

Original: English

**DRAFT RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT ON A MULTI-ANNUAL
CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME FOR NORTH ATLANTIC ALBACORE**

Proposal submitted by the European Union

RECALLING the Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning the Limitation of Fishing Capacity on Northern Albacore [Rec. 98-08], the Recommendation by ICCAT concerning Management Measures for Northern Albacore [Rec. 99-05], the Supplemental Recommendation by ICCAT concerning the North Atlantic Albacore Rebuilding Programme [Rec. 13-05] and the Recommendation by ICCAT to establish harvest control rules for the North Atlantic Albacore stock [Rec. 15-04];

RECOGNISING that the set of measures laid down in those Recommendations provide together for a multi-annual conservation and management programme for North Atlantic albacore;

ACKNOWLEDGING that it would be appropriate to streamline the existing measures concerning North Atlantic albacore and combine them into one Recommendation;

NOTING that the objective of the Convention is to maintain populations at levels that will support maximum sustainable catch (usually referred to as MSY);

CONSIDERING that the 2016 Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) stock assessment concluded that the relative abundance of North Atlantic albacore has continued to increase over the last decades and is likely somewhere in the green area of the Kobe plot;

RECALLING the importance that all fleets participating in the northern albacore fishery submit the required data (catch, effort and catch-at-size) on their fisheries for transmission to the SCRS;

RECOGNISING that it would be appropriate, as already applicable to other stocks under the purview of ICCAT, to establish an ICCAT register of vessels authorized to fish North Atlantic albacore;

CONSIDERING that the Standing Working Group to Enhance Dialogue between Fisheries Scientists and Managers (SWGSM) has proposed, among other case studies, North Atlantic albacore as a suitable candidate to examine harvest control rules;

NOTING the progress achieved so far by the SCRS in the work for testing harvest control rules and conducting management strategy evaluations for North Atlantic albacore and in particular the Kobe II Strategy matrix showing the different levels of probability of being in the green quadrant for different combinations of reference point values;

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION
OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) RECOMMENDS THAT:

**PART I
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Multi-annual Management and Conservation Programme

1. Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities (CPCs) whose vessels fish North Atlantic albacore in the Convention area shall implement this Multi-annual Management and Conservation Programme.
2. The management objective for the Northern Atlantic albacore stock is:
 - (a) to maintain the stock in the green zone of the Kobe plot, with at least a 60% probability, while maximizing long-term yield from the fishery, and
 - (b) where the spawning stock biomass (SSB) has been assessed by the SCRS as below the level capable of producing MSY (SSBMSY), to rebuild SSB to or above SSBMSY, with at least a 60% probability, and within as short time as possible, by 2020 at the latest, while maximizing average catch and minimizing inter-annual fluctuations in TAC levels.

**PART II
CATCH LIMITS**

TAC and catch limits

3. An annual Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of 28,000 t for North Atlantic Albacore is established for 2017 and 2018 and of 30,000 t for subsequent years of the Multi-annual Programme, subject to review based on the advice of the SCRS in 2018.
4. This annual TAC shall be allocated among the ICCAT Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities (hereafter referred to as CPCs) according to the following:

<i>CPC</i>	<i>Quota (t) for the period 2017-2018</i>	<i>Quota (t) for the period 2019-2020</i>
European Union	21,551.3*	23,090.7
Chinese Taipei	3,271.7**	3,505.4
United States	527	564.6
Venezuela	250	267.9

[The European Union will transfer 20 t from its quota to Venezuela in 2014]*

*[** Chinese Taipei will transfer 100 t from its quota to St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 2014, 2015 and 2016 / Chinese Taipei will also transfer 200 t from its quota to Belize in 2014, 2015 and 2016]*

5. CPCs other than those mentioned in paragraph 4 shall limit their annual catches to 200 t in 2017-2018 and to 215 t in 2019-2020.
6. By derogation to paragraphs 4 and 5, Japan shall endeavor to limit its total North Atlantic albacore annual catches to a maximum of 4% in weight of its total bigeye tuna longline catch in the Atlantic Ocean.

Underage or overage of catch

7. Any unused portion or excess of a CPC's annual quota/catch limit may be added to/shall be deducted from, according to the case, the respective quota/catch limit during or before the adjustment year, in the following way:

<i>Year of Catch</i>	<i>Adjustment Year</i>
2017	2019
2018	2020
2019	2021
2020	2022

However, the maximum underage that a Party may carry-over in any given year shall not exceed 25% of its initial catch quota.

If, in any year, the combined landings of CPCs exceed the TAC of 28,000 t, the Commission will re-evaluate this Recommendation at its next Commission meeting and recommend further conservation measures, as appropriate.

**PART III
CAPACITY MANAGEMENT MEASURES**

8. CPCs fishing for northern albacore shall limit the fishing capacity of their vessels, exclusive of recreational vessels, for this stock from 1999 onwards, through a limitation of the number vessels to the average number in the period 1993-1995.
9. The provisions of paragraph 8 do not apply to CPCs whose average catches are less than 200 t.

**PART IV
CONTROL MEASURES**

Specific authorization to fish for North Atlantic albacore

10. CPCs shall issue specific authorizations to vessels 20 meters LOA or greater flying their flag allowed to fish North Atlantic albacore in the Convention area, and to vessels flying their flag used for any kind of support of this fishing activity (hereafter referred to as "authorized vessels").

ICCAT Record of vessels authorized to fish North Atlantic albacore

11. The Commission shall establish and maintain an ICCAT record of vessels authorised to fish North Atlantic albacore. Fishing vessels 20 meters LOA or greater not entered into this record are deemed not to be authorized to fish, retain on board, tranship, transport, transfer, process or land north Atlantic albacore from the Convention area.
12. CPCs shall notify the list of authorized vessels to the Executive Secretary in an electronic form and in accordance with the format set in the Guidelines for Submitting Data and Information Required by ICCAT.
13. CPCs shall, without delay, notify the Executive Secretary of any addition to, deletion from and/or modifications of the initial list. Periods of authorization for modifications or additions to the list shall not include dates more than 45 days prior to the date of submission of the changes to the Secretariat. The Secretariat shall remove from the ICCAT Record of Vessels any vessel for which the periods of authorization have expired.
14. The Executive Secretary shall, without delay, post the record of authorized vessels on the ICCAT website, including any additions, deletions and/or modifications so notified by CPCs.

15. Conditions and procedures referred to in the *Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning the Establishment of an ICCAT Record of Vessels 20 meters in Length Overall or Greater Authorized to Operate in the Convention Area* [Rec. 13-13] shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Vessels actively fishing North Atlantic albacore in a given year

16. Each CPC shall by 31 July each year notify to the Executive Secretary the list of authorized vessels flying their flag which have fished North Atlantic albacore in the Convention area in the previous calendar year.

The Executive Secretary shall report each year these lists of vessels to the Compliance Committee and to the SCRS.

17. Provisions under paragraphs 10 to 16 are not applicable to vessels operating recreational fisheries.

**PART V
HARVEST CONTROL RULES AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVALUATION**

18. In 2017, the SCRS shall refine the testing of candidate reference points (e.g., $SSB_{THRESHOLD}$, SSB_{LIM} and F_{TARGET}) and associated harvest control rules (HCRs)¹ that would support the management objective expressed in paragraph 2 above. The SCRS shall also provide statistics to support decision-making in accordance with the performance indicators in Annex 2.
19. The result of the analyses described in paragraph 18 will be discussed in a dialogue between scientists and managers to be organised in 2017, either during a meeting of the SWGSM or as an inter-sessional meeting of Panel 2.
20. Based on the SCRS inputs and advice provided pursuant to paragraph 18 above and the dialogue process indicated in paragraph 19, the Commission shall then adopt HCR for the northern albacore stock, including pre-agreed management actions to be taken under various stock conditions. For this specific purpose, the management actions below will be considered by the Commission and updated as necessary:

- (a) If the average spawning stock biomass (SSB) level is less than SSB_{LIM} (*i.e.*, $SSB < SSB_{LIM}$), the Commission shall adopt severe management actions immediately to reduce the fishing mortality rate, including measures that suspend the fishery and initiate a scientific monitoring quota to be able to evaluate stock status. This scientific monitoring quota shall be set at the lowest possible level to be effective. The Commission shall not consider re-opening the fishery until the average SSB level exceeds SSB_{LIM} with a high probability. Further, before reopening the fishery, the Commission shall develop a rebuilding programme in order to ensure that the stock returns to the green zone of the Kobe plot.
- (b) If the average SSB level is equal to or less than $SSB_{THRESHOLD}$ and equal to or above SSB_{LIM} (*i.e.*, $SSB_{LIM} \leq SSB \leq SSB_{THRESHOLD}$) and
- i. F is at or below the level specified in the HCR, the Commission shall assure that that applied management measures will maintain F at or below the level specified in the HCR until the average SSB is above $SSB_{THRESHOLD}$;
 - ii. F is above the level specified in the HCR, the Commission shall take steps to reduce F as specified in the HCR to ensure F is at a level that will rebuild SSB to SSB_{MSY} or above that level.
- (c) If the average SSB is above $SSB_{THRESHOLD}$ but F exceeds F_{TARGET} (*i.e.*, $SSB > SSB_{THRESHOLD}$ and $F > F_{TARGET}$), the Commission shall immediately take steps to reduce F to F_{TARGET} .

¹ **Annex 1** provides a generic form of the HCR recommended by SCRS in 2010 that would be consistent with UNFSA.

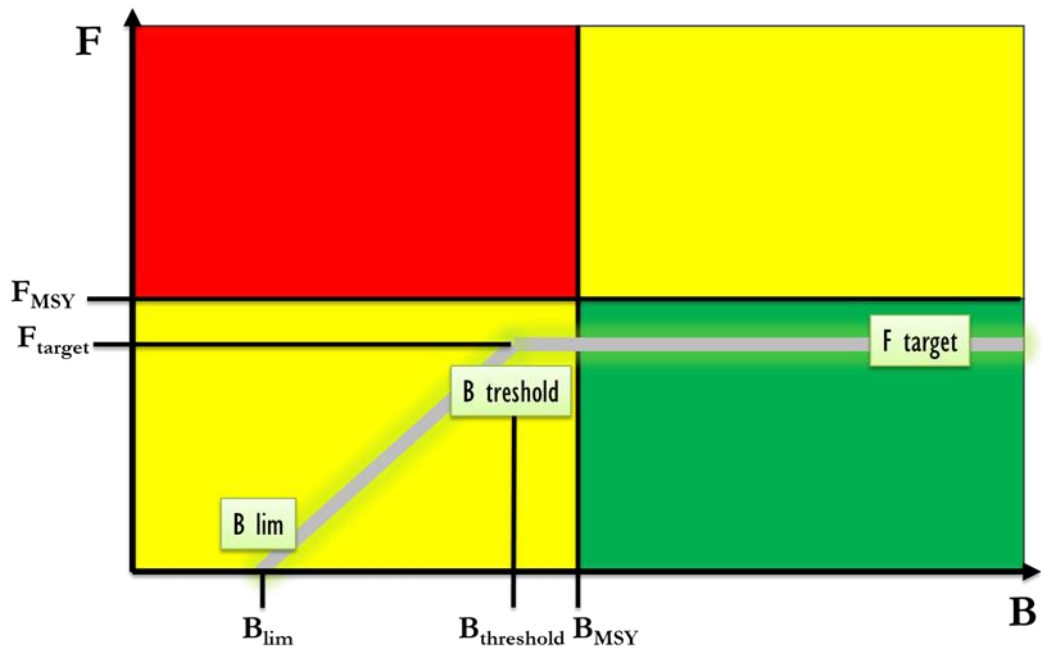
(d) Once the average SSB level reaches or exceeds $SSB_{THRESHOLD}$ and F is less or equal than F_{TARGET} (i.e., $SSB > SSB_{THRESHOLD}$ and $F \leq F_{TARGET}$), the Commission shall assure that applied management measures will maintain F at or below F_{TARGET} and in case F is increased to F_{TARGET} this is done with a gradual and moderate increase.

21. These HCRs should be evaluated by SCRS through the management strategy evaluation process, including in light of new assessments of the stock. The Commission shall review the results of these evaluations and make adjustments to the HCRs as needed.

PART VI FINAL PROVISIONS

22. This Recommendation replaces the *Supplemental Recommendation by ICCAT concerning the North Atlantic Albacore Rebuilding Programme* [Rec. 13-05], the *Recommendation by ICCAT concerning the limitation for fishing capacity on Northern Albacore* [Rec. 98-08], the *Recommendation by ICCAT concerning management measures for Northern Albacore* [Rec. 99-05] and the *Recommendation by ICCAT to establish harvest control rules for the North Albacore stock* [Rec. 15-04].

Generic form of the HCR recommended by SCRS in 2010
that would be consistent with UNFSA (Report of the 2010 WGSAM)



Indicative outline of the performance metrics to be provided by SCRS to support decision-making

Performance metrics and associated statistics	Unit of measurement	Type of statistics
1. Status: maximize probability of maintaining stock in the Kobe green zone		
1.1 Minimum spawner biomass relative to B_{MSY}	B / B_{MSY}	Minimum over [x] years
1.2 Mean spawner biomass relative to B_{MSY}	B / B_{MSY}	Geometric mean over [x] years
1.3 Mean fishing mortality relative to F_{MSY}	F / F_{MSY}	Geometric mean over [x] years
1.4 Probability of being in the Kobe green quadrant	B, F	Proportion of years that $B \geq B_{MSY}$ & $F \leq F_{MSY}$
1.5 Probability of being in the Kobe red quadrant	B, F	Proportion of years that $B \leq B_{MSY}$ & $F \geq F_{MSY}$
2. Safety: maximize the probability of the stock remaining above the biomass limit		
2.1 Probability that spawner biomass is above B_{lim} ($0.4B_{MSY}$)		Proportion of years that $B > B_{lim}$
3. Yield: maximize catches		
3.1 Mean catch		Mean over [x] years
4. Abundance: maximize catch rates to enhance fishery profitability		
4.1 Mean catch rates (CPUEs)	CPUE	Geometric mean over [x] years
5. Stability: maximize stability in catches		
5.1 Mean absolute proportional change in catch	Catch (C)	Mean over [x] years of $ (C_n - C_{n-1}) / C_{n-1} $
5.2 Variance in catch	Catch (C)	Variance over [x] years
5.3 Probability in shutdown	Catch (C)	Proportion of years that $C=0$