

***WPRFMC DRAFT PROPOSED CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURE FOR  
NORTH PACIFIC STRIPED MARLIN***

*The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC):*

*Recalling* from SC15 and WCPFC16 that the spawning biomass of Western Central North Pacific ('North Pacific') striped marlin is depleted ( $SSB_{2018}/SSB_{F=0} = 0.05$ ) and the average recent fishing mortality rate (2015-2017) was greater than the fishing mortality rate associated with MSY ( $F/F_{MSY} = 1.07$ );

*Recalling* that WCPFC16 adopted, in accordance to Article 10, an interim rebuilding plan with an interim rebuilding target for North Pacific striped marlin to be  $20\%SSB_{F=0}$ , to be reached by 2034, with at least 60% probability;

*Recalling further* that the interim rebuilding plan adopted by WCPFC16 did not provide specific terms to implement the interim rebuilding plan but noted that members are to develop conservation and management measures in accordance to the rebuilding objective, to WCPFC17. Members are to consider reduced catch limits and retention, live release, gear requirements, among other potential tools;

*Recognizing* phased catch total catch limits of North Pacific striped marlin provided in **WCPFC17-XX-XX** via stock projections for 2021-2024, 2025-2028, 2029-2032, and 2033-2034. These phased catch limits are 1951 mt, 1751 mt, 1551 mt, and 1351 mt, respectively;

*Recognizing further* that the aforementioned phased total catch limits for North Pacific striped marlin have a 60% probability of the stock successfully reaching the interim rebuilding target ( $20\%SSB_{F=0}$ ) by 2034;

*Recognizing further* that a total catch limit of 1951 mt for the years 2021-2024 has less than a 50% probability of overfishing occurring (relative to  $F_{MSY}$ ) at any point in time in this period, likely ending overfishing;

*Noting* that overfishing (relative to  $F_{MSY}$ ) is likely occurring through 2020 and a persistent overfishing condition in 2021 or beyond will likely reduce necessary catch limits relative to aforementioned catch limits in order to achieve the interim rebuilding plan objectives adopted by WCPFC16;

*Noting* that data used in the stock assessment for North Pacific striped marlin (SC15-SA-WP-09), and thus used to develop total projected catches in **WCPFC17-XX-XX**, are based on catch tonnages reported to and estimated by the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-Like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC). Longline fisheries comprise the most catch reported to the ISC and are most common among CCMs reporting catches of North Pacific striped marlin to the ISC;

*Noting* that if a catch limit is not adopted beginning 2021, member science providers of the ISC will need to again update stock projections with phased catch limits to reach the interim rebuilding plan objective adopted by WCPFC16;

*Noting* that a stock assessment for North Pacific striped marlin will be completed by the ISC in 2024 and provided to SC20, therefore effectiveness of catch limits for 2021-2024 and beyond may be reevaluated by SC20 and WCPFC21;

*Adopts* in accordance with Article 10 of the WPCF Convention, the following rebuilding plan and strategy for North Pacific striped marlin for 2021-2034:

### **Rebuilding Strategy**

Beginning 2021 through 2024, total retained catch of North Pacific striped marlin shall be 1951 mt. This corresponds to a total catch level corresponding to less than a 50% probability of exceeding fishing mortality associated with MSY ( $F_{MSY}$ ) and phased catch limits provided via stock projections in **WCPFC17-XX-XX** to reach the interim rebuilding target of 20%SSB<sub>F=0</sub> by 2034, as adopted by WCPFC16. A new stock assessment will be provided in 2024 and subsequent phased catch limits will be evaluated at SC20 and WCPFC21.

Catch proportions for CCMs from 2021-2024 within a total catch of 1951 mt are to be commensurate to proportion of longline catches of North Pacific striped marlin, as reported by CCMs from 2015-2019 to ISC20, acknowledging 3% allocation to other CCMs that have reported incidental catches of North Pacific striped marlin to the ISC (Table 1). These correspond to catch limits by CCM for North Pacific striped marlin as indicated in Table 2. SIDS CCMs do not have a specified catch limit. Only CCMs are to retain striped marlin north of the Equator in the WPCFC Convention Area.

Provisional total catch limits of North Pacific striped marlin are 1751 mt for 2025-2028, 1551 mt for 2029-2032, and 1351 mt for 2033-2034, based on phased stock projections indicated by **WCPFC17-XX-XX**. Catch limits specified by CCM following 2024 are to be reevaluated by WCPFC21 and should consider data reported to the ISC for use in North Pacific striped marlin stock assessments and compliance.

The use of circle hooks in longline fisheries are recommended during the rebuilding process to increase survivability of North Pacific striped marlin and other billfishes incidentally caught in longline fisheries.

CCMs may elect to allocate their total catches among fishery sectors and may elect to enact in-season accountability measures to cease retention of North Pacific striped marlin when their respective total catch of North Pacific striped marlin reaches the limit for CCMs, as indicated in Table 2.

The measure expires at the conclusion of 2034 and should be reevaluated by the ISC and at SC20 and WCPFC21. Provisional catch limits may be adapted based on science provider evaluations.

**Table 1.** Longline catch (mt) of North Pacific Striped Marlin by CCM as reported to ISC20 for monitoring of stock assessments, the proportion of catch reported by CCM, and proportion of catch by CCM whilst assuming 3% for SIDS and other WPFCC CCM catches

CCM	Total Longline Catch Reported to ISC, 2015-2019 (mt)	Proportion Longline Catch Reported ISC20	Proportion of Catch for CCMs
Japan	5433	0.5681	0.5510
Korea	295	0.0308	0.0299
Chinese Taipei	1534	0.1604	0.1556
USA	2302	0.2407	0.2335
Other CCMs	0	0	0.03
Total		1	1

**Table 2.** Catch limits of North Pacific striped marlin by CCM for 2021 through 2024, based on proportion of reported longline catch reported to the ISC from 2015-2019, with 3% allocation to CCMs not reporting North Pacific striped marlin catch to the ISC from 2015-2019.

CCM	Proportion of Catch for CCMs	Catch Limit 2021-2024
Japan	0.5510	1075
Korea	0.0299	58
Chinese Taipei	0.1556	304
USA	0.2335	456
Other CCMs	0.03	59
Total	1	1951