

Original: English

**DRAFT RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT FOR THE  
CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF NORTH ATLANTIC ALBACORE**

***Proposal submitted by the United States***

*RECALLING* the Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning the Limitation of Fishing Capacity on Northern Albacore [Rec. 98-08], the Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning Possible Management Measures for Northern Albacore [Rec. 99-05], the Recommendation by ICCAT on North Atlantic Albacore Catch Limits for the Period 2008-2009 [Rec. 07-02], the Recommendation by ICCAT to Establish a Rebuilding Program on North Atlantic Albacore [Rec. 09-05], and the Supplemental Recommendations by ICCAT to Establish a Rebuilding Program on North Atlantic Albacore [Recs. 11-04 and 13-05];

*FURTHER RECALLING* the Recommendation by ICCAT on the Principles of Decision-Making for ICCAT Conservation and Management Measures [Rec. 11-13];

*CONSIDERING* that the 2016 Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) stock assessment concluded that the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring;

*REMAINING* concerned, however, about the significant uncertainties affecting the northern albacore stock assessment, such that the magnitude of the stock's recovery is not well determined, and that given these uncertainties, the SCRS does not recommend an increase in the TAC from current levels of 28,000 t;

*NOTING* that the Recommendation by ICCAT to Establish Harvest Control Rules for the North Atlantic Albacore Stock [Rec. 15-04] established specific management objectives for this stock, including 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;

*WELCOMING* the SCRS proposal to establish a coordinated, multi-year research program in order to advance knowledge of the stock and provide more accurate scientific advice to the Commission;

*TAKING INTO ACCOUNT* the report from the July 2016 intersessional meeting of Panel 2 concerning harvest control rules and management strategy evaluation and seeking to advance this work; and

*RECOGNIZING* that the SCRS intends to complete a full Management Strategy Evaluation for North Atlantic albacore in 2017;

**THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION  
OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) RECOMMENDS AS FOLLOWS:**

**Management Objective**

1. Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties, Entities, and Fishing Entities (CPCs) fishing for northern albacore shall implement a conservation and management program for this stock with the goal of maintaining the stock in the green zone of the Kobe plot with at least a 60% probability, while maximizing long-term yield for the fishery.

**Total Allowable Catch**

2. An annual Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of 28,000 t is established for 2017.
3. This Recommendation shall be revised at the 2017 Commission meeting to incorporate harvest control rules (HCRs) in response to SCRS advice. If the SCRS has not sufficiently completed its work on the development and testing of HCRs for this stock in order to provide advice to the Commission in 2017, the TAC and other measure established pursuant to this Recommendation shall continue to apply in 2018.

4. The annual TAC shall be allocated among CPCs as follows:

<i>Party</i>	<i>Quota (t)</i>
European Union	21,551.3 <sup>[1]</sup>
Chinese Taipei	3,271.7 <sup>[2,3]</sup>
United States	527
Venezuela	250

[<sup>1</sup> The European Union will transfer 20 t from its quota to Venezuela in 2014.]

[<sup>2</sup> Chinese Taipei will transfer 100 t from its quota to St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 2014, 2015 and 2016.]

[<sup>3</sup> Chinese Taipei will 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.
6. By derogation to paragraphs 4 and 5, Japan shall endeavor to limit its total northern albacore catches to a maximum of 4% by weight of its total bigeye tuna longline catch in the Atlantic Ocean on an annual basis.
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 (where the adjustment year is two years following the year of catch). However, the maximum underage that a Party may carry-over in any given year shall not exceed 25% of its initial catch quota or catch limit as specified in paragraphs 4 and 5 above.
8. If, in any year, the combined landings of CPCs exceed the TAC of 28,000 t, the Commission will re-evaluate the northern albacore recommendation at its next Commission meeting and recommend further conservation measures, as appropriate.

#### **Research and Scientific Advice**

9. The Commission supports the initiation of a multi-year North Atlantic Albacore Tuna Research Program, as proposed by the SCRS in 2016 and described in its Albacore Work Plan, and encourages CPCs to undertake research that will contribute to this work.
10. The SCRS shall, as a matter of priority and in accordance with any HCR work plan that may be agreed by the Commission, continue its work on HCRs for northern albacore through management strategy evaluation, including use of the performance indicators outlined in the Annex.

#### **[Effort and Capacity Limits**

11. CPCs shall limit the fishing capacity of their vessels, exclusive of recreational vessels, for this stock through a limitation of the number of vessels to the average number in the period 1993-1995.
12. The capacity limit specified in paragraph 11 above shall not apply to CPCs whose average catches are less than 200 t.]

#### **[Record of Authorized Vessels**

13. CPCs shall issue specific authorizations to vessels 20 meters LOA or greater flying their flag that are authorized to fish for northern albacore in the Convention area. Each CPC shall indicate which such vessels it has so authorized on its vessel list submitted pursuant to 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). Such vessels not entered into this record or entered without the required indication that fishing for northern albacore is authorized are deemed not to be authorized to fish for, retain on board, transship, transport, transfer, process or land northern albacore.]

**Repeals**

14. This Recommendation replaces the [*Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning the Limitation of Fishing Capacity on Northern Albacore* [Rec. 98-08]; the *Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning Possible Management Measures for Northern Albacore* [Rec. 99-05]; and the] *Supplemental Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning the North Atlantic Albacore Rebuilding Program* [Rec. 13-05].

Performance indicators for North Atlantic Albacore

<i>PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND ASSOCIATED STATISTICS</i>	<i>UNIT OF MEASUREMENT</i>	<i>TYPE OF METRICS</i>
<b>Status</b>		
1.1 Minimum spawner biomass relative to $B_{MSY}$	B/ $B_{MSY}$	Minimum over [x] years
1.2 Mean spawner biomass relative to $B_{MSY}$ <sup>1</sup>	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 <sup>2</sup>	B, F	Proportion of years that $B \leq B_{MSY}$ & $F \geq F_{MSY}$
<b>2 Safety</b>		
2.1 Probability that spawner biomass is above $B_{lim}$ ( $0.4B_{MSY}$ ) <sup>3</sup>	B/ $B_{MSY}$	Proportion of years that $B > B_{lim}$
2.2 Probability of $B_{lim} < B < B_{thresh}$	B/ $B_{MSY}$	Proportion of years that $B_{lim} < B < B_{thresh}$
<b>3 Yield</b>		
3.1 Mean catch – short term	Catch	Mean over 1-3 years
3.2 Mean catch – medium term	Catch	Mean over 5-10 years
3.3 Mean catch – long term	Catch	Mean in 15 and 30 years
<b>4 Stability</b>		
4.1 Mean absolute proportional change in catch	Catch (C)	Mean over [x] years of $ (C_n - C_{n-1}) / C_{n-1} $
4.2 Variance in catch	Catch (C)	Variance over [x] years
4.3 Probability of shutdown	TAC	Proportion of years that TAC=0
4.4 Probability of TAC change over a certain level <sup>4</sup>	TAC	Proportion of management cycles when the ratio of change <sup>5</sup> $(TAC_n - TAC_{n-1}) / TAC_{n-1} > X\%$
4.5 Maximum amount of TAC change between management periods	TAC	Maximum ratio of change <sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This indicator provides an indication of the expected CPUE of adult fish because CPUE is assumed to track biomass.

<sup>2</sup> This indicator is only useful to distinguish the performance of strategies which fulfil the objective represented by 1.4

<sup>3</sup> This differs slightly from being equal to 1- Probability of a shutdown (4.3), because of the choice of having a management cycle of 3 years. In the next management cycle after B has been determined to be less than  $B_{lim}$  the TAC is fixed during three years to the level corresponding to  $F_{lim}$ , and the catch will stay at such minimum level for three years. The biomass, however, may react quickly to the lowering of F and increase rapidly so that one or more of the three years of the cycle will have  $B > B_{lim}$ .

<sup>4</sup> Useful in the absence of TAC-related constraints in the harvest control rule.

<sup>5</sup> Positive and negative changes to be reported separately

<sup>6</sup> Positive and negative changes to be reported separately