

RESPONSE FROM GIBRALTAR TO LETTER FROM COC CHAIR

GIBRALTAR

26 October 2022

Mr. Derek Campbell
Compliance Committee Chair ICCAT Secretariat
C/Corazón de Maria 8- 6 floor
28002 Madrid
Spain

Subject: Management and catches of Bluefin tuna in Gibraltar

Dear Mr. Campbell,

We refer to your letter dated 26 July 2022 addressed to the Honourable Prof. John Cortes MP in relation to the management and catches of Bluefin tuna (**BFT**) in Gibraltar. I am replying on his behalf.

In keeping with our continued commitment to fully cooperate with the ICCAT Secretariat, please note that catch statistics (Form ST02-T1NC) for the period **2021 and 2022** have today been submitted by the Department to the email account [STATS info@iccat.int](mailto:STATS_info@iccat.int) in accordance with ICCAT Circular 0669/22. A general overview of these data along with a summary of recent changes adopted regarding the management of BFT catches are provided in the Appendices to this letter. To date, the Secretariat has therefore been provided data on **BFT** catches landed in Gibraltar since the inception of the BFT quota in Gibraltar spanning the period 2015-2022.

We also take this opportunity to confirm that the current Total Allowable Catch set in Gibraltar is presently 22.5 tonnes (t). Furthermore, we can also confirm that there is presently no known exportation of Bluefin tuna from Gibraltar. In response to your query on rod and reel catches, which we must emphasize is the only method of capture employed in Gibraltar, these catches have all been landed in Gibraltar.

We remain at your disposal should you require any additional clarification on the abovementioned points and statistical data provided. Once again, we reiterate our desire to continue our cooperation and positive engagement with the Secretariat moving forward, and to the consideration of the possibility of extending ICCAT to Gibraltar.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed and stamped)
Senior Environment Officer
Department of the Environment, Sustainability, Climate Change and Heritage

Appendix A

Recent changes in BFT management measures

- Increased the minimum allowable size (length) of BFT to 130cm in 2021;
- BFT Open Season divided into 2 sub-quotas in 2022. 1st quota (19 t) allowed for the capture of large specimens whereas the 2nd quota (3.5 t) allows for the capture of smaller specimens albeit in keeping with the minimum size requirements (length: 130cm/weight 30kg) enshrined in the Tuna Preservation Regulations 2014 [see: <https://www.gibraltarlaws.gov.gi/legislations/tuna-preservation-regulations-2014-3702>].

BFT Open Season Summary statistics for the period 2015-2022

<i>Year</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>
Total Allowable Catch (tons)	13	13	15.5	15.5	16.74	19.81
Actual catch/landings (kg)	12,746	13,894*	16,109*	14,603	17,378*	20,020*
Average weight (kg)	47	88	98	121	117	83
Largest specimen (kg)	271	274	279	299	267	341
Total licensed recreational/sport anglers landing BFT	91	75	65	61	76	111
Total days in Open Season	123	121	69.5	93	39.5	91

<i>Year</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>
Total Allowable Catch (tons)	21	22.5
Actual catch/landings (kg)	21576*	24902*
Average weight (kg)	128	128
Largest specimen (kg)	328	350
Total licensed recreational/sport anglers landing BFT	85	98
Total days in Open Season	32	71

Explanatory note:

*Actual catch is slightly higher than TAC as a result of the necessary administrative time to give effect to the closure of the season.