

**Cover sheet to accompany new proposals**

*(proposal submitted by the European Union and Egypt)*

**Title of the proposed Draft Recommendation/Resolution:** *Draft Recommendation by ICCAT on aquaculture bluefin tuna*

**Title of currently in force Recommendation(s) or Resolution(s) addressing the same or related issues:**  
*Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 21-08 establishing a multi-annual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean (Rec. 22-08) & Recommendation by ICCAT for a conservation and management plan for western Atlantic bluefin tuna (Rec. 22-10)*

1. Does it create new **reporting obligation(s)** for CPCs?

Yes  No

Brief Description of new reporting obligation(s):

*CPCs must report detailed information on aquaculture facilities, including on broodstock used for artificial hatching, established within their territory in their yearly BFT fishing and aquaculture plans.*

2. Does it require additional input or **work by the SCRS**?

Yes  No

Is this work already included in the current SCRS workplan?

Yes  No

Brief description of new scientific work required (i.e. stock assessment, analysis, external consultant):

3. Does it involve the creation of a **new working group or intersessional process**?

Yes  No

4. Does it require a new **programme or additional activities to be managed by the Secretariat**?

Yes  No

Brief description of new Secretariat work required:

5. What is the proposed timeframe for implementation, and are there different specific timeframes for certain CPCs, fisheries, regions, etc.:

*Entry into force 2025.*

6. Is there any other relevant information regarding the resource and workload implications of the proposal?

**Draft Recommendation by ICCAT on aquaculture bluefin tuna**  
(proposal submitted by the European Union and Egypt)

*RECOGNIZING* that ICCAT has established a comprehensive Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS) for Atlantic bluefin tuna, firstly adopted in 2007, with the main aim to have effective control of the movement of bluefin tuna, strict tracking of the product from the point of capture throughout the whole operation to its final market;

*ACKNOWLEDGING* the critical role of the electronic Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation System (eBCD) in combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and the significant influence that market dynamics exert on the fishery; includes the necessity for complementary market-related measures that have contributed to the recovery of these stocks from overfishing status;

*TAKING INTO ACCOUNT* the rebuilding plan for western Atlantic bluefin tuna and the recovery plan for eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna adopted by ICCAT in 2008, which results have now come into fruition after the recovery of the stocks and the adoption leading ICCAT to transition to a bluefin tuna Management Plan, which however requires the maintaining the same level of control on all the components involved in the bluefin tuna fisheries;

*MINDFUL* of the rights and obligations of port States to promote the effectiveness of management measures adopted by regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs);

*UNDERLINING* the need to establish measures that safeguard the wild bluefin tuna market by preventing loopholes in the eBCD, maintain high standards in the fight against IUU fishing, and ensure that all wild fish can be clearly distinguished from aquaculture fish;

*NOTING* that during the 23rd Special Meeting of 2022, the Commission was informed of several CPCs' plans to develop bluefin tuna aquaculture, either through the importation of wild bluefin tuna eggs or through full aquaculture cycles using broodstock, with this fish potentially entering the commercial market as early as 2025;

*CONSIDERING* the current lack of information in the eBCD system regarding the origin of fish, whether wild-caught or from aquaculture;

*FURTHER CONSIDERING* the potential impact of escapements of aquaculture bluefin tuna on wild stocks.

*BEARING IN MIND* the discussions held in ICCAT Panel 2 and the technical deliberations by the Working Group on Integrated Monitoring Measures (IMM) in June 2023.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION  
OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) RECOMMENDS THAT:

1. Any CPC seeking to export aquaculture bluefin tuna must establish a traceability system to ensure the source of harvested fish, indicating whether the fish is wild-caught or from aquaculture. This traceability system shall be detailed in an Aquaculture plan to be submitted annually to Panel 2, as part of the reporting obligation on fishing, farming, inspection and capacity management plans for BFT.
2. Bluefin tuna produced through aquaculture must be accompanied by an eBCD, which clearly identifies the origin of the fish as an aquaculture product and specifies the aquaculture facility involved.
3. The eBCD System rules should be adjusted to allow the system to register the fish's origin, whether from an aquaculture facility or, if wild, from a trap or fishing vessel.

4. Aquaculture facilities established within the territory of any ICCAT CPC must be declared to ICCAT, through the yearly BFT fishing and Aquaculture plan as described in Recommendation 22-08 establishing a multi-annual management plan for the bluefin tuna eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean, including the details on the number of structures at sea and their farming capacity. CPCs must also report all measures taken to prevent caged fish from escaping.
5. In its Aquaculture plan, each CPC must provide ICCAT with details on the origin and quantity of broodstock used for artificial hatching, the expected number, expected size at time of harvest, and estimated volume of fish to be produced, and the anticipated harvest date.
6. The Standing Catch Document Scheme Working Group (CDS WG) should endeavor to propose to ICCAT Commission the necessary revisions to Recommendations 22-16 and 23-21 to incorporate the requirements of paragraph 2.
7. ICCAT Panel 2 shall endeavor to propose to ICCAT Commission the necessary amendments to Recommendation 22-08 to cater for the inclusion of an Aquaculture plan into the annual bluefin tuna plan.