

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

Statement to Plenary

Sciaena is grateful for the opportunity to participate as an observer to the 24th Special Meeting of ICCAT. As the Atlantic faces growing pressures that threaten its health, we believe the following proposals are key to demonstrate commitment to healthy pelagic ecosystems and sustainable fisheries management.

Ensure sustainable management of bigeye tuna

In 2024, ICCAT must adopt a much-delayed measure for tropical tuna, which must take into account the signs of recovery of the Bigeye tuna stock and the uncertainties that persist in the assessment. It is crucial that the measure gives the stock the best probabilities of staying in the green quadrant of the Kobe matrix, providing a solid basis for the upcoming years. The following elements must be included:

- A TAC no higher than 73,000 tons;
- A new allocation key for all fleets, considering historical catches, the needs of developing nations, and criteria for reducing negative impacts on the stock and the ecosystem;
- A reinforced set of FAD management measures (including a registry and marking scheme);
- Expanded observer coverage and electronic fleet monitoring.

Adopt an MSE for north Atlantic swordfish

Sciaena calls on CPCs to adopt a MSE for North Atlantic Swordfish in this year's meeting, which is key to ensure the sustainability of the pelagic longline fisheries in the region and to fulfil the SCRS work plan on MSEs. We support proposal PA4_809.

Implement strong measures for the conservation of sharks

Sciaena believes it is crucial that the Commission gives a green light to the development of a Blue Shark MSE, acknowledging the work that has already begun at SCRS.



We urge CPCs to urgently adopt and implement measures to reduce mako mortality, as the results presented by SCRS indicate that mortality hasn't decreased.

Continue leadership on Control, Monitoring and Compliance

In 2024 we call on ICCAT to keep improving its track record in terms of combating Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated fishing by:

- Endorsing the work advanced on basic design characteristics of the expanded CDS, and consider the inclusion of yellowfin tuna;
- Establishing an HSBI working group;
- Adopting a work plan to develop an ICCAT EM program, with ongoing trials demonstrating the way forward;
- Adopting proposal PWG_422 on Transshipment.

Taking Steps Towards Ecosystem and Climate Considerations

Sciaena fully supports proposal PLE_119 and urges its adoption as a key step to ensure the inclusion of climate considerations and ecosystem elements in MSEs and management procedures. We see this as the most objective step to ensure moving towards EBFM and thus ensuring ICCAT's contribution to healthy and resilient ecosystems in the Atlantic.

