



2023 ICCAT Position Statement

GLOBAL TUNA ALLIANCE

TOP LEVEL ASKS

Harvest Strategies

- Support the development of initial operational management objectives for Atlantic Skipjack to maintain skipjack tuna populations at or above MSY.
- Accelerate the development of management strategy evaluation (MSE) for all tropical tuna stocks.

Tropical Tuna Conservation Measures

- Revise Recommendation 22-01 to ensure that the bigeye tuna stock is rebuilt, and yellowfin tuna catch is maintained within the Total Allowable Catch (TAC).
- Developing and adopting procedures to identify and sanction non-compliance with TAC allocations.

Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA)

- Adopt integration and coordination of PSMs at a national level.
- Outline minimum standards for inspector functions and reports.
- Require all inspection reports to be transmitted to the flag State of the vessel and relevant States and parties, such as RFMOs, FAO, etc.

Electronic Monitoring

Adoption of minimum standards for electronic monitoring and 100% observer coverage (human and/or electronic) by 2023.

Stock Assessments

Commit to a future programme of triannual stock assessments for skipjack, bigeye and yellowfin.

HARVEST STRATEGIES

What is the issue?

- Harvest strategies (or management procedures) provide a pre-agreed framework to facilitate efficient, science-based decision-making to achieve a long-term vision for the stock and fishery.
- ICCAT has been working on developing a management strategy evaluation, but this needs to keep progressing in order to ensure stocks are at sustainable levels.
- Despite making some progress in developing harvest strategies, ICCAT has not yet agreed on management objectives for all tropical tuna stocks.

What happened last year?

- ICCAT made some significant progress. A harvest strategy was adopted for Mediterranean albacore with a 15-year rebuilding plan starting in 2022 and continuing through 2035 to achieve BSMY with at least a 60% probability.
- A management measure for Western Atlantic skipjack was approved but reference point numbers are still pending. Operational management objectives need to be determined.

What are we calling for?

- Support the development of initial operational management objectives for Atlantic Skipjack to maintain skipjack tuna populations at or above MSY.
- Accelerate the development of management strategy evaluation (MSE) for all tropical tuna stocks.



TROPICAL TUNA CONSERVATION MEASURES

What is the issue?

- Effective management measures are required to ensure bigeye and yellowfin tuna catches are maintained at sustainable levels.
- For several years, catches of bigeye and yellowfin have exceeded the TACs and lack of compliance needs to be addressed.
- ICCAT has been making progress and adopted some conservation measures last year. However, further improvements are needed this year in order to ensure stock levels are sustainable, and follow scientific advice.

What happened last year?

- An interim tropical tuna conservation measure was rolled over from 2021, covering the period up to 2023 (22-01).

What are we calling for?

- Revise Recommendation 22-01 to ensure that the bigeye tuna stock is rebuilt, and yellowfin tuna catch is maintained within the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) by:
 - Adopting a bigeye TAC that guarantees stock rebuilding with a high probability (>60%) of success within 15 years.
 - Adopting a precautionary yellowfin TAC that is aligned with the existing SCRS advice and allocated between fishing gears or CPCs.
 - Maintaining the agreed Atlantic-wide FAD closure and adopting additional measures to monitor and manage the use of FADs.
 - Agreeing on management objectives for managing the fishing mortality of juvenile vs. adult tunas, to address concerns related to juvenile catches.
- Develop and adopt procedures to identify and sanction non-compliance with TAC allocations.



PORT STATE MEASURES AGREEMENT

What is the issue?

- The PSMA, adopted in 2009 by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), requires parties to place tighter controls on foreign-flagged vessels seeking to enter and use their ports to land or transship fish.
- Tuna RFMOs also regulate member nations' port State controls as part of their management measures. This ensures that these governments have minimum standards in place, regardless of whether they are a party to the PSMA.
- ICCAT-managed species are entering ports of non-CPCs, and are potentially not being subject to the level of controls required by ICCAT and its CPCs.

What happened last year?

- No progress was made on Port State Measures.

What are we calling for?

- Adopt integration and coordination at a national level by the cooperation and exchange of relevant information between RFMOs, States, FAO and other international organizations (PSMA Article 5&6).
- Outline minimum standards for inspector functions (PSMA Article 13).
- Outline minimum standards for inspection reports (PSMA Articles 14 & 15).
- Require all inspection reports to be transmitted to the flag State of the vessel and relevant States and parties, such as RFMOs, FAO, etc. (PSMA Article 14 & 15).



ELECTRONIC MONITORING

What is the issue?

- Comprehensive observer coverage or electronic monitoring is critical to effective fisheries management, compliance monitoring, and independent verification of catch, effort, and species interactions.
- Low levels of monitoring coverage limits the availability of independent catch and operational data, reducing the accuracy of stock assessments and the effectiveness of conservation management measures.
- ICCAT currently requires only 5% observer coverage for vessels over 20 metres operating within the ICCAT Convention Area.

What happened last year?

- No progress was made on electronic monitoring programme.

What are we calling for?

- Adopt minimum standards for an electronic monitoring programme in 2023.



STOCK ASSESSMENTS

What is the issue?

- Stock assessments are quantitative estimates of the status (abundance) of the fish stocks and of the intensity of fishing upon them. Assessments underpin the scientific advice for the management of stocks.
- The purpose of triannual stock assessment programmes is to bring stability to the management framework in order to maintain fishing operations and resources.

What happened last year?

- No progress was made on a stock assessment programme.

What are we calling for?

- Commit to a future programme of triannual stock assessments for skipjack, bigeye and yellowfin.





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