
Ecology Action Centre Opening Statement for Panel 2

Important discussions around establishing management procedures for priority species took place in June of this year at the Second Meeting of the ICCAT Working Group to Enhance the Dialogue between Fisheries Scientists and Managers (SWGSM). These tools can offer particular advantages over the traditional approach to fisheries management. They can help to account for risk and allow for the balancing of trade-offs, enable managers to act swiftly and efficiently to ensure the health of the resource and long-term profitability, and effectively implement best practices in modern fisheries management.

While the overarching discussion to advance these management procedure tools will take place in Plenary, the recommendation from the SWGSM was for “the Panels commence discussion to identify management objectives, as well as, relevant parameters for Harvest Control Rules and performance indicators on a stock by stock basis.”

We therefore recommend that Panel 2 agree to a timeline to adopt a management strategy for priority species, including Atlantic bluefin tuna, by 2017, which includes deadlines for defining target and limit reference points, as well as a suite of possible harvest control rules. In doing so, Panel 2 should set at least a 75% probability of achieving the established target with only a 5% likelihood of breaching the limit; make clear that a fishery will be suspended and scientific monitoring instituted when limits are breached; and fully support the SCRS in developing a Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) tool including direct engagement with managers when necessary.