

92-4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 1992-1993 MANAGEMENT OF WESTERN ATLANTIC BLUEFIN TUNA

The Commission recommends:

First:

In order to achieve the goals of maintaining improvements in the western Atlantic bluefin tuna stock and allowing ICCAT to develop an enhanced multi-year recovery program for this stock:

- a) The Contracting Parties whose nationals have been actively fishing for bluefin tuna in the western Atlantic institute, for the interim, effective measures to limit the quota for scientific monitoring purposes as follows:

Period	Quota for period	Max in first year
1992 and 1993	4,788	2,660 MT
1994 and 1995	3,990	2,261 MT

- b) The biannual scientific monitoring quotas described in Paragraph 1(a) be taken by these Contracting Parties in the same proportions as previously agreed for in 1990;

Notwithstanding Paragraph (a) the catch limits in 1994 or, if not in 1994, in 1996 will return to those in 1991 unless the SCRS analysis in 1993 or 1995 indicates otherwise.

- c) A special western Atlantic bluefin management review committee consisting of representatives of these Contracting Parties be established for the purpose of discussing approaches for implementing the measures and reviewing the status of western Atlantic bluefin catch. This management review committee will meet early in 1992 to consider a possible reduction of the fishing level to 50 percent of the 1991 scientific quota to allow for a more rapid rebuilding of the western Atlantic bluefin stock in accordance with the following proposed schedule:

The catch limits for the western Atlantic bluefin tuna for the years 1993 and 1994 are as follows:

	US	Canada	Japan	Total
	(MT)			
1993	693 MT	286 MT	350 MT	1,329 MT
1994	693 MT	286 MT	350 MT	1,329 MT

The catch limits in 1995 will return to those in 1991 unless the SCRS analysis in 1994 indicates otherwise.

- d) Beginning with the 1992 catch, if the catch of one of these Contracting Parties exceeds its annual or biannual scientific monitoring quota, then in the biannual period or year following reporting of that catch to ICCAT, that Contracting Party will reduce its catch to compensate in total for that overage. Such a reduction will be applied to the domestic catch category of the applicable Contracting Party of the overage.

Second:

The three Contracting Parties will prohibit the taking and landing of bluefin tuna weighing less than 30 kg. or in the alternative having a fork length less than 115 cm.

Notwithstanding the above regulatory measure, these three Contracting Parties may grant tolerances to capture bluefin tuna either weighing less than 30 kg. or in the alternative having a fork length less than 115 cm. to limit the take of these fish to no more than 8 % by weight of the total bluefin catch on a national basis and would institute measures such that there would not be any economic gain to the fishermen from such fish.

Third:

These three Contracting Parties will encourage their commercial and recreational fishermen to tag and release all fish less than 30 kg or in the alternative having a fork length less than 115 cm.

Fourth:

That the adoption of the above measures concerning the western Atlantic must not imply any modification in the ICCAT recommendation adopted in 1975 concerning a minimum weight of 6.4 kg adopted for the entire Atlantic and fishing mortality limited to recent levels in the eastern Atlantic; this latter measure having been extended until a new decision is made by ICCAT.

Fifth:

That the Contracting Parties take measures to prohibit any transfer of fishing effort from the western Atlantic to the eastern Atlantic in order to avoid increasing fishing mortality of bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic. Such measures shall be reported in due time to the Commission for possible review at its next meeting.

Sixth:

That the developing bluefin tuna fisheries in the western Atlantic of Brazil and Cuba shall not be subject to the limitation addressed herein.

Seventh:

That there will be no directed fishery on the bluefin tuna spawning stocks in the western Atlantic in spawning areas such as the Gulf of Mexico.

Eighth:

That, notwithstanding the provisions of Article VIII, paragraph 2, of the Convention, with respect to paragraphs a) and b) of the First recommendation, the Contracting Parties whose nationals have been actively fishing for bluefin tuna in the western Atlantic take steps to implement this recommendation as soon as possible in accordance with the regulatory procedures of each country.