Regarding Atlantic white marlin, the results of the 2019 assessment indicated that the stock was overfished but not undergoing overfishing[1]. Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago share the Committee's concern about the status of white marlin due to misidentification of roundscale spearfish which adds uncertainty to the stock assessment results. Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago strongly agree that:

- Measures should be taken to ensure complete monitoring and reporting of all landings and discards, including live releases; and
- Efforts should be made to fully account for the artisanal and recreational catches.

Based on the distribution and biological characteristics of the stocks in areas under national jurisdiction, historical landings, interests, fishing patterns and practices, and contribution to food security, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago re-emphasize that marlin limits should be adopted corresponding to true catch. Furthermore, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago are deeply concerned over the application of an additional 25% penalty of phantom catch overage, noting that as worded in Rec. 19-05, regardless of whether a CPC manages to constrain subsequent annual landings to below the allotted annual limits, the accrued adjusted landing limits will continue to be reduced in each successive year on a compound basis.

As such the CPC is perpetually punished with no realistic mechanism for relief or reward for efforts to compliantly restrict annual catches, as well as making any viable payback plan within a reasonable time frame impossible. This methodology is therefore grossly prejudicial to the food security and livelihood of small-island developing coastal States whose fishing communities are greatly dependent on these stocks, and are furthermore limited in capacity to reduce catch rates of these species, without causing significant deleterious socioeconomic impacts on both fishing communities and the wider populations.

In conclusion Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago assert that ICCAT Rec. 19-05 does not consider the *Criteria for the Allocation of Fishing Possibilities* (Res. 15-13) nor the provisions in Article 24 of the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement which recognize the special requirements of developing States and in particular, small island developing States. Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago therefore strongly urge the Commission to re-evaluate the provisions of this Recommendation relating to allotted landing limits, the imposition of the 125% penalty on overages, and payback of excess landings especially in the context of Caribbean CPCs.

Appendix 9 to ANNEX 8

Statement to Panel 4 by Costa Rica

The Republic of Costa Rica would like to express to you the highest consideration and respect, and would like to refer to the situation of the national commercial multi-species fishery that catches North Atlantic swordfish (SWO-N), which my country has developed for decades, in its Exclusive Economic Zone, with small-scale fleets (<20 m in length). It is important to mention the correlation between this fishery and the vital needs for the socio-economic development of our depressed Caribbean community of Costa Rica.

The fishery for this species has been recorded since before Costa Rica began to participate in ICCAT in 2016; in fact, our records of SWO-N landings date back to 1999[1], this species being of great importance for national food security.

The Costa Rica Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture (INCOPESCA), as the competent national authority, collects fishery statistics, which are submitted to ICCAT each year, in compliance with its data reporting requirements, which include fishery statistics that contribute to SWO-N stock assessments. These data show that the number of national vessels engaged in this fishery has declined in recent years; however, management measures remain in place such as:

- Licences register closed (no new licences issued),
- Mandatory satellite monitoring with VMS,
- Inspections of 100% of landings of surface longliners catching this species,
- Implementation of Fishing Operation Record Books, which are completed by captains,

[1] Lara Quesada, N., Pacheco Chaves, B. y Carvajal, J. M. 2022. Revisión de las estadísticas históricas de desembarque de pez espada (*Xiphias gladius*) por parte de la flota de mediana escala en el Caribe costarricense, Colección de Documentos Científicos de ICCAT, 79(2), 180-185. https://www.iccat.int/es/pubs_CVSP.html.

- Restrictions on fishing gear and catch of species,
- Fishery biological sampling on landing,
- Time or geographical closures,
- Development of industrial fisheries for SWO-N is not authorised,
- Among other management measures

Moreover, my Delegation has expressed its interest to the SCRS in participating in the SWO-N biology programme, contributing national experience and data from species associated with our waters, in particular, the Caribbean Sea which has been identified as an information gap area.

In accordance with Recommendation 23-04, conservation and management measures will be established for SWO-N at the 2024 meeting, and for this, the Commission will consider the development/management plans of developing coastal CPCs and the fishery/management plans of other CPCs so that adjustments to existing catch limits and other conservation measures can be made, as appropriate.

In this regard, my country has detailed in its fishing plan[2] its limited fishing effort; in fact, the limited fishing possibilities imposed by ICCAT irreparably harm our communities, generating consequences contrary to the human rights of our society.

For this reason, and considering that:

a. Recent stock assessments of SWO-N have determined that it is in good condition, as it is neither overfished nor experiencing overfishing,

b. The average annual nominal catch for the period 2018 to 2022 (5 years) for this stock was 9,980.18 t, while its total allowable catch (TAC) was set at 13,200 t, therefore leaving, on average, 3,219.82 t of the TAC per year uncaught and,

c. The needs of my country, based on its historical participation in the fishery, as well as the provisions of Article 61, paragraph 2; Article 62, in particular paragraphs 1, 2, 4; Article 119, paragraph 1.a and 3, and related provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, as well as Article II of the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas and ICCAT Resolution 15-13.

Costa Rica requests to be allocated the non-discriminatory catch limit of 302.15 t, which will be very useful to meet its current needs and develop its fishery in the Atlantic in its coastal communities with a small-scale fleet.

These considerations may be expanded upon at the request of the Commission. Costa Rica appreciates the positive response to our request and renews its unwavering spirit of cooperation within the framework of ICCAT for the sustainable utilization and long-term conservation of the resources under the administration of this organization.

[2] Development or fishing / management plan for northern swordfish (attached in original language only due to late submission).

Plan de desarrollo o pesca/ordenación para el pez espada del norte

CP41-NSWOPlan	
Año:	**2023**
Pabellón que informa:	**Costa Rica**
Agencia que informa:	**Instituto Costarricense de Pesca y Acuicultura**
Persona responsable:	Bernald Pacheco Chaves
Tel.:	(506)2630-0600
Fax:	
Email:	incopescalCCAT@incopesca.go.cr

Actualmente tiene una pesquería de pez espada del Atlántico Norte X Cuota (t) 0

Actualmente no tiene una pesquería de pez espada del Atlántico norte, pero tiene planes para desarrollarla.

	Capacidad actual (año de comunicación en curso)						
	Palangre	Cerco	Cebo vivo	Arpón	Red enmalle	Arrastre	Otro (especificar)
Número de buques	12						
Capacidad total de captura (t)	302,15						
	Capacidad futura planeada (próximo año)						
	Palangre	Cerco	Cebo vivo	Arpón	Red enmalle	Arrastre	Otro (especificar)
Número de buques	12						
Capacidad total de captura (t)	302,15						

Medidas de ordenación internas actualmente en vigor

Especies: se permite la captura de grandes pelágicos y demersales.
Navegación: se permite realizar actividades de pesca dentro de las tres millas náuticas de la costa para embarcaciones comerciales de pequeña escala, hasta las 40 para mediana escala y más de 40 para avanzada.
No se autoriza la pesca en áreas de parques y áreas vedadas, se debe respetar los planes de ordenamiento de las áreas marinas de pesca responsable.

Planes para desarrollar la pesquería y medidas de ordenación internas contempladas

Recopilación de datos de captura en los viajes de pesca
Recopilación del esfuerzo pesquero
Programa de monitoreo en el puerto para verificación de libros de operación de pesca
Funcionarios de INCOPESCA inspeccionan el 100% de descargas de la flota comercial de mediana escala y avanzada y registro de la información en el Formulario de Inspección de Desembarque Recursos Hidrobiológicos (FID)
Sistema de seguimiento satelital de las embarcaciones (VMS)
Monitoreo de la actividad pesquera: vigilancia aérea, inspecciones en el mar y en el puerto (se hace inspecciones en sitios de procesamiento y compra del producto pesquero)
Talla mínima de captura para pez espada del Atlántico norte: peso en vivo de 25 kg o como alternativa 125 cm de longitud de la mandíbula inferior a la horquilla. Margen de tolerancia a los buques que hayan capturado ejemplares pequeños de forma incidental, con la condición de que estas capturas incidentales no superen el 15% del número de peces espada por desembarque de la captura total de pez espada de dichos buques.
Registro de información biológica pesquera en desembarques