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Original languages: English and French

DEVELOPMENT OR FISHING/MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR NORTH ATLANTIC SWORDFISH*Required by paragraph 3 of Rec. 13-02. Deadline 15 September 2017*

In 2012, the Secretariat developed a form to standardise the content of the swordfish development plans. Notwithstanding, several CPCs have requested interpretation of currently capacity. The original intention of this was to indicate fishing capacity, but there are several measurements of this, and hence information is not necessarily standardised. If reports are required in the future, the Panel may wish to indicate what information it requires for review.

In 2017, Belize (confirmed 2016 plan) Canada, China, Côte d'Ivoire, European Union (France; Portugal and Spain); France St. Pierre and Miquelon, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Morocco, Senegal (confirmed 2016 plan), Trinidad& Tobago; UK-OT, United States (text only), Venezuela and Chinese Taipei provided the reports within the deadline stipulated by the Recommendation. Those received in the Secretariat format have been aggregated in **Table 1** below.

Canada and the USA have provided a summary of their texts report for translation. Their full reports are available electronically in original language only as **Annex 1**.

Table 1. Summary of North Swordfish Management Plans received in 2017

CPC	Current Fishery	Current quota (t)	No. of vessels	Gear	Current capacity	Planned No. of vessels	Gear	Planned capacity	Current management measures	Future planned measures
BELIZE									See text report for 2016. Belize has reported (21 February) that there is no change to the plan submitted 9 March 2016	See text report for 2016. Belize has reported (21 February) that there is no change to the plan submitted 9 March 2016
CANADA	Yes	1348	43	LL	1462.6				See text report	See text report
			53	HARP	83.3				(total catch capacity refers to amount of quota that Canada caught in 2016 with only two thirds of the vessels being active)	

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CHINA*	Yes	75	34	LL	88	35	LL	88	Fishing permit: Vessels must hold the high seas fishing license issued by government	Plan: Chinese fishing vessel number operating in ICCAT waters increased to nearly 35, but the catch quota is far not equivalent with its catching capacity, China request to increase its N-SWO catch quotas to equal to its catching capacity.
									Annual review: Annual review on the performance of tuna fishing company	Fishing permit: Vessels must hold the high seas fishing license issued by government
									Catch limit: Vessels must strictly respect the catch limit stipulated by ICCAT recommendation	Annual review: Annual review on the performance of tuna fishing company
									VMS: Vessels are required to be equipped with VMS and report normally to government	Catch limit: Vessels must strictly respect the catch limit stipulated by ICCAT recommendation
									Logbook: Vessels are required to record fishing activities in the logbook everyday accurately including any by-catch	VMS: Vessels are required to equip with VMS and report normally to government
									Observers: dispatch observers to collect scientific data	Logbook: Vessels are required to record fishing activities in the logbook everyday accurately including any by-catch
									Catch report: A monthly catch report is required	Observers: Dispatch observers to monitor catch activities

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CPC	Current Fishery	Current quota (t)	No. of vessels	Gear	Current capacity	Planned No. of vessels	Gear	Planned capacity	Current management measures	Future planned measures
									Statistical Document: The statistical document is a must when exporting swordfish	Catch report: A monthly catch report is required
									Catch import verification: verify catch clearance certificate when importing swordfish	Statistical Document: the statistical document is a must when exporting swordfish
									Minimum size: issue official regulation to stipulate the swordfish minimize size consistent with ICCAT requirement	Catch import verification: verify catch clearance certificate when importing swordfish
										Minimum size: issue official regulation to stipulate the swordfish minimize size consistent with ICCAT requirement
*Plan: Chinese fishing vessel number operating in ICCAT waters increased to nearly 35, but the catch quota is far not equivalent with its catching capacity, China request to increase its N-SWO catch quotas to equal to its catching capacity.										
COTE D'IVOIRE	Yes	50	2	LL	27.449	2	LL	40,00	1) Monitoring of landings of the artisanal fishery	1) Monitor landings of the artisanal fishery
									2) Monitoring of by-catch taken by longliners flying the Côte d'Ivoire flag through onboard observer missions	2) Monitor by-catch taken by the longliners flying the Côte d'Ivoire flag through onboard observer missions
										3) Monitor the activities of foreign vessels in Côte d'Ivoire waters
										4) Train the professional organisations of the sector in statistical data collection
										5) Equip the public administration structures

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										6) Train public administration agents in statistical data collection
EU-Spain	Yes	6384.14	107	LL	6384.14	107	LL	6384.14	Standardised Surface Longline Census (only fleet authorised to catch SWO)	It is intended to maintain those measures in force that have proven to be very effective
									Individual quota by vessel and conditions for quota transfer by vessel	
									Annual fishing plans. Issuance of Provisional Fishing Permits by area and vessel	
									Technical measures of the surface longline gear (limitation on number and size of hooks)	
									Control measures: ERS, prior notice of departure from and arrival at port	

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EU_Portugal	Yes	1161,95	42	LL	7447	69	LL	6710,3	Portugal allocated the swordfish quota to vessels registered in the ports of the Mainland, Autonomous Region of Madeira and Autonomous Region of Azores. This allocation is based on the traditional activity (Ordinance n° 898/2004, of 7 July). Vessels registered in the Mainland have 66.1% of the Portuguese quota, those registered in the Azores had 31% and those registered in Madeira had 2.9%. Vessels without swordfish quota may only catch swordfish as bycatch which may not exceed 5% of the total catch retained on board at any time (Ordinance n°90/2013, of 28 February, amended by Ordinances n° 119/2014, of 3 June, n° 247/2016, of 14 September and n° 330-B/2016, of 21 December)	The EU regulation n° 605/2013, 12 June, obliges sharks, namely blue shark (<i>Priconace glauca</i>) and shortfin mako (<i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i>) to be landed with their fins naturally attached to the bodies, despite the fact that EU vessels didn't apply "finning" practices. This legislation has implied a change in the fishing patterns and swordfish became the most important target species instead of the referred sharks. As Portugal has a small quota for swordfish, a specific plan for the concerned fleet as well as a regulation to finance scrapping of longliners were adopted by national legislation (Ordinance n° 362-A/2013, 19 December). To create a level playing field, it would be essential that ICCAT adopts legislation requiring that all sharks be landed with fins naturally attached.
EU-France	Yes		31	TRAW					See text below	See text below
			3	LL						
			2	PS						

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FRANCE (SPM)	Yes	112.75	1	LL	50	1	LL	50	Fishing license system supervised by the State. See text below	See text below
JAPAN*	Yes	842	40	LL	17900	204*	LL	81374	Japanese Fisheries Law prohibits Japanese fishing vessels from fishing tuna on the high seas. Only fishing vessels with a fishing license issued by the Japanese Government can operate in high seas. The law also requires the Government to decide the maximum number of licenses to be issued and other fishing conditions. The Japanese Government ensures that fishing capacities have to be commensurate with its fishing opportunities as determined by tuna RFMOs such as ICCAT	Japan will continue to restrict the number of longliners
									Japanese swordfish catch is by-catch, which has been fluctuating year by year mainly due to the shift of the fishing ground for bigeye tuna. Japan, having no intention to increase north Atlantic swordfish catch as target species, needs flexibility to address this nature. For this purpose, special arrangements for Japan including a multi-year block quota, as provided in paragraph 7 of Recommendation 13-02, should be continued.	Will be continued according to paragraph 7 of Recommendation 13-02
									Japan has been properly reporting data on swordfish, which has been utilized in the stock assessment of north Atlantic swordfish	Japan will continue to instruct its fishermen to submit such data in a timely fashion

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CPC	Current Fishery	Current quota (t)	No. of vessels	Gear	Current capacity	Planned No. of vessels	Gear	Planned capacity	Current management measures	Future planned measures
									Japan has been monitoring, controlling and enforcing all its tuna vessels operating on the high seas with VMS, port inspection and so on	Japan will continue [these activities] to comply with ICCAT measures
*As of September 1 2017, a total of 204 Japanese vessels are registered in ICCAT. Since it could be possible that all of those vessels would operate in ICCAT area and catch swordfish as by-catch within TAC limit, the number of 204 and their total capacity were entered as the possible maximum figures.										
KOREA	Yes	75	14	LL		14	LL		Fourteen Korean longline fishing vessels target bigeye tuna, and these longliners occasionally take northern swordfish as bycatch. In accordance with paragraph 1, Article 13 of the Distant Water Fisheries Development Act of Korea, Korean distant water fishing vessels and operators shall comply with any relevant obligations arising from conservation and management measures of Regional Fisheries Management Organizations. If any provision of the conservation and management measure is breached, it is deemed as "a serious violation" and subject to imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or a fine of at least KRW 500 million. In accordance with Recommendation 16-03, Korea takes measures to ensure its 50tons of allocated catch limit is fully respected. If overharvest of the annual catch limit occurs, the amount of the overharvest shall be deducted from the catch limit in the following year. According to paragraph 5 of the Recommendation 01-22, catch data from Korean	

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									flagged vessels are reported to the Secretariat twice a year (April 1 and October 1). In order to protect small swordfish, Korea endeavors not to land swordfish weighting less than 25kg live weight or 125cm LJF and to provide scientific data related to north Atlantic swordfish to the SCRS in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Recommendation16-03, respectively.	
MOROCCO	Yes	850	386	LL	800	400	LL	850	Promulgation of Ministerial Order No.1176-13 of 8 April 2013 in Official Gazette No. 6144 of 18 April 2013 regulating fishing for North Atlantic and Moroccan Mediterranean swordfish	
			350	HL	100	360	HL	100	Monitoring and management of consumption of the quota allocated to Morocco by ICCAT centrally through the Maritime Fishing Delegations that are in charge of control and issuance of IUU certificates and the National Fisheries Office that oversees trade.	
									Monitoring of implementation of ICCAT provisions transposed in Ministerial Order No. 1176-13 of 8 April 2013 regulating North Atlantic and Moroccan Mediterranean swordfish.	
									Entry into the ICCAT Record of vessels of vessels 20m or greater likely to catch North Atlantic swordfish.	

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									Promulgation of Decree No. 2-09-674 of 17 March 2010 regarding the requirement that all Moroccan-flagged vessels that operate within a fishery and are subject to conservation and management measures adopted by RFMOs must be equipped with a positioning and tracking system	
									Promulgation of Dahir No. 1-14-95 of 12 rejev 1435 (12 May 2014) regarding promulgation of Law No. 15-12 on preventing and fighting against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and supplementing and completing the Dahir No. 1-73-255 of 27 chaoual 1393 (23 November 1973) regulating maritime fishing.	
									Promulgation of Ministerial Order No. 1517-17 of 15 June 2017 (Arabic and French version) on temporary prohibition of fishing for some species of shark, in the area of the Atlantic and Moroccan Mediterranean	
MEXICO	Yes	200	37	LL		37	LL		100% cover of longline tuna fishing vessels in the on board Observer Programme in the Gulf of Mexico	

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									NOM-023-SAG/PESC-2014 regulates the exploitation of tuna species with longline in the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea. A programme to manage the development of the swordfish fishery is being implemented	
									The levels of catches of this species by the longline tuna fleet in the Gulf of Mexico are low.	
SENEGAL	Yes	250	1	LL		3	LL		Prohibition of large pelagic nets	Improvement of data quality
			6	Canoes		7	Canoes		Selective fishing	
			4	PS		6	PS		Organisation of the artisanal fishery	
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	Yes	125	33	LL	152	48	LL	221	Catch monitoring via a trip reporting system; verification achieved through cross-checking customs export forms and SDP forms.	The Government of Trinidad and Tobago is seeking to provide the greatest possible economic opportunity for its citizens. In this regard the Government will facilitate the development of national fleets as far as is possible in accordance with established fisheries management principles and regulations. Given the country's need to more tightly manage capacity in other fisheries, displaced and new fishing capacity will be encouraged to enter the fishery for highly migratory species, including northern swordfish. The Government of Trinidad and

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										Tobago is receiving TCP support from the FAO to strengthen its national legislative framework to effectively discharge the country's international obligations as a coastal, flag, port and market State under UNCLOS, the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, ICCAT Recommendations, the Compliance Agreement and the PSMA. Project outputs expected in December 2018 include a final Draft Fisheries Management Bill and final Draft NPOA-IUU Fishing.
UK-OT Bermuda	Yes	35	2	LL	10	2	LL	10	The swordfish fishery is regulated locally by the Bermuda Fisheries Act 1972 and associated 2010 Regulations. The legislation sets a minimum legal size for swordfish of 125cm lower jaw fork length and 25kg. Fishermen wishing to set more than 5 hooks on a line (this was decreased from 15 hooks in 2013) must obtain a Special Licence from the Bermuda Department of Environment and Natural Resources to do so. Licences for pelagic longlining are subject to terms and conditions, some of which are: the	The development of the swordfish fishery and offshore fishery in general is an important component of Bermuda's plans to diversify the local fishery as reef fish stocks close to the Island are essentially fully exploited. This step will also enhance the economic opportunities available to local fishermen. A number of factors have delayed the development of the fishery in Bermuda. The biggest issue at present is

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									<p>mandatory use of circle hooks and monofilament line (no wire leaders), the collection of data and handling of bycatch and discards in compliance with ICCAT requirements, and the obligation to allow the Department to place qualified observers on board for any given fishing trip. Swordfish are occasionally caught via rod and reel or trolling but the limit on the number of hooks deployed and associated licensing requirements help to restrict such catches.</p>	<p>the lack of a shoreside support facility to provide processing and high quality freezing capacity. The 2005 Marine White Paper gave a commitment to establishing the needed support but the current financial situation has delayed progress on this initiative. The small UK Overseas Territories' quota (35 tonnes), shared between Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands, has also hindered development, and the transfer of 20 tonnes of this amount to another party for the 2007-2010 seasons only compounded this. Despite the challenges, one new participant entered the swordfish fishery last year. The Department will continue to work with the local fishing industry to overcome the obstacles to the development of the fishery.</p>

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USA									See text report	See text report
VENEZUELA	No	85	0		0	30	LL	45	There is a fishery protection area where it is prohibited for commercial and artisanal vessels to catch species of the families Xiphidae and Istiophoridae, except for a small fleet of 35 vessels belonging to the sector Playa Verde, Vargas State. In addition, it is only permitted to take by-catch of this species if the individuals have a minimum size of: 125 cm in length, from the lower jaw to the fork or a weight over 25 kg, in accordance with Art. 12 of Administrative Order No. 69 of 2003.	A draft resolution is being prepared to update the regulation governing the catching of fish belonging to the families Xiphidae and Istiophoridae in Venezuela. It includes provisions establishing a quota of 45 t which may be fished over the course of one year by the emerging artisanal fishery located in the community of La Zorra, Vargas State.
CHINESE TAIPEI	Yes	270	78	LL	270	63	LL	270	Prior authorization by fleet and area. We limit the number of fishing vessels operating in the specific area. All vessels shall fish in fishing areas designated to the group they belong, and shall not fish in non-designated areas without prior authorization. We also prohibit vessels to fish in the Mediterranean Sea	

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									<p>Catch limitation and individual quota Northern swordfish catch is by-catch of our Atlantic longline fleet. The government allocates species-based fishing quota to individual fishing vessel. When the catch of by-catch specie of an individual vessel has reached the quota allocated, it should be discarded and filled in the catch logbook.</p> <p>Prohibit the taking of and landing of swordfish in the entire Atlantic Ocean weighing less than 15 kg live weight, or in alternative, 119 cm lower jaw fork length (LJFL), if swordfish smaller than the designated size is caught, it should be discarded and filled in the catch logbook.</p>	
									<p>Management of positions of fishing vessels All vessels are required to install satellite-based vessel monitoring system (VMS). The VMS on board shall be maintained functional at all times, and transmit positions of the vessels to the VMS center every 4 hours.</p>	

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									<p>Management of catch reports The government requires the captain of the fishing vessel to accurately fill in the catch logbook (or e-logbook) and weekly catch report, and the carbon-copied sheet of the complete catch logbook shall be maintained on board the vessel for at least 12 months. In case the fishing vessel enters into a port or has completed its transshipment, the fishery operator shall submit its catch logbook to the Fisheries Agency for record.</p>	
									<p>Management on transshipment of catch Permission for at-sea or in-port transshipment shall be applied to the Fisheries Agency 72 hours before such transshipment. Transshipment shall only be permitted after receipt of written approval from the Fisheries Agency. Transshipment declaration shall be submitted for report within 15 days of the completion of the transshipment.</p>	

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									<p>Management of catch statistical documents</p> <p>When a fishing vessel wishes to sell specific catch, the vessel owner shall apply for the catch statistical documents of the fish species, such as north Atlantic swordfish. The information on catch statistical document shall be verified against the data on weekly catch report. A fishing vessel shall not use the catch statistical document issued to another vessel.</p>	
									<p>Observer program</p> <p>Fishing vessels shall accept scientific observers on board appointed by the Fisheries Agency.</p>	
									<p>Measures specified for swordfish</p> <p>In compliance with the measure on the restrictions of minimum weight and size of swordfish under Recommendation 13-02 and 15-03, fishermen are required to release live and fill in the catch logbook swordfish for rebuilding swordfish stock.</p>	

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BELIZE: 2016 PLAN**Introduction**

This plan outlines Belize's involvement in the fishery of Northern and Southern Swordfish in the ICCAT Convention Area and identifies its needs as a nation as well as its intention for its involvement over the next 3 years.

Background

Belize introduced its High Seas Fishing Act in 2003 to provide a legal basis for the regulation of the activities of its high seas fishing vessels. This Act embodies all the resolutions adopted by the various RFMOs and was intended to ensure compliance with all relevant conservation and management measures for the protection of the high seas resources. In November 2013, our High Seas Fishing Act was revised to further strengthen the management of the fleet which operates on the high seas. Pursuant to its adoption a new unit was established with the sole exclusive responsibility for regulation and control of the high seas fishing fleet.

Belize has ratified the FAO "Compliance" Agreement, the "Fish Stocks" Agreement, the "IPOA IUU" and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the provisions of which have already been incorporated into Belize's High Seas Fishing Act 2013. It has also ratified the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC). Belize has also, pursuant to the adoption of its revised HSFA, 2013, adopted a new Sanctions and, Licensing and Monitoring Control and Surveillance Regulations. These actions formalize Belize's commitment to the elimination of activities which diminish the effectiveness of conservation and management measures. Belize also adopted its National Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing on the High Seas, its National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks on the High Seas and is currently finalizing its National Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Long Line Fisheries. Belize has also adopted a High Seas Fleet Management Policy and a National Inspection Plan.

The fleet which fishes/operates on the high seas is registered by the International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize (IMMARBE) and is licensed by the Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit (BHSFU). Matters of policy are determined jointly by the Registrar of Ship and the Senior Deputy Registrar of IMMARBE and the Ships, Director of High Seas Fisheries of the BHSFU. and the Senior Deputy Registrar of IMMARBE.

Mission

Belize aims to provide the best possible management of its fleet engaged in the swordfish fishery in the ICCAT Convention area in an effort to optimize future benefits through efficient and sustainable management.

General Objective

- To participate in the management and conservation of the swordfish resources in the ICCAT Convention Area by ensuring compliance with measures dealing with data collection, monitoring, control and surveillance so as to attain the best possible management of Belize's high seas fishing fleet.

Specific Objectives

- Seek to increase quota allocation to provide for expansion in Belize's swordfish fishery;
- Continue diligent monitoring, controlling and surveillance of fishing vessels engaged in the exploitation of swordfish to ensure full compliance;
- Continue to provide statistical data in a timely fashion to ICCAT in order to facilitate the scientific process and informed decision making concerning the management of the swordfish stocks.

Long term objective

- Belize's long term objective is to build local capacity which would result in a higher level of income and expanded benefits for Belize. The Belizean Government currently has facilities in place for entrepreneurs who would seek to venture into new industries and the local encouragement will undoubtedly result in building of a locally owned fleet to engage in the Atlantic Swordfish fishery.

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Consequently, Belize's ability to secure additional quota allocations, in line with the vision of expansion, is paramount to its effective implementation.

Resources

Belize's High Seas Fishing Fleet is managed by the Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit (BHSFU) under the Ministry of Finance. Fishing vessels are monitored using a recent upgraded Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) which now provides hourly position reports every 4 hours. In late 2014, we expect to see the introduction of an electronic reporting system which will allow for 1 hour position reporting in addition to real time catch reporting. The High Seas Fisheries Act 2013 and its subsidiary regulations serves as the legal basis for the execution of the daily activities of the BHSFU, as well as the regulatory control over Belize flagged fishing vessels. We also expect to see the adoption of our new Fisheries Resources Bill for domestic fisheries in late 2014. The adoption of our revised High Seas Fishing Act and subsidiary regulations 2014 which will repeal current outdated domestic fisheries legislations. The adoption of our new HSFA now provides the legal framework for the establishment and implementation of our observer program and our port inspection program which are both important features of an effective monitoring, control and surveillance program.

Current Fishery

Belize currently has 279 vessels operating in the ICCAT convention area targeting tuna and tuna like species, which represents 32.29% of our operational fleet. 21 of vessels operating in this area target tuna and tuna like species and 30 one of these vessels participates in direct swordfish fishery. while several other target this specie as bycatch.

Northern Swordfish

To date, Belize has 23 long line vessels between 300-500 gt targeting Northern Swordfish as bycatch species.

Southern Swordfish

In 2012 Belize had 2 has only 1 long line vessels between 300-500 vessel of 353 gt targeting Southern Swordfish and several others target this specie as bycatch.

As a result of Belize's significant efforts to regulate its high seas fleet during the past two years, we have lost a considerable number of our longline tuna vessels. In an effort to now rebuild our fleet Belize expects to introduce 8 new long line fishing vessels between 300-500 gross tons to engage in the Swordfish Fishery in this area over the next 3 years.

Current Quota

As a result of attaining Contracting Party Status of ICCAT in July 2005 and our subsequent membership of Panel 1, 2, 3 and 4, Belize obtained the following quota allocations:

Northern Swordfish	130 m/t
Southern Swordfish	125 m/t

It must be noted that Belize's current quota allocations for both Northern and Southern Swordfish is fully being utilized by the 5 vessels targeting these species as is evident from the data in the table below:

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<u>N. Swd</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
Initial Quota	130	130	130	130	130	130
Adjusted Quota	195	195	195	195	195	270
Catches	-112	106	184	141	142	<u>75</u>
<u>S. Swd</u>						
Initial Quota	150	125	125	125	125	125
Adjusted Quota	-210	<u>187.5</u>	129	159	150	205
Catches	111	121	206	197	135	<u>45</u>

Current Management Measures

There are 24 long line tuna vessels that are currently engaged in the fishing for Northern and Southern Atlantic Swordfish in the ICCAT Convention area. These vessels are subject to the following management measures:

- Monitoring, control and surveillance achieved through the use of a VMS Vessel Monitoring System. All vessels are required to install a satellite based vessel monitoring system regardless of size. The VMS on board is required to be maintained functional at all times whether at sea or in port. Transmission of position reports are carried out every 4 hours. The VMS also allows Belize's monitoring personnel to assign certain vessels to specific geographical regions and the system generates notifications if a vessel ventures outside its designated area. Vessels that operate outside their authorized areas of operation are considered to have violated our regulations and are subject to disciplinary actions in accordance with our legislations which can range between prohibitions from sailing, to suspension of fishing authorization, to imposition of a fine or for repeated offenses, deregistration or a combination of all.
- Regular catch and effort reporting – catch reports are scrutinized thoroughly to ensure that fishing was conducted in compliance with the licenses granted to the vessel. Failure to submit required reports will result in the suspension of the vessel's fishing authorization, imposition of fines or possible deregistration for repeated violations. Belize will introduce its electronic reporting system during the second half of 2014. disciplinary measures taken against the vessel.

Belize also introduced its electronic catch reporting system in early 2015 and while data is being received partially through this means, we are still modifying the system. A fully functional electronic reporting system is expected to be operational in early 2017.

- Observation of transshipment at sea through the ICCAT ROP program - Transport vessels that will engage in the carriage of marine resources will now be placed on the relevant RFMO list of authorized vessels regardless of species to be transported. All transshipment activities by these vessels are subject to prior approval by the Belize Administration and all reports of the activities from commencement of transshipment to the transport to final destination and discharge reports are required to be submitted to us. Transshipment at sea not regulated by an RFMO ROP is prohibited and shall be conducted only at port upon prior approval from the Administration. Belize has only 1 fishing vessel engaged in transshipment at sea under the ICCAT ROP Program.
- Logbook program – logbooks are required to be completed during the entire year of operation. Copies of the logbook sheets are required to be submitted upon demand or after every voyage. The completed logbook is returned to our Administration for final consolidation of data together with our fishing log and fishing vessel voyage reports which are collected on a monthly basis.

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- Licensing Regulation – with the adoption of our new HSFA, 2013 we were able to also adopt a new licensing regulation to further strengthen our licensing regime.
- Sanction Regulation – with the adoption of our new HSFA, 2013 we were also able to adopt a new robust and comprehensive sanction regulation that will also for us to take administrative measures against any vessel, owner, operator or crew who contravenes our legislations and established conservation and management measures.
- High Seas Fisheries Fleet Policy - Belize introduced a new high seas fisheries fleet policy which allows for the restructure of our fleet size and capacity with institutional capacity available to effectively execute our monitoring, control and surveillance measures. .
- Fisheries Monitoring Centre - We have established a Fisheries Monitoring Centre within the corporate structure of the Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit. This now will allow for exclusive monitoring of our fleet which operates globally.
- Allocation System - A new allocation system has been introduced which will allow for the following:
 - Vessels which surpass their annual quota will see a reduction in their next annual allocation reduced by the same amount.
 - Vessels that do not harvest their entire quota allocation will not be allowed to carry over any un-harvested quotas, only under force majeure.
 - All transfers of quota between vessels need to be authorized.
 - Quota allocation will only be granted after a thorough review of the vessel's previous activities and quota utilization.
 - Vessels without an allocation can only accidentally incidentally catch up to 10 m/t of this species.
 - Vessels are required to report their catches monthly to ensure no overuse of quota.
 - When a vessel reaches its quota limits it is required to stop fishing immediately and must return to port. A prohibition from sailing is immediately issued to the vessel; therefore vessel must remain at port until further notice. During this time vessel operators are expected to ensure that their VMS units remain functional so that proper monitoring of their vessel can be conducted.
- Belize prohibits the registration or licensing of vessels to fish for Mediterranean Swordfish.
- Observer Program – Belize implemented its observer program in 2015 and has since placed an observer on one of our vessel in the ICCAT area. Belize intends to place observers on board its vessels in accordance with the percentage required by the ICCAT Regulation.

Future planned measures

In an effort to further strengthen our management measures Belize plans to introduce the following measures.

- Implementation of our at sea observer program. Belize has signed a contract with CAPFISH of South Africa for the provision of our at sea observer program. The implementation date for this program was 1st April 2014.
- Introduction of electronic catch reporting system via our vessel monitoring system, this will allow, among others, for the submission of real time information on catches as well as hourly reporting for the vessels. This is expected to be implemented by the second half of 2014.
- Inspection of discharges at port – By the second half of 2014 we expect to have implemented a Port Inspection Program where our vessels will be subject to port inspection of their discharges by our authorized fisheries inspectors.
- We will shortly adopt our monitoring, control and surveillance regulations.
- We will shortly expect to formally adopt our National Plan of Action for IUU Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Long Line Fisheries in 2016.
- We expect to adopt our National Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity in 2016

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- We expect to commence working on a plan for the incidental catch of sea turtles in accordance with the FAO guidelines for sea turtles.
- We shall continue to implement agreed management measures.

Projected Needs Explained

Since the attainment of ICCAT Contracting Party Status in July 2005, Belize has seen a gradual reduction in its quota allocation as the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and total allowable catch (TAC) for both swordfish species have been revised. This is currently restricting the development of Belize's swordfish fishery and the decrease has been endured despite our growing need for additional quotas as a developing coastal State. Despite our small swordfish fleet, it is noteworthy that Belize's current quota allocation is not conducive to a 100% operation by our vessels. Belize would like to enable these vessels to increase their operational capacity to ensure the sustainability of their fishing operations and to introduce 8 new long line vessels into this area over the course of 3 years. The new vessels will be of similar GT and holding capacity as the existing vessels. Our projected needs for quotas to sustain these new vessels as well as current vessels are detailed below.

Quota Request

In consideration of the ICCAT Criteria for the Allocation of Fishing Possibilities (01-25), based on current and historical catches, Belize hereby requests the following allocation for swordfish:

Northern Swordfish: Requesting a new national quota allocation of 380 metric tons

Belize currently has 23 long line fishing vessels over 300 gt targeting Northern Swordfish as bycatch which equally share 130 m/t. Belize plans on introducing 3 new vessels of similar GT and capacity over the next 3 years following any quota increase. These vessels are expected to fish an additional 195 m/t of this species. Furthermore, there are 10 several other vessels which catch this species smaller quantities as a bycatch and they will require 55 m/t to accommodate their fishing operations without impacting the catch limits allocated to vessels with a directed fishery of this species. This Plan will therefore require an increase of 250 m/t of Northern Atlantic Swordfish to be effected accordingly.

Southern Swordfish: Requesting a new national quota allocation of 425 metric tons

Belize currently has a quota allocation of 125 m/t for Southern Swordfish. The 3 vessels that engage in this fishery cannot operate at 100% capacity because of the limited quota available. An additional 4075 m/t will enable these vessels to increase their operating capacity and efficiency in order to guarantee the sustainability of their fishing operations. Belize also plans on introducing 5 new vessels of similar GT and capacity over the course of the next 3 years following any quota increase. This will require an additional increase of 210175 m/t to accommodate the introduction of these new vessels. Additionally, there are 5 several other vessels that catch this species as a bycatch, and they will require 50 m/t to accommodate their operations without impacting the catch limits allocated to vessels with a directed fishery of this specie. Therefore a total increase of 300 m/t of southern swordfish will be required to facilitate this expansion of Belize's swordfish fishery.

New Total Quota (MT)	Current quota (MT)	Additional Quota Request (MT)	Bycatch request (MT)	Proposed New Total Quota (MT)
N. Swordfish	130	195	55	380
S. Swordfish	125	250	50	425

Additional socio-economic considerations and proposed approach

Over the years, Belize has proven itself to be a responsible Flag State in managing its fleet in accordance with all ICCAT resolutions and recommendations and has fully respected quota allocations. Being a developing nation, our economy is largely dependent on the Agriculture and Fisheries sector and our high seas fishery makes an important contribution to this end. Belize is conscious of our request for more

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quotas at a time when the swordfish TAC must be reduced. However, in an effort to aid our continued development, we take this opportunity to remind the Commission of the need for Developed nations who have enjoyed the use of this resource for many years, to transfer some of their own quotas to facilitate the needs of Developing States such as Belize. This has been acknowledged during previous Commission meetings as a necessary step towards achieving greater equitability in quota allocations. It is noteworthy that Belize's fleet has historically utilized 100 % of its swordfish allocations; however, our swordfish fleet is forced to operate at less than 100% capacity due to quota restrictions. Therefore, it is essential that our additional quota requirements be granted in order to ensure the sustainability and viability of our high seas fishing operations, and the realization of Belize's development needs in respect of Atlantic swordfish fishery.

CANADA

Executive Summary (full text in original language only in Annex 1)

ICCAT Recommendation 13-02 requires each Contracting Party, and Cooperating non-Contracting Party, Entity or Fishing Entity to annually submit to the Secretariat by September 15, its swordfish development or fishing/management plan. This document describes the history, management, socio-economic and future aspirations of the Canadian North Atlantic Swordfish fishery.

Canada's history of fishing North Atlantic swordfish dates back to the 1880s. Today, this exclusively commercial fishery continues to be socially and economically important to many coastal and First Nations communities throughout Atlantic Canada. The annual landings generate over \$10 million of revenue over several Atlantic ports.

Canada's 2016 initial allocation of North Atlantic swordfish was 1,348 metric tonnes; from which 5t was allocated to Canada's offshore tuna fleet for swordfish bycatch. The remaining allocation was shared between 2 fleets targeting North Atlantic swordfish. 90% is allocated to the longline fleet and 10% to the harpoon fleet. There is no recreational or sportfish component to this fishery.

Canada's capacity to harvest its quota share is well documented. Average annual landings have totalled 114% of Canada's initial annual allocations since 2011 as a result of transfers from other CPCs. Since 2007, Canada has been allocated 9.8% of the total ICCAT quota. Nevertheless, as the recipient of quota transfers, Canada has landed 13% of the overall catch for North Atlantic swordfish annually over the past 6 years.

In 2016, the Canadian fleet with quota transfers was able to harvest its North Atlantic swordfish quota during an expanded 5 month season.

As the foundation for reliable research and stock assessments, Canada collects, among other things, catch and effort data for all fishing trips. Beginning in 1996, an industry-funded Dockside Monitoring Program (DMP) was instituted in Atlantic Canada to provide independent third party verification of logbook submissions. Canada's DMP is conducted by certified agents who oversee all 100% offloads of swordfish in Atlantic Canada as well as enter logbook data into a central database. The DMP ensures that precise and reliable information is collected on the number of fish caught, their weight, effort, environmental conditions, and other vital statistics. This data is available in real-time to fisheries managers, scientists, and enforcement officers.

Canada's comprehensive approach to enforcement also includes the requirement for Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) on all longline vessels, despite only 2 of Canada's 77 pelagic longline vessels being over 20 meters in length and thus subject to ICCAT's VMS measure. The Conservation and Protection Program of DFO fly aerial surveillance flights annually in areas where swordfish fishing activities occur. In 2016, 103.27 air surveillance hours were directly accrued for swordfish fishery. In 2016, at sea patrols, using large patrol vessels, accumulated 231.6 surveillance hours directly to the swordfish fishery. Also, Fishery Officers conduct patrols, inspect vessels and swordfish buying/processing facilities and conducted audits of the Dockside Monitoring Program in this fishery. In total, 638.25 fishery officer enforcement hours were expended on the swordfish fishery in 2016. At-sea observers are targeted for deployment on 10% of

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swordfish fishing trips despite no ICCAT requirements for observer's onboard swordfish vessels smaller than 20 meters.

Since 2012, in recognition of the strong management regime which is in place for these fisheries in Canada, both the longline and harpoon fleets targeting North Atlantic swordfish have been awarded Marine Stewardship Council certification. Canada is the first ICCAT member to obtain this certification for its entire swordfish fleet.

In 2016, Canada continues to be at the forefront with their scientific investigations. A new research project was established by DFO in collaboration with the Atlantic Canadian Swordfish and Other Tunas Longline Fishery, to deploy short-term Pop-up Satellite Archival Tags on live released shortfin Mako Sharks caught in the longline fishery. The project will determine post-release Mortality of the Shortfin mako shark and contribute to the total fishing mortality for inclusion in future national and international stock assessments.

Canadian researchers are also collaborating with researchers from the United States to establish a joint Canadian-American Swordfish Index of abundance from the two countries longline fisheries.

Industry is fully engaged in the conservation and management efforts for this species to ensure its sustainability, including participation in scientific research, funding of independent at-sea observers to monitor the fishery and funding independent third party monitors who observe and record all landings at dockside. The harpoon fleet provides funds or in-kind vessel support for scientific research in lieu of at-sea observer coverage.

While Canada, like other ICCAT members, accepted significantly lower quotas during the rebuilding period of the fishery, Canada is the only ICCAT member which has consistently demonstrated its ability to fully utilize its quota. Based on this information, Canada will be seeking increased access to this fishery moving forward to ensure viability for its' coastal communities.

EU-FRANCE

ICCAT recommendation 16-03 allocates a total allowable catches (TAC) for North Atlantic swordfish at 13 700 tonnes for 2017. The European Union catch limit is fixed, by paragraph 2 of ICCAT recommendation 16-03, at 6 718 tonnes for this year.

By contrast with Spain and Portugal, France does not have its own North Atlantic swordfish quota. French vessels are fishing on a specific quota, not allocated among the other Member States of the European Union (about 91,663 tonnes of consumption in 2016, based on an unallocated quota of 131 tonnes).

34 vessels equal to or more than 20 meters in length overall (LOA) caught North Atlantic swordfish in 2016.

YEAR OF REFERENCE	GEARS	NUMBER OF AUTHORIZED VESSELS ≥ 20 METERS LOA (1)
2016	Trawls	31
2016	Nets	0
2016	Longlines	3
2016	Scottish seines	2

(1) Vessels that have fished with different gears are counted several times.

34 vessels were notified to ICCAT as authorized vessels in 2017 (see NAF DPMA of 11 July 2017). 2 of the 34 authorized vessels have been entered in ICCAT vessel register for the first time in 2017, with the required indication that fishing for North Atlantic swordfish is authorized.

France has not yet adopted a maximum by-catch limit for vessels not authorized to fish for North Atlantic swordfish, pursuant to paragraph 14 of the ICCAT recommendation 16-03. Such a by-catch limit will be established soon, in any case before the end of 2017.

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FRANCE (IN RESPECT OF SAINT-PIERRE ET MIQUELON: SPM)

1. Background and current state of the fishery

France has been a member of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) since 1968. When the European Community joined ICCAT in 1997, France became a Contracting Party as a coastal State in respect of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon (SPM), which is a French overseas collectivity, and has Overseas Country and Territory Status status vis-à-vis the European Union (Article 355 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and partnership agreement between the EU and the OCTs: Part Three of TFUE).

Swordfish has been fished in SPM since 2002, initially through charter of a Canadian-flagged vessel (consecutively IVY, IVY ROSE, then ATLANTIC ODYSSEY). On 9 March 2011, Atlantic Odyssey, a longliner targeting tuna and mainly North swordfish, began to operate under the French flag. The vessel usually operates from April to November and the catches are landed in SPM or Canada.

The technical characteristics of this longline vessel are as follows:

- Gross tonnage : 345 UMS
- Length overall: 30.25 m
- Total installed engine power: 646 KW

As indicated below, the available fishing opportunities and the catches taken between 2006 and 2016 vary from 0 to 89.80 t.

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Initial quota	35	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
Adjusted quota ¹	48.30	78.80	108.30	56.80	120.70	80	100	100	100	100	100
Catches (t)	0	82	43.60	20.10	89.80	0.6	0	17.85	3.02	0	0

It should be noted that for many years, a device has enabled the reporting of unexploited fishing opportunities from one year to the next, based on methods which have evolved with the revisions to ICCAT recommendations. In addition, France (in respect of SPM) has benefitted in the past from transfers from other CPCs (in particular, from the United Kingdom, Overseas Territories).

For 2017, the initial quota of France (in respect of SPM) is 40 t, to which should be added, as in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016, a transfer of 40 t from the European Union as well as a transfer of 12.75 t from Venezuela (agreement under Article 6 "Transfers" of the *Recommendation by ICCAT for the conservation of North Atlantic swordfish* [16-03]: under paragraph 2, Venezuela can transfer to France SPM 15% of its allocation i.e. $85 \times 15\% = 12.75$ t).

2. Management, surveillance and control measures

All these measures are periodically notified to ICCAT, as required by the recommendations of this organisation.

The vessel is equipped with a VMS beacon. A controller can be boarded on an ad hoc basis. All landings are controlled. In addition, provisions have been made regarding the boarding of a scientific observer during the fishing campaigns of ATLANTIC ODYSSEY.

¹ Including eventual carryovers from previous years and/or transfers from another Contracting Party.

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To limit mortality of sea turtles which may be taken as by-catch, ATLANTIC ODYSSEY is equipped with circular hooks.

3. Legal and administrative aspects

Licences are granted by the State representative of the archipelago (Prefect) to fishing vessels that apply, on the basis of the following French and international texts:

- Book IX of the Rural and maritime fishing code, related to maritime fishing and marine aquaculture;
- Law 76-655 of 16 July 1976 regarding the economic zone off the coastline of the territory of the Republic;
- Agreement on mutual fishing relations between France and Canada, signed on 27 March 1972;
- Order of 20 March 1987 establishing fishery resources management and conservation measures and the Order of 24 March 2015 establishing technical measures and catch sizes for professional fishing in territorial waters and in the French economic zone off the coasts of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon;
- Decree No. 2010-1582 of 17 December 2010 on the organisation and missions of the State services in the overseas departments and regions, in Mayotte and Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon.

4. Objectives

Fishing for North swordfish in SPM should be approached as an aspect of the internal economic development of this island collectivity, especially since ATLANTIC ODYSSEY, which was purchased from Canada, began to operate under the French flag on 9 March 2011.

The catches of this stock are a source of export revenue for the economy of the archipelago, fish being sold for a price of around CAN\$ 5 per pound. In the future, fish could also be processed locally which would create employment in the processing industry, whose future depends in particular on diversification of the species of fish processed.

Taking into account the hazards likely to affect a small fleet, maintaining the option to carryover from year to year is a very important aspect for France (in respect of SPM).

SENEGAL

1. Background

Exploitation of swordfish started in the 1980s with a fleet of Spanish longliners. Catches had been estimated at around 500 t per year and yields were among the highest observed in the Atlantic. The monthly size frequencies of individuals caught were dominated by swordfish from 50 to 100 kg. However, smaller specimens appeared in July and formed the bulk of the catches; the average weight of the individuals caught (44 kg) is relatively low if compared with those observed in other Atlantic fisheries.

2. Intermediate situation

Swordfish was first exploited by Spanish fishers using surface longline. Later, this method of fishing was replaced for the most part by bottom fishing. In Senegal, three species belonging to the billfish family are known and exploited by the artisanal and industrial fishery.

Senegalese fishing involves essentially an artisanal fishery targeting small coastal pelagics and coastal demersals. This fishery takes tuna and billfish as by-catch. It is consistently noted that fishers have difficulties in distinguishing between swordfish, sailfish and marlin.

Sailfish and marlin are essentially targeted by the canoe-based artisanal fishery in particular while marlin is mainly targeted by the sports fishery. The gears used are troll, pelagic gill net and occasionally harpoons.

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The industrial and semi-industrial fishery involves a vessel owner using trawlers, tuna vessels (baitboats and purse seiners), a longliner and cord boats.

3. Current situation

Today, only a longliner has been active.

Senegal benefitted from swordfish quotas in 2006. This quota is comprised of a north stock equivalent to 400 t and a south stock of 300 t and has been subject to some changes due to several readjustments.

With regard to ICCAT management measures, Senegal has implemented in conjunction with companies and the vessel owner, mechanisms for compliance with the management measures of the Commission for their vessels. The new fishing code enables transposition of the relevant ICCAT management measures through memos, circulars and orders.

Senegal has undertaken a process to improve the capacity of its fleet through a development plan which is in progress and which provides for a new approach to the scaling of its fleet and to an improved artisanal fishery which is increasingly likely to catch ICCAT species.

As to the sports fishery, this fishery targets billfish and swordfish during the fishing season which runs from May to November. In Senegal, there are traditionally two large fishing centres in Dakar and in Mbour. The sports fishery is a sports discipline and a tourist product.

Every year, the Federation effectively participates in detailed data collection from the sports and recreational fisheries for ICCAT purposes. These data are included in Senegal's annual report which is presented to the SCRS. The data collected relate in particular to species, fishing periods and areas, number of fishing trips, number of individuals, average weight, and average size.

Improvements have been made in collaboration with ICCAT through the Japanese project JDIP for improvement of data quality. Further efforts must be made in relation to this fishing segment to ensure its efficiency.

Recently a fishing permit has been introduced for artisanal fishers. This process includes marking canoes in view of computerised management. This new regulation will enable compartmentalization of the fisheries and their monitoring in accordance with Senegal's obligations.

Senegal's swordfish fishing plan, with the approach to the industrial fishery, includes redeployment of its fleet and is as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>
Fishing type	Bottom longliners	Bottom longliners
Number of vessels	1	3
Target species	Swordfish, tuna, shark	Swordfish, tuna, shark

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TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Introduction

Trinidad and Tobago's Swordfish Fishery Development/Management Plan presented in 2011 still remains largely relevant; as previously obtained, figures in this submission have been updated as necessary. It is to be noted that Trinidad and Tobago has transferred 75t of its catch limit annually to Belize for the period 2014 to 2016 [Rec. 13-02].

Background

Trinidad and Tobago longliners have been fishing swordfish in the northern Atlantic Ocean for at least three decades. **Table 1** shows the country's reported catches and longline fleet size from 1983 to 2015. The species was targeted by the fleet from the 1980's to the mid-2000's; however since then other species have replaced swordfish as the main target species. The reasons for this shift in operations relate to economics in terms of pricing relative to other species (specifically tunas) and market access conditions which mandate that owners incur significant costs.

Trinidad and Tobago's involvement with ICCAT was prompted by its swordfish fishing operations and the country's initial activities as a Contracting Party related to neutralising its swordfish overages against the allocated catch limits and subsequently securing a catch limit that would allow the national fleet to continue its operations. The process involved a revision of Trinidad and Tobago's catch statistics through technical assistance from ICCAT and close monitoring of the country's swordfish catches by the local authorities.

At the time of negotiation of Trinidad and Tobago's current North Atlantic swordfish catch limit, it was indicated that this was below the potential of the national fleet, which at the time included 10 registered longliners. In agreeing to the catch limit of 125 t, however, concessions were made by Trinidad and Tobago given the prevailing climate relating to the TAC and the demand for fishing opportunities from CPCs. It is to be noted that Trinidad and Tobago's fleet of longliners has generally been increasing since 2003. The current number of registered longliners is 38 with 30 being operational in 2015.

Development/Management Plan

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago seeks to provide the greatest possible economic opportunity for its citizens. In this regard the Government facilitates the development of national fleets as far as is possible in accordance with established fisheries management principles and regulations.

The projected national, longline fleet-size for the period 2013 to 2016, based on requests to enter the fishery for tuna and tuna-like species, is given in **Table 2**.

The estimated national harvesting potential for the period 2013 to 2016, based on the projected fleet size, is given in **Table 3**. The estimated harvesting potential of a national longliner for swordfish (126 t/yr) and the estimated swordfish bycatch of the remaining vessels were taken into account in arriving at these quantities.

Considering the estimated harvesting potential of the Trinidad and Tobago longline fleet for North Atlantic swordfish for the period 2013-2016 and the reduced TAC for the stock, Trinidad and Tobago requests that its catch limit of 125 t be retained. Given the differences between the catch limit and the estimates of harvesting potential, catches of swordfish will be closely monitored to ensure compliance with the catch limit.

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Table 1. Trinidad and Tobago Historical Catch and Effort Statistics –North Atlantic Swordfish

Year	Trinidad and Tobago SWO Catch Limit (t)	Trinidad and Tobago reported SWO catches (t)	No. of Longliners
1983	-	21	Not available
1984	-	26	Not available
1985	-	6	Not available
1986	-	45	Not available
1987	-	151	Not available
1988	-	42	Not available
1989	-	79	Not available
1990	-	66	Not available
1991	-	71	Not available
1992	-	562	Not available
1993	-	11	12
1994	-	180	18
1995	-	150	20
1996	-	158	21
1997	-	110	26
1998	86.7 ²	130	24
1999	86.7 ²	138	23
2000	64.2 ²	41	19
2001 ¹	64.2	75	20
2002 ¹	64.2	92	20
2003	125	78	10 ³
2004	125	83	10
2005	125	91	14
2006	125	19	17
2007	125	29	19 ⁴

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2008	125	49	25
2009	125	30	29
2010	125	21	24
2011	125	16	23
2012	125	14	28
2013	125	16	31
2014	125	26	29
2015	125	17	30

Notes:

1. Partial revision of TTO statistics accepted by ICCAT in 2001; fully revised statistics accepted in 2002.
2. Revision of the TTO statistics resulted in an increase of the 1998 and 1999 TTO north Atlantic swordfish catch limits from 42 t to 86.7 t and the 2000 catch limit from 42 t to 64.2 t.
3. The numbers of longliners reported for the years 2003 to 2006 (inclusive) refer to registered vessels.
4. The numbers of longliners reported for the years 2007 to 2015 (inclusive) refer to operational vessels.

Table 2. Trinidad and Tobago Projected Longline Fleet-Size (2013-2016)

Year	Projected longline fleet-size (no. of vessels)
2013	40
2014	44
2015	48
2016	48

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Table 3. Estimated Harvesting Potential of Trinidad and Tobago Projected Longline Fleet for North Atlantic Swordfish (2013-2016)

Year	Estimated harvesting potential – North Atlantic Swordfish (t)
2013	178
2014	183
2015	188
2016	188

UNITED STATES**Executive Summary** (full text in original language only in **Annex 1**)**I. Executive Summary**

The United States first began managing its Atlantic swordfish fishery in 1985 – five years before active management by ICCAT. The conservation and management of this fishery is defined by a comprehensive suite of ecosystem-based measures that have been taken in line with domestic requirements and that go well beyond the requirements of ICCAT recommendations. A range of tools are used to manage the U.S. North Atlantic swordfish fishery, including licensing and reporting requirements, size limits, retention limits, and gear restrictions. U.S. requirements for logbooks, scientific observers, and electronic monitoring support the collection of reliable fishery data for management and stock assessment purposes. In addition, U.S. scientists actively engage in the stock assessment process and conduct innovative research on swordfish biology, life history, stock structure, fishing techniques, and bycatch mitigation technology. U.S. contributions to North Atlantic swordfish research have provided substantial support for efforts by the SCRS to understand the status of the stock and develop scientific advice for its long-term sustainability in accordance with the objective of the Convention.

While remaining in compliance with ICCAT recommendations, the United States has implemented even more far-reaching measures designed to support effective conservation and management of the North Atlantic swordfish stock. For example, when the stock was overfished, the United States took the initiative to reduce fishing effort to protect immature swordfish in the Florida Straits nursery grounds, successfully reducing fishing mortality on immature swordfish. This unilateral conservation action directly contributed to the rebuilding of North Atlantic swordfish and this has benefitted all ICCAT members that rely on this stock. The recovery of the North Atlantic swordfish stock is one of ICCAT's greatest success stories.

Consistent with ICCAT's growing emphasis on the importance of an ecosystem approach, the United States has comprehensive measures in place to support the health of the broader pelagic ecosystem. Several U.S. time/area closures for pelagic longline gear are in place to help minimize bycatch mortality of other highly migratory and protected species, such as sea turtles and some overfished billfish stocks. Additional bycatch mitigation measures include gear restrictions such as circle hooks, gangion length requirements; mandatory use of dipnets, line cutters and other equipment; and workshops/written materials that provide guidance on accurate species identification and techniques for careful handling and release of sea turtles, cetaceans, marlins, sailfish and protected shark species.

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Some of these domestic measures have affected the ability of the U.S. fleet to harvest its allocation of North Atlantic swordfish in recent years, which has been difficult for coastal communities who depend on this important resource. Recognizing this, the United States has taken steps to restructure its fisheries and adjust regulatory constraints on its swordfish fishery in light of the rebuilt status of the stock. For example, the United States has relaxed vessel upgrade restrictions in the fishery, revised requirements in the Individual Bluefin Quota (IBQ) system to increase flexibility for fishing for swordfish, and initiated research within an existing pelagic longline closed area to determine if catch rates of target and bycatch species have changed. The results of this research may inform future management decisions. We continue to investigate ways to provide additional opportunities for U.S. fishermen to increase swordfish harvests in a responsible way, ensuring that the fishery operates in accordance with U.S. laws and international obligations.

In addition to abiding by strong conservation and management measures, the U.S. fleet fishing for swordfish and other highly migratory species has faced unexpected and significant challenges over the past decade, including severe hurricanes and the Deepwater Horizon/BP oil spill. Most recently, the hurricanes Harvey and Irma (2017) have caused extensive damage in U.S. coastal communities that has not yet been quantified. However, we remain committed to active U.S. participation in the North Atlantic swordfish fishery, which continues to hold significant social and economic importance in numerous coastal communities.

In summary, the United States has chosen to pursue a prudent and deliberate strategy that reflects a balance of maintaining conservation objectives while encouraging full utilization of the quota. This document describes the interests, fishing patterns, and fishing practices of the U.S. Atlantic swordfish fleet – past, present, and future.

Annex 1: Canada and USA full reports are available electronically in original language only.