

Original: English

**RESOLUTION BY ICCAT CONCERNING THE USE OF A PRECAUTIONARY APPROACH
IN IMPLEMENTING ICCAT CONSERVATION
AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES**

(Adopted by Commission in Plenary 15 November 2015)

NOTING that the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement has set out elements of a precautionary approach to the conservation and management of straddling and highly migratory fish stocks in order to protect the living marine resources and preserve the marine environment;

FURTHER NOTING the general principles and Article 6.5 of the 1995 FAO International Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, which urges States and subregional and regional fisheries management organizations to apply a precautionary approach to conservation, management and exploitation of living aquatic resources in order to protect them and preserve the aquatic environment;

RECALLING that the ICCAT Convention does not prevent the Commission from applying a precautionary approach when making management and conservation decisions;

FURTHER RECALLING that ICCAT has taken decisions, such as ICCAT Resolutions 09-12, 11-14, and 11-17 as well as Recommendations 11-09, 11-13, 11-15 and 12-05 that apply elements of a precautionary approach;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the discussions taking place within the Convention Amendment Working Group on the incorporation of a precautionary approach in the proposed amendments to the ICCAT Convention; and

NOTING that this Resolution is without prejudice to any discussions or decisions made by the Working Group in this regard;

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

1. When making recommendations pursuant to Article VIII of the Convention, the Commission should apply a precautionary approach, in accordance with relevant international standards.
2. In applying a precautionary approach, the Commission should *inter alia*:
 - a) use the best available scientific advice;
 - b) exercise caution when scientific information is uncertain, unreliable or inadequate;
 - c) determine, on the basis of the best scientific information available, stock specific reference points, in particular limit reference points, and the action to be taken if exceeded; and
 - d) not use the absence of adequate scientific information as a reason to postpone or not to take conservation and management action in relation to the species under its mandate.
3. In applying a precautionary approach, the Commission should take measures to ensure that when limit reference points are approached, they will not be exceeded. In the event that they are exceeded, the Commission should without delay take action to restore the stocks to levels above the identified reference points.