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STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION ON DOCUMENT PA1-517

The European Union would like to offer clarifications regarding document PA1-517, entitled “Proposal to Amend the SCRS Report BET – Bigeye Tuna (Executive Summary) Item BET-6. Management Recommendations - (Proposal presented by the European Union)”. The rationale for the text submitted to the Secretariat was to prompt a correction of the text so that it correctly reflected what had been discussed and agreed during the adoption of the SCRS report but not correctly transmitted to the Secretariat when the whole report was assembled. Unfortunately, the way our request was presented and labelled in the document led to a misperception that this was an attempt by the European Union to amend the SCRS conclusions in its 2021 Report. Those familiar with this issue are aware that this was not the intention of the text, and that this request initially followed feedback from the Secretariat addressed to the Chair of the SCRS and the BET Rapporteur with a view to settle the matter without reopening the revision of the SCRS report.

This issue is related to an error which was introduced in the SCRS report and which required a correction. On the day of distribution of the SCRS report, the EU Head of Delegation to the SCRS highlighted to the Bigeye tuna rapporteur that a sentence in the Management Recommendation, namely “... some other sources of relevant uncertainties were not included in the development of the K2SM, including the appropriateness of the range of natural mortalities used in the uncertainty grid...”, was not reflecting the actual discussions and agreement since natural mortalities were actually taken into account in the uncertainty grid. It is worth noting that the revision of the text had been done through a quick scroll down on the screen at the end of the SCRS meeting with the reassurance that all cross checks would be done subsequently to ensure consistency amongst the sections. This was far from an ideal solution because since it was not corrected immediately there was a risk that the correction would be forgotten as an oversight as in fact happened. Other similar issues had already led to changes in other parts of the SCRS advice but this had for some reason not been done for section 6.

Following subsequent exchanges, involving also the SCRS Chair and other delegations, the Secretariat suggested not to reopen any discussions or editorial process of the text adopted, and but noted that it could be raised in the Commission during the SCRS Chair’s presentation.

Although reluctantly, because it is not for the Commission to amend the SCRS report, this is what the European Union did by its request to correct the text so it correctly reflected the actual content of the KIISM. The experience of this year’s discussion highlights the need for a more robust process for correcting mistakes in the SCRS document so we can avoid any discussions in the Commission.