

INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF PANEL 4 ON MEDITERRANEAN SWORDFISH
(Madrid, 20-22 February 2017)

1. Opening of the Meeting

Mr. Raul Delgado, 2nd Vice-Chair of the Commission, opened the meeting and reminded participants of the objectives of the Mediterranean Swordfish Working Group. The ICCAT Executive Secretary, Mr. Driss Meski, welcomed all the participants in the name of ICCAT, highlighted the importance of the meeting and reiterated the need to reach an agreement due to the conservation status of the Mediterranean swordfish stock.

The following members of Panel 4 were present: Algeria, Egypt, European Union, Morocco, Panama, Tunisia, Turkey, and the United States. Albania and Libya who are not members of Panel 4 were also present. The List of Participants is included as **Appendix 2** to this report.

2. Nomination of Rapporteur and other meeting arrangements

Ms. Rachel O'Malley (United States) was nominated as rapporteur. The Executive Secretary of ICCAT provided the meeting arrangements.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

The Agenda was adopted without change (**Appendix 1**). One delegation suggested that bilateral consultations could be helpful in reaching constructive solutions. The Chair replied that there could be some flexibility in the schedule to accommodate this. It was agreed to devote the remainder of the first day to bilateral consultations and to reconvene the meeting of Panel 4 on Wednesday morning.

4. Establishment of a fair and equitable allocation scheme of the TAC of Mediterranean swordfish

Document PA4_004/i2017 was introduced by the European Union (**Appendix 3**). This document describes the socioeconomics of the Mediterranean swordfish fishery within the European Union, which is mainly small-scale artisanal, and the efforts made by the European Union to manage and control this fishery.

Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey each took the floor in turn to describe the nature of their fisheries for Mediterranean swordfish. Similar to the European Union, these fisheries are mainly composed of small vessels fishing with longline gear in coastal areas. These catches are mainly going to local markets. The fishermen involved are heavily dependent on the resource and most of them have limited options to fish for other species. Libya and Albania informed the Group about the importance of the swordfish fisheries in their respective areas.

Morocco highlighted their historical efforts to prohibit the use of driftnets that were used to target juvenile swordfish, and the conversion to other fishing technologies that are more selective.

Turkey expressed that it had implemented stringent measures, including prohibition of modified driftnets used traditionally in the Mediterranean swordfish fishery.

Libya explained its current effort to improve catch statistics through training programs for its fishermen.

It was recognized that the stock is subject to a significant degree of overfishing. The total allowable catch (TAC) established in Recommendation 16-05 is an important first step to begin the recovery of this stock. Further measures will be needed to ensure its long-term sustainability and this will require a joint effort by all participants in the fisheries to support responsible management, including those CPCs that catch Mediterranean swordfish only as by-catch. Several delegations mentioned the challenges associated with managing small-scale fisheries, particularly when the points of landing are not centralized.

Catch history was generally acknowledged as a core part of the elements to be considered in the allocation of quota. Socioeconomic factors must also be taken into account, as well as efforts undertaken by individual CPCs to manage their fisheries responsibly and sustainably. Other criteria, as outlined in Resolution 15-13, should also receive consideration, and the delegations indicated openness to exchanging views on this.

Statements were provided by Algeria PA4_008A/i2017 (**Appendix 4**), Turkey PA4_006/i2017 (**Appendix 5**) and Morocco PA4_007/i2017 (**Appendix 6**).

5. Establishment of CPC quotas for 2017 without prejudice to the allocation scheme aforementioned

The Chair reminded CPCs of the mandate of the Working Group, which was established through paragraph 3 of Rec. 16-05 in order to: a) establish a fair and equitable allocation scheme of the TAC of Mediterranean swordfish; b) establish a CPC quota for 2017 without prejudice to the allocation scheme aforementioned; and c) establish the mechanism to manage the TAC.

The European Union thanked the other delegations for their input during the bilateral consultations, and explained that on the basis of these consultations and the allocation criteria in Resolution 15-13, they had developed a proposed allocation key and a quota table for 2017. The draft proposal was made available informally for review by the concerned CPCs. Following these informal discussions, the table was modified and circulated (PA4_009B/i2017) (**Appendix 7**).

Turkey expressed concern from adoption of insufficient technical management measures in Rec. 16-05 that still fall behind the legal practices in Turkey. For instance, minimum size should never be smaller than 125 cm LJFL, hook size should never be smaller than 9cm and maximum number of hooks to be fixed should never exceed 1,000. Notwithstanding, Turkey still joins the consensus on Rec. 16-05 with a view to contribute joint efforts towards a better stock status.

Turkey stressed that Turkish fishermen have been aggrieved and simply penalized for decades, in return for their compliance to stricter measures and responsible attitudes, with constantly decreasing catch amounts and subsistence as a result of overcapacity, overfishing and unregulated fishing activities mainly in the central and western Mediterranean. Turkey considers that due to insufficient, unregulated and unequally implemented conservation measures imposed by the biggest harvester CPCs with large industrial fleets, as a matter of fact, boom values as allocation percentages have been taken into account during TAC allocation for Mediterranean swordfish. Consequently, Turkey stated that a fair, equitable and higher TAC share should be allocated to Turkey in acknowledgement of its stricter implementation of conservation measures and its contributions and devotions to the success of management and conservation efforts for Mediterranean swordfish.

The delegates of Egypt and the United States also reserved their positions, in order to consult. Further, the delegate of Egypt reported that its government would gather and report catch statistics to the SCRS and reiterated Egypt's interest in being included in the quota for Other CPCs.

In light of questions from some CPCs, the European Union explained the basis of the Other CPCs category. The amount of quota allocated to Other CPCs in the EU proposal was based on the maximum catches reported by CPCs that have not consistently reported catches of Mediterranean swordfish over the past 25 years.

The delegate of Albania addressed the Panel 4 members to express concerns regarding the EU proposal. Albania is undertaking efforts to improve its catch statistics and to manage the stock in a sustainable manner, and would like this to be recognized in the allocation process with an allocation of 50t. Albania provided a statement for the consideration of Panel 4 (**Appendix 8**, PA4_010/i2017).

The delegate of Libya asked for clarification regarding whether it is considered a member of this Working Group.

The Executive Secretary and the Chair clarified that since the Working Group is a subsidiary body of Panel 4, only CPCs that are currently members of Panel 4 are members of the Working Group. However, this meeting is open to all CPCs, and all CPCs will have an opportunity to review and endorse (or choose not to

endorse) the report of the deliberations of this Group. The Executive Secretary reminded the CPCs that anyone wishing to join as a member of Panel 4 will have the opportunity to request Panel membership at the regular Annual meeting in 2017, according to the established procedures.

Libya explained to the Panel 4 members that it had established a closed season for Mediterranean swordfish and that it was committed to responsible management for this stock. Libya expressed its concerns about the EU proposal and submitted a statement for the consideration of Panel 4 (**Appendix 9**, PA4_011/i2017).

While taking note of the reservations, the Chair recommended that the EU proposal (PA4_009B/i2017) be appended to the meeting report and circulated for the consideration of all CPCs.

6. Establishment of a mechanism to manage the TAC

The proposed mechanism to manage the TAC for Mediterranean swordfish is described in the EU proposal (PA4_009B/i2017). There was no discussion of these provisions by the Working Group.

7. Consideration of requests for clarification in relation to Rec. 16-05

The Secretariat introduced document PA4_003/i2017 with requests for clarification on several elements of Rec. 16-05, including the vessel lists, inspection reports and fishing plans. Clarifications are reflected in the corrected version presented by the Secretariat (PA4_003A/i2017) (**Appendix 10**). There was consensus on this document.

Turkey indicated its willingness to translate the inspection report template as requested by the Secretariat.

8. Other matters

No other matters were raised.

9. Adoption of the Report

Algeria, EU, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey all expressed a commitment to respect the allocation and maintain catches within the TAC starting in 2017.

The report was adopted during the meeting and will be circulated to the Commission.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.

Appendix 1

Agenda

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Nomination of Rapporteur and other meeting arrangements.
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Establishment of a fair and equitable allocation scheme of the TAC of Mediterranean swordfish.
5. Establishment of CPC quotas for 2017 without prejudice to the allocation scheme aforementioned.
6. Establishment of a mechanism to manage the TAC.
7. Consideration of requests for clarification in relation to Rec. 16-05.
8. Other matters
9. Adoption of the Report
10. Adjournment

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Statement by the European Union [PA4_004/i2017]

Introduction

During the 2016 ICCAT Annual meeting held in Vilamoura Portugal, the ICCAT CPCs took a decisive step to address the alarming situation of Mediterranean swordfish through the adoption of a 15 years Recovery plan (ICCAT Recommendation [16-05]).

The European Union (EU) is very grateful that the concerned CPCs were able to make such a commitment to secure a long term future for this stock and for the fishing communities involved.

ICCAT CPCs are now facing important challenges before the Recovery plan can fully deliver on its objectives. One of these challenges concerns the allocation of fishing opportunities which is required in order to efficiently manage the TAC introduced in the Recovery plan.

The discussions held in Vilamoura have already identified some candidate criteria to reflect the respective importance of this fishery for the CPCs concerned. While there are some common patterns found across all CPCs, there are also an important differences in terms of the fleets involved, the fishing methods and the levels of interactions with other fisheries.

This document aims to provide a factual insight into the crucial importance of this resource for the European fishing sectors and coastal communities in the Mediterranean.

Socio Economics

- The main catching nations in the EU are Italy (in particular the southern regions of Sicily and Calabria), Spain, Greece and to a lesser extent Malta. Mediterranean swordfish is also exploited by Cypriot, Croat and French fleets.
- In 2015, the catches of Mediterranean swordfish by the European Union amounted to just under *8,000 t*, or *79% of the total catches of Mediterranean swordfish*. Since 2010, the share of the EU in terms of the total landings of Mediterranean swordfish has been stable around 76% (**Figure 1**).
- In recent years, around *14,000* EU vessels have been involved in the fishery for Mediterranean swordfish, with annual landings worth *€ 270 million*.
- The EU operators involved in this fishery often rely primarily on this stock and have few other fishing opportunities, in particular following the implementation of the Recovery plan for eastern bluefin tuna and the subsequent reductions of the TAC for this stock. In fact, a noticeable shift of the fishing effort took place from the bluefin tuna to the swordfish fisheries.
- The fishing activities for Mediterranean swordfish sustain directly around *20,000 jobs*, with an additional *10,000 ancillary jobs* in coastal communities. Most of these jobs are located in remote coastal and southern areas, characterised by very high unemployment rates and the lack of alternative economic activities.
- This is particularly true for remote islands communities found mainly, but not exclusively in the Ionian, Aegean and Adriatic seas. The high number of these islands means that the EU has around *32.000km* of coastline in the Mediterranean, or *3 times the length of the coastline of all the other Mediterranean nations together*.

Artisanal Fisheries

- The swordfish fishing sector in the Mediterranean is one of the most artisanal sectors in the European Union, with vessels under 10m in length making up to $\frac{3}{4}$ of the EU swordfish fleet.
- These are small scale artisanal and family owned vessels, operating essentially in coastal areas and landing in local ports.
- The swordfish landed are mostly traded and consumed locally, reflecting the strong and historical dependency of the coastal populations on this resource. This supports a local network of economic activities which are otherwise very scarce in remote coastal areas, conferring on this fishery a very significant socio economic importance.
- Among the larger EU vessels, some are, however, also fundamentally artisanal in nature. For instance, the Harpoon fishery in the strait of Sicily, which is very selective, has a minimal ecological footprint as well as very high cultural and historical significance.
- There are few alternative activities for these operators considering the status of most of the fisheries resources in the Mediterranean, and the current lack of fishing opportunities for bluefin tuna for small scale artisanal vessels.

Promotion of Conservation Measures

Faced with the alarming state of the stock, EU Member States have over the years promoted a range of conservation measures going far beyond the measures adopted in ICCAT.

- In terms of fishing capacity, EU member States have operated considerable reductions of their fishing capacity. The number of Greek and Italian vessels, historically the two largest European swordfish fleets, *decreased by in excess of 70%* in recent years. The number of Spanish vessels had been also significantly reduced a decade ago.
- Regarding the protection of juveniles, several Member States implement a *complementary fishery closure for several months*, in addition to the ICCAT closure periods. This is still the case in 2017 with some member States enforcing a six months closure from January to June. The Italian, Spanish and Greek fleets have also adjusted their fishing methods which resulted in a significant reduction of the proportion of juveniles being caught.
- Some Member States also restrict the number of hooks to 500 instead of 2,500 in ICCAT, and the length of the longline is reduced from a limit of 55km in ICCAT to a maximum 15-20km.
- Member States are also implementing additional measures concerning the obligation to carry VMS and electronic logbooks on-board, in order to facilitate the controls and accuracy of the catches reporting.
- At the EU level, a *joint scheme of inspection* covering the swordfish fishery has been implemented since 2014 by the EU member States, the European Fishery Control Agency and the European Commission.
- A central element in the management of the resource at the EU level has been the implementation of an *extensive control framework* adopted under Regulation 1224/2009. This regulation goes significantly further than the ICCAT requirements in terms of controls and allows ensuring the legality of the catches. It imposes specific control requirements on European Member States and their fishing operators. The provisions of EU Regulations 1224/2009 are minimum requirements for European fishing vessels, and some of the most relevant provisions are provided in the **Addendum 1 to Appendix 3** to this document.

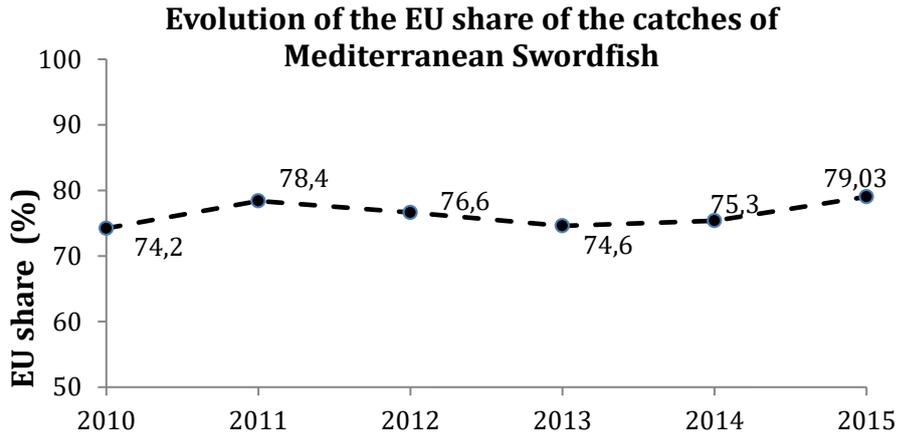


Figure 1. Evolution of the EU share of the catches of Mediterranean swordfish between 2010 and 2015.

Addendum 1 to Appendix 3**Relevant Control Measures Implemented by the European Union****Vessel monitoring system**

Member States of the EU must operate a satellite-based vessel monitoring system for effective monitoring of fishing activities of the fishing vessels flying their flag wherever those vessels may be and of fishing activities in the Member States' waters. This applies to vessels of 12m length overall, with a transmission frequency of 2 hours. In addition, Member States are obliged to operate Fisheries Monitoring Centres and to monitor fishing activities and fishing effort.

Completion and submission of the fishing logbook

Masters of Community fishing vessels of 10 metres' length or more must keep a fishing logbook of their operations, indicating specifically all quantities of each species caught and kept on board above 50 kg of live-weight. The recording of exit/entry into ports areas or areas of conservation is also required, as well as the date, time and coordinates for setting gear and of all operations. The master is also obliged to provide to its competent authorities, within 48 hrs of landing, a landing declaration.

Electronic completion and transmission of fishing logbook data

Masters of Community fishing vessels of 12 metres' length or more must record electronically and send by electronic means the logbook information to the competent authority of the flag Member State at least once a day.

Prior notification

Masters of Community fishing vessels of 12 metres' length or more engaged in fisheries on stocks subject to a multiannual plan, which are under the obligation to record fishing logbook data electronically, must notify the competent authorities of their flag Member State at least four hours before the estimated time of arrival at port.

Electronic completion and transmission of landing declaration data

The master of a Community fishing vessel of 12 metres length or more must record by electronic means the logbook information, and must send it by electronic means to the competent authority of the flag Member State within 24 hours after completion of the landing operation. The landing declaration must indicate information such as the quantities of each species in kilograms in product weight, broken down by type of product presentation or number of individuals.

Traceability

All lots of fisheries and aquaculture products must be traceable at all stages of production, processing and distribution, from catching or harvesting to retail stage. Fisheries and aquaculture products placed on the market in the Community must be adequately labelled to ensure the traceability of each lot.

Member States must ensure that operators have in place systems and procedures to identify any operator from whom they have been supplied with lots of fisheries and aquaculture products and to whom these products have been supplied. This information must be made available to the competent authorities' on demand.

First sale of fisheries products

Member States must ensure that all fisheries products are first marketed or registered at an auction centre or to registered buyers or to producer organisations.

The buyer of fisheries products from a fishing vessel at first sale must be registered with the competent authorities of the Member State where the first sale takes place.

Weighing of fishery products

Member States must ensure that all fishery products are weighed on systems approved by the competent authorities, unless it has adopted a sampling plan approved by the European Commission and based on the risk-based methodology adopted by the European Commission. The weighing must be carried out on landing prior to the fisheries products being held in storage, transported or sold.

Completion and submission of sales notes

Registered buyers, registered auctions or other bodies or persons authorised by Member States which are responsible for the first marketing of fisheries products landed in a Member State, must submit, if possible electronically, within 48 hours after the first sale, a sales note to the competent authorities of the Member State in whose territory the first sale takes place.

Electronic completion and transmission of sales notes data

Registered buyers, registered auctions or other bodies or persons authorised by Member States must record by electronic means the information, and must send it by electronic means within 24 hours after completion of the first sale to the competent authorities of the Member State in whose territory the first sale takes place.

Take-over declaration

When the fisheries products are intended for sale at a later stage, registered buyers, registered auctions or other bodies which are responsible for the first marketing of fisheries products landed in a Member State must submit within 48 hours after completion of landing a take-over declaration to the competent authorities of the Member State where the take-over takes place.

Completion and submission of the transport document

Fisheries products landed into the Community, either unprocessed or after having been processed on board, for which neither a sales note nor a take-over declaration has been submitted and which are transported to a place other than that of landing, must be accompanied by a document drawn up by the transporter until the first sale has taken place. The transporter must submit, within 48 hours after the loading, a transport document to the competent authorities of the Member State in whose territory the landing has taken place or other bodies authorised by it.

Statement by Algeria [PA4_008A/i2017]

Artisanal fishing plays a very important social and economic role in Algeria. It represents more than 60% of the fishing fleet, employs at least 60% of workers directly taking part in fishing activities, and contributes to around 25% of the total landings from capture fisheries.

Despite the 1,600 km of coastal line, the geomorphology of the Algerian coastal area shows a rugged terrain, which allows to limit trawl fishing in a natural way, and therefore, preserve the stocks against different forms of overexploitation. This geomorphology, however, enables the development of artisanal fisheries.

These type of artisanal fisheries, conducted by small vessels, significantly contributes to the stabilization of isolated and remote coastal populations, to respond to the expectations of the population scattered along the coast, in particular, young people, and search for income-generating and self-consumption activities for these populations, mainly in remote and mountainous areas. Out of 5,043 fishing vessels registered in the national fleet registry, 60% are small "métier" type vessels.

As regards swordfish fishing, this is mainly carried out by small scale vessels. Of the 445 units registered in the ICCAT register, the fleet is comprised of the following vessels:

- 77% measuring between 4.8m and less than 10m;
- 22% measuring between 10m and less than 15m;
- 1% measuring over 15m;

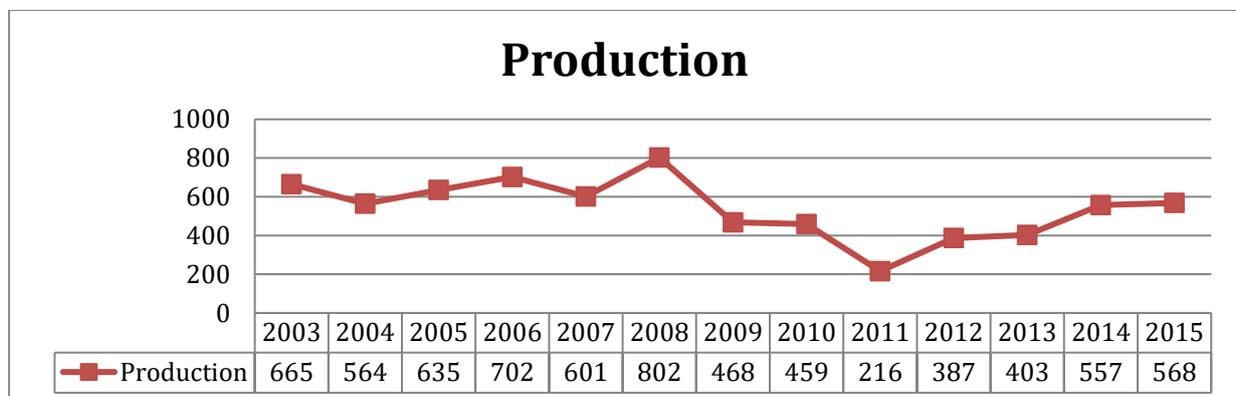
Taking into account the above mentioned data, it is observed that swordfish fishing is conducted almost exclusively by the artisanal fleet.

As regards the swordfish production, it should be noted, that according to the statistics on landings, Algeria accounted for an average production of 566 t throughout the last 15 years (2001-2015). Statistical analysis regarding the production shows that Algeria and other countries are not responsible for the swordfish stock decline.

The marine professionals who carry out activities in this fishery sector account for around 5,000 people, i.e.: more than 11% of registered marine professionals.

As regards swordfish trade, the total swordfish caught is destined to the Algerian market. The last swordfish exports date back to 2009.

Algeria is aware of the implementation of a multi-annual recovery plan for Mediterranean swordfish principle, however, Algeria wishes that the quota allocation be carried out in a fair and transparent manner, taking into account the socio-economic conditions of each CPC.



Statement by Turkey [PA4_006/i2017]

Turkey holds the view that the current management and conservation measures that have been adopted at the 20th Special Meeting of the Commission are obviously far from being sufficient to remediate the deteriorating stocks of the Mediterranean swordfish (Med-SWO)¹.

In consequence of harsh and effective conservation measures taken voluntarily in the last decade, Turkey leads among the CPCs whose fishers have suffered the most, socially and economically, since Med-SWO landings have relatively been reduced.

As a matter of fact, Turkey has adopted a precautionary approach over the past decades and has voluntarily restricted its fleet capacity to only about 150 fishing vessels, on yearly basis, from among 14,650 active vessels under 15 meters LoA, at the risk of fishermen's welfare and livelihood. Harboring one of the largest and most powerful fleets among other Mediterranean CPCs, Turkey could have realized a lot more Med-SWO catches if it had not observed the very principles of responsible fisheries management properly. With this approach, Turkey has never put in place a management mechanism to increase its fishing capacity towards Med-SWO and thus fishing practices and volume of catches and landings have remained constant without any increase over the years, despite these figures could have been boosted easily. Instead Turkey preferred to introduce a series of stringent measures, including prohibition of the unique and most efficient fishing gear being utilized traditionally in Med-SWO fishery for the benefit of an effective conservation and fisheries management.

Average yearly catches of Turkey have decreased sharply as a result of effective capacity limitations and further strengthened administrative measures for special fishing permits since decades. This downward trend had almost "hit rock bottom" for the period 2011-2015 when Turkey prohibited fishermen's traditional fishing gear as a further conservative measure (**Figure 1**).

In the same period, despite a new conservatory approach adopted by ICCAT in 2011 (Rec. 11-03) with a view to improve the declining swordfish stocks, some of CPCs are seen to have increased their Med-SWO catch shares proportionally, quite the contrary in comparison with that of Turkey.

Under such terms, in the case that quotas are allocated on the basis of previous catches only, those CPCs who have caught more Med-SWO irresponsibly would be more advantageous than the CPCs who behaved responsibly in terms of conservation. In this respect, it is unacceptable to base allocations only to "historical catch figures".

Before anything else, TAC allocation should be made in a fair, equitable and transparent manner pursuant to proper and fair criteria to be adopted by common consent. Due regard should be paid to efforts exerted by Turkey and by some CPCs that have adopted and implemented a conservative approach in the region with the view of achieving a much better and improved stock status for Med-SWO, even before introduction of a binding recommendation.

Along these lines, Turkey believes that a reward and fair compensation should be granted to those Parties (CPCs) that have voluntarily kept held their catch levels stable without allowing an increase. Such compensation should also apply to those Parties who have lost their traditional catch levels dramatically, especially in the last decade, due to implementing rules of management methods recommended by ICCAT in a very strict way for the benefits of stock recovery. Thus a special approach should be granted to those parties which adopted precautionary approach and imposed further and stricter measures although they have had sufficient fishing capacities.

¹ During the Panel 4 sessions, Turkey indicated that it would not break the consensus reached on the *Draft Recommendation by ICCAT replacing the Recommendation [13-04] and establishing a multi-annual recovery plan for Med-SWO (PA4-810/16)* but also requested the following statement to be included in the final report of Panel 4; "Turkey expressed concern from adoption of insufficient technical management measures through the proposal (PA4-810/16) that still fall behind the legal practices in Turkey. For instance, minimum size should never be smaller than 125 cm LJFL, hook size should never be smaller than 9 cm and maximum number of hooks to be fixed should never exceed 1000. Notwithstanding, Turkey would still join the consensus on this proposal with a view to contribute joint efforts towards a better stock status."

In addition, Turkey would like to emphasize that a fair and equitable quota allocation criteria should also guarantee the rights of coastal Mediterranean states with limited fishing capacities in view of the fact that these states could participate swordfish fishery in the Mediterranean in the future.

Turkey trusts that unjust, improper and unfair bluefin allocation precedent, discriminating Turkey unjustly for more than a decade, will not be repeated in this Panel. Turkey believes that it is time for ICCAT to demonstrate how a well-working mechanism for a fair and equitable allocation scheme could be established successfully to underlay an effective fisheries management regime for Med-SWO.

In this sense, with full commitment to achieve an effective management and stock recovery in line with the Convention objectives, Turkey hopes that the meeting will result in success in terms of establishing a fair, equitable and commonly agreed TAC allocation for Med-SWO.

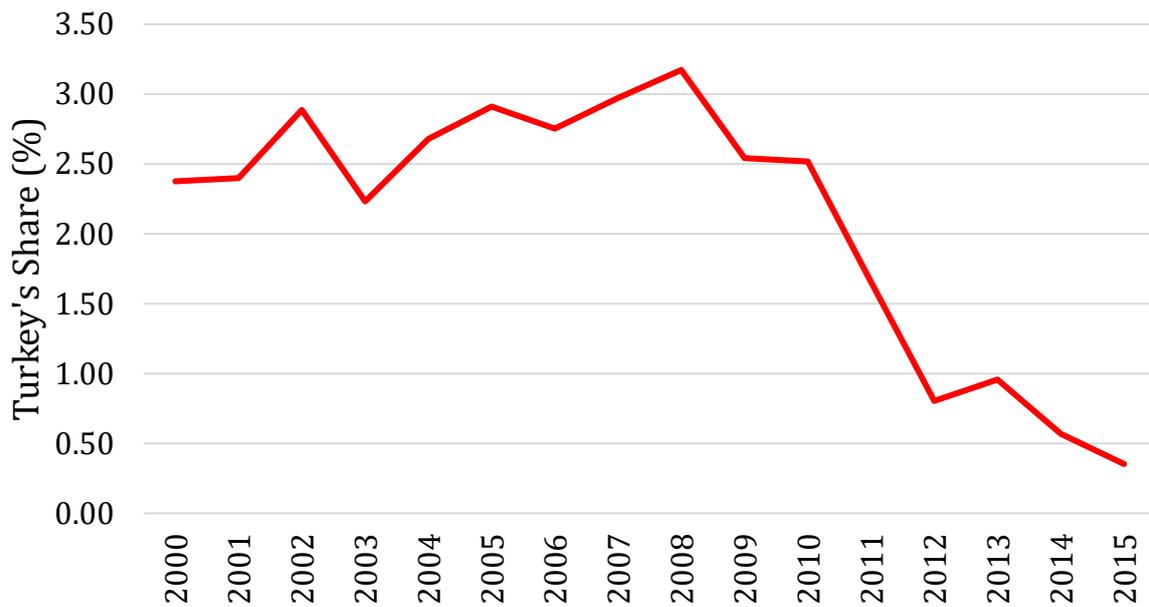


Figure 1. Turkey's share of the catches of Mediterranean swordfish between 2000 and 2015.

Statement by Morocco [PA4_007/i2017]

The Commission implemented a 15 year recovery plan for Mediterranean swordfish stock [ICCAT Recommendation 16-05] at the 20th Special meeting held in Vilamoura (Portugal).

This note aims at providing information on swordfish fishing activity in the Kingdom of Morocco.

Socio-economic aspects

- Moroccan Mediterranean swordfish fishing is a subsistence fishing activity which is artisanal (artisanal boats with a LHT < 7m and an engine power < 20 CV) ;
- Around 3,400 fishing units are registered in the ICCAT Register of Mediterranean swordfish, of which 90% are composed of artisanal boats;
- This activity generates around 62,000 direct and indirect jobs;
- The catches for Mediterranean swordfish are estimated at around 8 million Euros per year;
- The average swordfish catches in the Mediterranean Moroccan coast during the 2005-2009 period are estimated at 1,970 t;
- The average catches for swordfish in the Mediterranean Moroccan coast during the 2010-2014 period, were estimated at 1,000 t, which represents a reduction of 50% compared to the average catches in the 2005-2009 period;
- This reduction of catches is mainly due to the elimination of drift gillnet in the Moroccan coasts since 2010, in accordance with ICCAT Recommendation 03-04, measure which was adopted for the conservation of this stock.

Strengthening of conservation and management measures

- Elimination of drift gillnet (FMD) since 2010;
- Strengthening of the national legal arsenal aimed at the prohibition of FMDs by means of adopting several legal texts;
- Adoption of a management plan for this species including the following management measures:
 - Implementation of the VMS for vessels over 15m;
 - Implementation of the computerized traceability system throughout the chain (from catch to export);
 - Identification of artisanal boats by radio-frequency (project under way).

Negative socio-economic impacts of FMD elimination

The national program to eliminate FMDs has had negative socio-economic impacts on the population of this area where fishing constitutes one of the main activities, with a considerable loss of jobs.

- This program has an overall budget envelope in the amount of 25 million Euros, destined to the following output: demolition and elimination of the National Registry vessel, withdrawal of FMDs and conversion and compensation of sea fishermen working onboard these vessels.

The Kingdom of Morocco, convinced of the need to conserve this stock, calls for a fair and equitable allocation key, in accordance with the provisions of ICCAT Resolution 15-13.

**EU Proposal of the ICCAT Working Group Established under
paragraph 3 of Recommendation 16-05 [PA4_009B/i2017]**

Following paragraphs 2 and 3 of *Recommendation by ICCAT replacing the Recommendation [13-04] and establishing a Multi-annual Recovery Plan for Mediterranean Swordfish* [Rec. 16-05], a Working Group was established and met in Madrid on 20-22 February 2017 to:

- (a) Establish a fair and equitable allocation scheme of the TAC of Mediterranean swordfish;
- (b) Establish a CPC quota for 2017 without prejudice to the allocation scheme aforementioned;
- (c) Establish the mechanism to manage the TAC.

The total allowable catch (TAC) was fixed at 10,500 t.

The reference period used for the calculation of quota allocations was fixed as 2010-2014. The Working Group has taken into consideration other criteria, as set out under ICCAT Resolution [15-13], notably the efforts made by CPCs to manage the fisheries and to apply in some cases stricter rules than those defined in ICCAT recommendations, as well as socio economic considerations.

CPCs Members of the Panel 4 agree on the following table:

	<i>CPC TAC allocation (%)</i>	<i>2017 Quota per CPC (t)</i>
Algeria	5.238	550.000
European Union	70.756	7410.480
Morocco	9.952	1045.000
Tunisia	9.597	1007.694
Turkey	4.200	441.000
Reserve Other CPCs	0.436	45.826
Total	100	10,500

Starting in 2017, CPCs agree to implement with immediate effect the quota allocation defined in the table above. Furthermore, CPCs shall inform the ICCAT Secretariat without delay when 80% of their quota has been exhausted and provide to the ICCAT Secretariat more regular catch reports (on a monthly basis) than defined under Paragraph 37 of ICCAT Recommendation [16-05].

If in a given year, a CPC total catch exceeds its allocated quota, the excess amount shall be deducted the following year from the adjusted quota of the CPC concerned. The agreed allocation key provided in the table above could be inserted in ICCAT Recommendation [16-05].

Appendix 8

Statement by Albania [PA4_010/i2017]

As a continuation of my first pronouncement, despite the fact that Albania has not authorized yet the fishing vessels having the swordfish as target fishing, this type of fishing is reality: as by-catch or hooks/longline, artisanal or commercial. The problem is not reporting those activities and catches. The conservation measures start from clearing the situation, then management and monitoring and control.

In fact Albania didn't submit a list of fishing vessels less than 7m length overall, and the vessels over 12m length, that intend to fish swordfish as request of Rec. 16-05 because we are at the recovery of the fishing fleet register after a total census of entire fishing vessels. The list will be sent soon.

Setting a worthy quota for Albania will bring not only the fair economic incomes but, above all, will create premises for tutelage, local and international, to manage, monitor, observe, to report, then it will recovering this fishing resource from abusive practices.

Albania signed with FAO the "Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing", as well as the VMS system is in place. All those are the good premises that guaranty the correct tutelage and fishing process.

Appendix 9

Statement by Libya [PA4_011/i2017]

Note from Libya to the Meeting of the Mediterranean Swordfish Working Group established under paragraph 3 of Rec. 16-05.

The proposal by the EU of the ICCAT Working Group established under paragraph 3 of Rec. 16-05 [document PA4_009/i2017] referring to the allocation of swordfish quotas has relegated Libya to a residual number of CPCs grouped together under "Reserve Other CPCs", allocating to them a total olympic quota in the amount of 48.500 t.

In 2016 the Head Delegate of Libya was denied to obtain a visa by the Portuguese Authorities and could not participate in 20th Special Meeting of the Commission held in Portugal and unfortunately this led to Libya missing the opportunity of presenting a request for membership on Panel 4, however, Libya did participate actively in the preparation for this swordfish Working Group and submitted the required statistics and information in its fishing report for 2016.

Over the last years Libya has also been experiencing a serious upheaval in its political life and the members of this Authority, although only starting their brief in 2016, have ensured that the fisheries in the country are managed as best as possible.

Libya is responsible for one of the largest fishing zones in the Central Mediterranean where swordfish is concerned and not taking this fact into account can only be detrimental to the management and eventual survival of this species.

**Requests for clarification of Rec. 16-05
presented by the ICCAT Secretariat [PA4_003A/i2017]**

1. SWO-MED Vessel Lists

Rec. 16-05: Paragraphs 27-29 shall be implemented in accordance with the procedures laid down in Rec. 13-13, so therefore the Secretariat understands that such lists shall be published on the ICCAT web site.

Notwithstanding, no mention is made to publication of the (rod and line) Sport and Recreational fisheries vessel lists.

1. Does the Panel foresee that such vessels be included in the data base of the ICCAT Record, assigned an ICCAT number and published on the ICCAT Web site? **YES**
2. Confirmation is sought that all fields in para 21 are obligatory (unless marked with “if any”, whereby it would be obligatory only if existing) i.e. all vessels must be reported with a minimum of name, register number and length, as well as owner/operator information. **NO, IF MORE THAN ONE OPERATOR, ONLY OWNER NAME MAY BE SUBMITTED**
3. Is this sport and recreational vessel list an annual list, or are any authorisation periods required? Or, as in the case of 20m+ list, the period of authorisation for these vessels can be indefinite (automatically renewed each year), and only additions / deletions / change of owner-operator or name need be reported? **AS 20M, INDEFINITE IF REQUIRED**

2. ICCAT Scheme of Joint International Inspection

Paragraph 11 of Annex 1 of Rec. 16-05 stipulates that *Inspectors shall draw up a report of the inspection in a form approved by the ICCAT Commission.*

1. Can the same basic report format be used for both eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin (E-BFT) and Mediterranean swordfish (Med-SWO)? **YES**
2. If yes to above, is the format developed by the Secretariat (**Addendum 1 to Appendix 10**) acceptable to the Panel, and should copies of this be printed and provided, to CPCs as is currently the case for the E-BFT Inspection Scheme on request? **CHANGES HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED**
3. If yes to above, would concerned CPCs be in a position to provide translation templates in languages other than ICCAT official languages? (eg. Arabic, Korean, Japanese, Turkish). **YES FROM TURKEY. OTHER LANGUAGES TO BE DETERMINED WITH THE CPCs IF FORMAT AGREED**

3. Fishing plans

Paragraph 10 of Rec. 16-05 required CPCs to submit a fishing plan. It is understood that no endorsement of such plans is required. The Secretariat has developed, on the basis of the E-BFT template, a working draft format for the submission of such plans.

1. Is such a standardised format acceptable to the Panel, or is a free-text submission preferred? **STANDARD PREFERRED**
2. If a template is preferred, what changes to the working draft (**Addendum 2 to Appendix 10**) are required? **CHANGES HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED**

ICCAT INSPECTION REPORTS

REPORT OF INSPECTION N°

PART I: COMMON TO E-BFT AND TO SWO-MED

- 1. Inspector(s) Inspector's witness
 - 1.1 Name..... Name.....
 - 1.2 Nationality..... Nationality.....
 - 1.3 Contracting Parties..... Contracting Parties
 - 1.4 ICCAT Identity Card number..... ICCAT Identity Card number.....

- 2. Vessel carrying the Inspector
 - 2.1 Name and Registration
 - 2.2 Flag.....

- 3. Vessel inspected
 - 3.1 Name and Registration.....
 - 3.2 Flag.....
 - 3.3 Captain (Name and address).....
 - 3.4 Ship owner (Name and address).....
 - 3.5 ICCAT Record number.....
 - 3.6 Type of vessel.....

- 4. Position
 - 4.1 As determined by the inspector: Lat..... Long.....
 - 4.2 As determined by the captain of the fishing vessel: Lat..... Long.....
 - 4.3 Time (GMT) when position was recorded:

- 5. Date (dd/mm/yyyy).....

- 6. Time
 - 6.1 On arrival on board.....
 - 6.2 Of departure from the vessel.....

7. Fishing gear on board

Longline

Purse seine

Hand Line

Trolling lines

Harpoon

Pole & Line (Baitboat)

Other (specify)

8. Statement of photographs taken with description of subjects:

9. List of documents inspected and comments:

9.1 Log book Yes No

Infringement Yes No

9.2 BCD/Statistical document Yes No

Infringement Yes No

9.3 Transfer / transhipment declaration Yes No

Infringement Yes No

9.4 Other (specify)

10. Results of the inspection of the fish on board:

10.1 Species observed on board

SPECIES				
TOTAL CATCH (kg)				
INFORMATION SOURCE				
PRODUCT TYPE				
SAMPLE INSPECTED				
% UNDER MIN SIZE				

10.2 Species declared to be in the cage/s – for E-BFT

Towing cage(s) Yes No Number of cages:.....
Transfer document No..... Date of first transfer Farm of destination.....
Catching vessel name.....
ICCAT No.....
Cage No Species..... Number of fish..... Weight (kg).....

11. Infringements of ICCAT conservation and management measures observed (description of infringement with mention of legal reference, and if serious violation(s) have been detected, please complete the attached sheet)

12. Inspector's comments (if necessary use a complementary sheet specifying: "*attachment to ICCAT report number xxxx*")

13. Inspector's signature _____ Witness' signature _____

14. Observer's name, comments and signature

15. Captain's comments and signature

SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OBSERVED

Vessel name: _____
Vessel flag: _____
ICCAT number: _____

- fishing without a license, permit or authorization issued by the flag CPC;
- failure to maintain sufficient records of catch and catch-related data in accordance with the Commission’s reporting requirements or significant misreporting of such catch and/or catch-related data;
- fishing in a closed area;
- fishing during a closed season;
- intentional taking or retention of species in contravention of any applicable conservation and management measure adopted by the ICCAT;
- significant violation of catch limits or quotas in force pursuant to the ICCAT rules;
- use of prohibited fishing gear;
- falsification or intentional concealment of the markings, identity or registration of a fishing vessel;
- concealment, tampering with or disposal of evidence relating to investigation of a violation;
- multiple violations which taken together constitute a serious disregard of measures in force pursuant to the ICCAT;
- assault, resistance, intimidation, sexual harassment, interference with, or undue obstruction or delay of an authorized inspector or observer;
- intentional tampering with or disabling the vessel monitoring system;
- interference with the satellite monitoring system and/or operates without VMS system;
- transshipment at sea
- other (specify)

PART II: ONLY FOR E-BFT

SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OBSERVED SPECIFIC TO E-BFT

E-BFT:

- fishing with assistance of spotter planes;

- transfer activity without transfer declaration;

Inspector's signature _____ Witness' signature _____

Date _____

Addendum 2 to Appendix 10**Mediterranean swordfish tuna fishing, inspection and capacity management plan****Name of CPC: XXX****Fishing Plan Year: 20XX****1. Introduction**

Each CPC will provide a summary of its fishing plan, which includes information on their allocated quota, number of fishing vessels by gear type, and relevant national legislation.

2. Details of fishing plan

Each CPC will provide information on all fishing gear groups that catch Mediterranean Swordfish, including the total number of vessels in each group, how quotas are allocated to each gear group and, where applicable, how they are allocated to each vessel in that group. CPCs will also provide information on method(s) used to manage quotas as well as how catches are monitored and controlled to ensure vessel and gear group quotas are respected.

CPCs should also complete the following table:

	<i>ICCAT Requirement (per 16-05)</i>	<i>Explanation of CPC actions taken to implement</i>	<i>Relevant domestic laws or regulations (as applicable)</i>	<i>Note</i>
1	Fleet development plan (para. 9)			
2	Choice of closed Fishing Seasons (paras. 11-13)			
3	Recreational and sports fisheries (paras. 21-26)			
4	Allocation for by-catch and detail of limit per vessel/operation (para. 30)			
5	Catch recording and reporting (paras. 35-37)			
6	Measures taken to control landings (para 34)			
7	CPC Scientific Observer (para. 44)			
8	Other requirements (specify)			

Inspection Plan**a) CPC's inspection and control (para 13)**

Each CPC will provide information on its plan for inspection and control of closed season.

b) Joint international inspection (para 39-41; Annex 1)

Each CPC will provide information about joint international inspections that are implemented in accordance with Part IV of Rec. 16-05 (if applicable).

Capacity Management Plan (para 6-10)

Each CPC will provide the number of fishing vessels using the template provided by the Secretariat (attached).

MED SWO Vessel Fleet	Choose one		New < 7 m vessels in 2017 (para 7)	Total Fleet (vessels)			% difference between reference period and 2017 (max 5%)	% difference between reference period and 2018 (max 5%)	% difference between reference period and 2019 (max 5%)
	Number of vessels in reference period (average 2013-2016)	Number of vessels in reference period (Year 2016)		2017	2018	2019			
Longliner over 40m									
Longliner between 24 and 40m									
Longliner less than 24m									
Handline									
Harpoon									
Sport/Recreational (Rod & reel)									
Trap									
Other (please specify)									
Total number of vessels < 7 m									
Total number of vessels > 7 m									
Total fleet									
Quota									
Adjusted quota (if applicable)									