



Surveillance Report 3
American Albacore Fishing Association (AAFA) –
North Pacific Albacore Pole & Line and Troll/Jig Fishery

Certificate No.: MML-FC-014

Moody Marine Ltd.
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1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

Scope against which the surveillance is undertaken: MSC Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Fishing as applied to the AAFA Pacific Albacore Pole & Line and Troll/Jig Fishery.

Species: Albacore tuna *Thunnus alalunga*

Area: North Pacific

Method of capture: Pole & Line and Troll/Jig

Date of Surveillance Visit:	3-4 August 2010			
Initial Certification	Date: 24th August 2007		Certificate Ref: MML-FC-014	
Surveillance stage	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Surveillance team:	Lead Assessor: Rob Blyth-Skyrme Assessor(s): Joseph Powers Mike Laurs Paul Knapman			
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2.0 INTRODUCTION

This report contains the findings of the third surveillance cycle in relation to the American Albacore Fishing Association (AAFA) North Pacific Pole & Line and Troll/Jig Fishery. The surveillance audit was carried out in accordance with the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) Fisheries Certification Methodology (FCM) Version 6.

An announcement of the surveillance site visit was published on the MSC website on 22nd July 2010 (See appendix A) and opportunity was provided to stakeholders to meet with or submit information on the fishery to the assessment team. Stakeholders who have previously commented on the AAFA fishery certification were also notified directly of the third surveillance audit.

Stakeholder representation or comments were received from the World Wildlife Fund with regard to the closure last year of the final condition in the North Pacific fishery, and any future recertification, and Mr. John Hall of Zephyr Fisheries LLC with regard to a concern for the potential for albatross bycatch to occur in the AAFA fishery.

The surveillance team met with the client and with staff of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Fisheries Resources Division, and then teleconferenced with Dr. Gary Sakagawa of NMFS, who is also Chair of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) International Scientific Committee. During these discussions, evidence was gathered on the status of the stock, the performance of the fishery throughout the year, measures to meet the Condition of Certification and changes in management. A substantial number of scientific and meeting reports were also examined by the surveillance team in producing this report, as detailed in the information sources section.

It should be noted that Dr. Rob Blyth-Skyrme again undertook the role of lead assessor for this audit in place of Dr. Andrew Hough, who was part of the original assessment team. Rob is an Associate of Moody Marine Ltd.

3.0 RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section provides a tabulated format within which general information about the status of the stock and the fishery for this reporting period is provided along with the surveillance team's observations, conclusions and recommendations on the current status of the fishery.

With respect to the final Condition, which was closed out in the second surveillance audit, the following table sets out the original assessment scoring guideposts and scoring commentary, and the requirements of the Condition, alongside the heading 'Activity assessed'. This identifies the areas in which the fishery was previously determined to have been performing below the level required by the MSC standard during the initial assessment, and the required actions to address these issues. Although the AAFA satisfied the requirements of the condition by the second annual audit, the assessment team concluded in that audit report that:

“There is also an expectation from the audit team that AAFA continue to work to advocate appropriate, sustainable management of the fishery. As such, the condition may be reintroduced in future if an annual audit team is not satisfied that AAFA is performing adequately with regard to the intent of this condition.”

As such, for this third audit, the assessment team carefully reviewed the work undertaken by the client during the last year against the Action Plan, as specified by AAFA, setting out the stages involved in addressing the Conditions raised. This is set out in the table alongside the heading

‘AAFA Action’. It should be noted that this Action Plan was deemed to be adequate by the original main assessment team.

According to the terms of the Action Plan, the client again provided information on the work undertaken to date in time for this third surveillance audit.

This progress has been evaluated by the Moody Marine surveillance team (‘Observations’ and ‘Conclusion’) against:

1. The commitments made in the Action Plan;
2. The intent of the original Condition; and,
3. The original scoring indicator, guideposts and commentary.

The influence of any overall legislative and management changes in the fishery are also taken into consideration.

Item	Comments
1	Stock status
Observations	<p data-bbox="419 273 1452 306">North Pacific Albacore</p> <p data-bbox="419 306 1452 432">The stock assessment of North Pacific Albacore was updated in late 2006 and reviewed by the International Scientific Committee for tuna and tuna-like species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) in July 2007. The results were similar to the previous assessment (2004) upon which the original MSC certification was based.</p> <p data-bbox="419 472 1452 768">The new assessment indicated that the spawning stock biomass (SSB) fluctuated around an average of about 100,000 mt for four decades 1966-2006, increasing from about 74,000 mt in 2002 to about 153,000 mt in 2006. Additionally, the 2007 SSB was projected to increase slightly to 165,800 mt due to stronger year classes in 2001 and 2003. The 2006 SSB is approximately 53% above the overall time series average (1966-2005). Projections from 2007 to 2020, using an average recruitment productivity of 27.75 million fish, and F equal to 0.75 (average 2002-2004), indicate that the SSB will equilibrate at about 92,600 mt by 2015 (90% CI=62,700-129,300 mt).</p> <p data-bbox="419 804 1452 1032">The population is being fished at roughly F17%SPR (i.e., F2002-2004 = 0.75). This result is similar to the 2004 assessment. F= 0.75) is high relative to commonly used F reference points. For example, common F reference points are F30%SPR or F40%SPR. Therefore, the assessment expressed concern at the decline in total albacore catch since 2002. This led to the scientific committee recommending, based on the 2004 stock assessment, that current fishing mortality rate (F) should not be increased.</p> <p data-bbox="419 1072 1452 1608">It was noted that management objectives for the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) are based on maintaining population levels which produce maximum sustainable yield. Due to updating, and improvements and refinements in data and models used in the 2006 stock assessment, it is now recognized that the current fishing mortality rate (F_{cur} =0.75) is high relative to most of the F reference points (Table 1). On the other hand, the same analysis indicates that the current estimate of the SSB is the second highest in history but that keeping the current F would gradually reduce the SSB to the long-term average by the mid 2010s. Therefore, the recommendation of not increasing F from current level (F_{cur} (2002-2004) = 0.75) is still valid. However, with the projection based on the continued current high F the fishing mortality rate will have to be reduced. The degree to which, when and how reductions should occur will depend on which reference points are selected and the desired probability and practicability of success of attaining these reference points in a time frame to be agreed. The ISC requires additional guidance on these issues from the management authorities in a timely manner to work further on these issues.”</p> <p data-bbox="419 1644 1452 1709">The Table below provides results from equilibrium analysis of biological reference points (BRP) for North Pacific albacore associated with Model D1:</p> <ul data-bbox="419 1711 1452 1877" style="list-style-type: none"> (a) candidate target and limit reference points; (b) corresponding fishing mortality rates (F, yr⁻¹); (c) current F (2002-04) relative to target F or limit F reference points; (d) MSY proxy or equilibrium catch (1,000 mt); and (e) SSBMSY proxy or equilibrium SSB (1,000 mt). <p data-bbox="419 1912 1452 2042">The current F (0.75) reflects the fully-selected F (observed for age groups 8 and 9+) from the mean (geometric) of F-at-age estimates from 2002-04. All catch and SSB estimates are based on the assumption of constant recruitment of 27.75 million fish per year. All SSB statistics are based on the assumption of a 'May 1st' reference</p>

spawning date.				
(a) Candidate Target Reference Points	(b) Target F (yr^{-1})	(c) Ratio of Current F To Target F	(d) MSY Proxy (1,000 mt)	(e) SSBMSY Proxy (1,000 mt)
$F_{40\%}$	0.32	2.31	75	226
$F_{35\%}$	0.38	1.97	79	198
$F_{0.1}$	0.45	1.68	83	171
$F_{30\%}$	0.45	1.67	83	169
Candidate Limit Reference Points	Limit F (yr^{-1})	Ratio of Current F To Limit F	Equilibrium Catch (1,000 mt)	Equilibrium SSB (1,000 mt)
$F_{20\%}$	0.65	1.16	91	113
F_{Max}	2.07	0.36	100	10
$F_{\text{SSB-Min}}$	0.81	0.93	94	83
$F_{\text{SSB-10\%}}$	0.70	1.07	92	102
$F_{\text{SSB-25\%}}$	0.66	1.14	91	110

Essentially, the scientific committee is warning that fishing rates are in excess of common benchmarks and that even though formal benchmarks have not been adopted by the Commissions, there is a need to establish mechanisms to cap the fishing mortality (and effort) and to plan for reductions within the next few years. These results are not materially different than the previous assessment. However, it reiterates the need for developing an effort reduction strategy.

The Albacore Working Group of the ISC conducted a qualitative evaluation of the Northern Albacore stock in 2009. On the basis of that evaluation, they concluded that:

1. Fisheries data from 2006 to 2008 neither support nor refute the hypotheses from the 2006 stock assessment that spawning biomass reached an historic high in 2005, that spawning biomass will decline to the long-term average by 2015, or that the 2001 and 2003 year-classes contributed relatively strong recruitment pulses to the stock;
2. Nominal albacore effort in most fisheries appears to have declined since 2005 and catches since 2004 (with the exception of 2007) have been substantially lower than in the previous decade. This could mean that F_{2008} is now less than the F (0.75 yr^{-1}) used in the 2006 stock assessment projections. Alternatively, F may be as high as the value used in the stock assessment projections since the level of recruitment after 2005 is not known; and
3. A new stock assessment will be necessary to fully understand the implications of the new data available since the last stock assessment.

The next assessment is scheduled for 2011.

Management actions in Response to Status

In Resolution C-05-02 of the 2005 IATTC meeting it was resolved (among other things) that:

1. The total level of fishing effort for North Pacific albacore tuna in the Eastern Pacific Ocean not be increased beyond current levels.
2. The CPCs [*IATTC parties, cooperating non-party, fishing entity or regional economic integration organization*] shall take necessary measures to ensure

that the level of fishing effort by their vessels fishing for North Pacific albacore tuna is not increased;

3. All CPCs shall report all catches of North Pacific albacore tuna by gear type to the IATTC every six months.

In response to the new assessment information, at the 2008 IATTC meeting it was recommended that the fishing mortality averaged for 2002-2004 be used as the “current” fishing mortality as applies to (1). Also, paragraph (3) calls upon all CPCs to report all catches of North Pacific albacore tuna every six months; however, since the limit in the resolution is in terms of effort, the six-monthly reports include information on effort as well as catch, in terms of the most relevant measures for a given gear type. The technical aspects of the effort data to be supplied could be established by the IATTC in collaboration with scientists of the interested member countries.

Similarly, the WCPFC made the same recommendation described in Conservation and Management Measure (CMM) 2005-03 for CCMs not to increase fishing effort for North Pacific albacore. Summaries of actions in response to this were reported at their September 2007 meeting, and included:

- Japan: North Pacific albacore is taken by purse seine, longline and pole and line fleets which are subject to strict capacity and other controls. Japan noted that the catch of these fleets is declining.
- Chinese Taipei: Consistent with the advice of the ISC Chinese Taipei reported it is constraining fishing effort to 2004 levels.
- USA: Albacore is targeted in surface troll and pole-and-line fisheries and taken incidentally in the Hawaiian longline fishery, both of which are closely monitored. An analysis of U.S. commercial fishing effort directed towards North Pacific albacore during the years 1996 – 2006 concluded that effort for all U.S. commercial fisheries landing North Pacific albacore has been stable over this period and is not increasing.
- Korea: Albacore is not a target species for Korean fleets. It is taken by longliners as a by-catch.
- Canada: reported that its troll fleet is 95% compliant with the logsheet reporting requirements for this fishery and that recent effort has decreased from 220 to 171 vessels.

Taking into account these reports the WCPFC agreed to maintain the existing requirement not to increase fishing effort for North Pacific albacore.

The ISC met in 2008 to review the fisheries and scientific progress, where possible biological reference points based upon proxies of the fishing mortality rate at maximum sustainable yield (MSY) were explored (ISC 2008). The proxies ranged from $F_{20\%SPR}$ to $F_{40\%SPR}$. They note that an F_{SPR} proxy for MSY is not necessarily the most appropriate choice for a management limit. However, the results are consistent with previous assessment results that the North Pacific albacore stock is experiencing fishing mortality rates that are near full exploitation.

As of September 2009, the Northern Committee (NC) has adopted an F-based $F=0.75$ as an interim biological reference point. The ISC, however, requested clarification from the NC as to whether this interim reference point is a limit or a target reference point. If it is a limit reference point, then the NC needs to further consider the 50% probability limit it has chosen for this parameter; if it is the target reference point, then the NC needs to further consider the decision regarding appropriateness.

	Additionally, the NC adopted measures in 2009 which were meant to improve implementation of CMM-2005-03.
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Item	Comments
2	The Fishery
Observations	<p>Figures produced by the Pacific Marine Fisheries Commission show that in 2009 the total commercial landings of albacore tuna from the States of Washington, Oregon and California were 12,219 mt, of which 650 mt was landed by Canadian albacore fishing vessels operating in the US EEZ (PFMC 2010).</p> <p>The value of the US catch in 2009 was in the region of \$25.8 million. Landings data for the 2010 season are currently incomplete.</p> <p>In 2009, 71 AAFA vessels (members and associate members) participated in the North Pacific U.S. albacore fishery. These pole and troll vessels landed approximately 50% of the total U.S. harvest for the fishery. Some 70% of the AAFA catch was MSC certified.</p>

Item	Comments
3	Condition of Certification - The Stock is at an appropriate level to maintain long term productivity.
Activity assessed	<p>This Condition relates to Principle 1, performance indicators: 1.1.4.1:</p> <p>1.1.4.1 100 scoring guidepost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The stock is highly likely to be consistently above precautionary reference levels. <p>80 scoring guidepost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The stock is likely to be above precautionary reference levels. <p>60 scoring guidepost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The stock is likely to be above the limit reference levels and trends in the stock are positive. <p>Score 75</p> <p>Condition The present stock assessment suggests that the stock may be “<i>either fully exploited or sustaining fishing mortality above levels that are sustainable in the long term</i>”. Accordingly, management resolutions have been provided by IATTC/WCPFC for a cap on existing effort and expedited reporting of catches. Also, a re-examination of stock assessment data has been initiated by ISC. Actions required of AAFA in this regard are:</p> <p>1. AAFA to promote and support the management actions put forward, notably limitations on effort. Communications supporting such management measures should be made to the PFMC and/or NMFS. Records should be provided by AAFA of communications and responses.</p>

	<p>2. AAFA to provide a summary to Moody Marine on US's responses to IATTC/WCPFC management resolutions, as provided by NMFS and/or PFMC. In addition, responses are to be provided by AAFA regarding stock assessments and related research and recommendations for management actions pertaining to albacore from the International Scientific Committee (ISC) Albacore Working Group, the Northern Committee, and IATTC or other working groups .</p> <p>3. Should the existing resolution be withdrawn following the ISC report, then this condition would be considered closed.</p> <p>4. If additional resolutions are proposed, then these should be supported as in 1 above.</p> <p>Timescale. Point 1: If still appropriate, should be pursued immediately upon certification.</p> <p>Point 2: AAFA should provide this information within 6 months of certification.</p> <p>Point 4: Should further resolutions be passed by IATTC/WCPFC in this regard, supportive actions should be initiated at the earliest possible opportunity thereafter.</p>
<p>Conclusion from 1st Surveillance Report</p>	<p>There are four parts to the Condition, summarised as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AAFA to make representations to advocate and support limitations of fishing effort; 2. AAFA to provide a summary US response to IATTC/WCPFC management resolutions; 3. If additional management resolutions are proposed to improve stock status, then AAFA should support them as in 1 above. 4. If stock status improves and the need to cap fishing effort is removed the Condition would be considered closed. <p>AAFA have achieved the first two points and confirmed their commitment to continue to advocate fishing effort limitations.</p> <p>In accordance with the fourth point, because the management resolution to cap fishing effort remains in place, the Condition remains open.</p>
<p>Conclusion from 2nd Surveillance Report</p>	<p>AAFA has exhibited extensive, broad, and consistent efforts in promoting and supporting both domestic and international responsible management actions regarding the North Pacific albacore resource. The stock status has also been revised as being at high abundance. All elements of this condition of the certification have therefore been met.</p> <p>This performance indicator was originally scored 75. On the basis of the work AAFA has committed to and carried out, and because of the evidence that the stock is performing well, the audit team has now rescored the performance indicator at 80. The condition is therefore closed this year.</p> <p>100 scoring guidepost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The stock is highly likely to be consistently above precautionary reference

	<p>levels.</p> <p>80 scoring guidepost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The stock is likely to be above precautionary reference levels. <p>It should be noted that a new stock assessment is planned for 2010, and this information should be available prior to the next audit. This information will be closely scrutinized, and may allow the score for this performance indicator to be increased.</p> <p>There is also an expectation from the audit team that AAFA continue to work to advocate appropriate, sustainable management of the fishery. As such, the condition may be reintroduced in future if an annual audit team is not satisfied that AAFA is performing adequately with regard to the intent of this condition.</p>
AAFA Activity	<p>In this most recent year (2009-2010) AAFA has pursued the establishment of effort controls by advocating their position domestically to the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC). Additionally, AAFA has become a formal observer at IATTC. Their representations to and attendance at management forums have included:</p> <p><u>Letters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter to the PFMC, dated 8th April 2010. Re: Agenda Item G.3, Consideration of effort limitation in the albacore tuna fishery Further letter to the PFMC, dated 8th April 2010. Re: Agenda Item G.3, Consideration of effort limitation in the albacore tuna fishery Letter to IATTC, dated 26th April 2010. Re: Request for observer status Letter to PFMC, dated 8th June 2010. Re: Agenda Item E.1- Pacific albacore- International RFMO matters. <p><u>Meeting Attendance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance at June 2009 PFMC Highly Migratory Species Management Team and Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel meetings, Spokane, WA, USA. Attendance at November 2009 PFMC Highly Migratory Species Management Team and Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel meetings, Costa Mesa, CA, USA. Attendance at 23-25th February 2010 PFMC Highly Migratory Species Management Team meeting, held in La Jolla, CA, USA. Attendance at 8-15th April 2010 PFMC meeting, held in Portland, OR, USA. Attendance at 18-19th May 2010 meeting for US-Canada albacore treaty negotiations, San Francisco, CA, USA. Attendance at 10-17th June 2010 PFMC Highly Migratory Species Management Team and Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel meetings, Foster City, CA, USA.
Observations	<p>Generally, the current scientific information suggests that fishing mortality rates are near or above those which would result in maximum sustainable yield. The fishing mortality rate on North Pacific Albacore have been estimated to be about $F=0.75$ in</p>

	<p>the most recent assessment. Based upon these results, measures have been adopted at the relevant Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs; IATTC and WCPFC) to limit effort at 2002-2004 levels. At this point, it is unclear whether those actions have been or will be effective. The next stock assessment (now scheduled for 2011) will be important in determining these issues.</p> <p>While the RFMOs have adopted measures to cap effort (and, hopefully, fishing mortality rates), they have been less responsive in establishing limit and target reference points and control rules. An interim reference point was established, but it is unclear whether this is a limit or a target.</p> <p>Establishment of formal target and limit reference points and control rules are important to AAFA as they complete this certification period and, presumably, enter into the recertification process. The MSCs default assessment tree now requires the formal adoption of reference points and control rules. Thus, progress within the RFMOs may be required to meet these criteria before recertification.</p> <p>Having said that, the AAFA fishery has limited resources and ability to affect changes at the RFMO level. Nevertheless, they are encouraged to explore additional options to achieve those ends.</p>
Conclusions	<p>It should be noted that a new stock assessment is now planned for 2011, and this information could be available prior to the next audit. This information will be closely scrutinized.</p> <p>There is also an expectation from the audit team that AAFA continue to work to advocate appropriate, sustainable management of the fishery through the adoption of limit and target reference points and harvest control rules.</p>

Item	Comment
4	Any complaints against the certified operation; recorded, reviewed and auctioned.
	<p>No complaints were received against the certified operation in the course of this year's certification.</p> <p>Stakeholder representation was made to the assessment team prior to this year's audit visit regarding the potential for albatross to be bycaught in AAFA's North Pacific albacore troll fishery. The assessment team considers such issues to be of high potential significance, and so efforts were made to gather and review relevant data. This included questioning experienced NMFS scientists who had participated in albacore research survey cruises and in sampling trips aboard commercial vessels, and by asking NMFS to undertake a review of their logbook data for evidence of seabird interactions.</p> <p>The operator of any U.S. commercial fishing vessel and any recreational charter vessel fishing for albacore, or other highly migratory species (HMS), in the management area must maintain on board the vessel an accurate and complete record of catch, effort, and other data, including bycatch, on report forms provided by the NMFS Regional Administrator or a state agency. All information specified on the forms must be recorded on the forms within 24 hours after the completion of each fishing day. The original logbook form for each day of the fishing trip must be submitted to either the NMFS Regional Administrator or the appropriate state management agency within 30</p>

	<p>days of each landing or transshipment of HMS. Each form must be signed and dated by the fishing vessel operator. For bycatch, fishermen must record the following information about any non-albacore catch (birds, turtles, sharks, other fish and marine mammals) that was kept or returned to the ocean: bycatch species (common or scientific) name; numbers of the bycatch species that were kept; and the numbers of the bycatch species that were discarded dead or alive. NMFS fishery scientists examined the logbook records of US commercial albacore troll fishermen for the years 2000 (37,750 records) and 2005 (24,530 records) and found only two interactions with albatross, both of which were released. There is no information available on the species of the albatross or on the condition of the animals on release. There is, though, some reason to believe that survival would be considerably higher in a troll fishery than from long-line vessels as any bycaught bird would very likely be retrieved immediately, and then unhooked. It is also noteworthy that troll fisheries are not listed as a threat to albatross in the Birdlife review of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (Small, 2005), or on the Birdlife International pages for each albatross species (http://www.birdlife.org/community/2009/06/list-of-albatross-species/).</p> <p>The available data and reports are consistent with anecdotal information from NMFS fishery scientists regarding albatross bycatch occurring during albacore fishery research cruises. On review, at this time there is therefore considered to be no reason to raise an additional condition or to instigate additional investigations regarding albatross bycatch.</p>
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Item	Comment
5	Any relevant changes to legislation or regulations
	<p>Following the awarding of their MSC certificates, AAFA introduced and implemented its own certificate-sharing programme.</p> <p>Because AAFA operates under the Californian Fish Marketing Act there is a requirement within the "Act" that the certificate-sharing programme be limited to AAFA members. AAFA originally created a two-tier membership that allowed full or partial membership. Both forms of membership enabled participation in the MSC programme, however, only full membership afforded full privileges and voting rights.</p> <p>For 2010, AAFA changed the requirements of the certificate-sharing programme, by removing the option for partial membership. This was to ensure that fishermen who benefitted from the MSC certification were also fully on board with AAFA's commitment to quality and to the performance requirements of the AAFA certificate.</p> <p>AAFA has provided Moody Marine with updates on their membership thereby ensuring that a record of vessels that form part of the certificate sharing program is maintained. The assessment team had been pleased to note that membership of AAFA, and participation on the certificate-sharing programme, had grown considerably, from 26 vessels in 2006, to 53 vessels in 2008, to 71 vessels in 2009. Following the changes made by AAFA to the certificate-sharing programme, the assessment team were again pleased to note that membership has increased to 74 vessels for 2010, although 5 of those vessels did not fish for North Pacific albacore in 2010.</p>

Item	Comment
6	Any relevant changes to management regime.
	<p>US/Canada Albacore Tuna Treaty</p> <p>US/Canada treaty negotiations conducted in 2008 resulted in: a new 3-year fishing regime included limiting the number of Canadian vessels that may operate in the US EEZ to 110, all of which are restricted to their existing troll/jig fishery practices. The number of U.S. vessels that may fish in Canada's EEZ is to remain within historical levels; defined the Canadian vessel access period as starting June 15 and ending October 31; and either country may terminate the new regime in the event that international or domestic management measures are adopted. The NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service issued a contract for the preparation of a preliminary analysis of potential management options that would provide information to the Pacific Fishery Management Council that would be necessary in order to prepare recommendations for domestic management of the U.S. West Coast albacore fishery to the NOAA Fisheries.</p> <p>The preliminary analysis was presented to the PFMC High Migratory Management Team and the Highly Migratory Advisory Subpanel in June 2009 and was presented to the full Council in April 2010. The Council previously decided not to proceed with the development of a limited entry West Coast North Pacific albacore fishery, nor to change the control date for albacore and other highly migratory species fisheries. The Council did request that data were collected on domestic and international albacore fishing fleets so that, if it was deemed necessary in response to the 2011 albacore stock assessment, US proposals for albacore conservation and management could be proposed up to the relevant Regional Fishery Management Organisations.</p>

Item	Comment
7	Any other relevant changes.
	<p>MSC Certification of the Canadian Highly Migratory Species Foundation (CHMSF) British Columbia North Pacific albacore tuna fishery and the Western Fishboat Owners' Association (WFOA) North Pacific albacore tuna fishery.</p> <p>Background</p> <p>The fisheries for albacore under the CHMSF and WFOA certificates were certified by the Global Trust certification body on 23rd March 2010. These fisheries target the same albacore stock and occur in the same or adjacent waters as the AAFA North Pacific albacore fishery.</p> <p>The MSC has expressed a desire for fishery participants to 'certificate share' in order to reduce the potential financial burden of certification on fisheries and on management agencies faced with multiple requests for information, as well as to avoid the possibility that procedures or conditions would be different between related fisheries. Because certificate sharing may not be possible in all cases, the MSC also provided guidance on harmonising assessments between related fisheries. This was produced as Technical Advisory Board Directive (TABD) 15 (2.1) (MSC 2010) This version of TAB Directive 15 was published on 1st May 2010.</p> <p>The MSC Guidance states its intent as: "<i>CBs assessing fisheries that have areas of overlap are required to ensure consistency of outcomes so as not to undermine the integrity of MSC fishery assessments.</i>"</p>

TABD 15-2.1 also outlines a number of objectives and methods in respect of fisheries in assessment that overlap with existing certified fisheries. This is the situation with the AAFA fishery, which was certified in 2007, in relation to the WFOA and CHMSF fisheries which were certified in 2010.

The MSC Guidance states: *"2.1 Where a fishery under assessment overlaps with a certified fishery, CBs shall coordinate their assessments to ensure that key assessment products and outcomes are harmonised with the earlier assessment of overlapping certified fisheries. In this case, harmonisation would be evidenced by the following key activities and outcomes including:*

- *The use of complimentary assessment trees;*
- *The sharing of fishery information; and*
- *The achievement of consistent conclusions with respect to evaluation, scoring and particularly conditions.*

2.2 If CBs use an assessment tree that differs from the original/s, they must ensure that key aspects of previous trees are included in their own tree and that key issues raised in the previous assessment are explicitly considered in scoring the tree. Sufficient justification for using a different assessment tree shall be provided to the MSC. Sufficient justification shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, demonstration that all performance indicators and scoring guideposts have been set at equivalent levels and, where performance indicators and scoring guideposts differ, such differences are clearly identified and evidence provided that where an indicator is missing the topic it covers is adequately covered elsewhere in the assessment tree.

2.3 If MSC determines that sufficient justification has not been provided, variation will not be granted and the same assessment tree shall be used.

2.4 Where a fishery assessment overlaps with a certified fishery or fishery in assessment that has already been scored, the assessment team shall base their assessment on the rationale and scores detailed for the previously scored fishery. Any difference in the scores shall be clearly detailed and justified in the scoring rationale for all relevant performance indicators.

2.5 The assessment team responsible for the new assessment shall explicitly consider the findings of the most recent surveillance report(s) produced for the overlapping certified fishery. Similarly, the CB responsible for the surveillance of the overlapping certified fishery shall explicitly consider the findings of the assessment team responsible for the overlapping fishery in assessment when conducting annual surveillance audits.

2.6 The MSC will use the tools at its disposal to ensure that such efforts to harmonise assessments take place successfully, such as facilitating joint communications and meetings between CBs, requiring peer review of final assessment products by a member or members of the assessment team assessing the overlapping fishery"

This MSC guidance makes it clear that responsibility for harmonisation with respect to existing MSC fisheries lies, in the main, with the certifying body of the new fishery and, in part, with the MSC itself. However, it also says that the certifying body of the existing MSC fishery must also consider the findings of the new fishery's assessment team when conducting annual audits. This third audit report of the AAFA fishery therefore provides an opportunity to review procedures and to ensure that appropriate steps are taken towards harmonisation. The following sections of this 3rd

annual audit of the AAFA North Pacific albacore fishery therefore proceeds step-by-step through the direction provided by TABD 15-2.1.

Harmonisation Process

Section 2.1:

The responsibility here for the first and third sections lies with Global Trust. On the second issue of sharing fishery information, Global Trust contacted Moody Marine and were provided with links to the AAFA fishery assessment documents, on the understanding that those documents included what Moody Marine's assessment team considered to be relevant data or information.

Sections 2.2 and 2.3

From July 2008, the MSC required that new fisheries entering the assessment process use a standardised assessment tree through the use of the Fishery Assessment Methodology (FAM). The WFOA and CHMSF assessment commenced on 19th February 2009 and so was required to use the standardised tree.

Section 2.4:

The responsibility here lies with Global Trust to detail and justify any differences in the scoring between relevant performance indicators.

Section 2.5:

The responsibility for the first section again lies with Global Trust in explicitly considering the findings of the first two AAFA annual audits (2008 and 2009). Consideration of Global Trust's findings on the WFOA and CHMSF fisheries in comparison to the Moody Marine AAFA North Pacific albacore fishery is undertaken in the section below of this AAFA audit report.

Section 2.6:

The responsibility here lies with the MSC and with Global Trust. There was no need for the MSC to facilitate communication between Global Trust and Moody Marine as Global Trust contacted Moody Marine, as indicated in 2.1 above.

With respect to the requirement to minimally have one of the Moody Marine assessment team as a peer review, Global Trust did not seek to use either Dr. Joe Powers or Dr. Mike Laurs. This final part of this section also says that the MSC will only post the final products of various assessment steps when CBs have demonstrated harmonised outcomes.

Harmonised Outcomes

Three measures of harmonised outcomes are:

- 1) A comparison of any conditions of certification of the WFOA and CHMSF North Pacific albacore fisheries with any conditions of certification of the AAFA North Pacific albacore fishery;
- 2) A comparison of the action plans that accompanied any conditions of certification;
- 3) A comparison of the scores attributed to the performance indicators.

1) Conditions

The AAFA North Pacific albacore fishery was originally certified in 2007 with one condition. This stated:

"It is recognised that maintaining the stock at or above a precautionary reference limit is not under the control of AAFA and therefore actions required of AAFA in this

regard are:

1. AAFA to promote and support the management actions put forward, notably limitations on effort. Communications supporting such management measures should be made to appropriate organisations. Records should be provided by AAFA of communications and responses.
2. AAFA to provide a summary to Moody Marine on US's responses to IATTC/WCPFC management resolutions, as provided by NMFS and/or Pacific Fishery Management Council.
3. Should the existing resolution be withdrawn following the ISC report, then this condition would be considered closed.
4. If additional resolutions are proposed, then these should be supported as in 1. above."

The WFOA and CHMSF North Pacific albacore fisheries were certified in 2010 with one condition each. The text below is for the WFOA fishery, but very similar text was also specified for the CHMSF fishery, excepting that the relevant management bodies were Canadian rather than US-based. The WFOA condition stated:

"It is recognised that the implementation of explicit reference points is not under control of WFOA and therefore WFOA specific condition is as follow:

1. WFOA to promote and support:
 - a. The management actions put forward, notably limitation on effort. Communications supporting such management measures should be made to appropriate organisations.
Appropriate Organisations shall include: Fisheries and Oceans Canada; IATTC; and WCPFC (Northern Committee).
Records should be provided to Global Trust by WFOA of communications and responses;
 - b. ISC request to management authorities for guidance on the definition and application of biological reference points (BRPs) in order to facilitate response to requests for conservation advice. Communications supporting ISC request should be made by WFOA to appropriate organisations.
Appropriate Organisations shall include: Fisheries and Oceans Canada; IATTC; and WCPFC (Northern Committee).
 - c. Records should be provided to Global Trust by WFOA of communications and responses.
2. WFOA to provide a summary to Global Trust on US's responses to IATTC/WCPFC management resolutions, as provided by NMFS and/or Pacific Fishery management Council, when such materials become available.
3. Should the existing resolution be withdrawn following the ISC conservation advice, then point 1.a would be considered closed.
4. Should ISC existing request (1.b) be withdrawn then 1.b would be considered closed.
5. If additional resolutions are proposed, then these should be supported as in 1 above and records retained and provided to Global Trust.
6. If additional guidance, related to the definition of biological reference points, is requested from the ISC, then these should be supported as in 1.b above and records retained and provided to Global Trust."

In comparison, the substantive points of the AAFA and WFOA/CHMSF fishery conditions are near identical. AAFA and the WFOA/CHMSF are required to promote and support management actions, notably limitations on effort; communications are to be made to appropriate organisations; records of these communications are then to be provided to the certification bodies.

The remaining points of both conditions are somewhat procedural and require the fisheries organisations to provide support to the management bodies in advocating measures consistent with the MSC standard, and evidence of that support is to be provided to the certification bodies.

2) Action plans

The action plans of the CHMSF and WFOA North Pacific fisheries appear to be somewhat similar or very similar to the action plan of the AAFA North Pacific fishery.

The AAFA fishery action plan includes the statements:

- a) Effort: *"AAFA seeks to promote and support the responsible management actions being put forward, including international resolutions calling for fishing effort not to be increased. Attendance and participation in the discussions and meetings of the appropriate scientific and regulatory bodies afford AAFA opportunities to present its position and views in support of such actions."*;
- b) Appropriate management: *"Attendance and participation at PFMC sessions (including ancillary HMS-MT and HMS-AS meetings) to convey AAFA's support for development and adoption of appropriate management measures and progress to ensure compliance with international resolutions regarding the North Pacific albacore stock."*
- c) Attendance at meetings: *"AAFA plans to continue its practice of keeping up to date, attending, and participating in the key discussions and meetings of the appropriate scientific, regulatory, and government bodies tasked with policy and management responsibilities for North Pacific albacore and the stock's pole & line and troll/jig fisheries."*

In comparison, the CHMSF fishery action plan includes the statements:

- a) Effort: *"Submission of a letter to Tuna Advisory Board expressing CHMSF's continued support for ongoing efforts, based on best available science, toward the long term sustainability of the stock, and compliance with international resolutions calling for fishing effort not to be increased."*
- b) Appropriate management: *"Attendance and participation at Joint BCTFA, WFOA, NMFS, NOAA, meeting sessions to convey CHMSF's support for development and adoption of appropriate management measures and progress to ensure compliance with international resolutions regarding the North Pacific albacore stock."*
- c) Attendance at meetings: *"CHMSF Board and Advisors continues its practice of keeping up to date, attending, and participating in the key discussions and meetings of the appropriate scientific, regulatory, and government bodies tasked with policy and management responsibilities for North Pacific albacore and the stock's troll/jig fisheries."*

The WFOA fishery action plan includes the statements:

- a) Effort: *"WFOA, immediately upon certification, if still appropriate, will correspond with all levels of management on the need to bring harvest in line with the estimated long-term productivity of the stock."*
- b) Appropriate management: *"WFOA supports the principle of long-term sustainable yield and stable harvest. On this basis WFOA will support and effort by RFMO to achieve these goals by proposed BRPs and sustainable harvest levels. Should further resolutions be passed by IATTC/WCPFC in this regard, WFOA will support all management measures that are equability applied to all parties in the fishery and are*

	<p><i>shown to be a requirement to achieve an economically sustainable North American albacore fishery."</i></p> <p>c) Attendance at meetings: <i>"WFOA representatives will be present to provide oral testimony and requests for action at the various fora involved with NP albacore management. Additionally, WFOA through its science arm AFRF, will continue to support the attendance of a stock assessment scientist to the Scientific stock assessment working group."</i></p> <p>It is clear that the CHMSF action plan is very similar to the AAFA action plan, with a number of identical or near identical statements. It may be argued that the focus of the AAFA action plan is somewhat more positive towards precautionary management approaches than the WFOA action plan, which includes references to economic sustainability and to equitable management.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>3) Scores for Performance Indicators</u></p> <p>The AAFA North Pacific fishery was assessed under the MSC Fisheries Certification Methodology, version 6, whereas the WFOA and CHMSF North Pacific fisheries were assessed under the MSC FAM. As such, a direct comparison of the performance indicators and the scores is not possible without going through the detailed comparative process as outlined in TABD 15-2.1, Section 2.2.</p> <p>Summary</p> <p>Moody Marine considers that the Global Trust assessment of the WFOA and CHMSF fisheries were generally consistent with the earlier AAFA certification. The conditions of certification are near identical, and the action plans are somewhat similar, although the AAFA action plan appears to be more focused on taking a precautionary approach to management issues and uncertainty. The comparison of the scoring between the WFOA/CHMSF and AAFA fisheries requires detailed analysis that is not possible without undertaking the process detailed in TABD 15-2.1.</p> <p>Overall, Moody Marine Ltd. considers that there is no reason why the certificate holders of the AAFA, WFOA and CHMSF fisheries should not function similarly in respect of their certificates for North Pacific albacore and it is assumed that this will be demonstrated through the annual surveillance audits.</p>
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Item	Comment
8	Overall Conclusions
	<p>The overall management of the fishery continues to at least the level as during the main assessment.</p> <p>The client continues to devote effort to advocating appropriate, sustainable management approaches and has confirmed their intent to continue to participate in the management and advisory forums. This effort includes, among other things, advocating the reduction of fishing effort on the stock.</p> <p>MSC Certification should therefore continue and surveillance audits continue to the same schedule.</p>

Information Sources:

AAFA letter to PFMC, 8th April 2010: Agenda Item G.3 - Consideration of Effort Limitation in the Albacore Tuna Fishery

AAFA letter to PFMC, 8th June 2010: Agenda Item E.1 -- Pacific Albacore: International RFMO Matters

AAFA letter to IATTC, 28th April 2010: Request for observer status by the American Albacore Fishing Association

Global Trust (2010). MSC fishery assessment report: public certification report, the Canadian Highly Migratory Species Foundation North Pacific albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) tuna fishery, and the American Western Fishboat Owners' Association (WFOA) North Pacific albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) tuna fisheries. Date of submission: 22nd March. Global Trust, Dundalk. 174 pp.

MSC (2009). Fisheries assessment methodology and guidance to certification bodies; including default assessment tree and risk-based framework, version 2. The Marine Stewardship Council, London, 122 pp.

MSC (2010). TAB Directive 015 v.2.1: Harmonised fishery assessments. The Marine Stewardship Council, London. 3 pp.

Northern Committee Fifth Regular Session 7-10 September 2009 Nagasaki, Japan: Report of the ISC Albacore Working Group (ALBWG) for 2009, WCPFC-NC5-IP-01.

PFMC (2010). Status of the U.S. West Coast fisheries for highly migratory species through 2009: stock assessment and fishery evaluation, September 2010. Pacific Fishery Management Council, Portland. September 2010, 158 pp.

Meetings Conducted

Date	Organisation	Attending
3 rd August 2010	AAFA	Mrs. Natalie Webster Mr. Chip Bissell
	Moody Marine Ltd	Dr. Rob Blyth-Skyrme Dr. Joseph Powers Dr. Mike Laurs
3 rd August 2010	AAFA	Mr. Chip Bissell
	Moody Marine Ltd	Dr. Rob Blyth-Skyrme Dr. Joseph Powers Dr. Mike Laurs
	NMFS	Dr. Suzanne Kohin Dr. Russ Vetter Dr. Steve Teo Dr. Steve Stohs
4 th August 2010	AAFA	Mr. Chip Bissell

	Moody Marine Ltd NMFS (by telephone)	Dr. Rob Blyth-Skyrme Dr. Joseph Powers Dr. Mike Laurs Dr. Gary Sakagawa
4 th August 2010	Moody Marine Ltd Worldwide Fund for Nature	Dr. Rob Blyth-Skyrme Dr. Joseph Powers Dr. Mike Laurs Dr. Bill Fox
4 th August 2010	AAFA Moody Marine Ltd	Mr. Chip Bissell Dr. Rob Blyth-Skyrme Dr. Joseph Powers Dr. Mike Laurs

Standards and Guidelines used:

1. MSC Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Fishing
2. MSC Fishery Certification Methodology Version 6. September 2006
3. TAB Directives – all

Appendix A

**American Albacore Fishing Association (AAFA)
Pacific Albacore Pole & Line and Troll/Jig Fishery
Marine Stewardship Council Certification – 2010 Surveillance Audit
Certification Body: Moody Marine Ltd**

Surveillance Audit

MSC certification requires annual surveillance audits of all certified fisheries. These audits have two principal functions:

1. To review any changes in the management of the fishery, including regulations, key management or scientific staff or stock evaluation
2. To evaluate the progress of the fishery against any Conditions of Certification raised during the Main Assessment

During the audit, we shall be speaking with representatives of the fishery, fishery management and any other stakeholder who would like to provide information that may help in our audit. We expect to carry out most meetings over the period 3rd and 4th August in San Diego.

Should you have any information on this fishery that you feel should be considered in the assessment, please advise us. If you would like to arrange a meeting, please advise us of:

- a) Your name and contact details
- b) Your association with the fishery
- c) The issues you would like to discuss

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19th July 2010

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