



WESTERN
PACIFIC
REGIONAL
FISHERY
MANAGEMENT
COUNCIL



Western and
Central Pacific
Fisheries
Commission

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

International Fisheries Management Commission to Meet in Honolulu to Address Pacific Bigeye Tuna Quotas, Closures and Compliance

HONOLULU (4 December 2010) The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) will convene its 7th Regular Session, December 6 to 10, 2010, at the JW Marriott Ihilani Resort, Oahu, Hawaii. This international organization oversees management of tuna and other highly migratory fish stocks in the area that spans from roughly 150 degrees West longitude to the Asian mainland. Twenty-six nations are party to the Commission as members and cooperating non-members. The Commission was created following the adoption of the Convention on Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean, which was signed September 5, 2000, in Honolulu. The WCPFC celebrates the 10th anniversary of the Convention this year.

Among the key issues to be addressed at the meeting are international conservation and management measures for Pacific bigeye tuna and striped marlin, non-compliance by member and cooperating non-member countries, and the listing of illegal, unregulated and unauthorized (IUU) vessels, which are prohibited from fishing in the WCPFC Convention Area.

Pacific Bigeye Tuna: The Pacific bigeye tuna stock is experiencing overfishing. Purse seine fisheries, which target skipjack tuna, have seen increased incidental catches of juvenile bigeye tuna associated with increased use of fish aggregation devices (FADs). The WCPFC adopted conservation and management measures for 2009-2011, which include 30 percent reduction in longline catches through national quotas and FAD closures for purse seine fisheries with exemptions. The European Union is proposing replacing the current FADs closure with a full closure of purse seine fishing during the period of 1 July to 30 September, which would correspond with a 30 percent reduction of bigeye catches for the purse seine fleets. Japan is proposing measures to limit the number of purse-seine vessels and their capacity.

Compliance: Australia is proposing a WCPFC Compliance Monitoring Scheme with a graduated response to non-compliance.

Striped Marlin: The Commission is expected to discuss whether to address management measures for striped marlin now or to wait until the completion of the stock assessment by the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean, which is expected in 2011.

Four hundred delegates and observers from the Pacific nations, territories and distant-water fishing nations as far as Europe will participate. For more information, visit www.wcpfc.int.

Media Contact: Sylvia Spalding, communications officer, Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, at (808) 383-1069 or sylvia.spalding@noaa.gov or WCPFC Executive Director Glenn Hurry at hurry@wcpfc.int.