

Original: English

**DRAFT RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT TO ESTABLISH  
HARVEST CONTROL RULES FOR THE NORTH  
ATLANTIC ALBACORE STOCK**

*(Proposal by the European Union)*

*RECALLING* the *Supplemental Recommendation by ICCAT concerning the North Atlantic Albacore Rebuilding Programme* [Rec.13-05];

*NOTING* that the objective of the Convention is to maintain populations at levels that will support maximum sustainable catch (usually referred to as MSY);

*CONSIDERING* that the 2013 Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) stock assessment concluded that the northern albacore stock is overfished but that overfishing is not occurring, and recommended a level of catch of no more than 28,000 t to meet the Convention management objective by 2020;

*CONSIDERING* that the Standing Working Group for Enhancing the Dialogue between Fisheries Scientists and Managers proposed among other case studies the Northern Albacore Stock as a suitable candidate to examine Harvest Control Rules,

*NOTING* the progress achieved so far by SCRS in the work for testing Harvest Control Rules and Management Strategy Evaluations for the Northern Albacore Stock and in particular the Kobe II Strategy matrix showing the different levels of probability of being in the green quadrant for different combinations of reference points values,

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

1. The general objective of this Recommendation is to ensure that the stock of Northern Albacore is exploited at levels of fishing mortality that could bring its biomass at or above the level capable of producing maximum sustainable yield by 2020 with at least 60% of probability and to maximize the long term yield.
2. For the purpose of this recommendation the following interim reference points apply:

$$SSB_{threshold} = SSB_{MSY}$$

$$SSB_{lim} = 0,4.SSB_{MSY}$$

$$F_{target} = 0,95.F_{MSY}$$

$$F_{lim} = F_{0,4.SSB_{msy}}$$

3. When the average spawning stock biomass level is above  $SSB_{threshold}$  and the fishing mortality rate is less or equal than  $F_{target}$  ( $SSB > SSB_{thresh}$  and  $F \leq F_{target}$ ) then the fishing mortality for Northern Albacore should not exceed  $F_{target}$ .

4. When the average spawning stock biomass level is equal or less than  $SSB_{threshold}$  and more than  $SSB_{lim}$  ( $SSB_{lim} \leq SSB \leq SSB_{thresh}$ ) fishing mortality shall be immediately reduced in order to achieve the objective laid down in paragraph 1 of this recommendation.
5. When the average spawning stock biomass is above  $SSB_{threshold}$  but the fishing mortality rate exceeds the precautionary reference point ( $F_{target}$ ), ( $SSB > SSB_{thresh}$  and  $F > F_{target}$ ) the Commission shall decide on the modalities, paths, time schedule and acceptable levels of risk of being in safe areas of the Kobe plot to ensure that there is adequate reduction of the fishing mortality with respect to the fishing mortality exerted the previous year.
6. When the average spawning stock biomass level is less than  $SSB_{lim}$  ( $SSB < SSB_{lim}$ ) or the fishing mortality rate is above  $F_{lim}$  ( $F > F_{lim}$ ) then the Commission shall decide on the measures to be taken including the suspension of the fishery and the initiation of scientific monitoring in order to ensure that the stock returns to the green zone of the Kobe plot in as short time as possible.
7. The above mentioned Harvest Control Rules will be reviewed by the Commission in the light of the next assessment of the stock and following the development of Management Strategy Evaluations by ICCAT.

