

**24th Special Meeting of the International Commission
for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)
Limassol, Cyprus - November 11-18, 2024**

Statement to Panel 1

Ensure sustainable management of Bigeye tuna

In 2024, we expect ICCAT to finally adopt a much-delayed measure for tropical tuna, which must take into account the signs of recovery of the Bigeye tuna (BET) stock, but also contemplate the uncertainties that persist in the assessment. Sciaena believes it is crucial that the new measure needs to give the stock the best probabilities of staying in the green quadrant of the Kobe matrix, and provide a solid basis for the upcoming years, and we believe the Chair's proposal PA1-505 sets the Commission on a positive track to finally end the long-standing stalemate on Tropical Tunas.

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;

- Maintaining the FAD closure at 72 days;
- Establish a limit of 275 FADs per vessel or lower;
- Introduce requirements on FAD non-entanglement and biodegradability;
- Adopt 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.

Finally, Sciaena believes that the TAC for Yellowfin tuna shall not exceed 120.000 tons.

Sciaena also urges Panel 1 to decisively move towards the development and adoption of a Tropical Tuna MSE in 2025, by adopting an intersessional work plan for this purpose. We therefore welcome proposal PA1-506 and ask CPCs to endorse and adopt it. We also welcome proposal PA1_508, but we urge a minimum of 60% PGK to be included.

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. Hence, we support proposal PA1_511.

