

2024 GAC Recommendations to the U.S. Section of the IATTC**Tropical tunas**

1. The GAC supports IATTC Scientific staff recommendations to roll over the Resolution as a temporary measure but urges further action to fund and develop the bigeye harvest strategy and MSE as soon as possible, particularly given the significant uncertainties regarding yellowfin tuna stock assessments and changing environmental conditions.
2. The GAC supports the U.S. proposal for an extended tropical tuna Resolution, with the added provision that FADs moving out of the currently specified area, in particular south of 10 degrees south, continue to transmit for the purposes of FAD tracking and potential retrieval, but do not count against the active FAD limits. .
3. The GAC encourages the U.S. explore ways for bioFAD trials to be facilitated independently of the active FAD limits, such as through programs sanctioned by IATTC scientific staff with explicit timelines.
4. The GAC recommends that IATTC continue to utilize the individual vessel limit (IVL) and the enhanced monitoring program (EMP) within the measure, including supporting continuing monitoring and analysis of the effectiveness of the program.
5. The GAC supports efforts to strengthen relationships between the Commission and the fishing industry on tuna tagging and data collection, including data on drifting FADs during the closure periods with appropriate safeguards to protect business confidential information.
6. The GAC requests that the United States work bilaterally to advance support a science-management dialogue group for tropical tuna management strategy evaluation to provide opportunities for IATTC members to engage in focused conversation toward adoption of a harvest strategy for bigeye tuna in 2025.
7. The GAC recommends continued funding for the tropical tuna Enhanced Monitoring Program.
8. The GAC recommends that NMFS WCR coordinate with NMFS PIRO/PIFSC to ensure consistency in reporting of operational longline data between WCPFC and IATTC.

Fish aggregating devices (FADs)

1. The GAC recommends that the Commission prioritize continued research and trials for the development of biodegradable FADs noting that, although progress has been made, further work is required to develop a truly effective FAD design and appropriate materials.

2. To incentivize the deployment and testing of biodegradable FADs, recognizing that studies have shown mixed performance results, the GAC recommends that the U.S. consider an approach that does not fully count biodegradable FADs against the active FAD limit if they are deployed as part of an active project with an established scientific organization, such as ISSF.

North Pacific albacore

1. The GAC urges the United States to take a lead role in an effort to translate the North Pacific albacore's harvest strategy-based fishing intensity into TAC and TAE in an amended resolution to be adopted in 2025.

South Pacific albacore

1. The GAC supports the development of a conservation measure for South Pacific albacore.

Pacific bluefin tuna

1. The GAC supports the U.S. proposal from the Joint Working Group for adoption at the annual meeting.
2. The GAC recommends that the U.S. prioritize progress on a comprehensive long-term harvest strategy for adoption in 2025, including scheduling an intersessional meeting of the JWG in early 2025.
3. The GAC urges the U.S. to maintain a precautionary stance on Pacific bluefin tuna given uncertainty in recruitment and the impact of the small fish quota increase on EPO fisheries. The GAC recommends that the U.S. require further consideration of uncertainty in the MSE and East-West allocation as a precondition to any discussions on future revisions to management measures.
4. The GAC recommends that the U.S. oppose efforts to increase current catch limits by other countries seeking exceptions for discards – these should be accounted for in existing catch quotas.
5. The GAC supports continued efforts to identify and quantify unreported catch and discards, as well as improve overall catch and discard data of PBF, particularly in the Western Pacific and in recreational fisheries.
6. The GAC recommends that the U.S. support the expected Japanese proposal on monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS), with the addition of a paragraph mandating establishment of a catch documentation scheme (CDS) by 31 December 2026 in line with the EU MCS proposal.

7. The GAC recommends an economic analysis be conducted on the potential impacts of increased supply of PBF, including imports of Pacific bluefin into the US seafood market.

Electronic monitoring (EM)

1. The GAC recommends that the U.S. work with other delegations to propose and adopt interim EM standards as a matter of priority in 2024.
2. The GAC supports continuing development of EM with an initial focus on those fleets and fisheries with low observer coverage and low levels of data reporting.

Observer Coverage

1. The GAC continues to be very concerned with the low observer coverage of most LL fleets in the EPO and the lack of data on bycatch. The GAC recommends that the U.S. support proposals by other CPCs to increase observer coverage, so that all LL fleets increase coverage to above 20% coverage in a stepwise fashion if necessary.

Sharks

1. The GAC recommends that the U.S. advocates for thorough oversight by CPCs regarding the implementation of Paragraph 5 (compliance) of C-23-08 (Silky sharks) for directed longline fisheries that target sharks.
2. The GAC recommends that the U.S. explore opportunities to submit a proposal that incorporates additional voluntary measures for best handling and release practices for shark mitigation, pending availability of the latest analysis from the IATTC science staff.
3. The GAC recommends that the U.S. review the Silky shark measure to identify possible loopholes for longline vessels targeting silkies, and spearhead an effort to revise the silky shark measure to clarify that targeting silky sharks is prohibited for all fishing gears.
4. The GAC urges the U.S. to support the prioritization of blue shark research, which could inform future development of an MSE for the stock. The U.S. should consider a proposal setting an interim TAC for blue sharks at a future Commission meeting.

Bycatch

1. The GAC supports the US proposed Resolution on circle hooks, including use of large circle hooks and finfish type bait.
2. The GAC supports consideration of mandating hook strength, not just size, with respect to marine mammals.

Climate Change

1. The GAC urges the US to support the adoption of the IATTC Staff's proposed climate change workplan and to enable the availability of resources to support its implementation.
2. The GAC recommends that Commission measures developed or considered in response to the effects of climate change be adaptive and flexible in nature, avoiding static regulations that permanently reduce flexibility for the fishery to respond to shifts in distribution and abundance (e.g., reduction of the HS days, fixed MPAs, etc.).
3. The GAC supports the IATTC Staff's efforts to explore ways of reducing the environmental impact of the Commission's activities, including but not limited to the continuation of hybrid meetings to allow for both in-person collaboration and remote attendance.

Forced Labor

1. The GAC supports the US proposed Resolution on Forced Labor.

Compliance

1. The GAC supports the development of a compliance workplan to improve the Commission's compliance review process. This should include a system of pre-agreed corrective actions in response to identified cases of noncompliance and repeat offenses. Similar systems have been agreed at other RFMOs.