

13.6 BFT-Bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*)

Introduction

In 2022, the ICCAT Commission adopted a Management Procedure (MP) for both the western Atlantic and eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean management areas (*Recommendation by ICCAT establishing a management procedure for Atlantic bluefin tuna to be used for both the western Atlantic and eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean management areas (Rec. 22-09)*). The MP frees the assessment process from having to provide annual TAC advice and allows the stock assessment process to return to its traditional strengths which are to provide a determination of relative stock status. According to the adopted MP (*Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 22-09 establishing a management procedure for Atlantic bluefin tuna to be used for both the western Atlantic and eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean management areas (Rec. 23-07)*), stock assessments will continue to be conducted but on a reduced frequency. A status assessment will be held in 2026 or 2027 as part of the MSE review process, pending further dialogue between the Committee and the Commission. Until such time as a new assessment occurs, the Committee retains the stock status determination from the most recent assessments: West ([Anon., 2021c](#)) and East Atlantic and Mediterranean ([Anon., 2022c](#)). Previous stock assessments utilized $F_{0.1}$ as a reasonable proxy for F_{MSY} as fishing at $F_{0.1}$ would, over the longer term, allow the resource to fluctuate around the true, but unknown, value of $B_{0.1}$ regardless of the future recruitment level. The Committee noted that $F_{0.1}$ was not used to evaluate status within the MSE as the F_{MSY} was estimated within each of the OMs.

Summaries of stock status and estimated catches and discards by gear for Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea and Western Atlantic are provided in **Tables 1** (a: East and b: West) and **2**, respectively.

Table 1a. Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea bluefin tuna summary table.

<i>Indicator</i>		<i>Stock Status</i>
Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY)	Unknown	2020
TAC (2024)	40,570 t	
Current (2024) Yield	39,426 t ¹	
Relative Fishing Mortality ($F_{CURRENT}/F_{0.1}$ ²)	0.81 (0.48-1.62) ³	
Stock Status ³	Overfishing: NO	
Management measures in effect	Rec. 24-05 and Rec. 23-07	
Managed according to a Management Procedure: Recommended TAC for the period 2023-2025 of 40,570 t		

¹ As of 26 September 2025.

² $F_{CURRENT}$ refers to the geometric mean of the estimates (a proxy for recent F levels) for 2017-2020 for Virtual Population Analysis (VPA), and for 2018-2020 for Age-structured Assessment Programme (ASAP) and SS. For the VPA and ASAP, F is measured as apical F, for SS F is exploitation rate in biomass.

³ Mean and approximate 95% CI from integrating across the uncertainty for each model.

Table 1b. Western Atlantic bluefin tuna summary table.

<i>Indicator</i>		<i>Stock Status</i>
Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY)	Unknown	2020
TAC (2024)	2,726 t	
Current (2024) Yield	2,961 t ¹	
Relative Fishing Mortality ($F_{2018-2020}/F_{0.1}$)	0.53 (0.49-0.58) ²	
Stock Status	Overfishing: NO (=<1% probability of overfishing) ³	
Management measures in effect	Rec. 22-10 and Rec. 23-07	
Managed according to a Management Procedure: Recommended TAC for the period 2023-2025 of 2,726 t.		

¹ As of 26 September 2025.

² Mean and approximate 80% confidence interval from the multivariate lognormal approximation approach from the assessment.

³ Biomass reference points to determine stock status were not estimated in the 2021 BFT-W Stock Assessment due to uncertainty in recruitment potential.

Table 2. Estimated catches and discards of Atlantic bluefin tuna by stock and gear, for the period 2000-2024.

			2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024				
TOTAL			52775	52785	53319	52306	52125	51757	51813	62639	26463	21799	13197	11782	12689	14726	14889	18057	21314	25517	29853	33442	37255	37407	37800	41808	42387				
ATE			10061	10086	10347	7394	7402	9023	7529	8441	8243	6685	4379	3984	3834	4163	3918	4841	5968	7216	8157	9044	10874	10308	10477	10994	11010				
MED			39940	39914	39654	42606	42599	40977	42473	52950	60977	52950	62220	6961	9791	7101	9082	9344	11374	13445	16451	19626	22092	24174	24789	24623	28250	28417			
ATW			2275	2784	3319	2305	2125	1756	1811	1638	2000	1980	1857	2007	1754	1482	1627	1842	1901	1850	2069	2306	2208	2310	2700	2564	2961				
Landings	ATE	Bait boat	2032	2426	2635	1409	1902	2282	1263	2438	2393	1260	725	636	283	243	85	172	1085	1187	679	845	936	1031	1026	1036	1069				
		Longline	3736	3303	2896	2748	2064	2700	2033	1705	2491	1951	1194	1125	1139	1167	1194	1467	1829	2208	2730	3128	3313	3249	3294	3632	3576				
		Other surf.	509	558	631	521	290	424	831	502	181	297	124	35	49	141	210	193	261	295	340	320	381	359	368	430	448				
		Purse seine	661	153	887	490	1078	1197	408	0	0.0	2	1	0.3	0.1	2	0.1	0	42	49	11	56	190	147	107	111	333				
		Sport (HL+RR)	126	61	63	109	89	11	99	11	99	11	12	11	14	51	53	46	43	104	35	109	132	92	156	267	245	237	273		
		Traps	2996	3585	3235	2116	1978	2408	2895	3788	3166	3164	2292	2137	2311	2564	2376	2905	2716	3362	4258	4594	5889	5255	5434	5541	5302				
		MED	Bait boat	38	28	1	9	17	5	0	0	0	0	38	1	0	2	2	9	25	0.2	18	22	72	103	81	88	117	115		
		Longline	3424	4144	3234	3484	3036	3427	3408	3269	2376	1344	1242	962	587	605	588	776	1523	1184	1518	1485	1638	1657	1785	2030	2253				
		Other surf.	729	354	340	198	197	175	83	86	3	2	3	2	3	2	21	31	5	38	3	36	53	42	68	61	76	59			
		Purse seine	32327	33043	34044	37291	37869	36639	38363	48994	13540	11448	4986	4293	6172	7982	8184	9993	11340	14493	17128	19515	21123	21987	21587	24659	24776				
Sport (HL+RR)	1773	1167	1520	1404	1325	619	494	117	149	160	448	356	202	240	289	373	308	472	616	611	865	740	717	875	841						
Traps	739	1177	515	221	154	112	125	93	152	144	281	165	125	222	232	192	227	272	300	353	399	252	384	407	349						
ATW	Longline	858	610	729	186	644	425	565	420	606	368	529	743	478	470	498	553	562	559	706	675	576	653	913	888	955					
Other surf.	283	201	107	139	97	89	85	63	78	121	107	147	117	121	119	138	93	123	77	168	134	175	209	190	189						
Purse seine	275	196	208	265	32	178	4	28	0	11	0	0	2	29	38	34	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					
Sport (HL+RR)	1121	1650	2036	1399	1139	924	1005	1023	1134	1251	1009	888	917	692	810	1085	1204	1144	1263	1450	1482	1444	1521	1461	1783						
Traps	16	16	28	84	32	8	3	4	23	23	39	26	17	11	20	6	10	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	0.2	0					
Discards	ATE	Longline	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	7	9	8	1	4	5	8				
		Sport (HL+RR)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2				
		MED	Longline	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.5	82	16		
		Purse seine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	12	9	11	2	9	10	6	4	5	4	2	3	7			
ATW	Sport (HL+RR)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1				
	Longline	222	105	211	232	181	131	149	100	159	207	174	202	224	145	139	19	29	10	18	7	8	31	54	25	33					
	Other surf.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	2	4	3	3	1	1					
	Purse seine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	4	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Sport (HL+RR)	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0					
Landings	ATE	CP	China PR	80	68	39	19	41	24	42	72	119	42	38	36	36	38	37	45	54	64	79	89	101	101	72	116	113			
			EU-Denmark	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	1	3	6	6	5		
			EU-España	3493	3633	4089	2172	2801	3102	2339	3680	3536	2409	1550	1483	1329	1553	1282	1655	1986	2509	2489	2729	3289	2953	3301	3464	3297			
			EU-France	542	629	755	648	561	818	1218	629	253	366	228	135	148	223	212	254	343	350	461	462	557	559	540	637	671			
			EU-Ireland	22	8	15	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	4	10	13	19	14	32	16	17	6	16	16	20	19	17			
			EU-Netherlands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.4	0.1	0	0	0	0.0	1	0		
			EU-Portugal	441	404	186	61	27	82	104	29	36	53	58	180	223	235	243	263	327	429	450	475	592	614	583	634	640			
			Great Britain	0.4	0	0.1	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	2	5	22	40		
			Guinea Ecuatorial	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
			Iceland	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	5	4	30	37	6	0.4	0	0	1	1	0.2	1	2		
			Japan	2895	2425	2536	2695	2015	2598	1896	1612	2351	1904	1155	1089	1093	1129	1134	1386	1578	1905	2262	2514	2773	2779	2867	3083	2973			
			Korea Rep	6	0.5	0	0.1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	161	181	208	232	247	242	252	274	268		
			Maroc	2228	2497	2565	1795	1953	2389	1923	2418	1947	1909	1348	1055	990	960	959	1176	1433	1703	2164	2476	3089	2884	2704	2611	2598			
			Norway	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0.3	0.1	8	44	51	12	49	194	152	123	117	153		
			Senegal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	225		
			Sierra Leone	93	118	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
			NCC	Chinese Taipei	144	304	158	0	0	10	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
			NCO	Faroe Islands	118	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
				ICCAT (RMA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.5	1	6	2	2	2		
			MED	CP	Seychelles	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
					Albania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	9	34	40	47	56	100	156	168	264	263
					Algerie	2083	2098	2056	1504	1440	1500	1673	1489	1311	0	0	69	244	244	370	448	1038	1300	1437	1649	1650	1655	1895	2011		
					EU-Croatia	930	903	977	1139	828	1017	1022	825	834	619	389	371	369	384	385	456	515	630	738	827	903	903	816	988	958	
					EU-Cyprus	61	85	91	79	105	149	110	1	132	2	3	10	18	17	18	22	59	110	133	151	153	169	168	189	184	
					EU-España	2772	2234	2215	2512	2353	2758	2689	2414	2465	1769	1056	942	1064	948	1164	1238	1467	1688	2706	2660	2774	3228	2760	3243	3317	
					EU-France	6794	6167	5832	5859	6471	8638	7663	10200	3087	1755	805	791	2191	2216	2565	3054	3661	4360	4919	5316	5289	5303	5963	5965		
					EU-Greece	622	361	438	422	389	318	255	285	350	373	224	172	176	178	161	195	218	235	267	313	354	327	424	367	397	
					EU-Italy	3847	4383	4628	4981	4697	4853	4708	4638	2247	2749	1061	1783	1													

ATW	CP	Brazil	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.5	0		
		Canada	549	524	604	557	537	600	733	491	575	530	505	474	477	480	463	531	466	472	550	666	580	626	613	598	616
		Cuba	0	0	74	11	19	27	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		EU-España	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.1	0	0	1
		EU-Portugal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0
		FR-St Pierre et Miquelon	0	0	3	1	10	5	0	4	3	2	8	0.4	0	0.3	0.2	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Grenada	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
		Japan	492	506	575	57	470	265	376	277	492	162	353	578	289	317	302	347	345	346	406	406	407	410	657	610	702
		Korea Rep	0	0	0	0	0	1	52	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Mexico	29	10	12	22	9	10	14	7	7	10	14	14	51	23	51	53	55	34	80	39	28	63	60	39	16
		Panama	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		UK-Bermuda	1	1	0.5	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0.3	0	0.3	0.4	1	0	0.3	0	0.5	0.4	0.3	1	1	0	1	0
		UK-British Virgin Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.1	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		UK-Turks and Caicos	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		USA	1212	1583	1840	1426	899	717	468	758	764	1068	803	738	713	502	667	877	1002	986	1013	1185	1178	1177	1311	1291	1593
	NCO	Dominica	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		ICCAT (RMA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		NEI (Flag related)	270	49	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Discards	ATE	CP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
		Japan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	7	9	8	1	4	5	8
	MED	Albania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		EU-Croatia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	5	5	2	2	4	5	6	4	5	4	2	3	11	0
		EU-Cyprus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.5	5	3	0
		EU-España	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	77	10	0
		Libya	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Tunisie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Türkiye	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ATW	Canada	46	13	37	14	15	0	2	0.4	1	3	25	36	17	0	0	3	8	1	4	3	5	5	6	4	8
		Japan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.2	0.2	0	0.4	1	2	0
		Mexico	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	1	0	0	0	0.1	0.3	0	0	0	0	0.2	0.1	0.1	0
		USA	176	98	174	218	167	131	147	100	158	204	150	166	206	159	143	22	24	10	15	6	8	28	50	20	24

Outlook

The eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea stock (BFT-E) and the western Atlantic stock (BFT-W) are both managed using a single MP tested under MSE to set separate TACs for the West and East areas. Based on the MSE analysis, the adopted MP (BR) is expected to maintain both stocks in the green quadrant of the Kobe matrix with 60% probability over the next 30 years.

The Committee believes that the newly available BFT-W Close-Kin Mark-Recapture (CKMR) information is a breakthrough in the BFT stock assessment. The Committee evaluated the effect of incorporating the CKMR estimate into the MSE through reconditioning. Incorporating the CKMR results into the operating models (OMs) resulted in higher biomass and more positive relative status OMs for the western stock, than used in the adopted MSE (e.g., median western stock status in 2016 is about 1.0 B_{MSY} after reconditioning v.s. about 0.7 B_{MSY} before reconditioning). The reconditioned OM biomass estimates are within the range of those tested in the MSE; however, the revised distributions of biomass and stock status were different and influential on the MP. Based on the current EC criteria, the Committee did not reach consensus on whether the new information warranted a declaration of ECs (see item 19.10) according to the criterion of: “if stock is in states previously not considered plausible.” As such, both the adopted BR MP and the retuned BR* MP, that takes into account CKMR, are presented for consideration by the Commission.

Management recommendation

The Committee provides the results of two MPs: 1) the adopted BR and 2) BR* retuned to meet the management objectives under the re-conditioned OMs for the Commission’s consideration. Regardless of which option the Commission adopts the Committee is scheduled to review the MSE by 2028; this review will include the new western CKMR information (as agreed in 2025, that was the only new information to be taken into account in 2025) as well as updated information on stock mixing, movement and index revisions.

	<i>East TAC (2026-2028)</i>	<i>West TAC (2026-2028)</i>
BR - adopted MP ¹	48,403 t	2,568 t
BR* - CKMR retuned MP ²	45,191 t	2,963 t

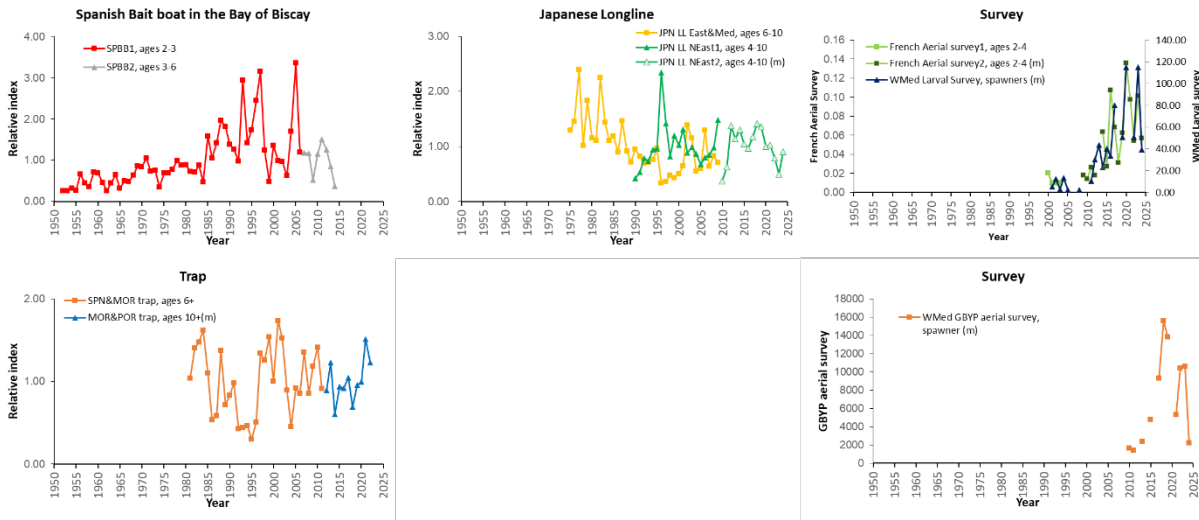
¹ Rec. 23-07

² Section 19.10 of this report and BRn9 in document Walter *et al.* (2025).

Additional supporting information

The Committee recognized that environmental variability is an important factor affecting many aspects of bluefin tuna population dynamics and the data used to assess stock status such as the indices of relative abundance (**Figure 1**). Drivers of particular interest are those related to the occurrence of marine heatwaves, the displacement of mesoscale structures, and changes in productivity. Given the potential influence of observed environmental changes on the variability of abundance indices, the SCRS will attempt to integrate these variables into the construction of such indices.

East Atlantic and Mediterranean



West Atlantic

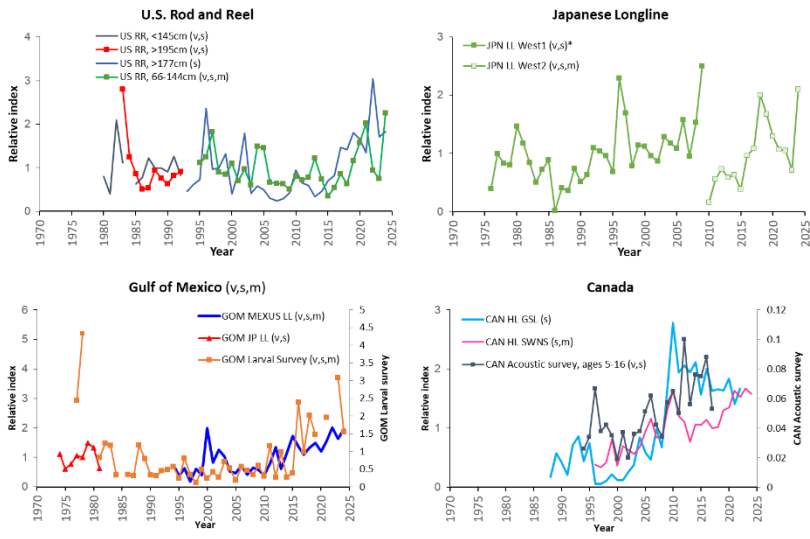


Figure 1. Plots of the updated fishery dependent and independent indicators used for the East Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna (top) and the West Atlantic (bottom) stocks. All fishery dependent indicators are standardized series and scaled to their averages. Indices denoted with an “s” were used in Stock Synthesis, indices with a “v” were used in VPA and indices with an “m” are used in the MP. The Spanish BB series was split in two series to account for changes in selectivity patterns, and the latest series was calculated using French BB data due to the sale of the quota by the Spanish fleet. The Japanese longline CPUEs for the Northeast Atlantic and West Atlantic were split in 2009/2010 and the French aerial survey index was split in 2008/2009. The Moroccan-Portugal index data points for 2023 and 2024 reflected substantial changes in the fishing operations, hence the index data points for these years were not used. The 1986 low data point of the Japanese longline in the West Atlantic was removed in the Stock Synthesis models.

13.7 SBF-Southern bluefin

The Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) is charged with assessing the status of southern bluefin tuna. Each year the SCRS reviews the CCSBT report in order to know the research on southern bluefin tuna and the stock assessments carried out. The reports are available from the CCSBT.