

**28th Regular Meeting of the International Commission  
for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)  
Cairo, Egypt - November 13-20, 2023**

**Statement to Panel 1**

This year, CPCs have to necessarily adopt a new Tropical Tuna (TT) measure, in order to end several years of stalemate and demonstrate ICCAT's capability of reaching consensus on the sustainable management of the stocks under its remit.

**Ensure sustainable management of Bigeye tuna**

Bigeye tuna (BET) continues to show signs of recovery but the uncertainties around the stock assessment still exist. Therefore, Sciaena recommends that the TAC for BET does not exceed 73.000 tons, in order to give an increased probability of the stock not being overfished or under overfishing in future years.

To help prevent overfishing, we are hopeful that CPCs will be able to define a new allocation key that includes all fleets, taking into account historical catches but also the aspirations of developing countries, as well as criteria such as reduced juvenile mortality and other factors that have negative impacts on the stock and the ecosystem it depends on.

Sciaena urges CPCs to maintain or enhance the Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) management measures which are in place, by adopting elements of proposals PA1-508 and PA1-509, such as: a limit of 300 FADs per vessel or lower; requirements on FAD non-entanglement and biodegradability; and the adoption of measures to increase accountability for FAD sets (such as a FAD registry and a FAD marking scheme).

In order to increase the transparency and improve the management of tropical tuna fisheries, Sciaena supports proposals that aim to increase observer and remote electronic monitoring coverage of the fleets that catch BET and other tropical tuna species, as well as additional restrictions and monitoring on at-sea transshipments.

Sciaena also urges Panel 1 to decisively move towards the development and adoption of a Tropical Tuna MSE in 2024, or 2025 at the latest, by adopting an intersessional work plan for this purpose. We therefore welcome proposal PA1-510 and ask CPCs to endorse and adopt it.

In adopting a successful new Tropical tuna measure, CPCs must also set measures that end Yellowfin tuna overage, by setting an allocation key for the stock.

**Adopt a Western Skipjack Management Procedure**

We considered the adoption of the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) for the Western Skipjack stock to be of a high priority for this year's annual meeting. As of the moment of submission of this statement, no proposal has been tabled, we urge Panel 1 to agree on an intersessional work plan for 2024 that ensures the adoption of a Western Skipjack MSE in 2024.

