



The Pew Charitable Trusts'
Opening statement to ICCAT Panel 1 - Tropical tunas
November 2023

The Pew Charitable Trusts appreciates the work of Panel 1 and understands that most of the agenda may be devoted to discussions on the draft recommendation for a multi-annual conservation and management program for tropical tunas. We urge members to merge proposals [PA1 508](#) and [PA1 509](#) to adopt a measure that includes improved FAD management and relaunch the regional observer program. We also ask that the Chair and members balance priorities with other work that has been progressed and is ready for adoption this year. One such effort includes setting conceptual management objectives for the multi-stock management strategy evaluation through adoption of [PA1 510](#), and we recommend adding an objective related to managing fishery selectivity to optimize the productivity of bigeye and yellowfin tunas.

Pew regrets that a proposal for a western Atlantic skipjack management procedure (MP) has not posted yet. The SCRS stated its support for MP adoption this year, noting that, "*the model-based MPs tested can be considered viable candidates for management of the western Atlantic skipjack tuna stock and can serve as the basis for MP adoption in 2023 consistent with the MSE roadmap*". In addition, Panel 1 made considerable progress in finalizing operational management objectives for the stock at its dedicated intersessional in May, and no CPCs have expressed opposition to moving forward this year. As such, we urge the main fishing nations to lead work within Panel 1 to adopt an MP for western skipjack this year in accordance with the MSE workplan. Significantly, this would be the first tropical tuna MP in the Atlantic Ocean and will lay the foundation for more progress in the management of other Atlantic tropical tunas.

Lastly, Pew joins other NGOs in expressing disappointment for the disregard of the yellowfin tuna total allowable catch (TAC). As landings continue to exceed the TAC – for a decade now, with a 35% overage in 2022 – we urge Panel 1 to adopt a yellowfin tuna allocation key as an urgent priority to hold CPCs accountable for respecting the TAC and recommend a stock assessment be conducted in 2024.