

- RECOMMENDATION -  
ALTERNATIVE OPTION TO CONSERVE  
UNDERSIZED ATLANTIC SWORDFISH, & REDUCTION OF FISHING MORTALITY

***TITLE: Recommendation by ICCAT Regarding the Implementation of an Alternative Option for the Conservation of Undersized Atlantic Swordfish and the Reduction of Fishing Mortality***  
(Entered into force: **June 22, 1996**)

*RECALLING* that, in 1991, the Commission adopted a prohibition on the taking and landing of swordfish, in the entire Atlantic Ocean, weighing less than 25 kg live weight (125 cm lower jaw fork length), but allowing Contracting Parties to grant a 15% tolerance of small fish in number of fish to boats that incidentally catch such fish;

*NOTING* that such tolerance has made it difficult for some Contracting Parties to ensure the effectiveness of the minimum size as a conservation measure to decrease the fishing mortality of swordfish as recommended by the SCRS;

*ALSO RECALLING* that the 1995 SCRS has recognized that a lower minimum size prohibition with no tolerance could be used as a functional equivalent, for the purposes of decreasing fishing mortality, to the current size prohibition with a tolerance; and

*NOTING* that, in 1991, the Commission encouraged Contracting Parties to take other appropriate measures within their national jurisdictions to protect small swordfish;

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF  
ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) RECOMMENDS,  
EFFECTIVE IN 1996:

That, in order to protect small swordfish, any Contracting Party may choose, as an alternative to the existing 1991 recommendation regarding the minimum size of swordfish, to take the necessary measures to prohibit the taking by its vessels of swordfish in the Atlantic Ocean, as well as the landing and sale in its jurisdiction, of swordfish and swordfish parts, less than 119 cm from the tip of the lower jaw to the fork of the tail, or the equivalent in weight, provided that no tolerance of swordfish smaller than this alternative minimum size shall be allowed. A party which chooses this alternative shall require appropriate record keeping of discards.