

NATIONAL REPORT OF LIBYA

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INTRODUCTION

The Marine Biology Research Centre and the Department of Planning and Statistics belong to the Marine Wealth Secretary and has the responsibility of Libyan fisheries management and statistical data for research on large pelagic species fished off the Libyan coasts and other species taken in the Atlantic.

FISHING ACTIVITIES

Fishing for tunas and tuna-like species is currently carried out in the Mediterranean Sea and in the Atlantic Ocean by different gears.

The Libyan fleet that operated in the Atlantic and off the coast of Libya was comprised of 5 longliners, 5 purse seiners and 4 traps (Tables 1 and 2).

The total Libyan commercial catches of tunas and tuna-like species during the 1992-1994 period amounted to 3,348 MT in the Mediterranean and 2,493 MT in the Atlantic Ocean. The composition of the catches, by species, is as follows:

Bluefin tuna (BFT): 80% of the total catch - Mediterranean Sea
 Bigeye tuna (BET): 70% of the total catch - Atlantic Ocean
 Yellowfin tuna (YFT): 20% of the total catch - Atlantic Ocean
 Albacore (ALB): 10% of the total catch - Atlantic
 Other species: 5% of the total catch - Atlantic + Mediterranean

The fishing season is from March to May in the Mediterranean and from August to October in the Atlantic.

The other tuna fishing operation of Libya during the period 1992-1994 has been a Korean joint venture longline vessel. This vessel targeted bluefin tuna, with a catch of about 350 MT, including some minor catches of swordfish and sharks.

The real fact, that the total Libyan catches of bluefin tuna and tuna-like species in the Mediterranean and Atlantic reported by FAO were still considered unreliable by the Consultation, due to the inaccuracies in the species composition and the lack of statistical data on the Libyan catches.

Most of the Libyan catches of tunas and tuna-like species were canned locally and minor catches were exported to the international market.

Table 1. Libyan catches (in MT) of bluefin tuna, by type of fisheries, in the Mediterranean Sea, 1992-1994

<i>Year</i>	<i>Type of Fishery</i>	<i>No. of Fisheries</i>	<i>Catches (MT)</i>
1992 (March-May)	Longline	2	320
	Purse seine	4	200
	Trap	3	150
1993 (March-May)	Longline	5	546
	Purse seine	5	400
	Trap	4	160
1994 (March-May)	Longline	5	732
	Purse seine	5	450
	Trap	4	150

Table 2. Libyan catches (in MT) of bigeye tuna and other species, by type of fisheries, in the Atlantic Ocean, 1992-1994

<i>Year</i>	<i>Type of Fishery</i>	<i>No. of Fisheries</i>	<i>Catches (MT)</i>
1992	Longline	4	308
	Purse seine	2	200
1993	Longline	4	785
	Purse seine	2	300
1994	Longline	4	400
	Purse seine	2	100

Table 3. Total Libyan catches (in MT) of bluefin tuna, bigeye tuna, and tuna-like species, by type of fisheries, in the Mediterranean Sea and in the Atlantic Ocean, 1992-1994

<i>Area</i>	<i>Type of Fishery</i>	<i>Total Catches (MT)</i>
Mediterranean (1992-1994)	Longline	1698
	Purse seine	1150
	Traps	500
Atlantic (1992-1994)	Longline	1693
	Purse seine	800