UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
PROGRAM PLANNING AND INTEGRATION
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

MAY - 7 2013

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

Under the National Environmental Policy Act, an environmental review has been performed on the following action.

TITLE: Environmental Assessment to Revise the United States Commercial Fishery Regulations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean in Accordance with Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission Resolution C-12-09

LOCATION: The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission Convention Area of the Eastern Pacific Ocean which is bounded by the coast of the Americas, the 50° N. and 50° S. parallels, and the 150° W. meridian.

SUMMARY: This final rule implements conservation measures that are part of an international agreement to conserve Pacific bluefin tuna caught (PBT) in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO). These include a cumulative commercial catch limit of 3,295 metric tons (mt) for PBT in 2013 for all member countries of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission and a 500 mt catch limit for individual member countries should the cumulative catch limit be reached. The proposed regulation would only apply to vessels that commercially catch PBT in the EPO. The average annual PBT landings by U.S. vessels fishing in the EPO represent roughly two percent of the average annual PBT landings from all fleets fishing in the EPO for years 2007 through 2011. The U.S. commercial fleets have caught less than 500 mt of PBT annually for over a decade. Impacts to the human environment (e.g., effects of the proposed action alternatives on the natural environment and the socioeconomic environment) were found to be insignificant.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: Rodney R. McInnis
Regional Administrator
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The environmental review process led us to conclude that this action will not have a significant impact on the environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement was not prepared. A copy of the finding of no significant impact (FONSI), including the environmental assessment, is enclosed for your information.

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Although NOAA is not soliciting comments on this completed EA/FONSI we will consider any comments submitted that would assist us in preparing future NEPA documents. Please submit any written comments to the Responsible Official named above.

Sincerely,

Patricia A. Montanio
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure

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