

Pacific Ocean tuna - longline (Cheng Hung) FIP Position Statement for the 2023 IATTC Annual Meeting

Drafted with agreement from all Pacific Ocean tuna - longline (Cheng Hung) FIP Participants –
July 2023

The submission of this position statement is regarding the Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) currently being undertaken by the Pacific Ocean LL Tuna FIP (Cheng Hung Seafood Frozen Produce Co., Ltd.) fishery. The fishery targets albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*), bigeye (*T. obesus*), yellowfin (*T. albacares*) and skipjack (*Katsuwonus pelamis*) tuna. The pelagic longline vessels are flagged to Taiwan and Vanuatu and fish on the high seas and occasionally in the national Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands. The fishery is managed regionally by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) and by the Inter American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO). Further details can be found here: [Pacific Ocean tuna - longline \(Cheng Hung Seafood Frozen Produce Co., Ltd.\)](#).

This FIP aims to meet the rising global demand for tuna by assuring catches do not exceed sustainable levels, promoting the ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management and strengthening policy and governance systems in the region. The end goal is to achieve certification under the [Marine Stewardship Council](#) Fisheries Standard by 2024.

As part of this FIP reaching MSC certification there are various actions that need to be undertaken that involve a range of different stakeholders. To ensure the FIP meets these objectives we need the support of the IATTC and urge action at the IATTC annual meeting this year on multiple topics laid out in this position statement.

Pacific Ocean tuna - longline (Cheng Hung) FIP strongly urge the IATTC and its member states to ensure the IATTC acts in August at the Annual Meeting of the IATTC Commission in Victoria B.C., to:

1. Compliance Processes

- Establish a work plan with timelines to further strengthen the Committee for the Review of Implementation of Measures' procedures and outcomes, including developing by 2024, a hierarchy of infractions and a scheme of responses to improve compliance.

2. Effective Management Procedures (Harvest Strategies)

- Adopt a harvest strategy for North Pacific albacore, including a Harvest Control Rule.
- For South Pacific albacore, collaborate with the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) to develop a harvest strategy and implement the 2023 recommendations of the IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC).
- Adopt interim reference points for skipjack tuna.
- Establish and convene a scientist-manager dialogue group to advance management procedures for other tuna stocks.

3. FAD Management

- Require fully non-entangling fish aggregating device (FAD) designs without netting or meshed materials to be implemented in a practical timeframe.
- Adopt the definition of "biodegradable" proposed by the FAD Working Group and establish a viable timeline for transition to 100% biodegradable FADs.

4. Tuna Stock Conservation

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- Ensure all CPCs implement Resolution C-21-04 fully so that the fishing mortality for bigeye and yellowfin does not exceed the average fishing mortality during 2017-2019.
- 5. Bycatch Mitigation & Shark Protections**
- Amend Resolution C-05-03 to require that all retained sharks be landed with fins naturally attached *without exceptions*.
 - Amend Resolution C-11-02 to include updated seabird mitigation options (e.g., hook shielding devices), including harmonization with IOTC and WCPFC.
- 6. Electronic Monitoring and Reporting & Observer Coverage**
- Endorse the recommendations of the IATTC Staff on Electronic Monitoring (EM).

If the above-mentioned elements are addressed effectively it will have positive long term-sustainability implications and we believe will improve the overall health of the Eastern Pacific marine ecosystem to allow for fisheries like our current FIP to achieve sustainability targets, particularly in line with MSC certification.

Signed on behalf of the Pacific Ocean tuna - longline (Cheng Hung) FIP

July 2023