

Resolution by ICCAT on development of initial conceptual management objectives for Atlantic bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, and the eastern stock of skipjack tuna

(proposed by the United States)

ANTICIPATING the transition to using management procedures, which the Commission has recommended for tropical tunas and other priority stocks to manage fisheries more effectively in the face of identified uncertainties, consistent with the Convention and the *Recommendation by ICCAT on the Principles of Decision Making for ICCAT Conservation and Management Measures* (Rec. 11-13);

CONSIDERING that the Commission intends to complete a multi-stock MSE for Atlantic bigeye, yellowfin, and the eastern stock of skipjack tunas by 2024 or as soon as possible thereafter;

UNDERSTANDING that conceptual objectives are high-level aspirational objectives that verbalize a desired generic goal without including any specifics on a measurable target or timeframe for achievement, while operational objectives are more refined and more specific about measurable targets and the associated likelihood of achieving those targets over determined timeframes;

RECOGNIZING that operational objectives are the key foundational component of any MSE;

SEEKING to advance the development of management procedures, as agreed by the Commission pursuant to the *Recommendation by ICCAT on the Development of Harvest Control Rules and of Management Strategy Evaluation* (Rec. 15-07);

ACKNOWLEDGING that, given the mixed-stock nature of these fisheries, the Commission will need to review the initial management objectives and consider trade-offs with respect to the yield of three tropical tuna stocks, taking into account SCRS advice;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that the current selectivity of the tropical tuna fishery has resulted in lower maximum sustainable yield (MSY) levels for bigeye and yellowfin tunas and the ongoing efforts by the Commission to minimize disproportionate impacts of fleets that harvest significant amounts of juvenile bigeye tuna to the fishing opportunities of fleets that use other gear or other fishing strategies to catch these species; and

NOTING ICCAT's need to commit to developing operational management objectives for Atlantic bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, and the eastern stock of skipjack tuna starting in 2024;

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) RESOLVES THAT:

1. Management objectives should be established for Atlantic bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, and the eastern stock of skipjack tuna consistent with the objective of the Convention of maintaining populations at or above levels that will support maximum sustainable catch (usually referred to as MSY).
2. Panel 1 should undertake, starting in the 2024 intersessional period, to develop initial operational management objectives for bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, and the eastern stock of skipjack tuna. To facilitate this development, the following conceptual management objectives should be considered:
 - a. Stock Status: The three tropical tuna stocks should have a probability of [XX% or greater] for bigeye tuna, [XX% or greater] for yellowfin tuna, and [XX% or greater] for the eastern stock of skipjack tuna of occurring in the green quadrant of the Kobe phase plot (no overfishing occurring and not overfished) during an [X]-year projection period (as determined by the SCRS, which can differ for each stock);

- b. Safety: The three tropical tuna stocks should have a probability of [XX% or less] for bigeye tuna, [XX% or less] for yellowfin tuna, and [XX% or less] for the eastern stock of skipjack tuna of falling below B_{LIM}^1 at any point during an [X]-year projection period (as determined by the SCRS, which can differ for each stock);
 - c. Yield: Overall catch levels should be maximized to the extent possible with respect to each stock of bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, and the eastern stock of skipjack tuna in the short (e.g., 1-3 years, medium (e.g., 4-10 years), and long (e.g., 11-30 years) terms;
 - d. Stability: Any change in TAC between consecutive management periods for the three tropical tuna stocks should be [XX%] or less for bigeye tuna, [XX%] or less for yellowfin tuna, and [XX%] or less for eastern skipjack tuna; and
 - e. Productivity: The overall selectivity of the fisheries targeting any of the three stocks should ensure that the yield at MSY and SSB at MSY for bigeye tuna and yellowfin tuna are equal to those values in the year [xxxx].
3. In the development of the operating models for the multi-stock tropical tunas MSE, the Commission calls on the SCRS, consistent with paragraph 62 of Rec. 22-01, to allow for the evaluation of the differential impacts of fishing operations (e.g., purse seine, longline, and baitboat) on juvenile mortality and yield at MSY as strategies to achieve management objectives.
 4. In further developing initial operational management objectives, the conceptual management objectives in paragraph 2 may be rejected, modified, or supplemented, as appropriate, by Panel 1, and these initial management objectives will be forwarded to the SCRS for review and evaluation through the MSE process.
 5. Panel 1 will provide its recommendations for final management objectives for Atlantic bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, and the eastern stock of skipjack tuna, considering SCRS input, to the Commission for consideration as part of the selection of a management procedure at its 2025 Annual Meeting or as soon as possible thereafter.
 6. This resolution will be repealed upon adoption of final operational management objectives for Atlantic bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, and the eastern stock of skipjack tuna by the Commission.

¹ The SCRS will advise on an appropriate B_{LIM} for Atlantic bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, and the eastern stock of skipjack tuna.