

RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT ON MEDITERRANEAN SWORDFISH

RECOGNISING that the Commission's Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) has indicated in its 2007 stock assessment that the fishing mortality needs to be reduced to move the stock toward the Convention objective of biomass levels which could support MSY, and that seasonal closures are considered to be beneficial in moving the stock condition closer to the Convention objective;

NOTING that the SCRS in its 2007 assessment estimated that fish less than three years old usually represent 50-70% of the total yearly catches in terms of numbers and 20-35% in terms of weight and that a reduction in the volume of juvenile catches would improve yield per recruit and spawning biomass per recruit levels;

RECALLING Recommendation by ICCAT Relating to Mediterranean Swordfish [Rec. 03-04], which encourages CPCs to take measures to reduce juvenile Mediterranean swordfish catches;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the SCRS advice advocating seasonal closures and pending the adoption of a more comprehensive management plan for Mediterranean swordfish in 2008;

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

1. Fishing for Mediterranean swordfish shall be prohibited in the Mediterranean Sea during the period from October 15 to November 15, 2008.
2. CPCs shall monitor the impact of this closure and submit relevant information to the SCRS.
3. CPCs shall ensure the maintenance or development of adequate scientific information in the formats requested by ICCAT and in the smallest time-area possible on the size distributions of the catches.