

Original languages: English and French

DEVELOPMENT OF FISHING/MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR NORTH ATLANTIC SWORDFISH

Required by paragraph 3 of Rec. 13-02. Deadline 14 September 2016

In 2012, the Secretariat developed a form to standardise the content of the swordfish development plans. Notwithstanding, several CPCs have requested interpretation of currently capacity. The original intention of this was to indicate fishing capacity, but there are several measurements of this, and hence information is not necessarily standardised. If reports are required in the future, the Panel may wish to indicate what information it requires for review.

In 2016, Belize (text only), Canada (text only), China, European Union-Spain, France (St. Pierre and Miquelon), Japan, Mexico, Morocco, Senegal, Trinidad & Tobago (text only); UK-OT for Bermuda, United States (text only) and Chinese Taipei provided the reports within the deadline stipulated by the Recommendation. Those received in the Secretariat format have been aggregated in **Table 1** below.

Canada and the USA have provided a summary of their texts report for translation. Their full reports are available electronically in original language only as **Annex 1**.

Table 1. Summary of North Swordfish Management Plans received in 2016

<i>CPC</i>	<i>Current Fishery</i>	<i>Current quota (t)</i>	<i>No. of vessels</i>	<i>Gear</i>	<i>Current capacity</i>	<i>Planned No. of vessels</i>	<i>Gear</i>	<i>Planned capacity</i>	<i>Current management measures</i>	<i>Future planned measures</i>
BELIZE									See text report	See text report
CANADA									See text report	See text report
CHINA*	Yes	104,005	24	LL	75	35	LL	137,500	Fishing permit: Vessels must hold the high seas fishing license issued by government	Fishing permit: Vessels must hold the high seas fishing license issued by government
									Annual review: Annual review on the performance of tuna fishing company	Annual review: Annual review on the performance of tuna fishing company
									Catch limit: Vessels must strictly respect the catch limit stipulated by ICCAT recommendation	Catch limit: Vessels must strictly respect the catch limit stipulated by ICCAT recommendation
									VMS: Vessels are required to be equipped with VMS and report normally to government	VMS: Vessels are required to equip with VMS and report normally to government

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CHINA*									Logbook: Vessels are required to record fishing activities in the logbook everyday accurately including any by-catch	Logbook: Vessels are required to record fishing activities in the logbook everyday accurately including any by-catch
									Observers: dispatch observers to collect scientific data	Observers: Dispatch observers to monitor catch activities
									Catch report: A monthly catch report is required	Catch report: A monthly catch report is required
									Statistical Document: The statistical document is a must when exporting swordfish	Statistical Document: the statistical document is a must when exporting swordfish
									Catch import verification: verify catch clearance certificate when importing swordfish	Catch import verification: verify catch clearance certificate when importing swordfish
									Minimum size: issue official regulation to stipulate the swordfish minimize size consistent with ICCAT requirement	Minimum size: issue official regulation to stipulate the swordfish minimize size consistent with ICCAT requirement

*Plan: Chinese fishing vessel number operating in ICCAT waters increased to nearly 35, but the catch quota is far not equivalent with its catching capacity, China request to increase its N-SWO catch quotas to equal to its catching capacity.

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EU-Spain	Yes	6.393.02	113	LL	7,167 (2015)	107	LL	6,780 (2016)		
FRANCE (SPM)	Yes	100	1	LL	50	1	LL	50	Fishing license system supervised by the State. See text below	See text below
JAPAN*	Yes	842	40	LL	17770	200*	LL	80,419	Japanese Fisheries Law has been prohibiting Japanese fishing vessels from fishing tuna on the high seas. Only fishing vessels with a fishing license issued by the Japanese Government can operate in high seas. The law also requires the Government to decide the maximum number of licenses to be issued and other fishing conditions. The Japanese Government ensures that fishing capacities have to be commensurate with its fishing opportunities as determined by tuna RFMOs such as ICCAT	Japan will continue to restrict the number of longliners
									Japanese swordfish catch is by-catch, which has been fluctuating year by year mainly due to the shift of the fishing ground for bigeye tuna. Japan, having no intention to increase north Atlantic swordfish catch as target species, needs flexibility to address this nature. For this purpose, special arrangements for Japan including a multi-year block quota, as provided in paragraph 7 of Recommendation 13-02, should be continued.	Will be continued according to paragraph 7 of Recommendation 13-02

<i>CPC</i>	<i>Current Fishery</i>	<i>Current quota (t)</i>	<i>No. of vessels</i>	<i>Gear</i>	<i>Current capacity</i>	<i>Planned No. of vessels</i>	<i>Gear</i>	<i>Planned capacity</i>	<i>Current management measures</i>	<i>Future planned measures</i>
JAPAN*									Japan has been properly reporting data on swordfish, which has been utilized in the stock assessment of north Atlantic swordfish	Japan will continue to instruct its fishermen to submit such data in a timely fashion
									Japan has been monitoring, controlling and enforcing all its tuna vessels operating on the high seas with VMS, port inspection and so on	Japan will continue [these activities] to comply with ICCAT measures
<p>*As of 1 September 2016, a total of 200 Japanese vessels are registered in ICCAT. Since it could be possible that all of those vessels would operate in ICCAT area and catch swordfish as by-catch within TAC limit, the number of 200 and their total capacity were entered as the possible maximum figures.</p>										
MOROCCO	Yes	850	386	LL	800	425	LL	1,100	Enactment of Ministerial Decree No.1176-13 from 8 April 2013 published in the Official Bulletin N°6144 on 18 April 2013 regulating swordfish fisheries in the Morocco's North Atlantic and Mediterranean.	
			50	HL	350	400	HL	100	Follow-up and management of the allocated quota to Morocco by ICCAT at central level through the Delegations of Sea Fisheries responsible for controlling and issuing INN certificates and the National Fisheries Office responsible for trade.	
									Follow-up of ICCAT regulations transposed through the Ministerial Order N°1176-13 from 8 April 2013 related to management of swordfish fisheries in the Moroccan North Atlantic and Mediterranean.	

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MOROCCO									Enactment of Decree No. 2-09-674 of 17 March 2010, regarding the obligation of carrying a geographical positioning system on board all Moroccan flagged vessels operating within the framework of a fishery where there are management and conservation measures adopted by RFMOs.	
									Enactment of Dahir No. 1-14-95 12 rejev 1435 (2 May 2014), containing enactment of law No.15-12 related to the prevention and fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, amending and supplementing Dahir No. 1-73-255, of 27 chaoual 1393 (23 Novembre 1973) relating to Maritime Fishing.	
MEXICO	Yes	200	36	LL		36	LL		100% cover of longline tuna fishing vessels in the on board Observer Programme in the Gulf of Mexico	
									NOM-023-SAG/PESC-2014 regulates the exploitation of tuna species with longline in the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea. A programme to manage the development of the swordfish fishery is being implemented	
									The levels of catches of this species by the longline tuna fleet in the Gulf of Mexico are low	

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SENEGAL*	Yes	250	1	LL		3	LL		Prohibition of large pelagic drift nets	Improvement of data quality
			6	Canoes		7	Canoes		Selective fishing	
			4	PS		6	PS		Artisanal Fisheries Organisation	
*Currently, there is no swordfish fishery in the North Atlantic, but there are plans to develop this fishery: delay in implementing the development plan.									See also text below	See also text below
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO									See text report	See text report
UK-OT Bermuda	Yes	35	2	LL	10	2	LL	10	The swordfish fishery is regulated locally by the Bermuda Fisheries Act 1972 and associated 2010 Regulations. The legislation sets a minimum legal size for swordfish of 125cm lower jaw fork length and 25kg. Fishermen wishing to set more than 5 hooks on a line (this was decreased from 15 hooks in 2013) must obtain a Special Licence from the Bermuda Department of Environment and Natural Resources to do so. Licences for pelagic longlining are subject to terms and conditions, some of which are: the mandatory use of circle hooks and monofilament line (no wire leaders), the collection of data and handling of bycatch and discards in compliance with ICCAT requirements, and the obligation to allow the Department to place qualified observers on board for any given fishing trip. Swordfish are occasionally caught via rod and reel	The development of the swordfish fishery and offshore fishery in general is an important component of Bermuda's plans to diversify the local fishery as reef fish stocks close to the Island are essentially fully exploited. This step will also enhance the economic opportunities available to local fishermen. A number of factors have delayed the development of the fishery in Bermuda. The biggest issue at present is the lack of a shoreside support facility to provide processing and high quality freezing capacity. The 2005 Marine White Paper gave a commitment to establishing the needed support but the current financial situation has delayed progress on this

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									or trolling but the limit on the number of hooks deployed and associated licensing requirements help to restrict such catches.	initiative. The small UK Overseas Territories' quota (35 tonnes), shared between Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands, has also hindered development, and the transfer of 20 tonnes of this amount to another party for the 2007-2010 seasons only compounded this. Despite the challenges, one new participant entered the swordfish fishery this year. The Department will continue to work with the local fishing industry to overcome the obstacles to the development of the fishery.
USA									See text report	See text report
CHINESE TAIPEI	Yes	270	88	LL	270	85	LL	270	Prior authorization by fleet and area. We limit the number of fishing vessels operating in the specific area. All vessels shall fish in fishing areas designated to the group they belong, and shall not fish in non-designated areas without prior authorization. We also prohibit vessels to fish in the Mediterranean Sea	
									Catch limitation and individual quota	

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									<p>Northern swordfish catch is by-catch of our Atlantic longline fleet. The government allocates species-based fishing quota to individual fishing vessel. When the catch of by-catch specie of an individual vessel has reached the quota allocated, it should be discarded and filled in the catch logbook.</p> <p>Prohibit the taking of and landing of swordfish in the entire Atlantic Ocean weighing less than 15 kg live weight, or in alternative, 119 cm lower jaw fork length (LJFL), if swordfish smaller than the designated size is caught, it should be discarded and filled in the catch logbook.</p>	
CHINESE TAIPEI									<p>Management of positions of fishing vessels</p> <p>All vessels are required to install satellite-based vessel monitoring system (VMS). The VMS on board shall be maintained functional at all times, and transmit positions of the vessels to the VMS center every 4 hours.</p>	

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CHINESE TAIPEI									Management on transshipment of catch Permission for at-sea or in-port transshipment shall be applied to the Fisheries Agency 72 hours before such transshipment. Transshipment shall only be permitted after receipt of written approval from the Fisheries Agency. Transshipment declaration shall be submitted for report within 15 days of the completion of the transshipment.	
									Management of catch statistical documents When a fishing vessel wishes to sell specific catch, the vessel owner shall apply for the catch statistical documents of the fish species, such as north Atlantic swordfish. The information on catch statistical document shall be verified against the data on weekly catch report. A fishing vessel shall not use the catch statistical document issued to another vessel.	
									Observer program Fishing vessels shall accept scientific observers on board appointed by the Fisheries Agency.	
									Measures specified for swordfish In compliance with the measure on the restrictions of minimum weight and size of swordfish under	

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									Recommendation 13-02 and 15-03, fishermen are required to release live and fill in the catch logbook swordfish for rebuilding swordfish stock.	

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BELIZE

Introduction

This plan outlines Belize's involvement in the fishery of Northern and Southern Swordfish in the ICCAT Convention Area and identifies its needs as a nation as well as its intention for its involvement over the next 3 years.

Background

Belize introduced its High Seas Fishing Act in 2003 to provide a legal basis for the regulation of the activities of its high seas fishing vessels. This Act embodies all the resolutions adopted by the various RFMOs and was intended to ensure compliance with all relevant conservation and management measures for the protection of the high seas resources. In November 2013, our High Seas Fishing Act was revised to further strengthen the management of the fleet which operates on the high seas. Pursuant to its adoption a new unit was established with the exclusive responsibility for regulation and control of the high seas fishing fleet.

Belize has ratified the FAO "Compliance" Agreement, the "Fish Stocks" Agreement, the "IPOA IUU" and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the provisions of which have already been incorporated into Belize's High Seas Fishing Act 2013. It has also ratified the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC). Belize has also, pursuant to the adoption of its revised HSFA 2013, adopted new Sanctions, Licensing and Monitoring Control and Surveillance Regulations. These actions formalize Belize's commitment to the elimination of activities which diminish the effectiveness of conservation and management measures. Belize also adopted its National Plan of the Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing on the High Seas, its National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks on the High Seas and is currently finalizing its National Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Long Line Fisheries. Belize has also adopted a High Seas Fleet Management Policy and a National Inspection Plan.

The fleet which operates on the high seas is registered by the International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize (IMMARBE) and is licensed by the Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit (BHSFU). Matters of policy are determined jointly by the Registrar of Ships, Director of High Seas Fisheries of the BHSFU and the Senior Deputy Registrar of IMMARBE.

Mission

Belize aims to provide the best possible management of its fleet engaged in the swordfish fishery in the ICCAT Convention area in an effort to optimize future benefits through efficient and sustainable management.

General Objective

- To participate in the management and conservation of the swordfish resources in the ICCAT Convention Area by ensuring compliance with measures dealing with data collection, monitoring, control and surveillance so as to attain the best possible management of Belize's high seas fishing fleet.

Specific Objectives

- Seek to increase quota allocation to provide for expansion in Belize's swordfish fishery;
- Continue diligent monitoring, controlling and surveillance of fishing vessels engaged in the exploitation of swordfish to ensure full compliance;
- Continue to provide statistical data in a timely fashion to ICCAT in order to facilitate the scientific process and informed decision making concerning the management of the swordfish stocks.

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Long term objective

- Belize’s long term objective is to build local capacity which would result in a higher level of income and expanded benefits for Belize. The Belizean Government currently has facilities in place for entrepreneurs who would seek to venture into new industries and the local encouragement will undoubtedly result in building of a locally owned fleet to engage in the Atlantic Swordfish fishery. Consequently, Belize’s ability to secure additional quota allocations, in line with the vision of expansion, is paramount to its effective implementation.

Resources

Belize’s High Seas Fishing Fleet is managed by the Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit (BHSFU) under the Ministry of Finance. Fishing vessels are monitored using an upgraded Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) which now provides hourly position reports. In late 2014, we implemented an electronic reporting system which allows for real time catch reporting. The High Seas Fisheries Act 2013 and its subsidiary regulations serves as the legal basis for the execution of the daily activities of the BHSFU, as well as the regulatory control over Belize flagged fishing vessels. The adoption of our revised High Seas Fishing Act and subsidiary regulations now provides the legal framework for the establishment and implementation of our observer program and our port inspection program which are both important features of an effective monitoring, control and surveillance program.

Current Fishery

Belize currently has 9 vessels operating in the ICCAT convention area targeting tuna and tuna like species, which represents 29% of our operational fleet. One of these vessels participates in direct swordfish fishery while several other target this specie as bycatch.

Northern Swordfish

To date, Belize has 3 long line vessels between 80-500 gt targeting Northern Swordfish as bycatch species.

Southern Swordfish

Belize has only 1 long line vessel of 353 gt targeting Southern Swordfish and several others target this specie as bycatch.

As a result of Belize’s significant efforts to regulate its high seas fleet during the past two years, we have lost a considerable number of our longline tuna vessels. In an effort to now rebuild our fleet Belize expects to introduce 8 new long line fishing vessels to engage in the Swordfish Fishery in this area over the next 3 years.

Current Quota

As a result of attaining Contracting Party Status of ICCAT in July 2005 and our subsequent membership of Panel 1, 2, 3 and 4, Belize obtained the following quota allocations:

Northern Swordfish	130 m/t
Southern Swordfish	125 m/t

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It must be noted that Belize's current quota allocations for both Northern and Southern Swordfish is being utilized by the vessels targeting these species as is evident from the data in the table below:

<i>N. SWO</i>	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Initial Quota	130	130	130	130	130	130
Adjusted Quota	195	195	195	195	195	270
Catches	112	106	184	141	142	75
S. SWO						
Initial Quota	150	125	125	125	125	125
Adjusted Quota	210	187.5	129	159	150	205
Catches	111	121	206	197	135	45

Current Management Measures

There are 4 long line tuna vessels that are currently engaged in the fishing for Northern and Southern Atlantic Swordfish in the ICCAT Convention area. These vessels are subject to the following management measures:

- Monitoring, control and surveillance achieved through the use of a Vessel Monitoring System. All vessels are required to install a satellite based vessel monitoring system regardless of size. The VMS on board is required to be maintained functional at all times whether at sea or in port. Transmission of position reports are carried out every hour. The VMS also allows Belize's monitoring personnel to assign certain vessels to specific geographical regions and the system generates notifications if a vessel ventures outside its designated area. Vessels that operate outside their authorized areas of operation are considered to have violated our regulations and are subject to disciplinary actions in accordance with our legislations which can range from prohibitions from sailing to suspension of fishing authorization to imposition of a fine or for repeated offenses, deregistration or a combination of all.
- Regular catch and effort reporting – catch reports are scrutinized thoroughly to ensure that fishing was conducted in compliance with the licenses granted to the vessel. Failure to submit required reports will result in disciplinary measures taken against the vessel.

Belize also introduced its electronic catch reporting system in early 2015 and while data is being received partially through this means, we are still modifying the system. A fully functional electronic reporting system is expected to be operational in early 2017.

- Observation of transshipment at sea through the ICCAT ROP program - Transport vessels that will engage in the carriage of marine resources will now be placed on the relevant RFMO list of authorized vessels regardless of species to be transported. All transshipment activities by these vessels are subject to prior approval by the Belize Administration and all reports of the activities from commencement of transshipment to the transport to final destination and discharge reports are required to be submitted to us. Transshipment at sea not regulated by an RFMO ROP is prohibited and shall be conducted only at port upon prior approval from the Administration. Belize has only 1 fishing vessel engaged in transshipment at sea under the ICCAT ROP Program.
- Logbook program – logbooks are required to be completed during the entire year of operation. Copies of the logbook sheets are required to be submitted upon demand or after every voyage. The completed logbook is returned to our Administration for final consolidation of data together with our fishing log and fishing vessel voyage reports which are collected on a monthly basis.
- Licensing Regulation – with the adoption of our new HSFA, 2013 we were able to also adopt a new licensing regulation to further strengthen our licensing regime.

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- Sanction Regulation – with the adoption of our new HSFA, 2013 we were also able to adopt a new robust and comprehensive sanction regulation that allows us to take administrative measures against any vessel, owner, operator or crew who contravenes our legislations and established conservation and management measures.
- High Seas Fisheries Fleet Policy - Belize introduced a new high seas fisheries fleet policy which allows for the restructure of our fleet size and capacity.
- Fisheries Monitoring Centre - We have established a Fisheries Monitoring Centre within the corporate structure of the Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit. This will allow for exclusive monitoring of our fleet which operates globally.
- Allocation System - A new allocation system has been introduced which will allow for the following:
 - Vessels which surpass their annual quota will see a reduction in their next annual allocation reduced by the same amount.
 - Vessels that do not harvest their entire quota allocation will not be allowed to carry over any un-harvested quotas, only under force majeure.
 - All transfers of quota between vessels need to be authorized.
 - Quota allocation will only be granted after a thorough review of the vessel's previous activities and quota utilization.
 - Vessels without an allocation can only incidentally catch up to 10 m/t of this species.
 - Vessels are required to report their catches monthly to ensure no overuse of quota.
 - When a vessel reaches its quota limits it is required to stop fishing immediately and must return to port. A prohibition from sailing is immediately issued to the vessel; therefore vessel must remain at port until further notice. During this time vessel operators are expected to ensure that their VMS units remain functional so that proper monitoring of their vessel can be conducted.
- Belize prohibits the registration or licensing of vessels to fish for Mediterranean swordfish.
- Observer Program – Belize implemented its observer program in 2015 and has since placed an observer on one of our vessel in the ICCAT area. Belize intends to place observers on board its vessels in accordance with the percentage required by the ICCAT Regulation.

Future planned measures

In an effort to further strengthen our management measures Belize plans to introduce the following measures.

- Inspection of discharges at port – Belize expects to implement a Port Inspection Program where our vessels will be subject to port inspection of their discharges by our authorized fisheries inspectors.
- We expect to formally adopt our National Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Long Line Fisheries in 2016.
- We expect to adopt our National Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity in 2016
- We expect to commence working on a plan for the incidental catch of sea turtles in accordance with the FAO guidelines for sea turtles.
- We shall continue to implement agreed management measures.

Projected Needs Explained

Since the attainment of ICCAT Contracting Party Status in July 2005, Belize has seen a gradual reduction in its quota allocation as the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and total allowable catch (TAC) for both swordfish species have been revised. This is currently restricting the development of Belize's swordfish fishery and the decrease has been endured despite our growing need for additional quotas as a developing coastal State. Despite our small swordfish fleet, it is noteworthy that Belize's current quota allocation is not conducive to a 100% operation by our vessels. Belize would like to enable these vessels to increase their

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operational capacity to ensure the sustainability of their fishing operations and to introduce 8 new long line vessels into this area over the course of 3 years. Our projected needs for quotas to sustain these new vessels as well as current vessels are detailed below.

Quota Request

In consideration of the ICCAT Criteria for the Allocation of Fishing Possibilities (01-25), based on current and historical catches, Belize hereby requests the following allocation for swordfish:

Northern Swordfish: Requesting a new national quota allocation of 380 metric tons

Belize currently has 3 long line fishing vessels targeting Northern Swordfish as bycatch which equally share 130 m/t. Belize plans on introducing 3 new vessels over the next 3 years following any quota increase. These vessels are expected to fish an additional 195 m/t of this species. Furthermore, there are several other vessels which catch smaller quantities as bycatch and they will require 55 m/t to accommodate their fishing operations without impacting the catch limits allocated to vessels with a directed fishery of this species. This Plan will therefore require an increase of 250 m/t of Northern Atlantic Swordfish to be effected accordingly.

Southern Swordfish: Requesting a new national quota allocation of 425 metric tons

Belize currently has a quota allocation of 125 m/t for Southern Swordfish. The vessel that engages in this fishery cannot operate at 100% capacity because of the limited quota available. An additional 75 m/t will enable this vessel to increase their operating capacity and efficiency in order to guarantee the sustainability of their fishing operations. Belize also plans on introducing 5 new vessels over the course of the next 3 years following any quota increase. This will require an additional increase of 175 m/t to accommodate the introduction of these new vessels. Additionally, there are several other vessels that catch this species as a bycatch, and they will require 50 m/t to accommodate their operations without impacting the catch limits allocated to vessels with a directed fishery of this specie. Therefore a total increase of 300 m/t of southern swordfish will be required to facilitate this expansion of Belize’s swordfish fishery.

<i>Species</i>	<i>Current quota (MT)</i>	<i>Additional Quota Request (MT)</i>	<i>Bycatch request (MT)</i>	<i>Proposed New Total Quota (MT)</i>
N. Swordfish	130	195	55	380
S. Swordfish	125	250	50	425

Additional socio-economic considerations and proposed approach

Over the years, Belize has proven itself to be a responsible Flag State in managing its fleet in accordance with all ICCAT resolutions and recommendations and has fully respected quota allocations. Being a developing nation, our economy is largely dependent on the Agriculture and Fisheries sector and our high seas fishery makes an important contribution to this end. Belize is conscious of our request for more quotas at a time when the swordfish TAC must be reduced. However, in an effort to aid our continued development, we take this opportunity to remind the Commission of the need for Developed nations who have enjoyed the use of this resource for many years, to transfer some of their own quotas to facilitate the needs of Developing States such as Belize. This has been acknowledged during previous Commission meetings as a necessary step towards achieving greater equitability in quota allocations. It is noteworthy that Belize’s fleet has historically utilized 100% of its swordfish allocations; however, our swordfish fleet is forced to operate at less than 100% capacity due to quota restrictions. Therefore, it is essential that our additional quota requirements be granted in order to ensure the sustainability and viability of our high seas fishing operations, and the realization of Belize’s development needs in respect of Atlantic swordfish fishery.

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CANADA

Executive Summary (full text in original language only in **Annex 1**)

Canada's Swordfish Fishery Management Plan: 2015

ICCAT Recommendation 13-02 requires each Contracting Party, and Cooperating non-Contracting Party, Entity or Fishing Entity to annually submit to the Secretariat by September 15, its swordfish development or fishing/management plan. This document describes the history, management, socio-economic and future aspirations of the Canadian North Atlantic Swordfish fishery.

Executive Summary

Canada's history of fishing North Atlantic swordfish dates back to the 1880s. Today, this fishery continues to be socially and economically important to communities throughout Atlantic Canada.

Canada's 2015 initial allocation of North Atlantic swordfish was 1,348 metric tonnes; from which 5t was allocated to Canada's offshore tuna fleet for swordfish bycatch. The remaining allocation was shared between 2 fleets targeting North Atlantic swordfish. 90% was allocated to the longline fleet, and 10% to the harpoon fleet. There is no recreational or sportfish component to this fishery.

Canada's capacity to harvest its quota share is well documented. Average annual landings have totalled 115% of Canada's initial annual allocations since 2011 as a result of transfers from other CPCs. Since 2007, Canada has been allocated 8.8% of the total ICCAT quota. Nevertheless, as the recipient of quota transfers, Canada has accounted for approximately 12% of all North Atlantic swordfish harvested over the past 5 years.

In fact, the Canadian fleet, which has been reduced significantly over the years in order to respect ICCAT quotas, is only able to harvest during a 3-month season before exhausting its quota share despite North Atlantic swordfish being present in significant numbers in Canadian waters throughout the year.

As the foundation for reliable research and stock assessments, Canada collects, among other things, catch and effort data for all fishing trips. Beginning in 1996, an industry-funded Dockside Monitoring Program (DMP) was instituted in Atlantic Canada to provide independent third party verification of logbook submissions.

Canada's DMP is conducted by certified agents who oversee all offloads of swordfish in Atlantic Canada as well as enter logbook data into a central database. The DMP ensures that precise and reliable information is collected on the number of fish caught, their weight, effort, environmental conditions, and other vital statistics. This data is available in real-time to fisheries managers, scientists, and enforcement officers. Due to the requirement for all logbook data to be uploaded prior to the commencement of their next fishing trip, Canada has 100% logbook coverage for its fleets targeting North Atlantic swordfish.

Canada's comprehensive approach to enforcement also includes the requirement for VMS on all longline vessels, despite only 2 of Canada's 77 pelagic longline vessels being over 20 meters in length and thus subject to ICCAT's VMS measure. The Conservation and Protection Program of DFO fly aerial surveillance flights annually in areas where swordfish fishing activities occur. In 2015, 108.6 air surveillance hours were directly accrued for swordfish fishery. In 2015, at sea patrols, using large patrol vessels, accumulated 126.75 surveillance hours directly to the swordfish fishery. Also, Fishery Officers conduct patrols, inspect vessels and swordfish buying/processing facilities and conducted audits of the Dockside Monitoring Program in this fishery. In total, 834 fishery officer enforcement hours were expended on the swordfish fishery in 2015. At-sea observers are targeted for deployment on 5% - 10% of swordfish fishing trips despite no ICCAT requirements for observer's onboard swordfish vessels smaller than 20 meters.

As of 2012, in recognition of the strong management regime which is in place for these fisheries in Canada, both the longline and harpoon fleets targeting North Atlantic swordfish have been awarded Marine Stewardship Council certification. Canada is the first ICCAT member to obtain this certification for its entire swordfish fleet.

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FRANCE (ST. PIERRE AND MIQUELON)**1. Background and current state of the fishery**

France has been a member of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) since 1968. When the European Community joined ICCAT in 1997, France became a Contracting Party as a coastal State in respect of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon (SPM), which is a French overseas collectivity having the status of overseas country and territory vis-a-vis the European Union (article 355 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and association decisions between the EU and the OCTs: part four of the TFEU).

Swordfish have been fished in SPM since 2002, initially under charter agreement of a Canadian-flagged vessel (later IVY, IVY ROSE, and then ATLANTIC ODYSSEY). On 9 March 2011, ATLANTIC ODYSSEY, a longline vessel targeting tuna and mainly northern swordfish, became a French-flagged vessel. The vessel usually operates from April to November and catches are landed in SPM or in Canada.

The technical characteristics of this longline vessel are as follows:

- Gross registered tonnage: 345 UMS
- Length overall: 30.25 m
- On board installed power: 646 Kw

As indicated below, the available fishing opportunities and catches taken between 2006 and 2015 vary between 0 and 89.80 t.

<i>Year</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>
Initial Quota	35	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
Adjusted Quota ¹	48.30	78.80	108.30	56.80	120.70	80	100	100	100	100
Catches Tonnes	0	82	43.60	20.10	89.80	0.6	0	17.85	3.02	0

It should be noted that, for many years, a system has allowed the carryover of unexploited fishing opportunities from one year to the next, in accordance with the methods developed through the successive revisions to ICCAT recommendations. In addition, France (in respect of SPM) has benefited in the past from transfers from other CPCs (in particular from the United Kingdom, in respect of its overseas territories).

For 2016, France's initial quota (in respect of SPM) is 40 t, to which a transfer of 40 t from the European Union should be added, as in 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015.

2. Management, surveillance and control measures

ICCAT has sent periodic notifications regarding these measures, as required by the recommendations of this organisation.

The vessel is fitted with a VMS beacon. A controller can be embarked for a specific period. All landings are controlled. In addition, provisions are in place regarding the boarding of a scientific observer during the fishing campaigns of ATLANTIC ODYSSEY.

¹ Including eventual carryovers from previous years and/or transfers from another Contracting Party.

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In order to limit the mortality of sea turtles caught as by-catch, ATLANTIC ODYSSEY is fitted with circle hooks.

3. Legal and administrative aspects

Licenses are granted by the State representative on the archipelago (Prefect) to fishing vessels upon application on the basis of the following French and international texts:

- Book IX of the rural and maritime fishing code, regarding maritime fishing and marine aquaculture;
- Law 76-655 of 16 July 1976 on the economic zone along the coasts of the territory of the Republic;
- Agreement on the reciprocal relations between France and Canada regarding fishing, signed on 27 March 1972;
- Order of 20 March 1987 establishing management and conservation measures for fishery resources and Decree of 24 March 2015 establishing measures on technique and catch sizes for the professional fishery in territorial waters and the French economic zone off the coasts of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon;
- Decree No. 2010-1582 of 17 December 2010 regarding the organisation and State service missions in the overseas departments and regions, in Mayotte and Saint-Pierre and Miquelon.

4. Objectives

The northern swordfish fishery in SPM must be regarded as an element of internal economic development of this island collectivity, in particular the fact that ATLANTIC ODYSSEY, which was purchased from Canada, started to operate under French flag on 9 March 2011.

Catches of this stock are a source of export revenue in the archipelago's economy, the fish being sold for an approximate price of Can\$5 a pound. In the future, this fish could also be processed locally which would create employment in the processing industry, whose future depends in particular on the diversification of the species of fish handled.

Given the risks that could affect a small scale fleet, maintaining the possibility of carryover from year to year constitutes a very important element for France (in respect of SPM).

SENEGAL

1. Background

The swordfish fishery started in the 1980s by a Spanish longline fleet. The catches were estimated at 500 t per year and the yields were among the highest observed in the Atlantic. The monthly size frequencies of the individuals caught were dominated by swordfish weighing between 50 and 100 kg. However, smaller specimens appeared in the month of July and made up the majority of catches; the average weight of individuals caught (44 kg) is relatively low compared to those observed in other Atlantic fisheries.

2. Intermediate situation

Swordfish fishing started with surface longline by Spanish fishermen. Later, this way of fishing was replaced in the majority of cases by bottom fishery. In Senegal, three species belonging to the billfish family are known and exploited both by the artisanal and industrial fisheries.

The Senegalese fishery is essentially composed of an artisanal fishery targeting small coastal pelagics and coastal demersals. This fishery catches tunas and billfish as by-catch. As regards artisanal fishers there continues to be difficulties regarding the distinction between swordfish, sailfish and marlins.

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Sailfish and marlins are targeted in particular by the canoe artisanal fishery while marlins are mainly caught by the sport fishery. The gears used are trolling lines, pelagic gillnets and occasionally harpoons.

The industrial and semi-industrial fishery comprise one vessel owner with trawlers, tuna vessels (baitboats and purse seiners) and longliners.

3. Current situation

To date, only one longliner is active.

Senegal was allocated swordfish quotas in 2006. This quota is comprised of a northern stock equivalent to 400 t and a southern stock of 300 t and has been subject to certain modifications due to different adjustments.

As regards ICCAT management measures, Senegal has established compliance mechanisms in relation to Commission management measures for companies and the vessel owner. Indeed, the new fishing code allows for transposition of ICCAT management measures through notes, circulars and decisions.

Senegal has embarked upon a process to improve the capacity of its fleet on the basis of a development plan which is under implementation and which provides for a new approach in the scaling of its fleet and for account to be taken of the artisanal fleet which is increasingly likely to catch ICCAT species.

As regards the sport fishery, it targets billfish and swordfish during the fishing season from May to November. In Senegal, traditionally, there are two large fishing centres in Dakar and Mbour. The sport fishery is both a sporting discipline and a tourist product.

Every year, the Federation participates effectively in data collection broken down by sport and recreational fisheries for ICCAT. These data are included in Senegal's Annual Report which is submitted to the SCRS. The data collected concern in particular species, fishing periods and areas, number of fishing trips, number of individuals, average weight, and average size.

Improvements have been obtained in conjunction with ICCAT through the Japanese project JDMIP to have better quality data. Continued effort should be made in this fishing segment to guarantee its effectiveness.

Recently, a new fishing permit has been introduced for artisanal fishermen. This process includes tagging boats for the purposes of computerised management. This new regulation will allow the compartmentalization of the fisheries and ensure the monitoring of Senegal's obligations.

Senegal's swordfish fishing plan with an industrial fishery approach entails redeployment of its fleet, is as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>
Fishing type	Bottom longliners	Bottom longliners
Number of vessels	1	3
Target species	Swordfish-tunas-shark	Swordfish-tunas-shark

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TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Introduction

Trinidad and Tobago's Swordfish Fishery Development/Management Plan presented in 2011 still remains largely relevant; as previously obtained, figures in this submission have been updated as necessary. It is to be noted that Trinidad and Tobago has transferred 75t of its catch limit annually to Belize for the period 2014 to 2016 [Rec. 13-02].

Background

Trinidad and Tobago longliners have been fishing swordfish in the northern Atlantic Ocean for at least three decades. Table 1 shows the country's reported catches and longline fleet size from 1983 to 2015. The species was targeted by the fleet from the 1980's to the mid-2000's; however since then other species have replaced swordfish as the main target species. The reasons for this shift in operations relate to economics in terms of pricing relative to other species (specifically tunas) and market access conditions which mandate that owners incur significant costs.

Trinidad and Tobago's involvement with ICCAT was prompted by its swordfish fishing operations and the country's initial activities as a Contracting Party related to neutralising its swordfish overages against the allocated catch limits and subsequently securing a catch limit that would allow the national fleet to continue its operations. The process involved a revision of Trinidad and Tobago's catch statistics through technical assistance from ICCAT and close monitoring of the country's swordfish catches by the local authorities.

At the time of negotiation of Trinidad and Tobago's current North Atlantic swordfish catch limit, it was indicated that this was below the potential of the national fleet, which at the time included 10 registered longliners. In agreeing to the catch limit of 125 t, however, concessions were made by Trinidad and Tobago given the prevailing climate relating to the TAC and the demand for fishing opportunities from CPCs. It is to be noted that Trinidad and Tobago's fleet of longliners has generally been increasing since 2003. The current number of registered longliners is 38 with 30 being operational in 2015.

Development/Management Plan

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago seeks to provide the greatest possible economic opportunity for its citizens. In this regard the Government facilitates the development of national fleets as far as is possible in accordance with established fisheries management principles and regulations.

The projected national, longline fleet-size for the period 2013 to 2016, based on requests to enter the fishery for tuna and tuna-like species, is given in **Table 2**.

The estimated national harvesting potential for the period 2013 to 2016, based on the projected fleet size, is given in **Table 3**. The estimated harvesting potential of a national longliner for swordfish (126 t/yr) and the estimated swordfish bycatch of the remaining vessels were taken into account in arriving at these quantities.

Considering the estimated harvesting potential of the Trinidad and Tobago longline fleet for North Atlantic swordfish for the period 2013-2016 and the reduced TAC for the stock, Trinidad and Tobago requests that its catch limit of 125 t be retained. Given the differences between the catch limit and the estimates of harvesting potential, catches of swordfish will be closely monitored to ensure compliance with the catch limit.

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Table 1. Trinidad and Tobago Historical Catch and Effort Statistics – North Atlantic Swordfish.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Trinidad and Tobago SWO Catch Limit (t)</i>	<i>Trinidad and Tobago reported SWO catches (t)</i>	<i>No. of Longliners</i>
1983	-	21	Not available
1984	-	26	Not available
1985	-	6	Not available
1986	-	45	Not available
1987	-	151	Not available
1988	-	42	Not available
1989	-	79	Not available
1990	-	66	Not available
1991	-	71	Not available
1992	-	562	Not available
1993	-	11	12
1994	-	180	18
1995	-	150	20
1996	-	158	21
1997	-	110	26
1998	86.7 ²	130	24
1999	86.7 ²	138	23
2000	64.2 ²	41	19
2001 ¹	64.2	75	20
2002 ¹	64.2	92	20
2003	125	78	10 ³
2004	125	83	10
2005	125	91	14
2006	125	19	17
2007	125	29	19 ⁴
2008	125	49	25
2009	125	30	29
2010	125	21	24
2011	125	16	23
2012	125	14	28
2013	125	16	31
2014	125	26	29
2015	125	17	30

Notes:

1. Partial revision of TTO statistics accepted by ICCAT in 2001; fully revised statistics accepted in 2002.
2. Revision of the TTO statistics resulted in an increase of the 1998 and 1999 TTO north Atlantic swordfish catch limits from 42 t to 86.7 t and the 2000 catch limit from 42 t to 64.2 t.
3. The numbers of longliners reported for the years 2003 to 2006 (inclusive) refer to registered vessels.
4. The numbers of longliners reported for the years 2007 to 2015 (inclusive) refer to operational vessels.

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Table 2. Trinidad and Tobago Projected Longline Fleet-Size (2013-2016).

<i>Year</i>	<i>Projected longline fleet-size (No. of vessels)</i>
2013	40
2014	44
2015	48
2016	48

Table 3. Estimated Harvesting Potential of Trinidad and Tobago Projected Longline Fleet for North Atlantic Swordfish (2013-2016).

<i>Year</i>	<i>Estimated harvesting potential – North Atlantic Swordfish (t)</i>
2013	178
2014	183
2015	188
2016	188

UNITED STATES

Executive Summary (full text in original language only in **Annex 1**)

The conservation and management of U.S. Atlantic swordfish fisheries since 1985 – five years before active management by ICCAT – has been defined by a comprehensive suite of ecosystem-based measures that go beyond the requirements of ICCAT recommendations. These measures reflect the results and advice from scientific studies and have the goal of developing and maintaining a sustainable swordfish fishery and a healthy ecosystem. The United States uses a range of tools and approaches to effectively manage its North Atlantic swordfish fishery, including licensing and reporting requirements, size limits, retention limits, and gear restrictions. Further, we have implemented several time/area closures for pelagic longline gear to minimize bycatch mortality of juvenile swordfish and other highly migratory and protected species, such as sea turtles. In addition to time/area restrictions, other sea turtle protection measures include gangion length requirements; mandatory use of dipnets, line cutters and other equipment; and mandatory workshops to learn to carefully release and handle sea turtles and other protected species.

The United States employs effective means, including the use of logbooks and observers, to ensure the collection of reliable fishery data in the swordfish fishery for management and stock assessments purposes. In addition, U.S. scientists actively engage in the stock assessment process and conduct innovative research on swordfish biology, life history, and fishing techniques and technology to reduce bycatch. U.S. research and management activities ensure U.S. compliance with ICCAT’s rules and support ICCAT and U.S. efforts to prevent overfishing and maintain the biomass of North Atlantic swordfish at the level that can support MSY, consistent with the Convention objective.

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Some U.S. domestic management measures (e.g., gear requirements, time/area closures, bycatch mitigation, and a catch share program called Individual Bluefin Quota (IBQ)) have temporarily affected the ability of the U.S. fleet to fully harvest its ICCAT allocation of North Atlantic swordfish. For example, as a responsible steward of the Florida Straits swordfish nursery grounds, the United States took actions to reduce fishing effort by our fleet to protect immature swordfish in this area. While successful in reducing mortality on immature swordfish, U.S. harvests of mature swordfish were also impacted. In addition, U.S. commercial fisheries have faced unexpected and significant challenges over the past decade that impacted U.S. swordfish harvests, including severe hurricanes and the 2010 Deepwater Horizon/BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. At the same time, however, the result of these circumstances resulted in a significant U.S. contribution to the health and rebuilding of the North Atlantic swordfish stock and the associated marine ecosystem, to the ultimate benefit of all ICCAT members that harvest this stock.

Ecosystem based management plays a key role in the sustainability of fisheries. It is a challenging but essential task to achieve broad ecosystem conservation and management objectives while preserving a viable fishery. As this document will demonstrate, the United States is taking its ocean stewardship responsibilities seriously. While ICCAT has taken steps aimed at addressing certain ecosystem matters, in particular with regard to bycatch, the United States has gone beyond those requirements, and we are implementing measures designed to ensure the health of the swordfish stock, the swordfish fishery, and the broader ecosystem.

Since the North Atlantic stock of swordfish was declared rebuilt, the United States has taken important steps over the past few years to restructure its fisheries and adjust regulatory constraints on its swordfish fishery in light of the new circumstances. These measures are designed to increase swordfish landings while ensuring that the fishery is prosecuted in accordance with U.S. laws and regulations, including those aimed at preserving the long-term sustainability of the stock, the ecosystem, and ICCAT requirements.

In summary, the United States has chosen to pursue a prudent and deliberate strategy of allowing an incremental increase in Atlantic swordfish fishing effort to ensure an environmentally and economically sustainable fishery while preserving its strong record of sustainable management of the fishery and the related ecosystem. Our approach to the management of this fishery and our contributions to North Atlantic swordfish science and research have provided substantial support for ICCAT's effort to rebuild the stock and is now helping to ensure its long-term sustainability in accordance with the objective of the Convention. We look forward to continuing our active participation in this fishery, which continues to be both socially and economically important to the United States, in particular to numerous coastal fishing communities along the East and Gulf coasts. To that end, this document describes the interests, fishing patterns, and fishing practices of the U.S. Atlantic swordfish fleet – past, present, and future.

Annex 1: Canada and USA full reports are available electronically in original language only.