**IDENTIFICATION**

**SCIENTIFIC NAME**
Katsuwonus pelamis

**SPECIES NAME(S)**
Skipjack tuna

**COMMON NAMES**
Skipjack tuna

**STOCK IDENTIFICATION**
It is likely that skipjack are distributed throughout the Pacific as a single population. Exchange of fish between the eastern and western region is not common. The majority of catches occur in the eastern and western regions (Maunder 2015).

**RELATED LINKS:**
- Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)

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**ASSESSMENT**

### Strengths
- Fishing mortality rates and biomass are currently thought to be sustainable.
- Discarding of tunas is prohibited.
- There is a multi-year conservation plan in place, which has just been extended, for skipjack tuna (and other tuna species).
- A harvest control rule has been adopted.
- There is 93% observer coverage on large purse seine vessels operating in the high seas.

At the national level, there are adequate regulations for protecting PET species (pelagic-eurythermic turtle and whale fisheries). Strengthened laws for lesser pelagics while fishing in territorial waters, required use of special screen on purse seine vessels for safe release of marine mammals, Ecuador in signatory to the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP) under the IATTC; Ecuador implements the IATTC resolution which bans transshipment of tuna on the high seas; Mandatory use of exclusion screen on class six tuna vessels to prevent capture of juvenile fish. There is 100% observer coverage for purse seine vessels operating in the high seas.

### Weaknesses
- There are no MSY-based reference points used for skipjack tuna in the EP0.
- There are time/area closures in place for the purse seine fleet but these measures are not sufficient to manage the fish aggregating device (FAD) fisheries.
- Purse seine fisheries interact with ETP species.
- The stock structure is uncertain for skipjack tuna in the Eastern Pacific Ocean in comparison to the Western and Central Pacific stocks (IATTC 2012). Tuna monitoring is poor in artisanal fisheries, especially for catch records; enforcement of artisanal fleet is difficult due to large number of small vessels that target tuna and other pelagic fish (Prieto 2009).
- There is shortage of information on catches of skipjack tuna in other surface fisheries prior to 1970.
- There was no observer scheme prior to 1993 and hence no discards are assumed before this period (Maunder 2012).
- Formal reference points and harvest control rules have not been adopted at the international RFMO level.

### SCORING

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management Quality:</th>
<th>Management Strategy</th>
<th>Managers Compliance</th>
<th>Fishers Compliance</th>
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<td>≥ 6</td>
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<tr>
<th>Stock Health:</th>
<th>Current Health</th>
<th>Future Health</th>
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**FIPS**
- Eastern Pacific Ocean tropical tuna - purse seine (TUNACONS): Stage 4, Progress Rating A, Type: Fip, Evaluation Start Date: 2 Jan 2017

**MSC**
- No related MSC fisheries

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**CATCHERS & REGULATORS**
1. Ensure member countries comply with all Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) conservation and management measures (CMMs), including measures aimed at both target and incidental market and non-market species, and all other obligations. Through your delegation to WFTT, encourage the compliance committee to make information on non-compliance by individual members and cooperating non-members publicly available and transparent.

2. At the regional level, promote the adoption by the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) and member countries of precautionary and ecosystem-based management measures, including MSY-based biological reference points.
1. Catchers – Inform relevant delegations to the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission’s (IATTC), those being Member and Cooperating Non-Members in countries where your company is incorporated and where your company conducts operations, to have IATTC adopt a formal MSY-based target reference point (or SMP) for skipjack tuna, a harvest strategy responsive to the state of the stock and designed to achieve the limit and target reference points, and management measure and tools consistent with the harvest strategy that reduces fishing mortality, as a limit reference point is approached. Comply with current required onboard observer coverage rates.

2. Encourage IATTC to conduct a feasibility study for routine sampling (i.e. length data) of adult tunas from canneries and to continue monitoring the average weight of skipjack tuna. Improved tagging data is also needed for skipjack tuna in the EPO region to properly define populations. Encourage IATTC to implement additional management measures to reduce fish aggregating device (FAD) fishing mortality, such as limiting the number of FAD sets allowed each year.

3. Conduct studies, increase monitoring and publish information to assess longline and purse seine interactions with endangered, threatened and protected (ETP) and other bycatch species. Identify and mandate best practice bycatch mitigation techniques. Central American countries should work with IATTC to conduct a feasibility study for routine sampling (i.e. length data) of adult tunas from canneries and to continue monitoring the average weight of skipjack tuna. Improved tagging data is also needed for skipjack tuna in the EPO region to properly define populations. Encourage IATTC to implement additional management measures to reduce fish aggregating device (FAD) fishing mortality, such as limiting the number of FAD sets allowed each year.

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RETAILERS & SUPPLY CHAIN

1. Encourage both the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission’s (IATTC) and individual member and cooperating non-members to adopt precautionary and ecosystem-based management measures. Demand that member countries comply with all IATTC’s Conservation and Management Measures, and request that IATTC make information on monitoring and compliance publicly available.

2. Explore implementation of control documents to ensure supplier compliance with IATTC conservation and management measures (CMMs) (e.g. around bycatch). Source from vessels registered on the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation’s (ISSF) Proactive Vessel Register (PVR) and in full compliance with all measures relevant to their gear type as demonstrated by annual independent audit reports that are made publicly available. Encourage ISSF to expand the ecological sustainability criteria against which tuna vessels on the PVR are assessed.

3. Explore the IATTC and other national and international opportunities for support studies and data gathering.

4. Contact SFP to learn more about fishery improvement projects (FIPs) and the Eastern Pacific Large Pelagic Supplier Roundtable.