



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE**

Pacific Islands Regional Office
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March 01, 2021

Mr. Archie Taotasi Soliai, Chair
Western Pacific Fishery Management Council
1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1400
Honolulu, HI 96813

Mr. Simon Kinneen, Chair
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
605 West 4th Avenue, Suite 306
Anchorage, AK 99601-2252

Mr. Marc Gorelnick, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, OR 97220-1384

Dear Chairs Soliai, Kinneen, and Gorelnick:

As you are aware, the United States participated in the Seventeenth Regular Session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (Commission), held online December 8-15, 2020. The provisional outcomes of the Commission meeting are available on the [Commission's website](#). The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) would like to provide its initial assessment of the regulatory actions that may be needed to implement the recent decisions of the Commission.

COVID-19

In a February 15, 2021, intersessional decision, the Commission agreed to further extend its waiver of requirements for at-sea transshipment observers, purse seine observers, and at-sea transshipment until May 15, 2021. Accordingly, NMFS has extended its waiver of the requirements under 50 CFR 300.223(e) until May 15, 2021, and no further regulatory action is needed. NMFS' waiver is subject to revocation or extension as circumstances warrant.

Conservation Management Measure (CMM) for Tropical Tuna Stocks (CMM 2020-01)

The Commission agreed on a "simple rollover" of CMM 2018-01 for one year and accordingly adopted *CMM 2020-01 Conservation and Management Measure for bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack tuna in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean*. The "simple rollover" extended all provisions of the tropical tuna measure by one year, until February 15, 2022. NMFS does not anticipate corresponding regulatory action.



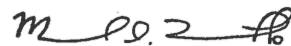
CMM for Pacific Bluefin Tuna

The Commission adopted *CMM 2020-02 Conservation and Management Measure for Pacific Bluefin Tuna*. This measure extended two provisions that were to expire in 2020, 1) increasing the allowable carryover of the unused portion of a catch limit from the previous year from 5 to 17%, and 2) allowing CCMs to transfer some of their small fish catch limit to their large fish catch limit. The main provisions of the CMM, including the fishing effort limits and catch limits, remain the same as in the previous CMM. NMFS does not anticipate any corresponding regulatory action.

Other substantive decisions by the Commission, none of which require regulatory action, include:

- denying the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (North Korea) application for cooperating non-member status;
- keeping the same three vessels on the WCPFC IUU Vessel list and encouraging members to engage intersessionally on the issue of cross-listing other regional fisheries management organizations' IUU vessel lists, and;
- agreeing to strengthen the WCPFC Regional Observer Programme's minimum standards when potential violations are reported by prioritizing a complete observer debriefing and collecting additional information from the observer before submitting the observer data to the Secretariat.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "m. p. 2" followed by a stylized monogram.

Michael D. Tosatto
Regional Administrator