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FOR CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF TUNAS

ICCAT: Annual Meeting 2019

Progress was made for tropical tuna measures including reduced TAC for bigeye tuna at the 2019 Annual Meeting but many elements including measure for yellowfin tuna conservation remain undecided and need further deliberations and determinations.

At the 2018 Annual Meeting ICCAT finally decided to roll over the measures for 2016-2018 to 2019.

The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) had been expected, at its annual meeting held in November 2018 in Dubrovnik, Croatia to adopt a new strengthened management program to realize the recovery of the Atlantic bigeye stock reflecting the new stock assessment and management advice from the SCRS.

The major points of management recommendations provided from SCRS to the Commission for bigeye are as follows:

The Commission should urgently ensure that catches are appropriately reduced to end overfishing and allow the stock to recover (overall catches exceeded the TAC level by approximately 20% in 2016 and 2017); current and previous FAD time area closures and/or changes to fleet allocation alone could not achieve the necessary reduction of fishing mortality; and, the Commission should be aware that increased harvests on small fishes by FADs and other fisheries as well as the development of new fisheries could have had negative consequences for the productivity of bigeye tuna fisheries (e.g. reduced yield at MSY and increased SSB required to produce MSY) and, therefore, should the Commission wish to increase long-term sustainable yield, the Committee continues to recommend that effective measures be found to reduce fishing mortality of small bigeye tunas.

However, the Commission was not able to establish a new program for tropical tunas at its 2018 Annual Meeting responding to the SCRS's advice and decided

to only role-over the measures covering 2016-2018 by one year with minor modifications.

A progress made at the 2019 Annual Meeting but more elements need to be fixed in 2020

In 2019, an extra two-day meeting of Panel 1 was scheduled just prior to the opening of the 26th Regular Meeting of the Commission held from 18 to 25 November 2019 in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, to expedite development of new conservation and management measures for tropical tunas. A lot of work had been done intersessionally with the view to developing draft measures which Panel 1 members could easily agree by consensus.

On the final day of the 26th Regular Meeting of ICCAT, a number of key elements of a new multi-annual conservation and management program for tropical tunas were adopted. The new program is set out in Recommendation 19-02 which covers 2020-2021, and includes key elements such as i) the objective, ii) **TACs for bigeye for 2020 (62,500t) and 2021(61,500t)**, iii) **allocation among CPCs for 2020**, iv) **FADs closures for 2020-2021**. But an intersessional meeting of Panel 1 was needed to review existing measures and inter alia develop catch limits and associated catch verification mechanisms for 2021. An intersessional meeting of Panel 1 is scheduled from April 20 to 23, 2020 in Azores, Portugal.

Recommendation 19-02 maintains the TAC for yellowfin as 110,000 t from Recs 16-01 and 18-01 but it contains no specific measures to restrain total catch within the TAC level such as allocation among CPCs. Paragraph 18. of Rec19-02 mentions "the Commission

New scheme for catch limit with 4 categories of CPCs (para4. of Rec 19-02)

As an interim measure for 2020 the following provisions shall apply:

Category	Catch limits
a) CPCs with catch limits >10,000t in Rec16-01 para.3	21% reduction to those limits
b) CPCs not captured by a) with the recent average catch*(RAC)>3,500t	17% less than their RAC or their catch limit in Rec. 16-01 para.3
c) CPCs with RAC between 1,000-3,500t	10% less than their RAC
d) CPCs with RAC < 1,000t	CPCs are encouraged to maintain catch and effort at recent levels

*Recent average catch for the purposes of paragraph 4 means the annual average catch for the 4 year period 2014-2017 or the average of real catches for the 5-year period 2014-2018 if in that period the catch was equal to zero in any of those years.

Closure for operations associated with FADs (purse seine and bait boat and related supporting vessels) (paragraphs 26.-28.) Rec 19-02

Year	Major prohibited operations	Area	Period
2020	purse seine and bait boat vessels fishing for, or vessels supporting activities to fish for, bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack tunas in association with FADs	Throughout Convention Area	January1 – February 29
2021			January1 – March 31

Area/Time Closure in relation with the protection of juveniles (paragraphs 13.-14. Rec 16-01 originally applied from 2016 to 2018, and then rolled over into 2019 by Rec 18-01)

Year	Major prohibited operations	Area	period
2016-2018 (2019)	- Fishing in association with artificial objects, including vessels; - Fishing in association with natural objects	Area enclosed with the following limits 4 °S, 20 °W, 5°N, the African coast	January1– February 28 (29)

shall adopt additional conservation measures for yellowfin tuna at the 2020 annual meeting.”

However, we should note the following warning from the SCRS: significant overages are frequent (since 2016 yellowfin catch has averaged 137,000t against the TAC of 110,000t); existing conservation and management measures appear to be insufficient; and SCRS recommended to strengthen related measures. Panel1 is expected to deepen considerations to fix the remaining elements of Rec 19-02 at its intersessional meeting in a timely manner for adoption by the Commission at the 2020 Annual Meeting.

It appears that a progress has been made for conservation and management of the Atlantic bigeye stock by strengthening scheme for CPCs’ catch limits and widening the area to be subject to the closure of fishing operations associated with FADs. But we will not be able to see the efficacy of these measures established in 2019 to be applied for 2020 and 2021 until the SCRS makes available of the information, data and evaluation of the new measures. The SCRS may express its views on factors related to Rec19-02 in October 2021 with information including provisional catch data for 2020.

The next update of the stock assessment for the Atlantic bigeye is scheduled to take place in 2021 and it will provide the basis for improvement of the multi-year program for tropical tunas to be adopted by the Commission at its 2021 annual meeting. We look forward to obtaining a robust assessment and explicit management recommendations from the SCRS.

In this connection, it is of concern that the time available before the commencement of the SCRS’s work may be too short to collect an adequate quantity of data and information. For example, catch and discard data under the new program will be available for only 2020 and on a provisional basis. Therefore, each of CPCs involved is required to submit relevant data and information including catch and effort data to the ICCAT Secretariat in a timely fashion while ensuring the compliance of its fleet with newly established and/or amended regulatory measures without fail.

WCPFC: Annual Meeting 2019 [WCPFC16]

WCPFC16 considered TRPs for the WCPO bigeye and yellowfin and decided to relax the pace of its work for MSE development and pursue a multi-species approach.

The 16th Regular Session of WCPFC (WCP-FC16) was held from December 5 to 11 in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

One of the major issues to be decided at WCPFC16 was the establishment of Target Reference Points (TRPs) for bigeye and yellowfin stocks in the western and central Pacific Ocean (WCPO). TRPs are an important factor in enhancing conservation and management by traditional means and new MSE scheme for those species.

With respect to other tuna species, an interim TRP was established in 2015 as 50%*SB_{F=0} for the WCPO skipjack, followed by the TPR for WCPO southern albacore established in 2018 as 56%*SB_{F=0} with the objective of achieving an 8 percent increase in catch per unit of effort (CPUE) for the southern longline fishery as compared to 2013 levels.

The following Table describes the work plan updated at WCPFC15 (Annual Meeting in 2018) regarding establishment of TRPs, etc.

[Source Work Plan for the Adoption of Harvest Strategies under CMM 2014-06 refined at WCPFC15 (Dec. 2018)]

	S. albacore	Skipjack	Bigeeye	Yellowfin
2015		Commission agreed an interim TRP [50%SB _{F=0}]. TRP shall be reviewed by the Comm. no later than 2019		
2016				
2017				
2018	Commission agreed a TRP [56%SB _{F=0}] * TRP shall be reviewed every 3 years			
2019		TRP shall be reviewed by the Comm. no later than 2019	Agree Target Reference Point-	Agree Target Reference Point-
2020	Develop HCRs and MSE	Adopt a HCR		
2021	Develop HCRs and MSE Adopt a HCR.	Harvest Strategy in place	Adopt a HCR	Adopt a HCR

*: with the objective of achieving an 8 percent increase in catch per unit of effort (CPUE) for the southern longline fishery as compared to 2013 levels.

According to the table above, it is obvious that the Commission was to agree TRPs for bigeye and yellowfin at its Annual Meeting in 2019 but it was a case.

The Provisional Outcome Document for WCPFC16 [WCPFC16-2019-outcomes 18 December 2019] and its Attachment H INDICATIVE WORK PLAN FOR THE ADOPTION OF HARVEST STRATEGIES UNDER CMM 2014-06 was refined and adopted at the Sixteenth Regular Session of the Commission, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea 5-11 December 2019.

The latter document includes the following “2019 update”:

As scheduled, the Harvest Strategy Workplan was subject to a more substantial review in 2019 and contains some significant changes in recognition of the needs of WCPFC CCMs as well as recent scientific advice.

● The updated workplan maintains the development of harvest strategies for skipjack and South Pacific albacore tuna, **initially on a single species basis but noting their eventual inclusion into a multispecies framework.**

● The updated plan identifies **the need for additional work and time to explore and develop the details and practical implementation aspects of the**

multispecies framework covering all four tuna stocks.

● The updated plan recognises **the need for additional time to build capacity and a sound understanding of harvest strategy functioning and consequences.**

● **Skipjack.** The updated plan recognises the need for additional time to
a) build capacity and a sound understanding of harvest strategy functioning and consequences
b) update the skipjack MSE framework in accordance with the 2019 assessment, and
c) continue to develop the harvest strategy. This is reflected in a shift in adoption of a management procedure* for skipjack to 2022.

● **South Pacific Albacore.** The updated plan delays adoption of a management procedure by one year (to 2022) because of a clash in 2021 with an updated albacore assessment (that may also necessitate an update to the MSE operating model) and a potential update of the interim TRP in accordance with the WCPFC15 adopted approach. It is noted that WCPFC are anticipating development of bridging management arrangements under the South Pacific Albacore Roadmap

● **Bigeeye and yellowfin.** The changes and revised timeline for yellowfin and bigeye tuna reflect the substantial body of work required to develop the multispecies framework in advance of further harvest strategy development. This will occur during 2020 and 2021 with flow-on effects to the timing of harvest strategy development for these two stocks.

*The term “Management Procedure” is now used in this workplan in place of “Harvest Control Rule (HCR)”.

The above describes the work plan from WCPFC15. It was revised as follows for the period from 2019 to 2022.

[Source: Work Plan for the Adoption of Harvest Strategies under CMM 2014-06 refined and adopted at WCPFC16 (Dec. 2019) P7-10]

New table	S. albacore	Skipjack	Bigeeye	Yellowfin
2019		SC advised on required analyses to support TRP review	Commission considered potential TRP	Commission considered potential TRP
2020	Develop HCRs and MSE	Develop HCRs and MSE	Consider TRP	Consider TRP
2021	Develop HCRs and MSE	Develop HCRs and MSE	Commission agree a TRP	Commission agree a TRP
2022	Develop MPs and MSE Adopt a MP	Adopt a MP	Develop MPs and MSE	Develop MPs and MSE

Although the work plan updated at WCPFC 15 has been further amended to slow down the work pace related to MSE for 4 stocks, or bigeye, yellowfin, skipjack and southern albacore, it seems better for the WCPFC CCMs including related fishing sectors. We have more time to better digest what the MSE scheme is, and its implications and to develop a multi-species approach that is expected to strengthen the coherence between tools to be applied for the species concerned, in particular, bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack. These three species have been dealt with by single Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) adopted by the WCPFC.

We'd better to remind ourselves of a saying "Haste makes Waste" and should be cautious enough to avoid introducing clumsy mechanisms.

With regard to the timing of initiation of the MSE approach, three tropical tunas should be dealt with in the same manner. In other words, the work for skipjack has been prioritized and has proceeded ahead of bigeye and yellowfin and this situation will not change according to the updated time table. However, purse seine operations, in particular those associated with Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) said to target skipjack have brought about high levels of fishing mortality for juvenile bigeye and yellowfin for many years. This has adversely affected those stocks, and longline operations targeting adult bigeye and yellowfin have been suffering decreased abundance of those two stocks. This makes it obvious that the MSE scheme for those three stocks cannot be developed or implemented individually.

The OPRT position for TRPs and MSE process for bigeye and yellowfin, and skipjack in the WCPO was made public in a paper submitted to WCPFC16 **"Statement to WCPFC16 WCPFC16-2019-OP02 12 November 2019"**.

We believe that our view is still valid for future work in this field and we would like to draw this to your attention:

"2. The situation that the longline fishery has been facing should be duly considered in developing and establishing Target Reference Points for the WCPO bigeye and yellowfin stocks. Relevant work should be expedited.

WCPFC16 is expected to establish TRPs for bigeye and yellowfin stocks.

(1) While purse seine operations associated with Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) and other floating objects have significant impacts on the WCPO bigeye and yellowfin stocks by harvesting a large amount of juveniles of these species in tropical areas in the WCPO, many longline fishing vessels are targeting bigeye and/or yellowfin tunas and are suffering from decreased size of spawning

stocks. Therefore, careful deliberations should be conducted for all sectors of fisheries related to the WCPO bigeye and yellowfin stocks.

(2) In establishing the TRP for the southern albacore stock last year (in 2018), the Catch per Effort Unit (CPUE) for the major longline fishing sector was considered. Similar consideration should be included in deliberations to establish TRPs for bigeye and yellowfin.

[Relevant Paragraph of Summary Report of SC Paragraph 131.]

..... While SC15 noted that the main biological consideration for a TRP is that it should be sufficiently above the LRP, SC15 also noted that the choice of a TRP can be based on a combination of biological, ecological and socioeconomic considerations. In this regard consideration of other factors (such as CPUE and the financial performance of typical vessels) in the selection of candidate TRPs would be welcome.

(3) In connection with the establishment of TRPs for bigeye and yellowfin, it is widely known that excessive catch of juveniles will lead to substantial deterioration of the stocks concerned, will decrease the level of Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) and will require larger amount of spawning biomass to achieve the same level of MSY compared to catches where juveniles account for smaller portion of the total.

Therefore, WCPFC is urged to take effective measures to rectify the situation to sufficiently reduce such adverse impacts.

[Relevant paragraphs]

i) SC 14 (therefore) recommends that WCPFC15 could continue to consider measures to reduce fishing mortality from fisheries that take juveniles, with the goal to increase bigeye fishery yields and reduce any further impacts on the spawning biomass for this stock in the tropical regions. (Paragraph 179.: SR of SC14 (Management advice including this is still most recent))

ii) WCPFC could consider measures to reduce fishing mortality from fisheries that take juveniles, with the goal to increase to maximum fishery yields and reduce any further impacts on the spawning potential for this (the WCPO yellowfin) stock in the tropical regions (Paragraph 38 (255): SR of SC10 (Management advice including this is still most recent)).

(4) In order to develop a more effective and workable OM to be incorporated in related MSE(s) in the future, it is necessary to commence and expedite the simulation work mentioned above in 1(2)*.

* : paragraph 1 (from chapeau to sub-paragraph (2))

1. Because of the high level of uncertainties it is premature to develop and implement CMMs based on the new stock assessment. A truly precautionary approach should be applied.

We consider that science must be respected in developing conservation and management measures for fish stocks including the Western Central Pacific

Ocean (WCPO) bigeye stock. However, since August 2017 we have been deeply concerned about the results of the stock assessment for the WCPO bigeye stock conducted at SC13 that contains a high level of uncertainties. Looking at the outcomes from SC14 held in August last year and SC15 held in August this year has not alleviated our concern.

The level of uncertainty for the 2018 stock assessment associated with the growth curve and regional division (SC15 noted that no stock assessment has been conducted since SC14 and therefore, the advice from SC14 should be maintained pending the next stock assessment) is considered basically unchanged from the 2017 assessment. It is assumed that such uncertainties cannot be resolved immediately. In fact, the new growth curve which has been used in lieu of the old one in the stock assessment process since 2017 and on which CMMs 2017-01 and 2018-01 are dependent has not been confirmed as more plausible than the old one although two years have passed since August 2017.

However, WCPFC15 decided that application of almost the same provisions of CMM2017-01 which is dependent on the new stock assessment will be extended until 2020 by adopting CMM 2018-01

Considering the problems associated with the new stock assessments mentioned above, we again urge the Commission, in accordance with a precautionary approach, to refrain from taking actions based on the results of new assessments, which could lead to irreparable damage to the WCPO bigeye stock.

In this connection, it should be highlighted that SC14 also noted that, regardless of the choice of uncertainty grid, the assessment results show that the stock has been continuously declining for about 60 years since the late 1950's, except for the recent small increase (paragraph 169. of Summary Report (SR) of SC14). This has amplified our concern.

Therefore, we request the following:

- (1)The work to reduce the level of uncertainty of new stock assessments associated with, inter alia, age determination methodology and growth curve derived from the result of such age determination should be expedited as a matter of priority;
- (2)Until the uncertainty included in these new assessments becomes adequately resolved, the work utilizing simulations should also be expedited to provide a basis for establishing conservation and management measures. Such simulation work is expected to create various results and provide information on the possible impacts on relevant stock assessments according to a series of cases such as: where differences are detected in growth curve for bigeye between the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) and the WCPO; where differences are detected for bigeye even within the WCPO; and various aspects related to the WCPO - EPO overlapping areas. In addition,

stock assessment utilizing the old growth curve should be conducted.

Incidentally, such simulation work would also greatly contribute to the development of the Operational Model (OM) to be incorporated in the relevant Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) scheme.”

**IOTC: Scientific Committee
2019 [IOTC-SC22]**

Bigeye stock in the Indian Ocean has deteriorated now in the “Orange” (in 2019 assessment) status in Kobe plot from the “Green “ (in 2016) :determined by the new assessment

The IOTC Scientific Committee seeks at least a 10% reduction in bigeye catch in the Indian Ocean because the result of latest assessment shows that the stock has deteriorated into the orange zone in Kobe Plot- not overfished but subject to overfishing [P 80-85, IOTC–2019–SC22–R[E]].

The previous assessment carried out in 2016 showed that the stock was in the green zone.

The 22nd session of Scientific Committee of IOTC (SC22) was held from December 2 to 6, 2019 in Karachi, Pakistan. A new stock assessment for bigeye in the Indian Ocean was conducted- an update of the assessment conducted in 2016

The updated assessment determined that the bigeye tuna stock is **not overfished but subject to overfishing.**

	Stock overfished (S _{year} /S _{BMSY} < 1)-	Stock not overfished (S _{year} /S _{BMSY} ≥ 1)-
Stock subject to overfishing (F _{year} /F _{MSY} > 1)	34.6%	38.2%
Stock not subject to overfishing (F _{year} /F _{MSY} ≤ 1)	0%	27.2%

SB₂₀₁₈ is above SB_{BMSY} with high probability (65.4%) and that fishing mortality is above F_{MSY} also with high probability (72.8%).

SC22 noted the following:

“Declines in longline effort since 2007, particularly from the Japanese, Taiwanese and Rep. of Korea longline fleets lowered the pressure on the Indian Ocean bigeye tuna stock since 2007. However, recent increase in catch from purse seine fleets have increased this pressure and the stock is estimated to be subject to overfishing.

The estimated MSY has declined significantly (16%) from the previous estimate (in 2016) due to the increase of purse seine catch in the overall change in catch composition, …………….”

At the least, a 10 % reduction of catch from current levels was recommended.

SC22 made a management recommendation as follows;

Should the management objective of maintaining biomass at levels higher than SB_{MSY} with more than 50% probability in 2028 be pursued, the overall catch should be reduced by 10% from current levels (73,272 t).

Year Assessment conducted	MSY	Average Catch (years)	Catch composition by gear*			
			Longline	Purse seine		Others
				Associated school	Free school	
2016 (SC19)	104,000t	101,515t (2011-15)	57%	19%	24%	
				13%	6%	
2019 (SC22)	87,000t	92,140t (2014-18)	42%	31%		
				24%	7%	

*: For figures indicated for the composition by gear related to the 2016 assessment were based on annual average catches for 2012-2015.

Yellowfin requires strengthened measures for a number of years

SC22 also calls for measures that effectively achieve prescribed catch reduction for the yellowfin stock that has been classified in the red zone in the Kobe plot (the stock is overfished and subject to overfishing) since 2015;

In 2015, SC18 made recommendations including that the catches of yellowfin tuna have to be reduced by 20% of the 2014 levels to recover the stocks to levels above the interim target reference points with 50% probability by 2024.

IOTC has an interim plan for the rebuilding the yellowfin stock, with catch limitations based on 2014/2015 levels (Resolution 19/01, which superseded 17/01 and 18/01). However, SC22 (in 2019) pointed out that the total catches of yellowfin in 2018 increased by around 9% from 2014/2015 levels and recommended “The Commission should ensure that any revision of the management measure can effectively achieve any prescribed catch reduction to ensure the effectiveness of the management measure.”

Therefore, the Commission is urged to take effective actions to realize the recovery of yellowfin and bigeye stocks in the Indian Ocean without delay at its 24th Session (Annual Meeting) to be held from 8-12 June 2020 in Bali, Indonesia.

”October 10 is the Day of Tuna” Campaign 2019

The Organization for the Promotion of Responsible Tuna Fisheries (OPRT) carried out the “Wild Sashimi Tuna Campaign” under the theme: “Sashimi tuna: indispensable to special dishes on celebrative occasions” from October 1 to 14. This campaign was conducted in cooperation with the Ja-

pan Fish Retailors Union (Zensui-Shoren) in relation to “October-10 Day of Tuna”. A total of 25,000 copies of leaflets, 800 copies of posters and flag of banners were distributed for sales promotion for wild frozen tuna through 208 fresh fish retailers with the aim at making the day better known among consumers and to impress them about the attraction of sashimi tunas. In the leaflet, pictures of a variety of dishes using sashimi tuna suitable for special occasions, such as new year celebrations and other national holidays as well as birthday, wedding anniversary, entrance or graduation ceremony of member(s) of a family and friends.

In 2019 in Japan, the enthronement of the Emperor took place on May 1 and the new Japanese era named “Reiwa” commenced on the same day. On October 22, the “Sokui no Rei” or the ancient enthronement ceremony was scheduled. Many Japanese were in an increasing celebratory mood toward October 22 and the 2019 OPRT Campaign was carried out in such an atmosphere.

In addition, among those who filled out the questionnaire forms available and collected at the retail stores participating in this campaign, 200 people won 3 sakus (portions of tuna meat with rectangular shape ready to be sliced into sashimi pieces) of frozen wild bigeye tuna (gross weight:700 g or more) by draw.

Fresh fish retailing stores make appeal about attraction of wild tuna.

During the period of the campaign, OPRT and Zensui-shoren jointly visited a number of the fresh fish retailing store participating in the campaign.

“Uoko Suisan” (魚幸水産), fresh fish store located in a shopping district in Yokohama-City, deals with fresh and frozen bigeye, southern bluefin and bluefin tunas, and sells 10-20 individuals of tuna/day on week days and 5-7 tons of tunas/day on the last days of the year, during which consumers make preparation for a new year celebration including purchase of food for special dishes .

It was spectacular to watch a big whole (gilled and gutted) tuna being cut down to sakus. This performance is carried out in front of shoppers and the product (pieces of Saku) is a popular sell.

President Yukihiro Motai (茂田井幸弘 社長) mentioned “Sashimi tuna stands first in all the fish products we handle and accounts for half of this store’s total proceeds.”

“Sakana-Ya Ocean” (さかなや Ocean) in Yokohama-City basically sells wild tuna. Sashimi tuna accounts for 25% of its total proceeds. Most popular tuna is bigeye. Frozen tuna (gilled and gutted) are thawed as whole fish-not cut into filets or blocks. Sashimi tuna from bigeye caught in good fishing ground (e.g. waters off Cape Town) and season can keep favorable meat color for relatively longer after being thawed and processed. President Shingo Yata(矢田信吾 社長) stated

“Sashimi tuna is the popular fish product we offer and the most important and typical product for us to gain customers’ confidence in our business. At the same time we are cautious and know that the obtained confidence can easily be lost and therefore we endeavor to buy and process tunas of good quality without fail.”

Mr. Isam Ohtake, the ex-owner and the 2nd generation of the family founded Uotatsu,(魚辰、大武勇 二代目社長) mentioned “Sashimi tuna is most popular for customers in the Tokyo Area. We usually offer frozen bigeye from various oceans and bluefin caught in the eastern Atlantic. I wish more bigeye tuna of good quality at reasonable prices was available as had been the case until a decade ago.”

Mr. Toshiyasu Ito, President of “Moriki Sengyoten”(森喜鮮魚店 伊藤敏恭 社長) in Yokohama-City stated “We have been offering frozen bigeye for many years but in recent years it has become more difficult to find bigeye of good quality.”

Mr. Motoharu Goto, President of “Uogo”(魚五 後藤基治社長) in Nakano-Ku, Tokyo mentioned “We have been dealing with southern bluefin exclusively for sashimi tuna (as a matter of course they offer other fish than tuna). The taste of southern bluefin sashimi is most intense among tuna species used for sashimi and actually sashimi of southern bluefin is very popular with our patrons. I am confident that as sashimi tuna no other tuna species is more appreciated than southern bluefin by consumers.”

Mr. Shuichi Tauchi, President of “Uoyoshi”(魚芳 田内周一社長) mentioned “We purchase frozen southern bluefin at Toyosu on every business day. Our sales of sashimi tuna are stable.”

Mr. Hiroshi Ishikawa, President of Ikedaya (池田屋 石川宏社長) located in Setagaya-Ku, Tokyo started a sale at 2:30 in the afternoon on October 6 (Sunday), with demonstration of cutting down a whole bigeye tuna (gilled and gutted). He stated “Among fish products we offer, sashimi tuna amounts to far and away the largest in our proceeds. It seems that a change of generations is taking place smoothly for residents in our area and many customers of younger generations purchase (relatively) large amount of sashimi tuna.”

Toyosu year’s first auction 2020

Second highest-priced bluefin tuna in record fetches JPY 193 million at the year’s first auction in Toyosu Market.

The first auction of 2020 was held in Toyosu Market on January 5. Since the Reiwa Era commenced on May 1 2019, this year’s first auction was the first one in the new Japanese Era “Reiwa”. Since the relocation of Tsukiji Market to Toyosu took place in October 2018, the year’s first auction of 2020 was the second one for Toyosu Market.

At the auction, the highest-priced tuna was a 276-kg fresh bluefin tuna landed at Oma (大間), Aomori

Prefecture (青森県). The price was JPY 193.2 million, namely JPY 700 thousand per kg. Last year, a 278-kg fresh bluefin tuna landed at Oma had the highest price (JPY 336 million) at the year’s first auction in Toyosu. This fish was sold for Record Price.

The highest priced tuna in 2020 was sold for the second highest price in history while price per kg was almost half compared to that for last year’s highest-priced tuna (JPY 1.20 million per kg).

Some say the successful bidder expects advertising and publicity effects for such price levels. There has been no correlation observed between prices for highest-priced tuna at the year’s first auction and average prices of tuna sold during the corresponding year in Tsukiji or Toyosu.

Prior to the auction, on behalf of the Wholesalers working at Toyosu Market Mr. Takeshi Yoshida, President of Tsukiji Uoichiba Co., Ltd. (築地魚市場株式会社、吉田猛社長) stated “One year and three months have passed since Toyosu Market commenced operations and we have steadily recognized its features. At the same time, we have found some room for improvement including insufficient parking lots and decreased frequency of buyers’ visits. This year the amended Wholesale Market act will be implemented. Succeeding the spirit and tradition of Tsukiji that had been build up for 80 years, let us strive in a united effort to establish a new Toyosu business model.”

This was followed by another statement made by Mr. Shigeo Yokota, President of the Tokyo Toyosu Shijou Ohmono Gyokai (Association of Intermediate Wholesalers for Tunas, Tokyo Toyosu Fish Market) (東京豊洲魚市場大物業会 横田繁夫会長). Mr. Yokota stated “We have been working in Toyosu Market without major troubles since the opening in October 2018. Therefore I would like to extend my deep gratitude to many people concerned working inside and/or outside Toyosu Market for their endeavors and assistance. At the beginning of this year, reminding ourselves that our operation in Toyosu is dependent on the support from many people let us reaffirm our role of contributing to Japanese food culture through marketing of Sashimi tuna and make our best effort to this end. . . ”

Mr. Yutaka Hayama, Special Advisor of the Association of Intermediate Wholesalers for Tunas, Tokyo Toyosu Fish Market (東京豊洲魚市場大物業会 早山豊相談役) lead the participants in giving “Tejime (手締め: Japanese custom of ceremonial rhythmic hand clapping, performed at the end of a special event)” to close the opening ceremony for year’s first auction.



Dates and venues for annual meetings of t-RFMOs in 2020, and respective major issues

RFMO	Dates & Venue	Issues to be settled	Remarks
IOTC	June 8-12 Bali, Indonesia	<p>Management measures for yellowfin and bigeye be strengthened [related situation]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Yellowfin stock: overfished and subject to overfishing. Effective amendments urgently required to reduce catch to the prescribed level. -Bigeye stock: subject to overfishing. $\geq 10\%$ reduction from the current catch. 	<p>For bigeye, fishing mortality is above FMSY also with high probability (72.8%). Selectivity by gear should be addressed in more active manner: increased mortality for juvenile affects more adversely the spawning stock.</p> <p>Relevant Management recommendation by SCRS of ICCAT may be helpful: “The Commission should be aware that increased harvests on small fishes by FADs and other fisheries as well as the development of new fisheries could have had negative consequences for the productivity of bigeye tuna fisheries (e.g. reduced yield at MSY and increased SSB required to produce MSY) (BET Figure 9) and, therefore, should the Commission wish to increase long-term sustainable yield, the Committee continues to recommend that effective measures be found to reduce fishing mortality of small bigeye tunas.” [Source: SCRS REPORT 2018 P44-]</p>
IATTC	Aug. 10-14 La Jolla, USA	<p>Management measures for tropical tunas (Res17-02) should be strengthened to adequately cope with increased fishing efforts and efficiency of FAD-associated purse seine fishing operations. [Related situation]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Bigeye stock: subject to overfishing. -Yellowfin stock: overfished and subject to overfishing[SAC-10-07 – Yellowfin tuna: assessment for 2018] 	<p>Efficiencies of Purse seine operations associated with FADs have improved substantially in recent years and accordingly impacts on related stocks have increased significantly. [See Fig. 3 of IATTC SAC-10-06 Stock status indicators for bigeye tuna]</p>
CCSBT	Oct. 12-15 Sapporo, Japan	TAC for southern bluefin and allocation for 2021-23	
ICCAT	Nov. 23-29 Antalya, Turkey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAC and allocation for eastern and western bluefin for at least 2021 • Complete tropical tuna measures for 2020-21 • Finalize measures for northern short-fin mako shark 	<p>Work for MSE development has been slowed down. SCRS will update stock assessments and make management advice for 2021-2022 Intersessional meeting of Panel1 will be held in late April. Intersessional meeting of Panel4 will be held in early July.</p>
WCPFC	To be determined [7-day meeting]	<p>Conservation & management measures for tropical tunas Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paragraph 28 of CMM 2018-01 [Purse seine limits for high seas] • paragraph 44 of CMM 2018-01 [Long line limits for bigeye] 	<p>Stock assessment for bigeye and yellowfin will be updated this year. A new methodology for aging and growth has provided the main basis for the optimistic assessment results since 2017 but it appears that no confirmation or plausibility shown so far that the new one is substantially better than the old one for bigeye. [See Para.35 of SUMMARY REPORT of SC15 Research Recommendation. The number of work items necessary to tackle have been increasing year by year and it seems that no convergence of views on methodology for age determination.]</p>