

Original: English

**DRAFT RESOLUTION BY ICCAT ON AREAS THAT ARE IMPORTANT
AND UNIQUE FOR ICCAT SPECIES INCLUDING THE SARGASSO SEA**

Proposal submitted by Canada, South Africa, and the UK Overseas Territories

RECALLING the *Resolution by ICCAT on Pelagic Sargassum* [Res. 05-11] which called upon the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) to examine the available and accessible information and data on the status of pelagic *Sargassum* and its ecological importance to tuna and tuna-like species;

ALSO RECALLING the *Resolution by ICCAT on the Sargasso Sea* [Res. 12-12] which called upon the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) to examine the available data and information concerning the Sargasso Sea and its ecological importance to tuna and tuna-like species and ecologically associated species;

RECOGNISING that a report on the findings of this work was presented to the Commission in 2015;

ALSO RECOGNIZING that, in its 2015 report, the SCRS noted that the Sargasso Sea is an important and unique ecosystem for some ICCAT species, and at the same time it was acknowledged that there are other ecosystems in the Atlantic Ocean that are also important and unique for ICCAT species;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that in 2013 the SCRS noted that the basic biological and ecological data provided for the Sargasso Sea offers a useful foundation for adopting this region as a basis for a case study in implementing the Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management (EBFM) approach within ICCAT;

NOTING that the United Nations Agreement on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks calls for the protection of biodiversity in the marine environment and refers to the need to take ecosystem considerations into account;

RECALLING the *Resolution by ICCAT Concerning the Application of an Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management* [Res. 15-11] which called upon the Commission to apply an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management when making recommendations pursuant to Article VIII of the Convention;

**THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS RESOLVES THAT:**

1. The SCRS will examine the available data and information concerning areas, including the Sargasso Sea, that are important and unique for ICCAT species in the Convention area.
2. The SCRS will report back to the Commission with available findings and advice in 2018.