



Proposed use of CCSBT Research Mortality Allowance to facilitate electronic tagging of adult SBT as part of Australia's contributions to the CCSBT SRP in 2007-08

Karen Evans

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Abstract

A total of 5 tonnes of research mortality allowance is requested to continue a significant tagging initiative aimed at the examining spatial dynamics of adult southern bluefin tuna as part of the CCSBT Scientific Research Program.

Proposal

As part of the CCSBT Scientific Research Program, Australia is proposing to continue a significant tagging initiative in 2007-08 aimed at the examining spatial dynamics (movements, mixing, residency, regional fidelity and frequency of spawning migrations) of adult southern bluefin tuna (SBT).

This study involves the tagging of adult SBT with pop-up satellite archival tags in the Tasman Sea region during the austral winter. Results of the progress to date are provided in Gunn and Patterson (2003); Patterson et al. (2005); Gunn et al. (2006); Patterson et al. (2007); Evans and Patterson (2007a) and Evans and Patterson (2007b). The results provide the first records of inter-oceanic migration (both Pacific-Indian and Indian-Atlantic) and spawning in adult SBT and extensive usage of the Tasman Sea region. The success of the project in tagging significant numbers of large SBT, and reductions in mortalities associated with tagging, suggest that ongoing tag releases of large SBT in the Tasman Sea are feasible and cost effective. Thus, Australia proposes to continue the tagging program and possibly also release some pop-up tags in the Indian Ocean contingent upon the availability of a suitable platform. This study is proposing to release in the order of 20 tags on adult SBT and so therefore the CCSBT is requested to allocate 5 tonnes of Research Mortality.

Literature Cited

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