

Original: English

**DRAFT RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT
FOR THE CONSERVATION OF NORTH ATLANTIC SWORDFISH**

Proposal submitted by the European Union

RECALLING the *Supplemental Recommendation by ICCAT to Amend the Rebuilding Programme for North Atlantic Swordfish* [Rec. 06-02], the *Recommendation by ICCAT for the Conservation of North Atlantic Swordfish* [Rec. 10-02], the *Recommendation by ICCAT for the Conservation of North Atlantic Swordfish* [Rec. 13-02] and the *Recommendation by ICCAT on the Development of Harvest Control Rules and of Management Strategy Evaluations* [Rec. 15-07];

CONSIDERING that following the 2013 stock assessment, the SCRS indicated that the stock was not overfished and that overfishing was not occurring;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the concern of the SCRS that the allowable country-specific catch levels agreed in [Rec. 13-02] exceed the TAC adopted by the Commission and the scientific recommendation;

DETERMINED to ensure that the total catch for any one year during the management period does not exceed the TAC of 13,700 t;

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 swordfish;

CONSIDERING that the period of validity of some of the provisions established in Rec. [13-02] will expire at the end of 2016 and that is necessary to extend the period of application of such measures until a new assessment of the North Atlantic swordfish stock takes place;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the structure of *Recommendation by ICCAT for the conservation of North Atlantic Swordfish* [Rec. 13-02] should be reviewed to improve clarity;

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

1. The Contracting Parties, and non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities (CPCs) whose vessels have been actively fishing for swordfish in the North Atlantic shall take measures to ensure the conservation of North Atlantic swordfish with the goal of maintaining B_{MSY} , with greater than 50% probability.

TAC and catch limits

2. For 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017, the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and the catch limits for North Atlantic swordfish shall be as follows:

	<i>Catch limit** (t)</i>
TAC	13,700 t
European Union ***	6,718*
United States***	3,907*
Canada	1,348*
Japan***	842*
Morocco	850
Mexico	200
Brazil	50
Barbados	45

Venezuela	85
Trinidad & Tobago	125
United Kingdom (OTs)	35
France (St. Pierre et Miquelon)	40
China	75
Senegal	250
Korea***	50
Belize***	130
Philippines	25
Côte d'Ivoire	50
St. Vincent & the Grenadines	75
Vanuatu	25
Chinese Taipei	270

* Catch limits of these four CPCs are based upon quota allocation shown in 3.c) of the 2006 *Supplemental Recommendation by ICCAT to Amend the Rebuilding Program for North Atlantic Swordfish* [Rec. 06-02].

** The following transfers of annual catch limits shall be authorized:

- From Japan to Morocco: 50 t
 - From Japan to Canada: 35 t
 - From EU to France (St. Pierre et Miquelon) : 40 t
 - From Senegal to Canada: 125 t
 - From Trinidad & Tobago to Belize: 75 t
 - From Philippines to China: 25t
 - From Chinese Taipei to Canada: 35 t
 - From Brazil, Japan, Senegal and United States to Mauritania: 25 t. each for a total of 100 t per year
- These transfers do not change the relative shares of CPCs as reflected in the above catch limits.

*** Japan shall be allowed to count up to 400 t of its swordfish catch taken from the South Atlantic management area against its uncaught North Atlantic swordfish catch limits.

The European Union shall be allowed to count up to 200 t of its swordfish catch taken from the South Atlantic management area against its uncaught North Atlantic swordfish catch limits.

The US shall be allowed to count up to 200 t of its swordfish catch taken from the area between 5°N and 5°S, against its uncaught North Atlantic swordfish catch limit.

Belize shall be allowed to count up to 75 t of its swordfish catch taken from the area between 5°N and 5°S, against its uncaught North Atlantic swordfish catch limit

3. The total TACs for 2014-2017 shall not be exceeded. For this purpose, if the total annual catch exceeds the TAC of 13,700 t, CPCs who have exceeded their individual adjusted catch limits shall pay back their overharvest. Any amount of the overharvest remaining after such adjustment shall be deducted from the annual catch limits of each CPC in the year following the excess, on a prorata basis of the catch limits in Table in 2 above.

Underage or overage of catch

4. Any unused portion or excess of the annual adjusted quota 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>Catch year</i>	<i>Adjustment year</i>
2014	2016
2015	2017
2016	2018
2017	2019

However, the maximum underage that a Party may carryover in any given year shall not exceed 15% of the initial catch limit for those CPCs holding catch limits more than 500 t, and 50% for other CPCs.

5. If Japan's landings exceed its catch limits in any year, the overage shall be deducted in subsequent years so that total landings for Japan shall not exceed its total catch limits for the four-year period commencing in 2014. When annual landings by Japan are less than its catch limits, the underage may be added to the subsequent years' catch limits, so that total landings by Japan do not exceed its total for the same four-year period.

Transfers

6. Notwithstanding the *Recommendation by ICCAT Regarding the Temporary Adjustment of Quotas* [Rec. 01-12], in between meetings of the Commission, a CPC with a TAC allocation of North Atlantic swordfish, as per section 2 may make a one-time transfer within a fishing year of up to 15% of its TAC allocation to other CPCs with TAC allocations, consistent with domestic obligation and conservation considerations. Any such transfer may not be used to cover over harvests. A CPC that receives a one-time catch limits transfer may not retransfer that catch limits.

Minimum size

7. In order to protect small swordfish, CPCs shall take the necessary measures to prohibit the taking of and landing of swordfish in the entire Atlantic Ocean weighing less than 25 kg live weight, or in alternative, 125 cm lower jaw fork length (LJFL); however, the CPCs may grant tolerances to boats which have incidentally captured small fish, with the condition that this incidental catch shall not exceed 15 percent of the number of swordfish per landing of the total swordfish catch of said boats.
8. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 7, any CPC may choose, as an alternative to the minimum size of 25 kg/ 125 cm LJFL, to take the necessary measures to prohibit the taking by its vessels in the Atlantic Ocean, as well as the landing and sale in its jurisdiction, of swordfish (and swordfish parts), less than 119 cm LJFL, or in the alternative 15 kg, provided that, if this alternative is chosen, no tolerance of swordfish smaller than 119 LJFL, or in the alternative 15 kg, shall be allowed. For swordfish that have been dressed, a cleithrum to keel (CK) measurement of 63cm can also be applied. A Party that chooses this alternative minimum size shall require appropriate record keeping of discards. The SCRS should continue to monitor and analyze the effects of this measure on the mortality of immature swordfish.

Specific authorization to fish North Atlantic swordfish

9. CPCs shall issue specific authorizations to vessels 20 meters LOA or greater flying their flag allowed to fish North Atlantic swordfish in the Convention area (hereafter referred to as "authorized vessels").

ICCAT Record of vessels authorized to fish North Atlantic swordfish

10. The Commission shall establish and maintain an ICCAT record of fishing vessels authorized to fish actively for North Atlantic swordfish. 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 swordfish from the Convention area.
11. 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.
12. 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 20 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.
13. 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.

14. 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 swordfish in a given year

15. 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 swordfish in the Convention area in the previous calendar year.

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

- 15 *bis*. Provisions under paragraphs 9 to 15 are not applicable to vessels operating recreational fisheries.

Availability of data to SCRS

16. All CPCs catching swordfish in the North Atlantic shall endeavor to provide annually the best available data to the SCRS, including catch, catch at size, location and month of capture on the smallest scale possible, as determined by the SCRS. The data submitted shall be for broadest range of age classes possible, consistent with minimum size restrictions, and by sex when possible. The data shall also include discards (both dead and alive) and effort statistics, even when no analytical stock assessment is scheduled. The SCRS shall review these data annually.

Final provisions

17. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article VIII, paragraph 2, of the Convention, with respect to the annual individual catch limits established above, the CPCs whose vessels have been actively fishing for North Atlantic swordfish shall implement this recommendation as soon as possible in accordance with the regulatory procedures of each CPC.
18. The Commission shall establish at its 2017 meeting conservation and management measures for a next three-year period on the basis of the SCRS advice resulting from the new stock assessment as well as the ICCAT Criteria for the Allocation of Fishing Possibilities [Res. 15-13]. In support of this effort, the Commission shall consider development/management plans of coastal developing CPCs and fishing/management plans of other CPCs in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 so that adjustments can be made to the existing catch limits and other conservation measures in 2017, as appropriate. Each CPC shall submit its development or fishing/management plan to the Commission by September 15 of each year.
19. When assessing stock status and providing management recommendations to the Commission in 2017, the SCRS shall consider the interim limit reference (LRP) of $0.4 \cdot B_{MSY}$ or any more robust LRP established through further analysis.
20. In line with the provisions of *Recommendation by ICCAT on the Development of Harvest Control Rules and of Management Strategy Evaluations* [Rec. 15-07], paragraph 3, the SCRS and the Commission shall begin a dialogue to allow for the development of harvest control rules (HCRs) for consideration in any subsequent recommendations. Further, while the HCRs are being developed, should the biomass approach the level which triggered the establishment of the previous rebuilding plan [Rec 99-02] then management measures should be considered to avoid further decline and begin to rebuild the stock.
21. This *Recommendation replaces the Recommendation by ICCAT for the Conservation of North Atlantic Swordfish* [Rec. 13-02].