terminal years of the assessment (2016 – 2018) have large uncertainties (ISC, 2020a)

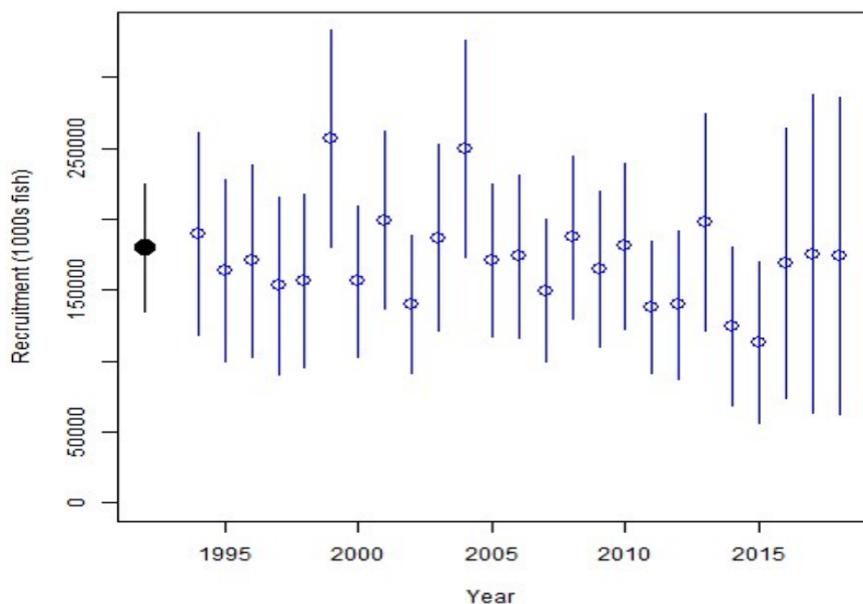


Figure 5 Maximum likelihood estimates of age-0 recruitment (open circles) of north Pacific albacore tuna (*Thunnus alalunga*). Vertical bars indicate 95% confidence intervals of recruitment estimates. Estimates of age-0 recruitment are based on estimates from QTR 2 of each year (ISC, 2020a).

The ALBWG uses spawning potential ratio (SPR) to describe the fishing on the North Pacific albacore stock. The SPR of a population is the ratio of female SSB per recruit under fishing to the female SSB per recruit under unfished conditions. The ALBWG uses 1-SPR (the reduction in female SSB per recruit due to fishing) to describe the overall fishing intensity on the albacore stock. The fishing intensity (1-SPR) on the north Pacific albacore stock has fluctuated between 0.40 and 0.71 during the assessment period (1994 – 2018). The estimated mean fishing intensity during 2015 – 2017 was 0.50 ± 0.07 , which corresponds to a moderate level of exploitation (ISC, 2020a).

Instantaneous fishing mortality at age (F-at-age) is similar in both sexes through age-5, peaking at age-4 and declining to a low at age-6, after which males experience higher F-at-age than females up to age 12. Juvenile albacore aged 2 to 4 years comprised approximately 70% of the annual catch between 1994 and 2018. The dominance of juveniles is also reflected in the larger impact of surface fisheries (primarily troll, pole-and-line), which remove juvenile fish, relative to longline fisheries, which primarily remove adult fish (Figure 6) (ISC, 2020a).

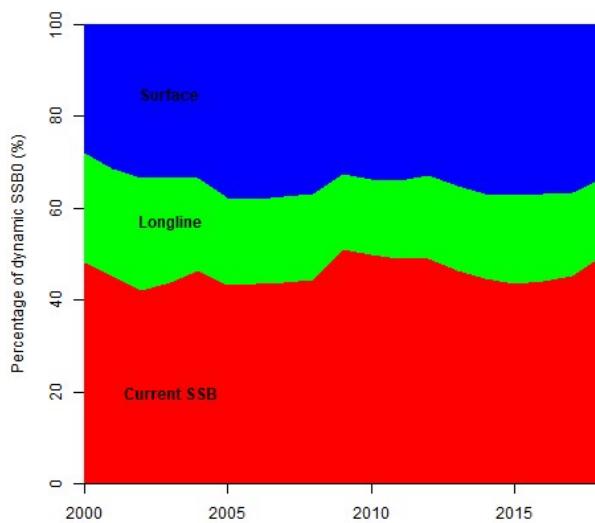


Figure 6 Fishery impact analysis on north Pacific albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) showing female spawning biomass (SSB) (red) estimated by the 2020 base case model as a percentage of dynamic unfished female SSB (SSB0). Colored areas show the relative proportion of fishing impact attributed to longline (USA, Japan,

Chinese-Taipei, Korea, China, Vanuatu and others) (green) and surface (USA, Canada, and Japan) (blue) fisheries (primarily troll and pole-and-line gear but including all other gears except longline) (ISC, 2020a).

Stock status is depicted in relation to the limit reference point (LRP; 20%SSB_{current,F=0}) adopted by the Northern Committee of the WCPFC (<https://www.wcpfc.int/meetings/nc13>) for the stock and the equivalent fishing intensity (F_{20%}; calculated as 1-SPR_{20%}) (Figure 7). Fishing intensity is considered a proxy of fishing mortality. The Kobe plot shows that the estimated female SSB has never fallen below the LRP since 1994, even though large uncertainty in the terminal year exists (2018). It is noted, that even when alternative hypotheses about key model uncertainties such as growth were evaluated, the point estimate of female SSB in 2018 (SSB₂₀₁₈) did not fall below the LRP, although the risk increases with this more extreme assumption (ISC, 2020a).

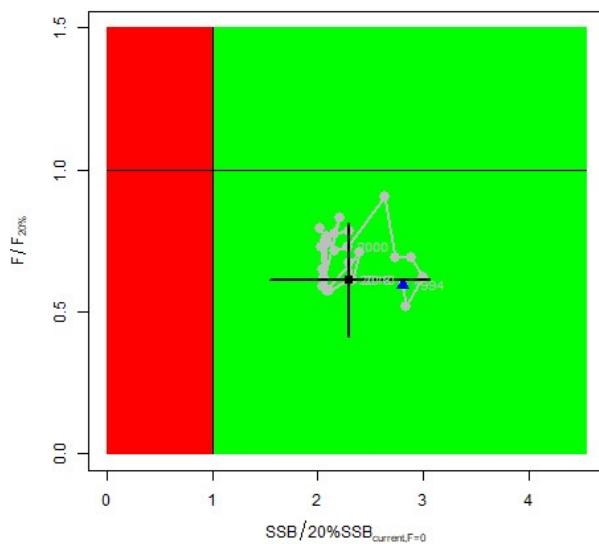


Figure 7 Kobe plot showing the status of the north Pacific albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) stock relative to the 20%SSB_{current, F=0} biomass-based limit reference point, and equivalent fishing intensity (F_{20%}; calculated as 1-SPR_{20%}) over the base case modelling period (1994-2018). Blue triangle indicates the start year (1994) and black circle with 95% confidence intervals indicates the terminal year (2018). The coefficients of variation of the SSB/20%SSB_{current, F=0} ratios are assumed to be the same as for the SSB/20%SSB₀ ratios. Fs in this figure are not based on instantaneous fishing mortality. Instead, the Fs are indicators of fishing intensity based on SPR and calculated as 1-SPR so that the Fs reflects changes in fishing mortality. SPR is the equilibrium SSB per recruit that would result from the current year's pattern and intensity of fishing mortality. Current fishing intensity is calculated as the average fishing intensity during 2015-2017 (F₂₀₁₅₋₂₀₁₇), while current female spawning biomass refers to the terminal year of this assessment (i.e., 2018) (ISC, 2020a).

Biological reference points were computed from the base case model (Table 2). The point estimate (\pm SE) of maximum sustainable yield (MSY – which includes male and female juvenile and adult fish) was $102,236 \pm 12,862$ t and the point estimate of female SSB that produces MSY (SSB_{MSY}) was estimated at $19,535 \pm 2,395$ t. Current F (F₂₀₁₅₋₂₀₁₇) was defined as the average 1-SPR for the years 2015-2017 because terminal year estimates of fishing intensity were generally considered to be uncertain. Current SSB (SSB₂₀₁₈) was defined as the female SSB in 2018. The ratio of F₂₀₁₅₋₂₀₁₇/F_{MSY} was estimated to be 0.60 ± 0.09 , and the ratio of SSB₂₀₁₈/20%SSB_{current, F=0} was estimated to be 2.30 ± 0.41 . Current fishing intensity (F₂₀₁₅₋₂₀₁₇) is likely at or below F_{MSY} and all MSY-proxy reference points, and SSB₂₀₁₈ were estimated to be well above the LRP threshold (Table 2). Note that F₂₀₁₅₋₂₀₁₇ and F-based reference points were not based on the average instantaneous fishing mortality. Instead, F₂₀₁₅₋₂₀₁₇ and F-based reference points were indices of fishing intensity based on SPR and calculated as 1-SPR so that they reflected changes in fishing mortality (ISC, 2020a).

Table 2 Estimates of maximum sustainable yield (MSY), female spawning biomass (SSB), and fishing intensity (F) based reference point ratios for north Pacific albacore tuna for: 1) the base case model; 2) an important sensitivity model due to uncertainty in growth parameters; and 3) a model representing an update of the 2017 base case model to 2020 data. SSB₀ and SSB_{MSY} are the unfished biomass of mature female fish and at MSY, respectively. The Fs in this table are indicators of fishing intensity based on SPR and calculated as 1-SPR so

that the Fs reflect changes in fishing mortality (e.g., F20% is calculated as 1-SPR20%). SPR is the equilibrium SSB per recruit that would result from the current year's pattern and intensity of fishing mortality. Current fishing intensity is based on the average fishing intensity during 2015-2017 ($F_{2015-2017}$). 20%SSB_{current}, F=0 is 20% of the current unfished dynamic female spawning biomass, where current refers to the terminal year of this assessment (i.e., 2018). The model representing an update of the 2017 base case model is highly similar to but not identical to the 2017 base case model due to changes in data preparation and model structure.

| Quantity | Base Case | Growth CV = 0.06 for L_{inf} | Update of 2017 base case model to 2020 data |
|--|-----------|-----------------------------------|---|
| MSY (t) ^A | 102,236 | 84,385 | 113,522 |
| SSB _{MSY} (t) ^B | 19,535 | 16,404 | 21,431 |
| SSB ₀ (t) ^B | 136,833 | 113,331 | 152,301 |
| SSB ₂₀₁₈ (t) ^B | 58,858 | 34,872 | 77,077 |
| SSB ₂₀₁₈ /20%SSB _{current, F=0} ^B | 2.30 | 1.63 | 2.63 |
| $F_{2015-2017}$ | 0.50 | 0.64 | 0.43 |
| $F_{2015-2017}/F_{MSY}$ | 0.60 | 0.77 | 0.52 |
| $F_{2015-2017}/F_{0.1}$ | 0.57 | 0.75 | 0.49 |
| $F_{2015-2017}/F_{10\%}$ | 0.55 | 0.71 | 0.48 |
| $F_{2015-2017}/F_{20\%}$ | 0.62 | 0.80 | 0.54 |
| $F_{2015-2017}/F_{30\%}$ | 0.71 | 0.91 | 0.62 |
| $F_{2015-2017}/F_{40\%}$ | 0.83 | 1.06 | 0.72 |
| $F_{2015-2017}/F_{50\%}$ | 1.00 | 1.27 | 0.86 |

A – MSY includes male and female juvenile and adult fish

B – Spawning stock biomass (SSB) in this assessment refers to mature female biomass only.

Based on these findings, ISC20 provided the following information on the status of the North Pacific albacore stock (ISC, 2020c):

1. The stock is likely not overfished relative to the limit reference point adopted by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (20%SSB_{current, F=0}), and
2. No F-based reference points have been adopted to evaluate overfishing. Stock status was evaluated against seven potential reference points. Current fishing intensity ($F_{2015-2017}$) is likely at or below all seven potential reference points (see ratios in Table 2).

Conservation information

The ALBW conducted two 10-yr harvest scenarios to evaluate impacts on future female SSB: F constant at the 2015-2017 rate ($F_{2015-2017}$) and constant catch (average of 2013-2017 = 69,354 t). Median female SSB is expected to increase to 62,873 t (95% CI: 45,123 - 80,622 t) by 2028, with a low probability of being below the LRP by 2028, if fishing intensity remains at the 2015-2017 level (Figure 8) (ISC 2020a).

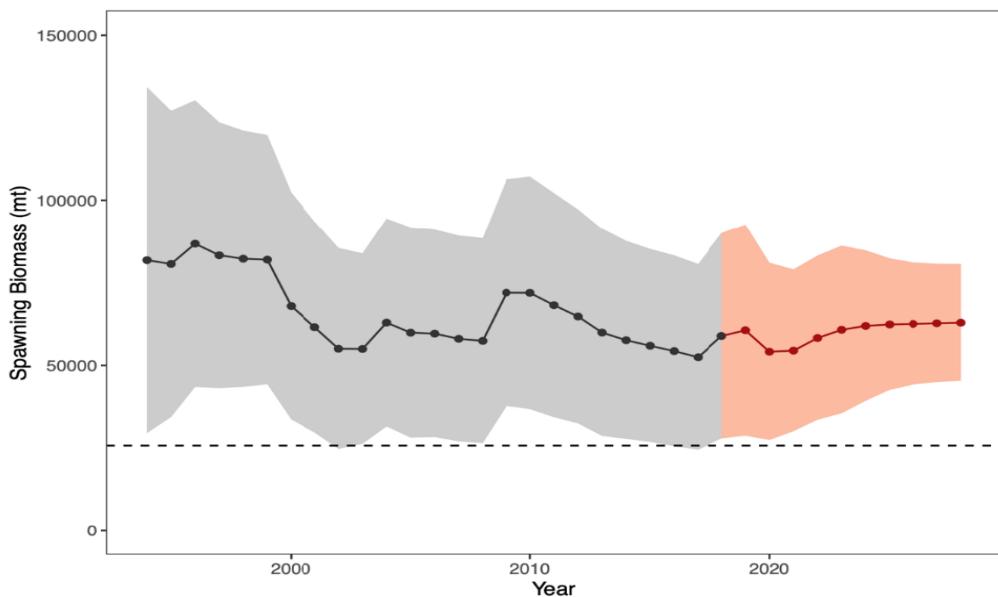


Figure 8 Historical and future trajectory of north Pacific albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) female spawning biomass (SSB) under a constant fishing intensity (F2015-2017) harvest scenario. Future recruitment is based on the expected recruitment variability. Black line and gray area indicate maximum likelihood estimates and 95% confidence intervals (CI), respectively, of historical female SSB, which includes parameter uncertainty. Red line and red area indicate mean value and 95% CI of projected female SSB, which only includes future recruitment variability and SSB uncertainty in the terminal year. Dashed black line indicates the 20%SSB_{current F=0} limit reference point for 2018 (25,573 t) (ISC, 2020a).

If future catch is held constant at 69,354 t, then the female SSB is expected to increase to 66,313 t (95% CI: 33,463 - 99,164 t) by 2028 and the probability that female SSB will be below the LRP by 2028 is slightly higher than the constant F scenario (Figure 9). Although the projections appear to underestimate the future uncertainty in female SSB trends, the probability of breaching the LRP in the future is likely small if the future fishing intensity is around current levels (ISC, 2020a).

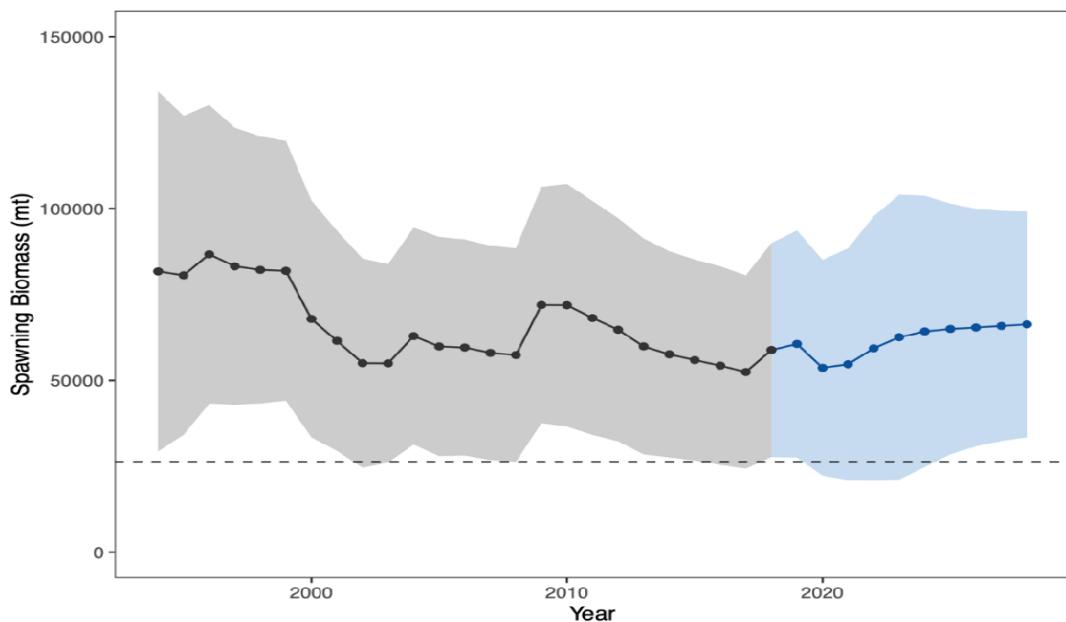


Figure 9 Historical and future trajectory of north Pacific albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) female spawning biomass (SSB) under a constant catch (average 2013-2017 = 69,354 t) harvest scenario. Future recruitment is based on the expected recruitment variability. Black line and grey area indicate maximum likelihood estimates and 95% confidence intervals (CI), respectively, of historical female SSB, which includes parameter uncertainty. Blue line and blue area indicate mean value and 95% CI of projected female SSB, which only includes future recruitment variability and SSB uncertainty in the terminal year. Dashed black line is the 20%SSB_{current F=0} limit reference point for 2018 (25,573 t) (ISC, 2020a).

Based on these findings, ISC20 provided the following conservation information (ISC, 2020c):

1. If a constant fishing intensity ($F_{2015-2017}$) is applied to the stock, then median female spawning biomass is expected to increase to 62,873 t and there will be a low probability of falling below the limit reference point established by the WCPFC by 2028.
2. If a constant average catch ($C_{2013-2017} = 69,354$ t) is removed from the stock in the future, then the median female spawning biomass is also expected to increase to 66,313 t and the probability that SSB falls below the LRP by 2028 will be slightly higher than the constant fishing intensity scenario.

The Commission noted the stock status of North Pacific albacore, Pacific Bluefin tuna, and North Pacific striped marlin as presented by the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the Northern Pacific Ocean (ISC) (WCPFC, 2020b; Par.141; p. 30), without further comment.

4.2.3 Harvest strategy and harvest control rules

In response to the scientific advice resulting from North Pacific albacore stock assessments conducted by the ALBWG in 2005, both the IATTC and the WCPFC adopted management measures for this stock. In 2005, the IATTC adopted C-05-02 (with supplemental Resolution C-13-03 in 2013) which resolved that: “The total level of fishing effort for North Pacific albacore tuna in the Eastern Pacific Ocean not to be increased beyond current levels.” The resolution also requires all fishing entities within the IATTC convention Area to take necessary measures to ensure that their vessels’ fishing effort is not increased, and that they report all albacore catches every six months.

The WCPFC adopted CMM-05-03, in 2005 (now CMM-2019-03), that: “The total level of fishing effort for North Pacific albacore in the Convention Area north of the equator shall not be increased beyond current levels.”

At the 12th Meeting of the IATTC’s Scientific Advisory Committee it was recommended that CPCs continue to implement Resolutions C-05-02 and C-18-03, presently in force (IATTC, 2021b). It is noted that the major regional management measures harmonized between IATTC and WCPFC are still in place in 2020.

The NC reviewed and adopted the 2021-2023 Work Programme for the Northern Committee (WCPFC, 2020a). The Work Programme Objectives for 2021-2023 for North Pacific albacore are: A) Review members’ reports on their

implementation of CMM 2019-03, and B) Implement the Interim Harvest Strategy, including: (1) monitor if LRP is breached; (2) continue to work to establish the target reference point (TRP) and other elements of harvest strategies, if appropriate based on MSE; (3) recommend any changes to CMM. And annually review effectiveness of North Pacific albacore measure (CMM 2019-03), including members' reports on their interpretation and implementation of fishing effort control (WCPFC, 2020a; Attachment F).

Management strategy evaluation (MSE) is a process used to evaluate the consequences of alternative harvest strategies against pre-defined fishery and conservation objectives for a stock, considering uncertainties in environmental, biological and management systems and the likelihood that harvest strategies are able to achieve the chosen objectives. MSE has the advantage of revealing the trade-offs among a range of possible management decisions to managers and stakeholders and delineate assessment challenges to scientists (IATTC, 2021a).

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Northern Committee (WCPFC-NC) and the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) endorsed an MSE process by the ALBWG of the ISC to refine the interim harvest strategy currently in place for North Pacific Albacore tuna and adopt a target reference point (TRP) and consider a possible threshold reference point. The MSE results for North Pacific Albacore Tuna were presented at the 12th Meeting of the IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee (IATTC, 2021a). The Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) also recommended that CPCs use results of the concluded MSE process to establish reference points and harvest control rule for North Pacific albacore tuna (IATTC, 2021b). The report, coupled with the results of runs from previous iterations in this process, represent a substantial amount of information for WCPFC-NC and IATTC member countries and managers on which to base decisions concerning harvest strategy for this stock. The report will be reviewed by ISC21 in July 2021.

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) established a limit reference point (LRP) of 20%SSB_{CURRENT, F=0} (SSB: Female Spawning Stock Biomass) for North Pacific albacore (NPALB). So far, no formal Target Reference Point (TRP) and no Harvest Control Rule (HCR) have been adopted.

The audit team concluded that progress is being made by IATTC and WCPFC toward establishing a TRP and HCRs for North Pacific albacore. However, there is no need to rescore PI 1.2.2 (Harvest Control Rules). Condition 1 therefore remains open.

4.2.4 Research update

For the 2020 North Pacific albacore tuna stock assessment workshop the ALBWG prepared nine papers which were summarized in the workshop report (ISC, 2020d).

Kiyofuji (2020) described quarterly catch data from 2000-2015 provided by the SPC and IATTC submitted by non-ISC members (China and Vanuatu) as a record for future assessment. The data used for the 2020 stock assessment were compared to data used in the 2017 stock assessment Kiyofuji (2020: Table 2).

Two papers dealt with abundance indices. Fujioka *et al.* (2020) attempted to develop adult and immature abundance indices (i.e., standardized CPUEs) using Japanese longline fisheries data over a long period of time from 1976 to 2018. The standardized CPUE was calculated separately for two periods of 1976-1993 and 1994-2018, based on the information about historical operational patterns and albacore catch-availability of the fisheries. Matsubara, Akoi and Kiyofuji (2020) summarized the index of Standardized CPUE of North Pacific albacore caught by the Japanese pole-and-line distant water fleet. Standardized CPUE were analyzed from pole and line logbook data from 1972 to 2018 using the same methodologies as was used in the 2017 albacore tuna stock assessment for the analysis of CPUE standardization. Updated CPUE showed annual variations.

Teo *et al.* (2020) performed an analysis of the 2020 North Pacific albacore stock assessment model and made some recommendations to improve the assessment model. The model was developed in a stepwise fashion by incorporating the data submitted by ALBWG members, previously agreed upon model structure and biological parameters, and the best features of the previously suggested improvements. The model was expected to have a main model period of 1994 – 2018. Three types of data were used in this study: fishery-specific catches, size composition, and abundance indices. The geographic area and spatial stratification of this study followed that of the 2017 assessment (Pacific Ocean north of the equator (0°) to 55°N and from 120°E to 100°W).

Ijima (2020) provided preliminary results of a stochastic future projection using SSfuture C++. This work was based on previous work for updating the future projections program for North Pacific albacore which was presented at the ISC Albacore Working Group Intercessional Workshop in Shimizu, Japan (Ijima, 2019).

James, Dewar and Teo (2020a) reviewed the available age and growth data and determined that the sex-specific von Bertalanffy growth model generated by Xu *et al.* (2014) and currently used in the albacore stock assessment is still the best available science. The ALBWG agreed to use the same growth model used in the 2017 assessment (ISC, 2020d). The ALBWG also reviewed and discussed research on sex identification of fish using genetics methods (Craig and Hyde, 2020) and biological sampling plan (James, Dewar and Teo, 2020b).

At the stock assessment workshop, Desiree Tommasi (MSE specialist) provided an update on progress of the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) for albacore (ISC, 2020d). Tommasi and Teo (2020) showed temporal trends in the effort data and assessed if fishing mortality as estimated by the base case operating model is correlated with changes in effort. Japanese effort, both for the longline and surface fleet, has decline from 1993 to present. Effort of the U.S. and Canadian surface fleet has remained relatively stable. Chinese Taipei's longline effort has been relatively stable since the mid-2000s. U.S. longline effort, Korean longline effort, Vanuatu longline effort, and China's longline effort (numbers of hooks, quarter 1) have increased from 1993 to present. However, albacore fishing mortality showed an increasing trend only for the Japanese surface fleet in the northern area April-June and for the Japanese longline fleet operating in Area 2. Longline effort was often found not to be representative of albacore fishing mortality, possibly because many longline vessels are not targeting albacore. Implications of these results for the second round of NPALB MSE are also discussed and a workplan for the second round of NPALB MSE is presented (Tommasi and Teo, 2020).

NMFS analysed catch logbook data and trawl survey records to investigate how juvenile albacore in the California Current System (CCS) use their oceanographic environment, and how their distributions overlap with the habitats of four key forage species (Muhling *et al.*, 2019). This has relevance for the development of ecosystem models for the CCS, and for the eventual implementation of ecosystem-based fishery management (ISC, 2019).

The American Fishermen's Research Foundation (AFRF) is committed to continue to fund research that supports issues such as status of the stock assessments, management strategy evaluations and other data and science issues that in the long term support the local fishing industry. AFRF had discussions with Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) about revamping their sampling project to support albacore stock assessment more than in the past along with ecosystem projects. The SWFSC want to specifically target some data gaps in the stock assessment as well as continue with the ecosystem work. They hope to re-examine the length-at-age relationship given that it hasn't been reviewed for a decade or so. For this re-examination a different sampling scheme than is currently used will be needed. Other projects AFRF is engaged in is archival tagging of albacore and genetic research. Genetic markers have shown that albacore intermingle across the equator but remain separate stocks (AFRF, 2020).

4.2.5 Potential or actual changes to the management system

NOAA Fisheries and the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) manage the North Pacific albacore stock and fisheries off the West Coast of the U.S., and it is managed under the Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP). There have been no changes in regulations or amendments to the HMS FMP since the last surveillance audit that took place in 2019.

A newsletter from the PFMC stated that the Council found enough new information to justify considering revisions to essential fish habitat (EFH). EFH for HMS has not been updated since the FMP was adopted in 2003. The HMS management team was scheduled to develop a proposed schedule, scope of work and amendment process for Council review in March 2021 (PFMC 2020). National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) – Canada collaborate through the Data Working Group (DWG) to develop a mutually agreed upon summary of catch, effort, and landings of North Pacific albacore landed on the west coast of the U.S. and Canada. Table 3 shows the catch of the U.S and Canadian troll and pole & line vessels in the last 5 years (PFMC 2021).

Table 3 Catch of Albacore by U.S. and Canadian Troll and Pole & Line Vessels in the North Pacific Ocean.
Source: PFMC 2021

| Canadian Fleet 2, 3 | | | | U.S. Fleet 5, 9 | | | | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|------------------|---------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Year | Canadian EEZ (%) | U.S. EEZ (%) | High Seas (%) | Total catch (metric tons) | Logbook coverage (%) ⁴ | U.S. EEZ (%) | Canadian EEZ (%) | High Seas (%) | Total catch (metric tons) ⁶ | Logbook coverage (%) ⁷ |
| 2016 | 54.8 | 44.4 | 0.8 | 2,842 | 100 | 97.9 | 1.4 | 0.7 | 10,777 | 79 |
| 2017 | 11.2 | 75.0 | 13.8 | 1,830 | 100 | 91.2 | 0.2 | 8.7 | 7,430 | 81 |
| 2018 | 30.8 | 68.9 | 0.3 | 2,717 | 100 | 95.4 | 3.8 | 0.8 | 7,728 | 72 |
| 2019 | 51.7 | 44.9 | 3.4 | 2,402 | 100 | 93.0 | 4.2 | 2.8 | 7,797 | 76 |
| 2020 | 71.3 | 19.8 | 8.9 | 2,356 | 100 | 78.1 | 9.3 | 12.6 | 7,316 | 69 |

Internationally, North Pacific albacore is managed by the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). These Commissions rely on the scientific advice of the ISC to develop and adopt international resolutions for conservation and management measures. Working with the U.S. Department of State, NOAA Fisheries domestically implements these conservation and management measures (NOAA 2021). Aside from the recent stock assessment in 2020 for North Pacific Albacore fishery, no new conservation measures have been implemented for this fishery and/or gear types in these management areas.

4.2.6 Personnel changes in science, management, or industry

Dr. John Childers at the SWFSC has reportedly retired. The SWFSC are still in the process of finding his replacement.

4.2.7 Enforcement updates

Enforcement for the North Pacific Albacore fishery is conducted by the West Coast Enforcement Division Office of Law Enforcement (OLE). Under the federally-funded NOAA Cooperative Enforcement Program (CEP), OLE has ongoing Cooperative Enforcement Agreements (CEA) and Joint Enforcement Agreements (JEA) with all three West Coast States: California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon State Police (OSP) – Fish and Wildlife Division, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) (NOAA, 2021). According to the NOAA Annual Enforcement Report to the PFMC for 2020, there were three findings related to Highly Migratory Species. All three findings were related to commercial fishing vessels with HMS landings without valid HMS permits. There was also one High Seas Fisheries Compliance Act infraction, which was due to an expired High Seas permit. None of these findings specifically implicated the North Pacific Albacore fishery (NOAA, 2021).

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5.1 Version details

Table 4 Fisheries program documents versions

| Document | Version number |
|--|----------------------|
| MSC Fisheries Certification Process | Version 2.2 |
| MSC Fisheries Standard | Version 2.0 |
| MSC General Certification Requirements | Version 2.4.1 |
| MSC Surveillance Reporting Template | Version 2.1 |

6 Results

6.1 Surveillance results overview

6.1.1 Summary of conditions

Table 5 Summary of conditions

| Condition number | Condition | Performance Indicator (PI) | Status | PI original score | PI revised score |
|------------------|---|----------------------------|-----------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1 | By the end of the fourth year of certification, the SG 80 scoring requirements above must be met in full. This will be achieved if well-defined harvest control rules are in place at the IATTC and WCPFC that are consistent with the harvest strategy and ensure that the exploitation rate is reduced as the PRI is approached, the selection of the harvest control rule takes into account the main uncertainties, and available evidence indicates that the tools in use are appropriate and effective in achieving the exploitation levels required under the harvest control rules. | 1.2.2 | On target | 60 | Not revised |

6.1.2 Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and catch data

Table 6 Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and catch data (this fishery does not operate with a TAC)

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|------|--------|-------------------------------|
| TAC | Year | 2019 | Amount | 51,688 t (ISC, 2020c) |
| UoA share of TAC | Year | 2019 | Amount | 28,167 t (ISC, 2020c) |
| UoA share of total TAC | Year | 2019 | Amount | 7,798 (ISC, 2020b) |
| Total green weight catch by UoC | Year (most recent) | 2019 | Amount | 7,798 (data from client) |
| Total green weight catch by UoC | Year (second most recent) | 2018 | Amount | 7,738 t (data from client) |

6.2 Re-scoring Performance Indicators

Not applicable. No Performance indicators were rescored during this surveillance period.

6.3 Conditions

6.3.1 Progress against conditions

Table 7 Condition 1

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Performance Indicator | 1.2.2 |
| Score | 60 |
| Justification | Page 144 – 146 in the PCR from June 14 th , 2018 |
| Condition | By the end of the fourth year of certification, the SG 80 scoring requirements above must be met in full. This will be achieved if well-defined harvest control rules are in place at the IATTC and WCPFC that are consistent with the harvest strategy and ensure that the exploitation rate is reduced as the PRI is approached, the selection of the harvest control rule takes into account the main uncertainties, and available evidence indicates that the tools in use are appropriate and effective in achieving the exploitation levels required under the harvest control rules. |
| Condition start | June 14 th , 2018 |
| Condition deadline | According to the variation granted by the MSC on 14 January 2019, the deadline for closing the harvest control rule condition for all North Pacific Albacore certified fisheries was after the IATTC commission meeting in 2023. Then, MSC issued a derogation due to the COVID-19 pandemic that extended this deadline by one year. Therefore, the condition deadline for this fishery is now after the IATTC commission meeting or any extraordinary meeting in 2024. The milestones are revised accordingly. |
| Milestones | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By the first annual surveillance audit (December 2019), the certifier will be presented with information on those consultations which have occurred with the responsible parties. 2. By the second surveillance audit (December 2020¹) the certifier will be presented with information on progress which has been made in establishing a scientifically based target reference point and harvest control rules. 3. By the third annual surveillance (December 2021²) the certifier will be presented with information on how those harvest control rules, assuming they have been agreed to by the RFMOs, might be implemented. 4. By the fourth annual surveillance (December 2022) the certifier will be presented with information on how those harvest control rules, assuming they have been agreed to by the RFMOs, might be implemented, and evidence of the clients' support and contribution to their implementation. 5. By the fifth year (December 2023) the certifier will be presented with evidence that the RFMOs have an implementation plan in progress, and the evidence that the clients support and contribute to their implementation. |

¹ This milestone was extended due to the MSC Derogation granting certificate extension by 6 months.

² This milestone was extended due to the MSC Derogation 6

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| | <p>By December 2024, well defined HCRs will be in place that ensure that the exploitation rate is reduced as the PRI is approached, that are expected to keep the stock fluctuating around a target level consistent with (or above) MSY.</p> |
| | <p><i>The progress made by the fishery client to address conditions shall be detailed, along with any observations from the assessment team. The CAB may include progress summaries from previous surveillance audits.</i></p> |
| Progress on Condition (Year X) | <p>AAFA/WFOA in the past two years 2018 and 2019 has sent representatives to all the listed RFMO's and Federal Council meetings to advocate for sustainability in the west coast albacore troll fishery. The client indicated that they participated in the following meetings since the re-certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WCPFC Northern Committee Fourteenth Regular Session, Japan • IATTC annual meeting, Bilbao, Spain • WCPFC Fifteenth Regular Session, Honolulu, Hawaii • Fourth ISC MSE workshop, Yokohama, Japan • Nineteenth Meeting of the ISC, Taipei City, Taiwan • PFMC Council Meeting • WCPFC-SC Meeting in Pohnpei, FSM • WCPFC Northern Committee Fifteenth Regular Session, Portland, Oregon <p>Details of client activities related to the action plan are provided in Appendix 5.4. (MRAG, 2019)</p> |
| | <p>Regional Progress: MSE results for North Pacific Albacore Tuna were presented at the 12th Meeting of the IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee (IATTC, 2021a). SAC also recommended that CPCs use results of the concluded MSE process to establish reference points and harvest control rule for North Pacific albacore tuna (IATTC, 2021b). The report, coupled with the results of runs from previous iterations in this process, represent a substantial amount of information for WCPFC-NC and IATTC member countries and managers on which to base decisions concerning harvest strategy for this stock. The report will be reviewed by ISC21 in July 2021.</p> <p>Client Progress: While WFOA and AAFA, and previously AFRF, representatives have attended and given support to US positions on MSE for meetings throughout 2020 and now 2021, it must be recognized that during this entire time period all the meetings were virtual. Progress on making decisions involving the application of MSE to the management of fisheries was minimal and most of the effort expended was to have further explanatory sessions with stakeholders. The other problem with this arrangement is that unless it is during pre-meeting delegation meetings, it is almost impossible to talk in any meaningful manner to the one or two representatives who are allowed to speak for each delegation. All the GAC and PAC meetings discuss both SPA and NPA but these sessions are usually kept confidential as much as possible since they may involve discussions of USG strategies in negotiating. That is why there is no specific reporting even though WFOA and AAFA representatives attend or are members of these two advisory groups. The advocacy of MSC positions is nevertheless continued.</p> |

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| | <p>AAFA/WFOA in the past 18 months has participated at all the listed RFMO's and Federal Council meetings to advocate for sustainability in the west coast albacore troll fishery. The client indicated that they participated in the following meetings since the re-certification:</p> <p>2019</p> <p>PFMC June 2019 Meeting: WFOA and AAFA representatives attended and participated in the Council's June meeting. Those representatives serve of the Council's Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS). The HMSAS advises the Council on fishery management issues, planning, and the content and effects of fishery management plans, amendments, and regulations impacting those stocks managed under the Council's HMS Fishery Management Plan. Our representatives offered advice on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report for the 1st round of North Pacific Albacore Management Strategy Evaluation• Forward a proposed Draft Resolution to the US Commissioners to the IATTC. This measure is urgent and needs to be presented at the July 22-26 Annual Meeting of the IATTC in Bilbao, Spain. This Resolution is designed to address increase in longline effort by vessels purported to be from Fiji and Vanuatu.• The upcoming 15th Regular Session of the Northern Committee (NC15). <p>9/3-9/6 NC 15 Meeting WFOA and AAFA representatives attended and participated in the 15th Regular Session of the Northern Committee (NC15). There were items of interest to the NPA fishery which were scheduled for discussion and potential consensus on recommendations to present to WCPFC16.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potential modifications to CMM 2005-03 - Conservation and Management Measure for North Pacific Albacore• Interim harvest strategy for North Pacific albacore fishery (HS 2017-01) <p>The meeting failed to have a quorum, so no recommendations came out of NC15. However, it is envisioned the discussions by those in attendance could lead to recommendations when the NC reconvenes during WCPFC16.</p> <p>9/16/2019 - PFMC September 2019 Meeting WFOA and AAFA representatives attended and participated in the Council's November meeting. and offered advice on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A presentation given to the Council by the Southwest Fisheries Science Center which outlined HMS related science being undertaken. For NPA that included<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Life History (stomach contents and Age and Growth expanded sampling to regional/ sex specific curves; and○ Habitat Modeling○ Next steps: |
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- Incorporate multi-year SWFSC diet studies into models (O. Snodgrass and C. Nickels)
- Examine importance of migration behavior vs. local conditions for determining interannual availability
- Consider potential climate change impacts ("Future Seas" project)
- Report on the September NC meeting which took place in Portland, Oregon. Unfortunately, there was no quorum present and therefore there were no recommendations to the WCPFC. Nonetheless, members present discussed a number of issues and prepared a report that will be considered when the NC convenes on the margins of the WCPFC meeting in December 2020.
- Request NMFS and Dept. of Commerce increase research of potential mislabeling regarding country of origin for albacore imported into Canada for processing; and then exported to the U.S. market under "Product of Canada" labeling. Industry fishing groups and U.S. individuals cannot track specific information (harvesting nation, traceability throughout the supply chain, etc.).

11/18 & 19 2019 - PFMC November 2019 Meeting
WFOA and AAFA representatives attended and participated in the Council's November meeting. and offered advice on the following:

- Recommendations from the Permanent Advisory Committee to the U.S. Section to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission meeting held - October 10-11, 2019. There were recommendations regarding the SPA fishery. Concern was expressed regarding the flagrant disregard by certain CCMs of the provisions of both the North Pacific albacore and the South Pacific albacore CMMs and their limitations on effort.
- Those, and other, key issues of interest to be discussed at the WCPFC 16th Regular Session.
- A discussion on the expiring Regime under the Treaty between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States of America on Pacific Coast Albacore Tuna Vessels and Port Privileges.
- Concerns on possible increased IUU catch

2020

3/7 & 3/8 2020 – PFMC March 2020 Meeting
WFOA and AAFA representatives attended and participated in the Council's March meeting. It is worth noting that this was right around the beginning of the outbreak of Covid 19 in California. The meeting was held in Rohnert Park, California which is about 10 miles from Santa Rosa, California where a nursing home had reported a cluster of cases. To say there were distractions during the meeting would be an understatement.

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| | <p>The Council discussed the following items which may impact management of the NPA fishery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Treaty between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States of America on Pacific Coast Albacore Tuna Vessels and Port Privileges. The most recent three-year regime under the Treaty expired on December 31, 2019.• Outcomes of the 16th Regular Session of the WCPFC (12/5 – 11, 2019).<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ A revised CMM for North Pacific albacore, CMM 2019-03, which will replace CMM 2005-03. The revised measure removes a six-month reporting requirement and clarifies the baseline for fishing effort limits (2002-04). The main provisions of the CMM, including fishing effort limits and catch limits, remain the same, and no regulatory action is needed to implement the modifications.• Members of the HSMAS met with representatives from the USCG to discuss strategies and tactic to identify possible IUU fishing activity occurring on the high seas. This included an update on the ability of NPA harvesters to photograph and submit pictures of fish which appear to have net marks on them (the thought being an illegal drift net fleet is operating on the high seas on the North Pacific harvesting NPA). <p>6/12/2020 – PFMC June 2020 Meeting</p> <p>WFOA and AAFA representatives participated in the Council's June meeting. Given that this was the first Council meeting where HMS was on the agenda after implementation of Covid-19 restrictions, this meeting (and all subsequent PFMC meetings thru June 2021) took place remotely. We were advised of the status of many previously scheduled international meetings, none which were intended to directly impact NPA management.</p> <p>During this meeting the Council was informed of the availability of Preliminary Results of the 2020 Stock Assessment for NPA. WFOA and AAFA representatives participated in the development of the HSMAS report to the Council which noted the 2020 Assessment appeared to show the stock in a more favorable condition than the 2017 Assessment.</p> <p>6/18 IATTC GAC 7/7 WCPFC PAC</p> <p>8/21 to 26 WCPFC Science and Statistical Committee Virtual: At this meeting a lot of time was spent reviewing the work of the ISC and it was pointed out that neither the IATTC nor the WCPFC had adopted F-based limit reference points for the North Pacific albacore stock. However, the stock status has been depicted in relation to the interim limit reference point (LRP; 20%SSBcurrent, F=0) for the stock and the equivalent fishing intensity (F20%; calculated as 1-SPR20%). Fishing intensity (F, calculated as 1-SPR) is a measure of fishing mortality expressed as the decline in the proportion of the spawning biomass produced by each recruit relative to the unfished state. For example, a fishing</p> |
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| | <p>intensity of 0.8 will result in a SSB of approximately 20% of SSB0 over the long run. Fishing intensity is considered a proxy of fishing mortality. There was no opportunity to consider LRPs, TRPs, Threshold Points or HCRs.</p> <p>9/14/2020 - PFMC September 2020 Meeting WFOA and AAFA representatives engaged in Council discussions about the possibility of an increase in recreational fishing vessels less than 30 feet also operating as commercial fishing vessels in order to opportunistically sell their catch. The Council's Highly Migratory Species Management Team reported to the Council that there was no significant increase in commercially licensed vessels less than 30 feet.</p> <p>10/7 WCPFC-NC Virtual: WFOA and AAFA representatives supported the US position to continue the MSE process and try to bring it into management measures as soon as possible according to the extended work plan. The Northern Committee also considered and discussed recent assessments of northern stocks, including North Pacific albacore (NPALB).</p> <p>10/14 to 16 WCPFC PAC Virtual</p> <p>11/10 IATTC GAC Virtual</p> <p>11/12 WCPFC South Pacific Albacore Roadmap. Virtual: WFOA representatives encouraged the Working Group to push the WCPFC to continue the work that had been begun for the MSE process for South Pacific albacore. This process has been complicated by the WCPFC decision to use a LRP and a HCR based not on SSB, but rather on reaching a target CPUE.</p> <p>11/19/2020 - PFMC November 2020 Meeting WFOA and AAFA representatives attended the Council meeting and offered advice on the Recommendations from the Permanent Advisory Committee to the U.S. Section to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Web Conference - October 14-16, 2020. While NPA was not specifically mentioned, there were recommendations regarding the SPA fishery.</p> <p>11/30 to 12/4 IATTC Annual Meeting Virtual</p> <p>12/8 to 14 WCPFC Annual Meeting Virtual</p> <p>12/22 IATTC Extraordinary Meeting Virtual</p> <p>2021</p> <p>3/9 & 3/10/2021 – PFMC March 2021 Meeting WFOA and AAFA representatives attended the Council meeting and offered advice on the following items which may impact management of the NPA fishery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provisional outcomes from the 17th Regular Session of the WCPFC (12/8 – 15, 2020).<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ We noted the WCPFC received a general overview of the stock status of SPA (as |
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| | <p>presented by the Scientific Services Provider (SPC) and general overview of the stock status of NPA (as presented by the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the Northern Pacific Ocean (ISC))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The WCPFC noted the report of progress from the SPA Roadmap Working Group○ The WCPFC noted that the review of CMM 2015-02 Conservation and Management Measure for South Pacific Albacore is ongoing as part of the work of the SP Albacore Roadmap Working Group.● We expressed with concern the transfer of 6,000 metric tons (mt) of Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) Bigeye Tuna quota from Japan to China for the 2021 fishing season, to be harvested using longline gear. The concern being that increased effort by any fleet in the EPO could lead to problems not only with bigeye but other species such as North Pacific albacore.● Given the completion of the North Pacific Ocean Albacore Management Strategy Evaluation (NPALB MSE), we expressed support for the intended meeting with representatives of the ALBWG to provide the MSE results to stakeholders in their respective countries. The United States will be holding a joint virtual workshop with Canada's representatives and stakeholders from March 22-25, 2021, 9:30am-12:30pm. The aim of this workshop is to present the results of the MSE and assist stakeholders in understanding how to interpret and utilize the final results of the MSE <p>3/22 to 25 ISC-MSE Explanatory Meeting NPA MSE Virtual: At this meeting WFOA and AAFA representatives were primarily in a listening mode as the ISC announced it had completed its work in providing the MSE scientific basis for the managers and stakeholders to make decisions with regard to LRP_s, TRP_s, Threshold Points and HCR_s. This presentation was made to both the Canadian and US fishermen and engendered a lengthy discussion of what the agreed upon LRP_s, TRP_s, LRP_s and Threshold Points would be the right ones to use in management. There was also discussion of the scientific data uncertainties which went into the ISC MSE operating models, the lack of data after 2017 and other concerns. It was pointed out that a separate presentation had been made to Japan and the Asian participants in the albacore troll and longline fishery, however the views from these presentations had not been reconciled. The one thing that was agreed to is that whatever reference points and control rules were eventually agreed to should be the same across the North Pacific and the same in the IATTC and the WCPFC.</p> <p>5/3 to 4 IATTC MSE for Tropical Tunas Virtual 5/26 Combined IATTC SAS and GAC Virtual 6/1 WCR/PIRO MSE Stakeholder Meeting Virtual: WFOA and AAFA representatives attended the U.S. Stakeholder meeting convened by NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office and West Coast Region to provide an opportunity for U.S. stakeholders to express their priorities</p> |
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| | <p>and consider future management of NPALB. The concerns expressed in the March Explanation meetings were reiterated.</p> <p>6/24 WCPFC South Pacific Albacore Road Map Mtg. 6/25/2021 – June PFMC 2021 Meeting WFOA and AAFA representatives attended the Council meeting and offered advice on the following items which may impact management of the NPA fishery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provided the Council with a brief summary of the 2020 Stock Assessment which found the North Pacific albacore (NPALB) stock “is likely not overfished relative to the limit reference point adopted by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (20%SSBcurrent, F=0).”• Provided the Council with updates on the following recently completed meetings: ISC ALBWG US-Canada Stakeholder Meeting (March, 2021); NPALB US Stakeholder Meeting (June, 2021) <p>Regarding the ISC ALBWG US-Canada Stakeholder Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ That we remain concerned there is a general lack of understanding surrounding the nuances of MSE, assumptions made in the model and how those impact the model’s results. For example:○ How does the model estimate: (1) the percentage of the stock that migrates to the eastern Pacific; (2) the catchability of those fish; or (3) the stock impact of fish harvested in the Eastern Pacific versus those taken Western Pacific (juveniles vs. spawning age fish).○ Impacts of a rogue nation who has not participated in the MSE process and may not agree to be bound by any management measures; and has shown a history of not prioritizing RFMO engagement/enforcement.○ As stated in the MSE analysis, if a ghost fleet of unmanaged harvesters develops or is revealed, current harvesters will have reduced harvest opportunity.○ We would encourage the Council to support any and all efforts to facilitate additional conversations as the management process unfolds in the RFMOs. <p>Regarding the June 1 NPALB US Stakeholder Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meaningful participation by fishery stakeholders necessitates clear understanding of the measures being discussed. Thoughtful, considered and well-understood reference points (Target, Threshold and Limit) and resulting Harvest Control Rules are supportable by industry.• We offered the following specific suggestions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ a consistent and enforceable harvest strategy across the Pacific○ ensuring SSB is maintained above the limit reference point (LRP) should be the top priority○ support the inclusion of a Threshold reference point |
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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Additional understanding is necessary regarding the implication(s) of various levels of F and how those influence the HCRs ○ Additional conversations are needed regarding controls (TAE vs. TAC). ○ In terms of a timeline, moving forward with management proposals (development of HCRs) in 2021 is not recommended – the fishing season is about to start, there is no stock related need for immediate action, there are likely going to be other priorities (tropical tunas, PBF) at the RFMOs this year, etc. We would be supportive of moving this forward next year. |
| | Year 3 | <i>Summary of progress</i> |
| | Year 4 | <i>Summary of progress</i> |
| | <i>Insert additional years if relevant</i> | |
| Progress status | The assessment team concluded that substantial progress has been made through the MSE process towards the MSC requirements for PI 1.2.2 to establish well defined harvest control rules for north Pacific albacore. The AAFA/WFOA has acted in good faith to advocate for progress towards the MSC requirements for PI 1.2.2 to establish well defined harvest control rules for north Pacific albacore. This condition is on target | |
| Remedial action | N/A | |
| Additional information | N/A | |

6.4 Client Action Plan

Changes to the client action plan are detailed in the conditions table and constitute only a shifting of the milestones to correspond with the new deadline resulting from the MSC's variation for RFMO-managed stocks and derogation for management conditions due to COVID-19.

7 Appendices

7.1 Evaluation processes and techniques

7.1.1 Site visits

The surveillance audit process as defined in the MSC FCP v2.1 was followed in this audit.

Information supplied by the client and management agencies was reviewed by the assessment team ahead of the remote meeting, and discussions with the client and management agencies centred on the content within the provided documentation. In cases where relevant documentation was not provided in advance of the meeting, it was requested by the assessment team and subsequently supplied during, or shortly after the meeting.

Thirty days prior to the remote audit, all stakeholders from the full assessment were informed of the visit and the opportunity to provide information to the auditors in advance of, or during, audit. Table 8 lists the stakeholders that were contacted for this surveillance audit:

Table 8 Stakeholders contacted

| Name | Organization |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Jose Roques | Bellingham Cold Storage |
| Doug Heater | Bornstein Seafood |
| Andrew Bornstein | Bornstein Seafood |
| Chris Wick | North Delta Seafoods |
| Brad McLean | French Creek Seafood |
| Bob Abbott | Ilwaco Landing |
| Derryl Evans | INSEACO |
| Don Alber | Alber Seafoods, Inc. |
| Sherri Blevins | J.K. Seafood, Inc. |
| Dennis Rydman | Ocean Gold Seafoods |
| James Elstad | Oregon Seafoods LLC |
| Larz Malony | Pacific Seafood |
| Steve Stinnett | Pacific Seafood |
| Rick Harris | Pacific Seafood |
| Dave Wright | Pacific Seafood |
| Bill Weidman | Pacific Seafood |
| Jeff Reynolds | Pacific Seafood |
| | Seafood Producers Cooperative |
| | Seawater Seafood Company |
| Marvin Warman | Starvin Marvin's |
| Anthony Vuoso | Cal-Marine Fish company |
| Bill Carvalho | Wild Planet Foods |
| | Wild Planet Foods |
| | Wild Planet Foods |
| Tony Bettencourt | Wild Planet Foods |
| Mike Babcock | Oregon Seafoods LLC |
| Adrian Gutteridge | MSC |
| Alison Cross | WWF - US |
| Cisco Werner | NOAA |
| Dorothy Lowman | PFMC |

| Name | Organization |
|-------------------|--|
| Doug Loder | Tuna Management Association of New Zealand |
| | IATTC |
| John Hall | Coastal & Offshore Pacific Corporation |
| | Intertek |
| Kit Dahl | NOAA |
| Natalie Webster | American Albacore Fishing Association |
| Peter Flournoy | Western Fishboat Owners Association |
| Mike Conroy | American Albacore Fishing Association |
| Robert Gillett | Gillett, Preston and Associates, Inc. |
| Stephen Stohs | NOAA |
| Wayne Heikkila | Western Fishboat Owners Association |
| | WCPFC |
| Ana Justel | ISSF |
| Susan Jackson | ISSF |
| Victor Restrepo | ISSF |
| David Itano | American Fishermen's Research Foundation |
| Douglas Fricke | Washington Trollers Association |
| | CU Pesca |
| Geraldine Criquet | NSF International |
| Tom Seaman | Undercurrent News |

7.1.2 Stakeholder participation

A remote surveillance audit was held May 24th - 27th, and June 7th, 2021. The following participants were in attendance via teleconference:

| Name | Organization |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Amanda Stern-Pirlot | MRAG Americas, Assessment team leader |
| Erin Wilson | MRAG Americas, Assessment team member |
| Dr. Max Stocker | Assessment team member |
| Wayne Heikkila | WFOA |
| Natalie Webster | AAFA |
| Mike Conroy | AAFA |
| Peter Flournoy | WFOA |
| Steve Teo | SWFSC |
| Desiree Tomasi | SWFSC |

The General agenda is included below:

-
- Introductions
 - Introductions of the team, their roles, and responsibilities regarding scoring the fishery
 - Screen shot for attendance
 - Overview of the MSC Surveillance Process
-

- Where to find more materials: Guide to the MSC process

- Review the following updates to the fishery:

- Changes to the fishery and its management
 - Changes to the traceability of the fishery
 - Any changes in personnel relevant to science, management, or industry
 - Any potential changes to scientific information, including stock assessments
 - Any other significant changes to the fishery
-

Main topics for discussion:

- Impacts of COVID
-

Principle 1: Target Stock

- MSE process and review
 - Observer coverage changes in the last 2 years
 - Stock assessment
 - Any potential changes that occurred in the management (new rules affecting discards, TAC, etc.) in the last year.
-

Principle 2 Ecosystem:

- Updates on research into fishery impacts on habitats or ecosystems
 - Noteworthy protected species interactions, regulations or new research
-

Principle 3 Management System:

- Any potential or actual changes in observer programs, monitoring, reporting, etc.
 - Personnel: any changes in 2019 and 2020 in science, management or industry and their impacts on the management of the fishery?
-

- Questions/wrap up
-

7.2 Stakeholder input

Thirty days prior to the audit site visit, all stakeholders from the full assessment were informed of the visit and the opportunity to provide information to the auditors in advance of, or during, the site visit.

MRAG Americas received one set of comments from the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF). ISSF's comments and MRAG's responses to those comments are listed below.

Performance Indicator (PI) input

| Performance Indicator (PI) | Condition | Input summary | Input detail | Evidence or references | Stakeholder input code | CAB response to stakeholder input | CAB response code |
|--|---|------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Performance Indicator - please copy and insert rows to raise more than one input against a Performance Indicator | If relevant, please provide the associated condition - please copy and insert rows to raise more than one input against a condition | Summary sentence | Detail of stakeholder input | Objective evidence or references should be provided in support of any claims or claimed errors of fact. Optional. See the Codes section for a description of the codes. | Please assign an input code to describe the suggested change based on your input and evidence. | The CAB shall respond in this column. CAB responses should include details of where different changes have been made in the report (which section #, table etc). | The CAB shall assign a response code to each row completed by the stakeholder. |

Principle 1 - Sustainable fish stocks

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| 1.1.1 - Stock status | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.2 - Stock rebuilding | | | | | | | |
| 1.2.1 - Harvest strategy | | | | | | | |

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| 1.2.2 - Harvest control rules and tools | Condition 1 | Comments re: CAP | <p>As regards the Client Action Plan to meet Condition 1 on the adoption of HCR for North Pacific albacore, ISSF acknowledges AAFA & WFOA's advocacy efforts and recommends the following specific actions that AAFA & WFOA can add to those already listed in the CAP:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Publicly support the high-level appeals for RFMOs developed by global NGOs that are participants in the NGO Tuna Forum. <p>In 2021, companies will have the opportunity to engage in other direct RFMO advocacy tactics to demonstrate market support for specific tuna sustainability asks. NGO participants in the NGO Tuna Forum have begun reaching out to market partners with these opportunities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Continue to advocate for accelerated progress on the adoption and implementation of Harvest Strategies through WCPFC and IATTC, such as through continued direct engagement with national delegations to WCPFC and IATTC. The WCPO MSC Alignment Group is not currently active, but ISSF also encourages AAFA & WFOA to continue to monitor the group for an opportunity to participate in the future. 3) Continue urging the delegation of US and of all other parties associated with AAFA & WFOA at WCPFC and IATTC to take a strong public position on advancing harvest strategies as part of the deliberations WCPFC and IATTC will undertake virtually this year and at future in-person meetings, including by making proposals for the development of harvest strategies including harvest control rules, and to underscore that the MSC has established hard deadlines for P1 conditions for certified tuna fisheries, which for North Pacific albacore HCR is May 2024. If these deadlines are not met, the corresponding North Pacific albacore MSC certifications will be suspended. <p>AAFA & WFOA should also urge the US delegation and other delegations to WCPFC to publicly support establishing a scientist/manager dialogue group that will hold its first meeting in 2022.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4) Have meetings, calls or other direct contact with all other relevant WCPFC and IATTC delegations where AAFA & WFOA have business interests to advocate for the adoption of Harvest Strategies including HCR. 5) Publicly support ISSF Position Statements that contain detailed asks on Harvest Strategies and Harvest Control Rules to the virtual sessions of the WCPFC and IATTC in 2021, as well as future WCPFC and IATTC in-person meetings, and document that support (e.g. by submitting a letter or some other communication citing the Position Statement). 6) Support technical work of WCPFC/SPC and IATTC as well as capacity workshops on Management Strategy Evaluation in the PO region so as to increase the leverage of WCPFC and IATTC members for the discussion and adoption of robust Harvest Strategies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - https://ngotunaforum.org/ - https://issf-foundation.org/what-we-do/influence/position-statements/ | Thank you for your comments. As the certifier, we do not make specific recommendations on the CAP, only provide guidance on what is needed to remove the condition. We have however, made note of your comments and have brought your recommendations to the attention of the client. | Not accepted (information for PI score has not changed) |
| 1.2.3 - Information and monitoring | | | | | | |
| 1.2.4 - Assessment of stock status | | | | | | |
| Principle 2 - Minimising environmental impacts | | | | | | |
| 2.1.1 - Primary species outcome | | | | | | |

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| 2.1.2 - Primary species management | | | | | | | |
| 2.1.3 - Primary species information | | | | | | | |
| 2.2.1 - Secondary species outcome | | | | | | | |
| 2.2.2 - Secondary species management | | | | | | | |
| 2.2.3 - Secondary species information | | | | | | | |
| 2.3.1 - ETP species outcome | | | | | | | |
| 2.3.2 - ETP species management | | | | | | | |
| 2.3.3 - ETP species information | | | | | | | |
| 2.4.1 - Habitats outcome | | | | | | | |
| 2.4.2 - Habitats management strategy | | | | | | | |
| 2.4.3 - Habitats information | | | | | | | |
| 2.5.1 - Ecosystem outcome | | | | | | | |
| 2.5.2 - Ecosystem management strategy | | | | | | | |
| 2.5.3 - Ecosystem information | | | | | | | |
| Principle 3 - Effective management | | | | | | | |
| 3.1.1 - Legal and/or customary framework | | | | | | | |

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| 3.1.2 - Consultation, roles and responsibilities | | | | | | | |
| 3.1.3 - Long term objectives | | | | | | | |
| 3.2.1 - Fishery- specific objectives | | | | | | | |
| 3.2.2 - Decision- making processes | | | | | | | |
| 3.2.3 - Compliance and enforcement | | | | | | | |
| 3.2.4 - Monitoring and management performance evaluation | | | | | | | |

7.3 Revised surveillance program

Table 9 Fishery surveillance program

| Surveillance level | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 |
|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Level 5 | On-site surveillance audit | Off-site surveillance audit | On-site surveillance audit | On-site surveillance audit & re-certification site visit |

Table 10 Timing of surveillance audit

| Year | Anniversary date of certificate | Proposed date of surveillance audit | Justification |
|------|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| 2 | December 2020 (North) May 2021 (South) | May 2021 (North and South) | Surveillance audit was scheduled to combine the North and South Pacific albacore site visit. |

Table 11 Surveillance level justification

| Year | Surveillance activity | Number of auditors | Justification |
|------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 2 | Off-site audit | 3 auditors working remotely | <p>The MSC's Derogation 3: Covid-19 Fishery and Chain of Custody Remote Auditing enables CABs to conduct reassessments and surveillance audits remotely when "International, national, or local travel restrictions that impact the assessment team or auditor or certificate holder."</p> <p>https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html</p> |

7.4 Harmonised fishery assessments

On 12th November 2018, accredited CABs submitted a joint VR for all tuna fisheries currently in the MSC Program. MSC has accepted this VR which allows:

- Not to suspend fisheries that are behind target on P1 conditions raised against CRv.1.3.
- To upgrade all tuna fisheries currently under CR v.1.3 to V.2.0 at the next available opportunity.
- To harmonise P1 conditions and timelines for all tuna fisheries on the same stock.
- To set a shared deadline for achieving conditions in line with RFMO workplans.

Since the 1st Surveillance Audit (MRAG, 2019) three additional fisheries for North Pacific albacore received MSC certification:

- Pan Pacific yellowfin, bigeye and albacore longline fishery (Jones, *et al.*, 2020);
- Owasebussan Co. Ltd North Pacific Longline Tuna Fishery for Albacore, Yellowfin Tuna & Bigeye Tuna (DiNardo, *et al.*, 2021); and
- Kiribati albacore, bigeye and yellowfin tuna longline fishery (Gascoine *et al.*, 2021)

The certification status of the overlapping fisheries are summarized in Table 11. Due to the Covid-19 outbreak the MSC has issued a derogation that allows a 6-month extension for all fishery certificates, conditions and fishery assessment/audit activities. Accordingly the certificate expiry dates in Table 11 have been updated.³

Table 12 Overlapping fisheries

| Fishery name | Certification status and date | Performance Indicators to harmonise |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| CHMSF British Columbia albacore tuna North Pacific | Date re-certified: 9 June, 2020; Expiry date: 7 Dec., 2025 | All P1 performance indicators |
| AAFA and WFOA North Pacific albacore tuna | Date re-certified: 14 June, 2018; Expiry date: 13 Dec., 2023 | All P1 performance indicators |
| Meiho Gyogyo Japanese pole and line albacore and skipjack fishery | Date certified: 17 October, 2016; Expiry date: 16 April, 2022 | All P1 performance indicators |
| Ishihara Marine Products albacore and skipjack pole and line fishery | Date certified: 12 March 2019; Expiry date: 11 Nov., 2024 | All P1 performance indicators |
| Owasebussen Co. Ltd North Pacific Longline Tuna Fishery for Albacore, Yellowfin Tuna & Bigeye Tuna | Date certified: 05 Feb. 2021; Expiry date: 04 Feb. 2026 | All P1 performance indicators |
| Pan Pacific yellowfin, bigeye and albacore longline fishery | Date certified: 26 June, 2020; Expiry date: 25 Dec., 2025 | All P1 performance indicators |
| Kiribati albacore, bigeye and yellowfin tuna longline fishery | Date certified: 19 Jan., 2021; Expiry date: 18 July., 2027 | All P1 performance indicators |

Table X – Overlapping fisheries

| |
|---|
| Supporting information |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describe any background or supporting information relevant to the harmonisation activities, processes and outcomes. <p>Harmonisation meetings have been taking place in connection with the 1st surveillance audit of the AAFA/WFOA albacore fishery and the 2nd re-assessment of the CHMSF albacore fishery at the end of August/early September 2019. CABs will continue to engage harmonisation discussions to ensure that P1 scoring is fully harmonised.</p> |

³ Stakeholder Notification: Confirmation of condition deadlines for Tuna stocks covered under the multi-fishery variation request accepted 14th January 2019.

| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Was either FCP v2.2 Annex PB1.3.3.4 or PB1.3.4.5 applied when harmonising? | No |
| Date of harmonisation meeting | September 2019 |
| If applicable, describe the meeting outcome | |
| - e.g. Agreement found among teams or lowest score adopted. | |

Table 13 Scoring differences

| Performance Indicators (PIs) | AAFA/WFOA North Pacific albacore | CHMSF British Columbia albacore | Meiho Gyogyo Japanese pole and line albacore and skipjack fishery | Owasebussan Co. Ltd. North Pacific longline tuna fishery for albacore yellowfin tuna and bigeye tuna | Pan Pacific yellowfin, bigeye and albacore longline fishery | Ishihara Marine Products albacore and skipjack pole and line fishery | Kiribati albacore, bigeye and yellowfin tuna longline fishery | MSC harmonization scores |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|---|--|---|--------------------------|
| 1.1.1 | 90 | 90 | 80 | 90 | 80 | 80 | 100 | 100 |
| 1.1.2 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 1.2.1 | 80 | 85 | 85 | 85 | 85 | 85 | 85 | 80 |
| 1.2.2 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 |
| 1.2.3 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 |
| 1.2.4 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Table 14 Rationale for scoring differences

| |
|---|
| If applicable, explain and justify any difference in scoring and rationale for the relevant Performance Indicators (FCP v2.2 Annex PB1.3.6) |
| Not applicable. All P1 performance indicators were harmonized. |
| If exceptional circumstances apply, outline the situation and whether there is agreement between or among teams on this determination |
| Not applicable |