

Original: Spanish

FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF THE REPUBLIC OF EL SALVADOR

Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Center for Development of Fisheries and Aquaculture

(Document prepared due to the entry into force of Recommendation 15-01 of the International Commission for the conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT), and the requirement laid down in paragraph 4 (c) of the Recommendation.)

EL SALVADOR, October 2016

Introduction

The Republic of El Salvador is located in Central America, on the coast of the Pacific Ocean with an extension of land of 20,742 Km² and a population of 6.5 million inhabitants in 2015 living within the national territory and 1.5 million living abroad, with a population density of 314 inhabitants/square kilometer.

El Salvador also exercises sovereignty and jurisdiction over the sea, the subsoil and seabed to a distance of 200 nautical miles counted from the line at lowest tide. It has a coastline of 321 kilometers, and an area of around 100,000 square kilometers of Exclusive Economic Zone.

The city of San Salvador is the capital of the country, and where the main Governmental offices are located with a population of 2.2 million. According to the Constitution, the State integrates three branches of power: Executive, Legislative and Judicial. The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, through the General Directorate of Fishing and Aquaculture (CENDEPESCA) is the Governmental entity which acts as competent authority in this field.

The fishing activity is divided into four main categories: fishing of highly migratory species, industrial fishing, artisanal fishing and inland fishing. As regards to aquaculture, shrimp and tilapia farming activity should be emphasized.

El Salvador joined the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) in 1997 and ratified the Antigua Convention in October 2004. Fishing for highly migratory species started in 2001 in the East Pacific Ocean. Moreover, El Salvador has Cooperating non-member status of the Western and Central Pacific Ocean Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) since 2008.

By the end of 2012 it obtained the status of Cooperating non Contracting Party to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), and in December 2014 the ICCAT Convention was ratified by the Government of El Salvador who deposited an instrument of adherence to the FAO Convention and became full member of the Commission.

Currently there are seven Salvadoran flag vessels operating in distant-water fisheries. Six with purse-seine gears and one baitboat. Two purse seiners operate in the areas of IATTC and WCPFC and the other four operate in the ICCAT area. The baitboat vessel operates in waters under IATTC jurisdiction.

A processing facility for tuna products from these fisheries was inaugurated in 2003. Its facilities have steadily expanded to reach a processing capacity of 150 t per day. The processed products originate from domestic fleet catches, as well as from purchases made by the industry in various oceans of the world. Tuna exports are destined mainly to the European market as frozen loins and canned products. The second Salvadoran tuna buyer is the Central American market.

On average, the tuna industry has contributed to 0,44% of the Gross Domestic Product over the last three years at existing prices, helping to create 1,500 jobs, directly and 5,000 indirectly, as well as contributing to food security.

El Salvador seeks alternatives in terms of creating jobs and generating foreign currency in order to develop its impoverished communities. The opportunities provided by the international Law of the Sea with regard to the exploitation of the fisheries resources are included within the country's provisions to develop tuna fisheries in distant waters in accordance with the relevant conservation and management measures.

This Plan is made available to the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) in order to be assessed, and to be granted the status of developing economy, classification established by the World Bank who described El Salvador as a country of medium-low income, for the purpose of allocation of tropical tuna quotas, in the framework of the Recommendation 15-01, which will be reviewed during the 20th Regular meeting of the Commission.

Fishing Vessel Operations and Target Species

Fishing activities in the ICCAT area began in 2015. The target species have only been tropical tunas: yellowfin (*Thunnus albacares*), skipjack (*Katsuwonus pelamis*), bigeye (*Thunnus obesus*), and frigate tuna (*Auxis thazard*) as by-catch species. Fourteen fishing trips, were carried out that year with a total catch of 11,263 t, of which 63% was caught in international waters and 37% in the Exclusive Economic Zones of coastal countries that have issued fishing licenses to the Salvadoran vessels.

The catches by species for 2015 are summarized below.

<i>Species</i>	<i>Catches (t)</i>
SKJ	7,055
YFT	2,781
BET	992
MEL	435
Total	11,263

In 2015, three vessels were registered in the ICCAT record of vessels, only one carried out a fishing trip, currently inactive in the Commission record of vessels.

In 2016, two additional vessels were registered. These vessels already operated in the Atlantic Ocean under another flag, therefore fishing effort has not increased.

The following table shows a history of vessel registrations in the ICCAT record of vessels, flying a Salvadoran flag.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Fishing gear</i>	<i>Date entered into the ICCAT register</i>	<i>Status</i>
MONTEALEGRE	PS	14/01/2015	Active
MONTELAPE	PS	14/01/2015	Active
MONTEROCIO	PS	17/08/2015	Inactive
MONTECELO	PS	10/03/2016	Active
MONTEFRISA NUEVE	PS	10/03/2016	Active

All listed vessels are purse seiners including a description of some of their technical specifications.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Montealegre</i>	<i>Montelape</i>	<i>Montecelo</i>	<i>Montefrisa nueva</i>
TRB	2157	2058	1931	1902
LENGTH (m)*	82.83	78.1	76.8	76.75
BREADTH (m)	12.88	12.88	13.5	13.5
DRAUGHT (m)	8.31	8.31	6.87	6.35
CREW:	28	28	28	28
IRCS	YSC2005	YSC2004	YSC2216	YSC3216
IMO	8021763	8021775	7009152	7409176
ICCAT No.	AT000SLV00001	AT000SLV00002	AT000SLV00005	AT000SLV00004

Control Measures

VMS and Control Measures

The General Law on Management and Promotion of Fisheries and Aquaculture in El Salvador and its Regulation provides for the compulsory use of two-way systems to locate and monitor vessels fishing for highly migratory species. To this end, CENDEPESCA has set up a vessel monitoring center.

Before issuing and renewing fishing licenses, the equipment on board is inspected to ensure that the signal transmission is reliable. CENDEPESCA receives a signal of the vessel position every 60 minutes.

Catches, transshipment and landings are monitored through the mandatory submission of daily logbooks, ICCAT forms for transshipments in port, export invoices (in the event of sale), and tracks of trips generated by the VMS system. Prior authorizations are required for transshipments at port, while transshipments on the high seas are prohibited under national legislation.

As regards catch certificates, El Salvador has adopted the same provisions as those established by the Regulation 1005 / 2008 of the European Union, as well as the statistical document programme for bigeye tuna established by the resolutions or recommendations of the various tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (IATTC, ICCAT, IOTC). All of the above has been implemented to support the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

Observers

Observers have been embarked during the time/area closure established by Recommendations 14-01 and 15-01. El Salvador will continue to comply with these provisions provided they are regulated by the Commission.

Data to the Commission

The report of the data corresponding to 2015 has been difficult since it was the first time El Salvador filled out the SCRS and Commission forms. However, El Salvador is working towards the establishment of an appropriate reporting system for the transmission of reports within the deadlines.

Imposition of sanctions

The General Law on Management and Promotion of Fishing and Aquaculture in El Salvador, in its Articles 76 to 84, established sanctionary procedures against natural or legal persons who contravene the conditions under which fishing licenses are granted.

Fishing licenses are related to the Recommendations or Resolutions of tuna RFMOs under whose jurisdiction the fishing activity is taking place.

High Sea Boarding of Vessels

El Salvador does not object to its vessels on the high seas being boarded as long as this is for inspection purposes and provided the inspectors and the boarding/inspecting procedures are carried out in accordance with the procedures established by the relevant RFMO.

Capacity Management

Artisanal fishing activities are not carried out in the Atlantic Ocean. Currently only purse seiners are fishing. However, the possibility in the medium term, of introducing three additional purse seiners and four longliners, is being considered.

These vessels would operate as fishing vessels in international waters and in Exclusive Economic Zones of countries where fishing licenses can be obtained.

The Recommendation 15-01 limited El Salvador's aspirations in its first year of fishing activities in the ICCAT area, mainly as regards bigeye tuna. It reduced the possibilities of catching this species from 3,500 t to 1,575 t, without taking into account that all international organizations classify this country as a developing economy with medium-low income.

The following table describes the history of bigeye tuna catches. Data for 2016 include catches up to 30 September.

<i>Year</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>
Initial Quota	3,500	1,575 ¹
Adjusted Quota	0	0
Catches	992	1,366

With the available current information, it is estimated that catches of bigeye for 2016 could exceed 2,100 t, as the summary of catches for this year does not include the catches for the first quarter, made by vessels that joined El Salvador in March 2016.

Training of human resources and capacities

Training of inspectors and processing of information

Joint efforts with the local tuna industry to train national inspectors in data collection during landings at port are being carried out, complying with the provisions of Recommendation 15-01, paragraph 42, related to the information on species composition, size composition, weight and biological samples.

In due course, making use of the opportunities granted by the Commission to developing Contracting Parties, El Salvador will request assistance to train staff to process and analyze the information from this fishery to try and contribute to the sustainability of the resources and comply with the various applicable Recommendations.

Future aspirations

As mentioned above, El Salvador is relatively new in exploiting highly migratory species, particularly tuna species. However, in a 15 year period El Salvador has managed to participate in three different RFMOs (IATC, WCPFC, ICCAT) in a responsible manner and in compliance with the various management measures. No vessel has been identified as carrying out illegal fishing practices, and El Salvador has gradually adopted international regulatory instruments applicable to tuna fisheries and its international trade.

¹ Catch limit established in Rec. 15-01, paragraph 4 (a) (the wording is not in line with the classification of El Salvador) and notified in Annex of Circular 2743/16 of 12 May 2016.

El Salvador aspires to fully develop tropical tuna fisheries in the ICCAT area, activity that allows to create local sources of employment, as well as to generate foreign exchange and food security. This aspiration has been limited since El Salvador has not been granted fair treatment taking into account its status as a State with a developing economy.

El Salvador requests that she be allowed by the Commission to develop tropical tuna fisheries in its area of influence, granting the same quota of bigeye tuna as that allocated to other countries classified as developing economies.

Guarantees of the Country regarding Compliance

The history of compliance in others RFMOs, such as IATC and WCPFC, regarding the established management measures, is a practical example of El Salvador's commitment towards the future of the Commission. Some members, with a history of 50 years in the Commission, can consider the compliance of Recommendations as routine, however, for a small developing country with budgetary limitations, compliance becomes a challenge and commitment. Thus, the following statements should be thoroughly considered by Contracting Parties when assessing El Salvador's aspirations and request:

- Salvadoran vessels are monitored on a permanent basis with the VMS device on board and transmit a position every hour.
- El Salvador does not allow transshipments on the high seas; tuna transshipments are only allowed in those ports mentioned in the fishing licenses.
- Salvadoran vessels have fishing licenses issued by coastal countries where they carry out their fishing operations.
- El Salvador complies with the time/area closure and guarantees 100% observer coverage on their vessels during this period.
- El Salvador flagged vessels have a clean record as regards illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities.
- El Salvador has agreed for its vessels to be boarded on high seas for inspection purposes and by inspectors authorized to do so, under the guidelines established by the Commission.
- In accordance with ICCAT regulations, El Salvador is committed to provide catch and fishing effort data.

Finally, El Salvador would like to transmit its desire and interest to host the Panel 1 meeting (tropical tunas) or, alternatively, the Joint Tuna RFMO FAD Working Group meeting. The latter meeting was a possibility considered and mentioned at the last SCRS meeting. This would allow El Salvador to show the Commission and the observers the importance of the tuna industry for the economic and social development of its various communities.