

STATEMENT BY SOUTH AFRICA TO PANEL 1 - ROUND 2

SUBJECT: RE: LETTER AND REVISED DRAFT PROPOSALS TO BE DISCUSSED VIA CORRESPONDENCE ON PANEL 1 - ROUND #2 [ICCAT SALIDA #7697]

Dear Mr. Helguilè,

Thank you for your ongoing leadership of Panel 1 and collaboration of the various ICCAT Panel 1 Contracting Party, Cooperating non-Contracting Party, Entity or Fishing Entity fishing (CPCs) views received to date. South Africa appreciates the opportunity to contribute to the current business of Panel 1, including PA1-502A, PA1-503A and the Proposed Roadmap for PA1 Intersessional meetings in 2021.

PA1_502A/20 - Proposed table to replace PA1-502/20 “2020 Tuna Bigeye Catch Limits”

South Africa thank the Chair for recognizing the points raised in our correspondence and appreciate the presentation of the alternative table format for the consideration of other CPCs.

Furthermore, South Africa would also like to thank the European Union (EU) for the provision of additional evidence with regards to the claim for carry-over of 2121.35 t from 2018 to 2020. It should however be noted that South Africa is very concerned about CPCs exploiting the lack of clarity in the measure that allows for under-catch of adjusted limits (as opposed to underage of the catch limits as listed in the Recommendation), and to this end, South Africa would appreciate if the ICCAT Secretariat could perhaps seek legal advice on the interpretation of these specific provisions and whether carry-over of undercatch from adjusted catch limits (rather than catch limits as specified in the Rec.) is in fact allowed.

PA1_503A/20 - Draft supplemental recommendation by ICCAT to amend Rec. 19- 02

South Africa support the proposal as drafted in PA1_503A.

PA1-511/20 - Proposed Roadmap for PA1 Intersessional Meetings in 2021

South Africa support the development of a roadmap for Panel 1 to continue our discussions and make progress towards the adoption of effective consideration and management measures for the Atlantic tuna stocks. We acknowledge that travel limitations may persist for some time and we cannot continue to delay discussion on these urgent matters. However, South Africa asks the Chair and CPCs to recognise the difficulties faced by some developing CPCs with online connectivity, which compromises our ability to reliably and effectively participate in discussions through online forums. As such, we are of the view that the virtual forums proposed by the Chair be framed as workshops, not decision-making forums.

With regards to the topic of discussion at the virtual workshops, South Africa is of the view that these discussions must be informed by evidence, including data on the implementation of measures in 2020. We therefore request that provisional data on catch, effort and Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) activity during 2020 be made available to inform the workshops. This will allow us to focus our discussions on the areas that are not having the intended effect, or gaps in the current regime.

South Africa is of the view that virtual workshops should not discuss matters that have significant impacts on national interests. The constraints of negotiating via online platforms preclude meaningful engagement by all CPCs, and therefore any highly controversial matters, or matters that directly affect outcomes for individual CPCs, should not be discussed. South Africa therefore does not support the discussion of an ‘allocation key for TAC distribution’ during the virtual workshops. As previously stated, given how challenging these negotiations were in person, we do not believe that consideration of allocation through online forums or correspondence would not provide for fair and robust outcomes. South Africa support inclusion of FAD management mechanisms in the list of items for consideration in the virtual workshops, and suggest that the FAD closure should be discussed together with the number of FADs.

Original: English

South Africa also supports the proposal to discuss the Bigeye tuna Total Allowable Catch (TAC) in a virtual workshop. However, information on catches in 2020 will be necessary for this discussion, which may affect the proposed timing.

South Africa supports the EUs view that the proper implementation of catch limits is a priority for Panel 1, including accountability for possible overharvests, and therefore suggest this be added to the list of Panel 1 priorities for 2021. We also suggest that catch and effort reporting be added to the list of Panel 1 priorities for 2021.

Yours sincerely,



Letter signed by: Mr. Saasa Pheeha

Designation: South Africa's Commissioner to ICCAT

Date: 20 November 2020