

# INTERNATIONAL FISHERIES COMMISSIONS

## *Resource Summary*

(\$ in thousands)

Appropriations	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Estimate	FY 2013 Request	Increase / Decrease
Funds	50,399	36,300	32,800	(3,500)

### *Program Description*

The International Fisheries Commissions appropriation supports the Department's strategic goals of securing a sustainable global environment and ensuring economic prosperity and security, as well as the food security goal of the U.S. Global Development Strategy (the Feed the Future initiative) by funding U.S. shares of operating expenses for ten international fisheries commissions and organizations, the International Whaling Commission, two international marine science organizations, the Arctic Council, the Antarctic Treaty, and international sea turtle and shark conservation initiatives. Through these international fisheries commissions, the United States advocates for science-based conservation and management measures to regulate the global fishing industry and works to level the international economic playing field to promote growth and job-creation in the U.S. fishing industry. In most cases, U.S. contributions are mandated by treaty; failure to meet assessments results in loss of voting rights or influence within the commissions. The appropriation also provides for travel expenses of the U.S. commissioners and their advisors, as well as compensation to non-government employees of the Pacific Salmon Commission for days actually worked as U.S. commissioners, panel members, advisors, and/or alternates.

The commissions and organizations were, for the most part, established by treaties and agreements negotiated by the United States and ratified by the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate. The United States entered into these arrangements to protect its access to shared international fisheries resources and to support other vital economic and environmental interests.

Recent developments have underscored the importance of working through the commissions and programs funded by this account to conserve and manage finite and vulnerable shared marine resources. For example, the re-authorized Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act laid out a specific mandate for the United States to work multilaterally to address illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing and by-catch of protected living marine resources. It specifically calls on the United States to promote improved monitoring, control, and surveillance for high seas and shared fisheries; improve the effectiveness of international fisheries governance through adoption of IUU vessel lists, stronger port state controls, and market-related measures; and build capacity in other countries to ensure sustainable fisheries and regulatory enforcement. The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce, worked with other countries and international organizations to establish rules based on sound science to enhance sustainable fishing practices and eliminate unregulated destructive fishing practices that jeopardize fish stocks and the habitats that support them. The Regional Fishery Management Organizations and other cooperative arrangements funded by this account are the primary means of achieving each of these goals.

The commissions and organizations funded by this appropriation enable the United States to promote critical U.S. economic and conservation interests. Each facilitates international cooperation by conducting or coordinating scientific studies of fish stocks and other living marine resources and their

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habitats, and establishing common management measures to be implemented by member governments based on their results. Many also oversee the allocation of member nations' fishing rights.

Through the ongoing efforts of the commissions and programs funded by this account, many fishing areas that were nearly depleted are now yielding sustainable catches for U.S. commercial and sport fishermen, and some key endangered populations are recovering. For example, fisheries restrictions adopted through the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas enabled North Atlantic swordfish populations to rebuild from depletion to a fully sustainable level two years faster than targeted. The oldest of these organizations, the International Pacific Halibut Commission, has facilitated unprecedented cooperation between the United States and Canada and has successfully managed the shared halibut stock from a dangerously low level 20 years ago to current historically high biomass levels. Through the International Dolphin Conservation Program associated with the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, dolphin mortality in the eastern Pacific tuna fishery has plummeted from approximately 100,000 animals in 1989 to less than 2,000 in recent years, well below the target levels.

### **Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)**

The FY 2013 request will enable the IATTC to continue the research, assessment, and analysis activities and programs necessary to conserve and manage the commercial tuna and other stocks of the eastern Pacific Ocean and to evaluate and manage the impacts of the fishery on the broader marine ecosystem of the eastern Pacific, contributing to the IATTC's and the Department's objectives of sustainable use of marine resources and ecosystem management. In addition to the extensive workload associated with the implementation of the International Dolphin Conservation Program (IDCP), the Commission has also been tasked by its members to expand research into minimizing the by-catch of juvenile tuna and non-target species, such as sharks, seabirds, and sea turtles, improve its monitoring and recording of fish landings at ports throughout the eastern Pacific, augment its research program for bigeye tuna, and improve compliance. The Commission will also conduct further research on the stocks of dolphins taken in conjunction with tuna and will continue to administer the IDCP to reduce and, to the extent possible, eliminate dolphin mortality in the fishery, a priority objective of the U.S. Government and constituent groups.

### **Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC)**

FY 2013 activities will include sea lamprey control to reach target levels that protect the valuable fisheries in all of the Great Lakes, enhanced stream treatments to provide the maximum control without expanding infrastructure, and maximum suppression of lamprey on the St. Mary's River. Parasitic, invasive sea lampreys feed primarily on trout, salmon, walleye, sturgeon, and whitefish; the foundation of Canada and the United States' shared Great Lakes fisheries. The proposed funding provides for baseline research and assessment programs to determine the sources and distribution of sea lampreys and the success of treatment options. The FY 2013 request will fund continued research into and further development of alternative controls to continue reducing lampricide use in the Great Lakes beyond the 35 percent decrease achieved by 2006, while still delivering successful sea lamprey control. This promising research includes the use of attractants (pheromones) and repellants, which will modify reproductive behavior to enhance trapping of spawning sea lampreys and increase effectiveness of lampricide control. The request will allow the GLFC to continue its work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to construct barriers that block sea lamprey from spawning in streams and continue existing highly successful sterile-male release activities.

### **The Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC)**

Decisions made by the Pacific Salmon Commission affect where, when, and by whom valuable Pacific salmon resources are caught, and involve input from state, tribal, and Federal stakeholders. The FY 2013 request will fund fisheries research and management demands placed on the PSC and negotiations for a

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key treaty regime governing Fraser River fisheries. The PSC members will negotiate in 2013 to renew a management regime for the Fraser River, a transboundary river that is central to tribal, state, and Canadian salmon fisheries in the region. In addition to the U.S. share of joint PSC expenses, Department of State funding provides for compensation to non-governmental U.S. commissioners, panel members, and alternates while conducting PSC duties and for travel and expenses of U.S. participants as per the Pacific Salmon Treaty Act.

### **International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC)**

The FY 2013 request would allow the IPHC to continue vital research on and management of Pacific halibut, a resource that contributes \$700 million per year in fisheries activity to the U.S. economy. Base funding for the IPHC provides for annual stock assessment and recommendation of catch limits for Canada and the United States. Examples of core activities include: 1) monitoring harvest in commercial, sport, and bycatch fisheries; 2) scientific surveys to determine the abundance and distribution of halibut stocks; and 3) research into the population structure of halibut to determine the correct management framework for the species. The United States also has a treaty obligation to provide headquarters facilities for the IPHC. Therefore, FY 2013 request includes funding for operational costs of the IPHC offices that are solely the responsibility of the United States. The increase of \$100K over the FY 2012 request arises from U.S. requests to expand research effort in domestic waters and adjustments for pension fund liabilities.

### **Arctic Council**

In May, 2011, the foreign ministers of the eight members of the Arctic Council, including Secretary Clinton, decided to establish a new, small standing secretariat for the Council to improve the operations of this high-level intergovernmental forum. The secretariat will be administrative in nature and will carry out tasks such as website maintenance, facilitating collaboration among the subsidiary bodies within the Council and with the media, logistical support for Arctic Council meetings, and other administrative support directly to the country holding the Arctic Council chairmanship. The secretariat, to be located in Tromsø, Norway, is intended to be equally funded by the eight Arctic States and will become operational during FY 2013. The FY 2013 request is to support the initial costs of establishing the secretariat, with full annual contributions towards its continued operation beginning in FY 2014.

### **Antarctic Treaty Secretariat (ATS)**

The FY 2013 request reflects the expected contribution amount for the Antarctic Treaty System and supports the functioning of the ATS and provides for shared funding of the costs of Consultative Meetings, including increases in translation and interpretation costs. The ATS carries out numerous administrative tasks in support of the annual meetings of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties. The Treaty System oversees scientific and environmental cooperation in Antarctica and specifically addresses problems involving the marine environment, marine protected areas, and the sea and ice interface. As such, the work of the ATS relates directly to the work of other organizations covered by this appropriation, including the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, a sister organization under the Antarctic Treaty System.

### **Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)**

CCAMLR manages fishing and marine living resources in the Southern Ocean. The FY 2013 request provides CCAMLR with funding that allows the organization to develop and implement measures to ensure effective conservation and management of Antarctic marine living resources based on an ecosystem approach. The organization's efforts have helped toothfish (Chilean sea bass) stocks rebound over a period of many years. In FY 2013, the United States will continue to work to advance efforts through CCAMLR to eliminate illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing and implement the recommendations of the independent review of CCAMLR's performance. Membership in this Commission, which is headquartered in Australia, ensures the restoration of the world's largest untapped

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source of marine protein and aids in protecting future U.S. access to important marine resources in the Antarctic region.

### **Expenses of the U.S. Commissioners**

The U.S. commissioners to the various fisheries commissions are appointed by the President and are responsible to the Secretary of State in carrying out their duties. They receive transportation expenses and per diem while engaged in the commissions' work. The FY 2013 request will fund travel expenses for the U.S. commissioners to participate in meetings of all fishery commissions except the Pacific Salmon Commission, which is covered within the funds requested for that Commission.

### **International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)**

ICCAT's mission is to coordinate management of Atlantic populations of tuna and tuna-like species at levels that will permit the maximum sustainable catch. The ICCAT provides a forum for fishing nations, including a large number of developing coastal nations, to establish catch limits and national allocations, and combat illegal fishing, and oversees a program of research on tuna, swordfish, and billfish. The FY 2013 request will enable the United States to continue to work within ICCAT to implement effective, science-based measures to rebuild depleted Atlantic bluefin tuna stocks and to enforce stronger measures for the protection and conservation of Atlantic shark populations. The United States will also work to strengthen ICCAT's functioning, in particular through amendments to its establishing Convention to bring it in line with modern fisheries governance. The request will also support the ICCAT Bluefin Tuna Research Program, a multi-year program in addition to regular budgetary items intended to improve the conservation and management of this vital fishery.

### **International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES)**

The FY 2013 request will enable ICES to promote and coordinate research and investigation of the North Atlantic Ocean, particularly focusing on fisheries, as well as ecosystem management, marine mammals, and marine pollution. ICES plans programs; organizes research and investigation as determined necessary, in agreement with member nations; supports approximately one hundred intersessional meetings of scientific and advisory working groups and study groups to coordinate and synthesize this research; and publishes or encourages the publication of data and research resulting from investigations carried out under its auspices. ICES is also seeking to further broaden the relevance of its research and scientific participation beyond its traditional products that focused on fisheries. ICES advances U.S. goals of strengthening ecosystem considerations in marine resource management and ensuring that science informs environmental policy. ICES will continue to provide scientific advice to its member nations, the European Community, regional fisheries management organizations, and other international organizations.

### **International Sea Turtle Conservation Programs**

The FY 2013 request will support International Sea Turtle Conservation Programs associated with the Inter-American Convention for Sea Turtles (IAC) and the Indian Ocean and South East Asia Sea Turtle Memorandum of Understanding (IOSEA MOU). The United States is a Party to the IAC, and is a signatory of the IOSEA MOU. Following the relocation of the IAC interim Secretariat to the United States, regional participation in the Convention and associated project development has significantly increased. In addition to further engaging the Caribbean region, IAC will finalize mechanisms to share technologies to reduce sea turtle interactions with fishing gear, such as improvements to turtle excluder devices (TEDs), and will assist developing countries to sustainably manage traditional utilization of sea turtles. The IOSEA MOU region is currently engaged in a variety of economic development projects. IOSEA will work to ensure port and coastal development and extraction of natural resources take into account environmental concerns, sea turtles in particular. Under the IOSEA MOU, a Site Network is being developed to give special status to habitats identified as critical to sea turtles, and is seeking cost

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effective means of evaluating and reducing light pollution on nesting beaches to improve survival of turtle hatchlings.

### **International Shark Conservation Program**

The FY 2013 request will support international efforts to conserve and protect migratory sharks through the recently adopted Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (MOU). It would support the continued functioning of the interim secretariat of the MOU, housed within the Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species, and any other costs for implementation of the MOU regarding international cooperation on shark conservation. The MOU represents a mechanism to achieve U.S. policy objectives, particularly those articulated in the 2011 Shark Conservation Act, and the requested funding will allow it to be fully operational and effective as an international framework.

### **International Whaling Commission (IWC)**

This request assumes that a previously forecast assessment increase for all large economies in the IWC membership will not be adopted for FY 2013, although it is still possible in future years. The United States remains vigilant on this issue since a simple majority vote controls budgetary decisions in the deeply divided organization, and the United States will lose its voting rights in the IWC if its full assessment is not paid. Funding for the IWC provides for the conservation, scientific study, and optimum use of whales, and in particular provides a quota for the taking of whales by U.S. Natives for aboriginal subsistence purposes. The IWC and its associated committees collect and analyze information on the status and trends of whale stocks, evaluate the effects of whaling, and develop conservation strategies for numerous whale species. The IWC has had several significant achievements that advance U.S. environmental interests, such as adoption of the moratorium on commercial whaling, critical analyses of unilateral whaling activities in other countries, the establishment of whale sanctuaries in the Southern and Indian Oceans, and the establishment of a Conservation Committee.

### **North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO)**

NASCO promotes the conservation, restoration, enhancement, and rational management of salmon stocks in the North Atlantic Ocean through international cooperation, as well as the acquisition, analysis, and dissemination of scientific information pertaining to these salmon stocks. In FY 2013, NASCO will follow up on its 2005 in-depth review of its working methods and structure and implement any additional reforms needed to improve transparency and accountability. The FY 2013 request will ensure the United States remains in good standing in NASCO, will be able to shape the implementation of new reporting requirements to ensure accountability of members, and help the organization meet key strategic goals to restore salmon stocks and improve international governance. It also includes a time-limited increase associated with retirement of the current Executive Secretary and recruitment of his replacement.

### **North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC)**

NPAFC activities help manage and preserve anadromous and ecologically-related species in the North Pacific and Central Bering Sea. Anadromous fish, such as salmon, spend their adult lives in the oceans but return to freshwater to spawn. The NPAFC treaty mandates a prohibition on fishing for anadromous stocks on the high seas of the North Pacific, and thereby provides a valuable tool to deter the use of large-scale driftnets in that region, and significantly contributes to the U.S. goal of achieving sustainable coastal fisheries. The NPAFC also promotes and coordinates scientific studies on anadromous stocks, the results of which can help minimize the incidental catch of valuable anadromous stocks in other fisheries. Additionally, the Parties to the Convention — the United States, Canada, Russia, Japan, and Korea — collaborate internationally on high seas enforcement of the NPAFC fishing ban.

### **North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES)**

PICES is the Pacific Ocean counterpart of ICES, and it supports numerous collaborative and ecosystem-based research initiatives that promote data exchange and science-based decision-making about natural

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resource management. The North Pacific Ocean not only is rich in resources of great importance to the U.S. economy, but also exerts a major influence on weather and climate in North America. In FY 2013, PICES will encourage capacity building through scientific seminars and collaborations, workshops, symposia, technical publications, and an Intern Program. PICES's work is guided by the Integrative Science Program, which was finalized in FY 2008—an innovative multidisciplinary, international research program to address key challenges and questions in ecosystem-based management of marine resources.

### **Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO)**

NAFO promotes the conservation and optimum use of fishery resources in the Northwest Atlantic. It encourages international cooperation and consultation and is responsible for investigating the abundance, life history, and ecology of any species of aquatic life in the Convention Area, and collecting and analyzing statistical information relating to the fishery resources of the area. Although NAFO has successfully increased its workload without a corresponding budget increase through substantial efficiencies in its administrative operations, the recent strength of the Canadian dollar has nonetheless resulted in increased U.S. contributions. Key FY 2013 U.S. initiatives will include working to secure a permanent U.S. share of fishing quota, ensuring that management measures for NAFO stocks are consistent with scientific advice on sustainable levels, and expanding NAFO management of threatened shark stocks. The United States will also continue to work within NAFO to strengthen efforts to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems and end destructive fishing practices.

### **Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)**

WCPFC's objective is to ensure, through effective management, the long term conservation and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks such as tunas in the western and central Pacific Ocean. The WCPFC provides a forum for fishing nations to establish catch limits, gear restrictions, area closures, and compliance and enforcement mechanisms; combat illegal fishing; minimize impacts on threatened species such as sea turtles, seabirds, and sharks; and oversee a program of scientific research. Commercial fisheries under WCPFC purview are worth nearly \$4 billion annually. Most of the fish are harvested within the national waters of small island developing nations in the Pacific who depend on these fisheries for food security, revenue, and economic development. Revenue from U.S. fisheries for Pacific tunas alone is estimated at more than \$360 million each year, based on current fish prices. In order to meet its objectives, the WCPFC requires additional resources to undertake further scientific assessments of bigeye tuna and key shark populations and critical research to reduce the catch of juvenile tunas around fish aggregating devices. Additionally, U.S. catches in the Western Pacific have increased in recent years. Because the agreed budget formula includes a component tied to a country's average catch levels over the past three years, the recent increase of U.S. catches has resulted in larger indicative assessed dues for the United States in FY 2012 and FY 2013.

### ***Justification of Request***

The FY 2013 request of \$32.8 million is a decrease of \$3.5 million from the FY 2012 estimate level. The FY 2013 request covers the United States' anticipated, treaty-mandated assessments and other expenses related to the commissions. Funds are required to maintain good standing, and in some cases voting privileges, in each of the commissions and organizations to advance the interests of the United States and important constituent groups. For many of these commissions, FY 2013 funding levels reflect increases due to anticipated exchange rates. The commercial and recreational fisheries managed by these organizations generate income from \$12 to \$15 billion annually in the United States.

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### *Funds by Program Activity*

(\$ in thousands)

	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Estimate	FY 2013 Request	Increase / Decrease
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)	1,897	1,898	1,900	2
Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC)	24,325	23,709	20,000	(3,709)
International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC)	3,250	4,500	4,600	100
Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC)	3,250	3,250	3,200	(50)
Pacific Salmon Special Assessment	15,000	0	0	0
Other Marine Conservation Organizations	2,677	2,943	3,100	157
Arctic Council	0	0	58	58
Antarctic Treaty Secretariat (ATS)	60	61	70	9
Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)	135	117	150	33
Expenses of the U.S. Commissioners	137	167	160	(7)
Int'l Commission for the Conservation of Atlanta Tunas (ICCAT)	315	325	330	5
Int'l Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)	235	235	260	25
International Sea Turtle Conservation Programs	170	173	175	2
International Shark Conservation Program	0	100	100	0
International Whaling Commission (IWC)	170	190	180	(10)
North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Org. (NASCO)	46	55	67	12
North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC)	188	187	190	3
North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES)	114	118	130	12
Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO)	260	298	280	(18)
Western & Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)	847	917	950	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>50,399</b>	<b>36,300</b>	<b>32,800</b>	<b>(3,500)</b>

### *Funds by Object Class*

(\$ in thousands)

	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Estimate	FY 2013 Request	Increase / Decrease
2100 Travel & Trans of Persons	137	167	160	(7)
4100 Grants, Subsidies & Contributions	50,262	36,133	32,640	(3,493)
<b>Total</b>	<b>50,399</b>	<b>36,300</b>	<b>32,800</b>	<b>(3,500)</b>