

US keeps bluefin tuna off endangered list

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Tuna is on display at New York's main wholesale fish market in the Bronx on March 2010. The United States on Friday rejected calls to protect Atlantic bluefin tuna as an endangered species, saying that while it was worried about overfishing it did not fear imminent extinction.

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Environmental groups have repeatedly voiced concern that the global fad for Japanese food was driving the world's stocks of tuna to dangerously low levels and have sought strong safeguards to preserve the species' survival.

The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said it was putting Atlantic bluefin tuna on a watchlist of species at risk but would not classify it under the [Endangered Species Act](#), which would bring

legal protections.

"Based on careful scientific review, we have decided the best way to ensure the long-term sustainability of bluefin tuna is through international cooperation and strong domestic [fishery management](#)," said Eric Schwaab, a senior official at the agency.

He said that the United States would continue to advocate strict quotas on the number of tuna that can be hunted to "ensure the long-term viability of this and other important [fish stocks](#)."

The administration also pledged to review its decision in early 2013, acknowledging that its review did not take into full account the effects of last year's massive [BP oil spill](#) in the Gulf of Mexico.

The United States last year led a push to ban the international trade in [Atlantic bluefin tuna](#), but the proposal was easily defeated at the UN Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species after intense lobbying against the plan by Japan and opposition by some European nations.

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