in cargo before they could cause significant adverse impacts to the wildlife indigenous to the Pribilof Islands falls within the scope of the Proposed Rule. NMFS invites the public to submit additional comments on such pre-emptive use and will issue a subsequent final rule addressing any comments received.

NMFS has determined that another round of prior notice and comment before implementing the regulations would be contrary to the public interest because any further delay could have significant adverse impacts to the wildlife indigenous to the Pribilof Islands, subsistence practices and food security, public health, and the tourism economy. As discussed in the preamble and in the Proposed Rule, under this interim final rule, NMFS may authorize the temporary use of rodent-detection dogs to locate rodents and prevent their establishment on the Pribilof Islands pursuant to the FSA. Finalizing this rule will allow for the beneficial use of rodent-detection dogs, consistent with the new regulatory requirements, rather than deferring implementation for another round of prior notice and comment. Given the various regulatory requirements for the use of rodent-detection dogs and the many practical and logistical hurdles in transporting a dog to the Pribilof Islands, finalizing this rule now will also provide sufficient time for landowners and dog handlers to consider the use of such dogs for rodent detection, either pre-emptively or in response to invasive rodents on island.

References

Drake, D.R., Hunt, T.L. Invasive rodents on islands: integrating historical and contemporary ecology. Biological Invasions 11, 1483–1487 (2009). *https://doi.org/10.1007/s10530-008-9392-1*.

List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 216

Alaska, Pribilof Islands.

Dated: June 30, 2026.

Kelly Denit,

Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service.

For the reasons set out in the preamble, NMFS amends 50 CFR part 216 as follows:

PART 216—REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE TAKING AND IMPORTING OF MARINE MAMMALS

■ 1. The authority citation for part 216 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.,* unless otherwise noted.

■ 2. Revise § 216.82 to read as follows:

§ 216.82 Dogs prohibited.

(a) In order to prevent molestation of fur seal herds, the landing of any dogs at Pribilof Islands is prohibited.

(b) The NMFS Alaska Regional Administrator may authorize the landing of independently certified and trained rodent detection dogs on an island in the Pribilof Islands, subject to the following:

(1) A Pribilof Island landowner must submit a request for authorization to land a rodent detection dog on a Pribilof Island in writing to the NMFS Alaska Regional Administrator and must include the following information:

(i) Independent certification by an accredited canine scent detection association, company, or organization that the dog has been trained for rodent detection;

(ii) Certification that the dog will be under the constant voice, electronic, or leash control of a professional dog handler, or otherwise confined, while on the Pribilof Island;

(iii) Proof that the dog has undergone any quarantine period required by the State of Alaska;

(iv) Current immunization and health certifications required by the State of Alaska and NMFS Alaska Regional Administrator;

(v) The number of dogs expected to be used;

(vi) The professional dog handler's written plan for collecting and incinerating dog feces;

(vii) The expected duration and location of rodent searches on the Pribilof Island; and

(viii) Any other information requested by the Alaska Regional Administrator.

(2) After receipt of a complete request, within 10 days, the NMFS Alaska Regional Administrator may authorize the landing of one or more independently certified and trained rodent detection dogs and impose any additional conditions on their use on the specified Pribilof Island.

(3) No independently certified and trained rodent detection dog authorized by the NMFS Alaska Regional Administrator may be on the specified Pribilof Island for more than 180 total days from landing on that Island.

[FR Doc. 2026–13684 Filed 7–6–26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Parts 216 and 300

[Docket No. 260629–0154]

RIN 0648–BO29

International Fisheries; Pacific Tuna Fisheries; Conservation and Management Measures for Tropical Tunas in the Eastern Pacific Ocean for 2026 and Beyond

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: NMFS is issuing regulations under the Tuna Conventions Act (TCA) of 1950, as amended, to implement resolutions adopted at the 103rd Meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) in September 2025. The final rule also implements several provisions of Resolution C–19–04 (Resolution to Mitigate Impacts on Sea Turtles) that were not previously implemented and makes technical corrections to regulations for fishing under the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP). The management measures in this rule apply to fishing vessels targeting tropical tuna (*i.e.,* bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*), yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), and skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*)) in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO). This rule is necessary for the conservation and management of tropical tuna stocks in the EPO and for the United States to satisfy its obligations as a member of the IATTC.

DATES: This rule is effective July 7, 2026.

ADDRESSES: A plain language summary of this rule is available at *https://www.regulations.gov/docket/NOAA-NMFS-2025-1362.*

Copies of supporting documents that were prepared for this rule, including the regulatory impact review (RIR) are available via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal: *http://www.regulations.gov,* docket NOAA–NMFS–2025–1362, or contact Tyler Lawson, NMFS West Coast Region Portland Office, 1201 NE Lloyd Blvd., Suite 1100, Portland, OR 97205, or *tyler.lawson@noaa.gov.*

Send comments on aspects of the collection of information to the **ADDRESSES** above, and by email to *OIRA_Submission@omb.eop.gov,* or fax to (202) 395–5806.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tyler Lawson, NMFS WCR, at (503) 230–5421, *tyler.lawson@noaa.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background on the IATTC

The United States is a member of the IATTC, which was established under the 1949 Convention for the Establishment of an Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (1949 Convention). In 2003, the IATTC updated the 1949 Convention through the adoption of the Convention for the Strengthening of the IATTC Established by the 1949 Convention between the United States of America and the Republic of Costa Rica (Antigua Convention). The Antigua Convention entered into force in 2010. The United States acceded to the Antigua Convention on February 24, 2016. The full text of the Antigua Convention is available at: *https://www.iattc.org/PDFFiles2/Antigua_Convention_Jun_2003.pdf.*

The IATTC consists of 21 member nations and 5 cooperating non-member nations. The IATTC is responsible for the conservation and management of tuna and tuna-like species in the IATTC Convention Area. The IATTC Convention Area is defined as waters of the EPO within the area bounded by the west coast of the Americas and by 50° N latitude, 150° W longitude, and 50° S latitude. The IATTC maintains a scientific research and fishery monitoring program and regularly assesses the status of tuna, sharks, and billfish stocks in the IATTC Convention Area to determine appropriate catch limits and other measures deemed necessary to promote sustainable fisheries and prevent the overexploitation of these stocks.

International Obligations of the United States Under the Antigua Convention

As a Party to the Antigua Convention and a member of the IATTC, the United States is legally bound to implement decisions of the IATTC under the TCA of 1950, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 951 *et seq.* (Pub. L. 114–81). The TCA directs the Secretary of Commerce, in consultation with the Secretary of State and, with respect to enforcement measures, the U.S. Coast Guard, to promulgate such regulations as may be necessary to carry out the United States' obligations under the Antigua Convention, including recommendations and decisions adopted by the IATTC. 16 U.S.C. 955(a). The authority of the Secretary of Commerce to promulgate such regulations has been delegated to NMFS.

IATTC Resolutions on Tropical Tuna Conservation, Fish Aggregating Devices, and Mitigating Impacts on Sea Turtles To Be Implemented by This Rulemaking

The 103rd Meeting of the IATTC was held in Panama City, Panama, in September 2025. At this meeting, the IATTC adopted Resolutions C–25–01 (Conservation Measures for Tropical Tunas In The Eastern Pacific Ocean During 2026 and 2027–2028) and C–25–07 (Amends and Replaces Resolution C–24–06 on Fish-Aggregating Devices). At the 94th Meeting of the IATTC in Bilbao, Spain, in July 2019, the IATTC adopted Resolution C–19–04 (Resolution to Mitigate Impacts on Sea Turtles). This section summarizes those three resolutions, all of which contain measures that are implemented by this rule, as discussed in the next section.

Resolution C–25–01 (Conservation Measures for Tropical Tunas in the Eastern Pacific Ocean During 2026 and 2027–2028)

Many of the measures in Resolution C–25–01 are identical in content to those contained in the previous tropical tuna resolution (C–24–01; Conservation Measures for Tropical Tuna in the Eastern Pacific Ocean During 2025–2026), which NMFS implemented in a May 23, 2025 final rule (90 FR 22023); the regulations implemented through that rule are in effect unless and until they are amended or replaced. Specifically, Resolution C–25–01 continues, unchanged, the following measures from the previous resolution (C–24–01): catch limits of bigeye tuna caught in the EPO for longline vessels greater than 24 meters in overall length, catch limit transfer requirements for bigeye tuna, a requirement that all tropical tuna be retained and landed (with some exceptions), the corralito closure area, and restrictions on the use and design of fish aggregating devices (FADs).

In addition to continuing the existing measures discussed in the previous paragraph, Resolution C–25–01 expands fishing opportunities by reducing the current purse seine closure period from 72 days to 64 days. As discussed further under the Classification section, this reduction of eight closure days provides substantial additional fishing opportunities for the U.S. fleet, allowing vessels to make additional purse seine sets and increase revenue. This reduction in closure days is consistent with advice from the IATTC scientific staff, who provided options for reducing closure days based on the current stock status of tropical tuna stocks. Because of the reduced number of closure days, Resolution C–25–01 also adjusts the current closure date periods for class size 5 and 6 purse seine vessels and creates a new alternative for class size 4 purse seine vessels to choose their own closure of 64 consecutive days at any time of the year. Class size 4 purse seine vessels are also no longer eligible to request a closure day exemption due to force majeure due to the flexibility to select closure days.

The Resolution also removes beaching of a FAD as a circumstance that allows for deactivating a FAD satellite buoy and requires that vessels and vessel operators report if the FAD satellite buoy is turned on or off.

Additionally, the Resolution requires a one-time assessed contribution to be paid by all class size 4–6 purse seine vessels listed as active on the IATTC Regional Vessel Register (RVR) at any point during the 2026 calendar year. These vessels must pay an amount equal to $6.16 per cubic meter of well capacity. Payment for such vessels is due by June 30, 2026, or for vessels entering the RVR after January 15, 2026, is due prior to the vessel's inclusion in the RVR, along with its AIDCP vessel assessment. These assessed contributions will be used to support the enhancement of the IATTC's Regional Tuna Tagging Program (RTTP) to allow for estimation of growth, natural mortality and abundance of tropical tuna, swordfish, and sharks.

Resolution C–25–01 will expire at the end of 2026 ''unless the scientific advice provided by IATTC staff and the IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee in 2026 through the management strategy evaluation process confirms the effectiveness of the measures in place,'' in which case the Resolution would remain in force until December 31, 2028.

Resolution C–25–07 (Amends and Replaces Resolution C–24–06 on Fish-Aggregating Devices)

Resolution C–25–07 continues measures from Resolution C–23–03, which NMFS implemented in a December 6, 2024 final rule (89 FR 96906). These measures establish requirements for vessels that choose to recover FADs for the purpose of final disposal or recycling and a reporting requirement for information associated with recovered FADs and also continue to prohibit the use of tender vessels.

For vessels engaged in FAD recovery activities, the Resolution amends the current data reporting provision to allow vessels and operators to either enter recovery data directly into the IATTC's online FAD recovery database or to report the data by completing and submitting a specified FAD sighting form.

Resolution C–19–04 (Resolution To Mitigate Impacts on Sea Turtles)

The IATTC adopted Resolution C–19–04 in 2019, which revised measures from prior resolutions on bycatch. Several of the new measures in Resolution C–19–04 still need to be implemented and are included in this rule. These measures are: (1) modified procedures for what to do if a sea turtle is sighted in the net or entangled during net roll; (2) requirements for purse seine vessels to carry onboard safe handling tools (*e.g.,* dip nets) for the release of sea turtles and to promptly release sea turtles observed entangled in a FAD; and (3) a requirement for purse seine vessels to record all observed sea turtle interactions using specified minimum data fields (*e.g.,* species ID, size, release condition).

Final Regulations

This rule includes minor changes to part 300, subpart C of title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The rule applies to U.S. commercial fishing vessels using purse seine or longline gear to catch tropical tuna in the IATTC Convention Area. Most of the measures in Resolution C–25–01 do not need to be implemented through this rule because, as noted previously, they continue existing measures that are already codified and do not expire. These include the following provisions of C–25–01:

• A 750 metric ton (mt) catch limit on bigeye tuna caught by longline vessels greater than 24 meters in overall length in the IATTC Convention Area (50 CFR 300.25(a)(2));
• Requirements for additional closure days for class size 4–6 purse seine vessels that exceed specified annual catch levels for bigeye tuna (50 CFR 300.25(e)(2));
• Provisions related to transferring longline catch limits for bigeye tuna between IATTC members (50 CFR 300.25(a)(5));
• Requirements related to stowing gear during time/area closure periods (50 CFR 300.25(e)(7));
• Restrictions on the number of active FADs allowed (50 CFR 300.28(c));
• A requirement that all tropical tuna be retained on board and landed (with certain exceptions) (50 CFR 300.27(a)); and
• Prohibitions against failing to comply with gear-stowing restrictions, retention requirements, and FAD-related restrictions (50 CFR 300.24(e), (f), (m), (nn), (oo), and (pp)).

This rule modifies certain fishing restrictions on purse seine vessels, in accordance with Resolution C–25–01. The modifications include reducing the current purse seine closure period from 72-days to 64-days (see 50 CFR 300.25(e)(1)), allowing class size 4 purse seiners to choose their own closure of 64 consecutive days at any time of the year (see 50 CFR 300.25(e)(1)(ii)), and removing class 4 purse seine vessels from the class sizes that are eligible to request a closure day exemption due to force majeure (see 50 CFR 300.25 (e)(5)). The rule also removes beaching of a FAD as a circumstance that allows for deactivating a FAD satellite buoy (previously in 50 CFR 300.28(d)(2)) and adds a requirement to report whether or not the echosounder is on or off in the active FAD reporting provisions (see 50 CFR 300.22(c)(2)).

The rule also requires class size 4–6 U.S. purse seiners to pay a one-time assessed contribution of $6.16 per cubic meter of well capacity. This amounts to a one-time cost of $185,447 for the entire U.S. large purse seine fleet. These funds will be used for a tuna tagging project which IATTC scientists have deemed necessary to ensure that adequate data are collected to complete future tropical tuna stock assessments. Because this is a one-time fee, it will not be codified in the CFR. The owner or managing owner of a class size 4–6 purse seine vessel is required to submit the vessel assessment fee directly to the IATTC, not to NMFS, no later than June 30, 2026, or for vessels entering the RVR after January 15, 2026, fees are due prior to the vessel's inclusion in the IATTC RVR, along with the vessel's AIDCP vessel assessment. NMFS will coordinate with vessel owners requesting to be on the RVR after January 15, 2026, and communicate with vessels where this fee is applicable.

As noted in the previous section, Resolution C–25–01 is set to expire at either the end of 2026 or the end of 2028. However, NMFS does not intend for these regulations to expire concurrently with the Resolution. Instead, because the IATTC will likely continue to adopt similar conservation and management measures upon expiration of this Resolution, and to avoid a lapse in the management of the fishery that may occur between expiration of the regulations and implementation of new measures adopted by the IATTC, these regulations will remain in effect unless and until they are amended or replaced.

The TCA gives NMFS the authority to promulgate such regulations as may be necessary to carry out the United States' international obligations under the Convention and this chapter, including recommendations and decisions adopted by the Commission. 16 U.S.C. 955(a). In past years, NMFS has implemented IATTC resolutions for specific calendar years, and this approach has at times led to lapses in management in the affected fisheries in subsequent years. Given the time-consuming nature of the U.S. domestic rulemaking process, combined with the increasingly frequent delayed adoption of IATTC resolutions, implementing domestic measures that do not expire unless and until new measures are in place is necessary to carry out the United States' international obligations under the Antigua Convention and the TCA because it will ensure there is no lapse in management of the tropical tuna fishery in the EPO.

Thus, these regulations will remain in effect until they are amended or replaced. NMFS intends to publish rules to implement new resolutions adopted by the IATTC as expeditiously as possible; however, this approach would allow existing regulations to remain in force and prevent any lapse in regulatory coverage caused by expirations.

In addition to the regulations to implement Resolution C–25–01, this rule also implements new FAD provisions from Resolution C–25–07 related to restrictions on satellite buoy deactivations. Specifically, vessel owners and operators are required to keep their FAD satellite buoys active when they drift south of 10° S and west of 100° W and to share their position with FAD recovery programs or other vessels capable of retrieving FADs for final disposal (see 50 CFR 300.28(d)(4)). If vessels and vessel operators would like these buoys to be considered ''non-fishing FADs'' (which is defined in § 300.21) and excluded from active FAD limits, this can be done provided that:

i. The buoys send data on location only for recovery purposes;

ii. The vessel or vessel operator instructs the buoy service provider to share the FAD location with recovery programs and other vessels capable of retrieving FADs and the location data are no longer shared with the vessel or vessel operator;

iii. The location data will be shared with a frequency of at least one position per day;

iv. The position will not be visible to the owner of the FAD and will not be set on;

v. The buoys emit location for at least 6 months when drifting in the area defined in this paragraph; and,

vi. The echosounder is turned off and this status is reported to the IATTC.

In addition to the new FAD provision, this rule also implements an alternative to paper FAD recovery reporting forms, in that vessel owners and operators are allowed to directly enter FAD recovery data into the IATTC's online FAD Recovery database to fulfill existing reporting requirements (see 50 CFR 300.22(c)(5)), with the goal of providing flexibility and making existing regulations less burdensome. NMFS will update its West Coast Highly Migratory Species Logbook web page with the new specified recovery form as well as information on how to directly enter FAD recovery data into the database: *https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/west-coast/sustainable-fisheries/west-coast-highly-migratory-species-logbooks.* Because this information is typically collected and reported to the IATTC by observers, if a vessel has an observer onboard that is submitting this information, FAD recovery data does not need to be separately collected and reported by the vessel owners and operators.

This rule also implements measures in Resolution C–19–04 that were not previously implemented after the Resolution was adopted.

First, to be consistent with the language in Resolution C–19–04, this rule amends the current regulatory requirement in 50 CFR 300.27(c)(2) for purse seine vessel procedures when a sea turtle is entangled during net roll. The amended language includes specifics on hauling the net over the turntable and moving the main boom in order to ensure the sea turtle can be released alive.

Additionally, the rule requires purse seine vessels to carry onboard safe handling tools (*e.g.,* dip nets) for the release of sea turtles (see 50 CFR 300.27(c)(5)). Furthermore, the rule requires owners/operators/vessel crew of purse seine vessels to promptly release unharmed, to the extent practicable, all sea turtles observed entangled in FADs (see 50 CFR 300.27(c)(6)).

This rule also adds new recordkeeping and reporting requirements to specify that purse seine vessels are required to report all sea turtle interactions by purse seine gear as part of current logbook reporting requirements in 50 CFR 300.22(a). The regulation includes a list of the minimum data fields required to satisfy this reporting and also a list of additional data that should be included if available (see 50 CFR 300.22(e)). To comply with this provision, purse seine vessels that do not fish on FADs and use the ''IATTC Regional Purse Seine Logbook'' must enter the minimum data fields in the ''Remarks'' column of the logbook, and purse seine vessels that do fish on FADs and use the ''Logbook for purse seine vessels that fish on Fish Aggregating Devices'' must enter minimum data fields not already on the logbook in the ''Comments/Observations'' column of the logbook.

Finally, this rule removes the current regulatory requirement in 50 CFR 300.27(c)(1) for purse seine vessels to have speedboats stationed close to the point where the net is lifted out of the water to assist in the release of sea turtles from a purse seine net. This regulation was put in place in 2001 to implement a 2000 IATTC resolution on bycatch (*e.g.,* Resolution C–00–08), and was continued in subsequent IATTC bycatch resolutions, until finally being removed under Resolution C–19–04. The regulation (*i.e.,* § 300.27(c)(1)) is therefore amended for consistency with Resolution C–19–04 and also due to human safety concerns for the crew operating a speed boat in varying weather conditions on the high seas. Moreover, recent discussions with the IATTC on updated best handling and release practices indicate having speedboats near the net can cause sea turtles to actively evade rescue and dive deeper into the net, consequently becoming more entangled. The amended regulatory language also clarifies that sea turtles must be safely released when sighted in the net.

In addition to implementing provisions from the IATTC resolutions, as discussed above, this rule also makes technical corrections to outdated contact information, cross-references, and hyperlinks in regulations for fishing under the AIDCP at 50 CFR 216.24 and in 50 CFR 300.24. Specifically, § 216.24(b)(4) and (6) include cross-references to RVR regulations in 50 CFR part 300, subpart C; however, those cross-references—which were to subparagraphs in § 300.22(b)—became outdated when NMFS slightly reorganized 50 CFR part 300, subpart C in a March 28, 2022 final rule (87 FR 17248), in part by moving the regulations pertaining to the RVR from § 300.22(b) to § 300.23. The rule also removes fax and email contacts that are no longer in use. Other than updating the contact information and cross-references to the RVR regulations, this rule does not make any other changes to § 216.24(b)(4) and (6). For the same reason, two cross-references within part 300, subpart C (specifically, in § 300.24(i)) are updated by this rule to reflect the current location of the RVR regulations; this rule makes no other changes to those regulations.

In the event a court were to invalidate some but not all aspects of this rule, NMFS intends that the remaining aspects of the rule be severable to the extent possible.

Classification

The NMFS Assistant Administrator has determined that this rule is consistent with the TCA and other applicable laws.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B), the NMFS Assistant Administrator finds good cause to waive prior notice and the opportunity for public comment, as following such procedures for this action would be impracticable, unnecessary, and contrary to the public interest. As a Member of the IATTC and a Party to the Antigua Convention, the United States is obligated to implement resolutions adopted by the IATTC. NMFS is authorized to implement those resolutions under the Tuna Conventions Act and must report U.S. compliance with implementation to the IATTC on an annual basis. The IATTC resolutions being implemented by this rule are already in effect. And the specific provisions of those resolutions being implemented by this rule are largely prescriptive, which means there is no alternative action that could be taken with respect to those provisions, nor could public comment provide new information that would change the requirements of those provisions. Providing prior notice and opportunity for public comment would therefore further delay U.S. compliance with its international obligations without providing associated benefits to the regulated community or fishery.

The NMFS Administrator finds good cause under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3) for this rule to take effect upon public inspection in the **Federal Register**. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3), delaying the rule's effective date would also be contrary to the public interest because it would delay the availability of increased flexibilities and fishing opportunities offered by this rule, including the 8-day reduction in the required closure period, which could limit fishery participants' ability to realize the full level of economic opportunity the rule provides and have an impact on the annual revenue of the purse seine fleet. In addition, affected members of the public are already on notice of, and had an opportunity to provide some input on the development of, the measures implemented by this rule, because many of them attended or sent professional representatives to attend the relevant IATTC annual meetings and were involved in briefings and discussions with State Department and NOAA officials and staff, both prior to and during those annual meetings.

Furthermore, NMFS notes that it provided actual notice to all affected vessel owners and operators via email on several occasions that payment for the one-time assessed contribution would be due by June 30, 2026. Vessel owners and operators were notified on March 4, 2026, and were sent a reminder, that included bank information necessary to make the payment, on May 5, 2026. As of June 18, 2026, payments have already been paid for nearly half of the vessels. A follow-up reminder was sent to the owners and operators of the vessels for which payment remained outstanding. As mentioned previously, these funds will be used for a tuna tagging project which IATTC scientists have deemed necessary to ensure that adequate data are collected to complete future tropical tuna stock assessments, particularly skipjack tuna which is the target of the U.S. large purse seiners. U.S. industry representatives were present at the 103rd meeting of the IATTC where this measure was negotiated and supported the U.S. Section of the IATTC to advocate for including a requirement for payment of these funds by June 30 in the Resolution because the regulated entities greatly desire the benefits to the fleet from the updated skipjack assessment.

As soon as the rule is filed, NMFS will send notice of the rule via email to owners of vessels that are affected by this rule.

In conclusion, NMFS finds that the 30-day delay in effective date does not apply to this final rule pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3).

Executive Order 12866

This rule has been determined to be significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866. This action would update management measures for the U.S. large purse seine and longline fisheries in the EPO, which provide an average of $159 million of commercial fishing opportunity for large purse seine vessels and an average of $387,976 for longline vessels based on ex-vessel revenue from 2022–2024. Consistent with Executive Order 14276, this final rule implements provisions of IATTC Resolution C–25–01 to increase flexibility and fishing opportunity by reducing closure days for U.S. purse seine vessels from 72 days to 64 days. NMFS estimates that based on the average catch of large U.S. purse seine vessels from 2022–2024 and the average market rates, each vessel can make approximately $56,000 to $73,000 per day (average of $65,000 per day; assuming 1 set per vessel per day). There are currently 18 large U.S. purse seine vessels on the IATTC RVR, which means that every extra day of fishing could be worth an average of approximately $1.0 million to $1.3 million in additional ex-vessel revenue for the large U.S. purse seine fleet, with fluctuations due to the amount of catch and price of tuna. With the current closure day arrangement, some U.S. large purse seine vessels can opt to go fish the WCPO in the WCPFC Convention Area. However, industry representatives advocated for this closure day reduction to provide them additional flexibility to fish in the EPO as much as possible. Additionally, these vessels would likely lose several days of fishing time to transit from the EPO to the WCPO. Some U.S. large purse seine vessels do not cross over to the WCPO to fish during closures and would be sitting idle at port during closure periods. The increased catch from U.S. vessels as a result of the closure day reductions would strengthen our Nation's seafood supply chain by increasing American tropical tuna landings by up to 5,740 metric tons per year. Additionally, the final rule implements provisions of Resolutions C–25–07 related to the use of FADs and also several provisions of Resolution C–19–04 on sea turtles that were not previously implemented.

If NMFS does not take action to implement Resolutions C–25–01, C–25–07, and C–19–04, the United States will not satisfy international obligations as a Member of the IATTC and Party to the Antigua Convention. In addition, if the final rule is not implemented, the vessel owners and operators of large purse seine vessels will still have to abide by a longer 72 day closure period, will not have a new provision for non-fishing FADs, will not gain the added FAD recovery reporting flexibility, and would not have in place all the sea turtle mitigation provisions adopted by the IATTC.

In the alternative, by implementing provisions of Resolutions C–25–01, C–25–07, and C–19–04 as proposed, NMFS will maintain and extend measures for size class 6 purse seine vessels that are intended to manage fishing for tropical tuna stocks in the IATTC Convention Area. These actions are not expected to substantially change the typical fishing practices of affected vessels, and any impact to the income of U.S. commercial vessels would be minor. The gains in fully implementing this Resolution and contributing to the overall conservation of tropical tuna, as well as fulfilling the international obligations of the United States, are expected to outweigh any potential costs to affected entities. In conclusion, it is determined that the described action will be an economically viable and better alternative relative to the alternative of not taking action to implement the provisions of Resolutions C–25–01, C–25–07, and C–19–04 as proposed.

Executive Order 14192

This final rule is considered an Executive Order 14192 deregulatory action.

Executive Order 13175

NMFS has determined that this action would not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian Tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian Tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian Tribes; therefore, consultation with Tribal officials under E.O. 13175 is not required, and the requirements of sections (5)(b) and (5)(c) of E.O. 13175 also do not apply. A Tribal summary impact statement under section (5)(b)(2)(B) and section (5)(c)(2) of E.O. 13175 is not required and has not been prepared.

Paperwork Reduction Act

This rule contains changes to the collection of information requirement for the purposes of the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995. NMFS is amending the supporting statement for the ''West Coast Region Pacific Tuna Fisheries Logbook, Fish Aggregating Device Form, and Observer Safety Reporting'' Office of Management and Budget (OMB) PRA requirements (OMB Control No. 0648–0148), to include the data collection requirements for U.S. purse seine vessel owners and operators to report all observed sea turtle interactions using specified minimum data fields (*e.g.,* species ID, size, release condition), unless that information is already collected and submitted to the IATTC by an observer onboard the vessel. Additionally, for existing FAD reporting data collection requirements, vessel owners and operators will be allowed to directly enter FAD recovery data into the IATTC's online FAD Recovery database to fulfill reporting requirements as an alternative to entering and submitting data in the FAD recovery data form provided by the Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Branch. This added flexibility aims to improve and modernize how data are collected to better reflect what is happening on the water. Finally, active FAD reporting requirements are amended to add a requirement to report whether or not the echosounder is on or off.

NMFS estimates that the public reporting burden for the collection of information for reporting sea turtle interactions will average 3 minutes per form, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, and no person shall be subject to penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the PRA, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number. All currently approved NOAA collections of information may be viewed at: *https://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain.*

Because prior notice and opportunity for public comment are not required for this rule by 5 U.S.C. 553, or any other law, and a proposed rule is not being published, the analytical requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act, 5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.,* are inapplicable.

List of Subjects in 50 CFR Parts 216 and 300

Administrative practice and procedure, Fish, Fisheries, Fishing, Marine resources, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Treaties.

Dated: June 30, 2026.

Kelly Denit,

Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service.

For the reasons set out in the preamble, NMFS amends 50 CFR parts 216 and 300 as follows:

PART 216—REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE TAKING AND IMPORTING OF MARINE MAMMALS

■ 1. The authority citation for part 216 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.,* unless otherwise noted.

■ 2. Amend § 216.24 by revising paragraphs (b)(4) and (b)(6)(iii)(A) through (F) to read as follows:

§ 216.24 Taking and related acts in commercial fishing operations including tuna purse seine vessels in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.

* * * * *

(b) * * *

(4) *Application for vessel permit.* To apply for an ETP vessel permit, a vessel owner or managing owner must complete, sign, and submit the appropriate form and submit any required payment of the permit application fee to the Administrator, West Coast Region, allowing at least 15 days for processing. Application forms and instructions for their completion are available from NMFS. To request that a vessel in excess of 400 short tons (362.8 mt) carrying capacity be categorized as active on the Vessel Register under § 300.23(c) of this title in the following calendar year, the owner or managing owner must submit the vessel permit application, payment of the vessel permit application fee, and payment of the vessel assessment fee no later than September 15 for vessels for which a DML is requested for the following year, and no later than November 30 for vessels for which a DML is not requested for the following year.

* * * * *

(6) * * *

(iii) * * *

(A) The owner or managing owner of a purse seine vessel for which a DML has been requested must submit the vessel assessment fee to the IATTC, no later than September 15 of the year prior to the calendar year for which the DML is requested. Payment of the vessel assessment fee must be consistent with the fee for active status on the Vessel Register under § 300.23(c)(2)(ii) of this title.

(B) The owner or managing owner of a purse seine vessel for which active or inactive status on the Vessel Register, as defined in § 300.21 of this title, has been requested, but for which a DML has not been requested, must submit payment of the vessel assessment fee to the IATTC, no later than November 30 of the year prior to the calendar year in which the vessel will be listed on the Vessel Register. Payment of the vessel assessment fee is required only if the vessel is listed as active and is required to carry an observer, or if the vessel is listed as inactive and exceeds 400 short tons (362.8 mt) in carrying capacity. Payment of the vessel assessment fee must be consistent with the vessel's status, either active or inactive, on the Vessel Register in § 300.23(c) of this title.

(C) The owner or managing owner of a purse seine vessel that is permitted and authorized under an alternative international tuna purse seine fisheries management regime in the Pacific Ocean must submit the vessel assessment fee to the IATTC, prior to obtaining an observer and entering the ETP to fish. Consistent with § 300.23(a)(1) of this title, this class of purse seine vessels is not required to be listed on the Vessel Register under § 300.23(c) of this title in order to purse seine for tuna in the ETP during a single fishing trip per calendar year of 90 days or less. Payment of the vessel assessment fee must be consistent with the fee for active status on the Vessel Register under § 300.23(c)(2) of this title.

(D) The owner or managing owner of a purse seine vessel listed as inactive on the Vessel Register at the beginning of the calendar year, and who requests active status on the Vessel Register under § 300.23(c)(2) of this title during the year, must pay the vessel assessment fee associated with active status, less the vessel assessment fee associated with inactive status that was already paid, before NMFS will request the IATTC Director change the status of the vessel from inactive to active. Payment of the vessel assessment fee is required only if the vessel is required to carry an observer.

(E) The owner or managing owner of a purse seine vessel not listed on the Vessel Register at the beginning of the calendar year and who requests to replace a vessel removed from active status on the Vessel Register under § 300.23(h)(2) of this title during the year, must pay the vessel assessment fee associated with active status only if the vessel is required to carry an observer, before NMFS will request the IATTC Director change the status of the vessel to active.

(F) Payments will be subject to a 10 percent surcharge if received under paragraph (b)(6)(iii)(E) of this section for vessels that were listed as active on the Vessel Register in the calendar year prior to the year for which active status was requested; or if received after the dates specified in paragraph (b)(6)(iii)(A) or (B) of this section for vessels for which active status is requested if the vessel was listed as active during the year the request was made. Payments will not be subject to a 10 percent surcharge if received under paragraph (b)(6)(iii)(C) or (D) of this section, or if received under paragraph (b)(6)(iii)(E) of this section for vessels that were not listed as active on the Vessel Register in the calendar year prior to the year for which active status was requested. Payments will also not be subject to a 10 percent surcharge if received after the date specified in paragraph (b)(6)(iii)(B) of this section for vessels for which inactive status is requested, or for vessels for which active status is requested if the vessel was not listed as active during the year the request was made. Payment of all vessel assessment fees described in this section must be made to the IATTC.

* * * * *

PART 300—INTERNATIONAL FISHERIES REGULATIONS

■ 3. The authority citation for part 300, subpart C, continues to read as follows:

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 951 *et seq.*

■ 4. Amend § 300.21 by adding, in alphabetical order, the definition for ''Non-fishing FAD'' to read as follows:

§ 300.21 Definitions.

* * * * *

Non-fishing FAD means a FAD drifting in the area as defined in § 300.28(d)(4) and where the satellite buoy sends location data only for recovery purposes; buoy locations are provided by the buoy service providers; location data are shared with a frequency of at least one position per day for at least 6 months; the position is not visible for the owner of the FADs; and the echosounder is reported as 'off.'

* * * * *

■ 5. Amend § 300.22 by revising paragraph (c)(2) and adding paragraph (e) to read as follows:

§ 300.22 Recordkeeping and reporting requirements.

* * * * *

(c) * * *

(2) *Reporting on Active FADs.* U.S. vessel owners and operators must record or maintain daily information on buoy location and acoustic data for all Active FADs that have been deployed in the water in the IATTC Convention Area and report that information to the IATTC, using a format and address provided by the HMS Branch. Daily information on buoy location must include date, time, buoy identifier, latitude, longitude, IMO number, speed, and whether or not the echosounder is on or off. Daily acoustic data will vary depending on the buoy company, but must include company, buoy identifier, latitude, longitude, date, time, and available layers of data. Further instructions on reporting data specific for different buoys companies are available in a compliance guide. This information must be submitted for each calendar month no later than 90 days after the month covered by the report.

* * * * *

(e) *Sea turtle interaction reporting.* The owner and operator of a purse seine fishing vessel of the United States that interacts with a sea turtle while commercially fishing in the Convention Area must ensure that the incident is recorded on the log that is required by paragraph (a) of this section, unless that information is already reported to the IATTC by an observer.

(1) *Required information.* The log of sea turtle interactions must include the following information:

(i) Number of individual sea turtles with which the vessel interacted;

(ii) Date of interaction;

(iii) Location of interaction (latitude and longitude of interaction);

(iv) Fishing gear type;

(v) Species identification;

(vi) Size (*i.e.,* curved or straight carapace length); and,

(vii) Capture and release condition (*e.g.,* live/injured/dead).

(2) *Supplemental information.* If available, the log of sea turtle interactions should also include the following:

(i) The anatomical hooking location (*e.g.,* flipper, mouth/jaw, swallowed, entangled);

(ii) Amount of gear left on the animal, if applicable (*e.g.,* estimated length of line); and,

(iii) Any associated photographs.

■ 6. Amend § 300.24 by revising paragraphs (i), (j), and (qq) to read as follows:

§ 300.24 Prohibitions.

* * * * *

(i) Fail to report information when requested by the Regional Administrator under § 300.23.

(j) Fail to record or submit information required under § 300.22(b), (d), or (e).

* * * * *

(qq) Fail to provide FAD data as described under § 300.28(d)(5).

* * * * *

■ 7. Amend § 300.25 by revising paragraphs (e)(1) through (4), the introductory text of paragraph (e)(5), and paragraph (e)(5)(v) to read as follows:

§ 300.25 Fisheries management.

* * * * *

(e) * * *

(1) *64-day closure.* A U.S. commercial purse seine fishing vessel that is of class size 4–6 (carrying capacity of more than 182 metric tons) may not be used to fish with purse seine gear in the Convention Area for 64 days during the following periods:

(i) For class size 5–6 purse seine vessels:

(A) From 0000 hours Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) August 6 to 2400 hours UTC October 8; or

(B) From 0000 hours UTC November 9 to 2400 hours UTC January 11 of the following year.

(ii) For class size 4 purse seine vessels a closure of 64 consecutive days must be observed at any time of the year.

(2) *Additional closure days for vessels that exceed bigeye tuna catch levels.*

(i) U.S. purse seine vessels that exceed a certain annual catch level of bigeye tuna must increase the number of closure days they observe in the following year, as specified in table 1 to this paragraph (e)(2).

(ii) The additional days of closure must be added to the closure period indicated in paragraph (e)(1) of this section. For class 5–6 vessels observing the first closure period, the additional days must be added at the beginning of the closure period. For class 5–6 vessels observing the second closure period, the additional days must be added to the end of the closure period. For class 4 vessels, the additional days must be added consecutively to their chosen days of closure. The HMS Branch will confirm the determination of annual catch levels for U.S. purse vessels based on information provided by the IATTC and notify any U.S. vessel that exceeds a given catch level.

TABLE 1 TO PARAGRAPH (E)(2)

Catch level (mt) exceeded	Additional closure days observed
1,200	10
1,500	13
1,800	16
2,100	19
2,400	22

(3) *Choice of closure period.* (i) A class size 5–6 vessel owner, manager, or association representative of a vessel that is subject to the requirements of paragraph (e)(1) of this section must provide written notification to the Regional Administrator declaring which closure period identified in paragraph (e)(1) of this section their vessel will observe in that year. This written notification must be submitted by email to *wcr.hms@noaa.gov* and must be received no later than May 15 of the relevant calendar year. The written notification must include the vessel name and registration number, the closure dates that will be observed by that vessel, and the vessel owner or managing owner's name, signature, business address, and business telephone number.

(ii) A class size 4 vessel owner, manager, or association representative of a vessel that is subject to the requirements of paragraph (e)(1) of this section must provide written notification to the Regional Administrator declaring which consecutive 64 days of closure that vessel will observe in that year. This written notification must be submitted by email to *wcr.hms@noaa.gov* and must be received no later than 30 days prior to the start of the closure. The written notification must include the vessel name and registration number, the closure dates that will be observed by that vessel, and the vessel owner or managing owner's name, signature, business address, and business telephone number.

(4) *Default closure period.* If written notification is not submitted per paragraph (e)(3)(i) of this section for a class size 5–6 vessel subject to the requirements under paragraph (e)(1) of this section, that vessel must observe the second closure period under paragraph (e)(1)(i)(B) of this section. If written notification is not submitted per paragraph (e)(3)(ii) of this section for a class size 4 vessel subject to the requirements under paragraph (e)(1) of this section, that vessel must observe a closure period from 0000 hours Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) October 28 to 2400 hours UTC December 31.

(5) *Request for exemption due to force majeure.* A class size 5–6 vessel may request a reduced closure period if a *force majeure* event renders the vessel unable to proceed to sea outside one of the two closure periods specified in paragraph (e)(1)(i) of this section for at least 75 continuous days. A vessel will only be eligible for an exemption due to *force majeure* if the vessel was disabled in the course of fishing operations by mechanical and/or structural failure, fire, or explosion.

* * * * *

(v) An exemption due to force majeure will apply to only the closure period required under paragraph (e)(1) of this section. Vessels that are both granted a reduced 40-day initial closure period due to force majeure under this paragraph (e)(5) and required to observe additional closure days for exceeding bigeye tuna catch levels under paragraph (e)(2) of this section must observe the reduced closure period consecutively with the additional closure days by adding the additional closure days to either the beginning of the first reduced closure period or the end of the second reduced closure period.

* * * * *

■ 8. Amend § 300.27 by revising paragraph (c)(1) and (2) and adding paragraphs (c)(5) and (6) to read as follows:

§ 300.27 Incidental catch and tuna retention requirements.

* * * * *

(c) * * *

(1) Whenever a sea turtle is sighted in the net, vessel owners and operators must take all reasonable steps to ensure its safe release.

(2) If a sea turtle is entangled during net roll, the net should be hauled over the turntable to a height of 2 meters, the main boom should be moved to starboard or to port (depending on the vessel's direction) and the net should be rolled back, so that the crew can release the turtle from the netting as soon as possible, and return it to the sea if it is active. Net roll should not start again until the turtle has been disentangled and released.

* * * * *

(5) Vessels must carry on board, and employ, when appropriate, dip nets able to lift and lower sea turtles to and from vessels. Dip nets must follow the design specified in § 660.712(b)(3) of this title.

(6) All sea turtles observed entangled in fish-aggregating devices (FADs) must be promptly released unharmed.

* * * * *

■ 9. Amend § 300.28 by revising paragraph (d) to read as follows:

§ 300.28 FAD restrictions.

* * * * *

(d) *Restrictions on satellite buoy deactivations.* A vessel owner or operator that deactivates a satellite buoy attached to a FAD must comply with the reporting requirements for buoy deactivations in § 300.22(c)(3). A U.S. vessel owner or operator shall deactivate a satellite buoy attached to a FAD that was activated in the IATTC Convention Area only in the following circumstances:

(1) Complete loss of signal reception;

(2) Appropriation of a FAD by a third party;

(3) Temporarily during a selected closure period;

(4) For being outside of the area between the meridians 150° W long. and 100° W long., and the parallels 8° N lat. and 10° S lat.; the area between the meridian 100° W long. and the coast of the American continent and the parallels 5° N lat. and 15° S lat. FADs drifting south of 10° S lat. and west of 100° W long. must not be deactivated and the vessels or vessel operators must share their position with FAD recovery programs or other vessels capable of retrieving FADs for final disposal. These FADs will be considered ''non-fishing FADs'' and excluded from active FAD limits in paragraph (c) of this section if:

(i) The buoys send location data only for recovery purposes;

(ii) The vessel or vessel operator instructs the buoy service provider to share the FAD location with recovery programs and other vessels capable of retrieving FADs and the location data are no longer shared with the vessel or vessel operator;

(iii) The location data is shared with a frequency of at least one position per day;

(iv) The position is not visible to the owner and the FAD will not be set on;

(v) Location data is shared for at least 6 months when drifting in the area defined in this paragraph; and

(vi) The echosounder is turned off and this status is reported to the IATTC; or

(5) Transfer of ownership.

* * * * *

[FR Doc. 2026–13666 Filed 7–6–26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P