

**RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT ON THE SOUTHERN ALBACORE
CATCH LIMITS FOR 2012 AND 2013**

NOTING that the current high level of uncertainty in the stock status has led to a less optimistic view of the stock status compared to the 2007 stock assessment with MSY estimated at 27,964 t compared to 29,900 t in 2007;

NOTING FURTHER the conclusions of the 2011 Albacore Assessment Meeting, and of the 2011 SCRS Report, that the southern albacore stock is likely to be overfished and is experiencing overfishing with the current best estimate of SSB_{2009}/SSB_{MSY} being 0.88(0.55-1.59) and the current best estimate of $F_{current}/F_{MSY}$ being 1.07(0.44-1.95);

ACKNOWLEDGING that total annual catches since 2004 have been considerably lower than MSY;

RECOGNISING the need to implement measures to improve the southern albacore stock to MSY levels, this being the management objective of ICCAT;

FURTHER NOTING that catches exceeding 24,000 t will not permit the rebuilding of the stock within the projected time frame;

FURTHER RECOGNISING that additional work is needed before sharing arrangements for southern albacore based on the *ICCAT Criteria for the Allocation of Fishing Possibilities* [Ref. 01-25] can be developed and agreed on;

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

1. The annual total catch limit for albacore caught in the Atlantic Ocean South of 5°N shall be set at 24,000 t for 2012 and 2013, this being the maximum allowable catch to permit stock rebuilding.
2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1, should the total reported albacore catches in 2011, as reported to the 2012 ICCAT meeting, exceed 29,900 t, the TAC for 2013 shall be reduced by the full amount of the 2011 catch in excess of 29,900 t.
3. The five participants actively fishing for southern albacore, namely Chinese Taipei, South Africa, Namibia, Brazil and Uruguay, shall participate in a sharing arrangement of 21,000 t. In addition to the sharing arrangement limit, the five participants shall not exceed their individual catch limits*, namely 13,000 t for Chinese Taipei, 10,000 t for South Africa and Namibia combined, 3,500 t for Brazil, and 1,200 t for Uruguay.
4. Catch limits shall apply to the European Union (1,540 t), Belize (300 t), Philippines (150 t), Korea (150 t). Japan shall endeavour to limit its total catch of southern albacore to 4% by weight of its total longline bigeye tuna catch in the Atlantic Ocean south of 5°N.
5. All other CPCs, which are not actively fishing for southern albacore, shall be limited to a maximum catch of 100 t.
6. a) All CPCs mentioned in paragraph 3 and 4 shall provide regular reporting of provisional accumulative southern albacore catches to the ICCAT Secretariat according to the following schedule:
 - total catches made from the 1 January to the 30 June shall be reported before the 31 July;
 - total catches from 1 January to 30 September shall be reported before the 31 October, and;

* Individual catch limits referred to in paragraph 3 merely represents country aspirations under the current stock status and should be considered within the total sharing arrangement limit of 21,000 t. These limits are only applicable for the current conservation measure and shall have no bearing for future allocations.

- total catches from the 1 January to 31 December shall be reported before the 31 January the following year.
- 6.b) In addition to the provisions of paragraph 6(a) Japan shall also report its bigeye tuna catches south of 5°N simultaneously with its albacore catches.
- 6.c) The ICCAT Secretariat shall immediately distribute reported catches to all CPCs concerned
7. At the second reporting period (31 October), if the total reported catches of all five participants of the sharing arrangement exceeds 16,800 t (80% of the sharing arrangement limit) then these participants shall be required to report on a monthly basis to the ICCAT Secretariat for the remainder of the year.
 8. If at any stage a participant referred to in paragraphs 3 and 4 (excluding Japan) reaches 80% of its individual catch limit then it shall be required to report its respective catch on a monthly basis to the ICCAT Secretariat for the remainder of the year.
 9. Should the catches of the sharing arrangement exceed 21,000 t, without any of the five participants exceeding their individual catch limits, then the sharing arrangement shall be reduced in the subsequent year by 100% of the total amount exceeded. This reduction shall also apply pro rata to all the individual catch limits in the subsequent year.
 10. Should the catches of the sharing arrangement exceed 21,000 t, due to any of the five participants exceeding their individual catch limits, then the sharing arrangement shall be reduced in the subsequent year by 100% of the total amount exceeded. In addition, the participants, which have caused the over-catch shall have its individual catch limit reduced in the subsequent year by 125% of the total exceeded amount.
 11. If any CPC referred to in paragraph 4 (excluding Japan) exceeds its catch limits then such CPC shall have its catch limits reduced by 100% of the total exceeded amount in the subsequent year.
 12. All other CPCs, referred to in paragraph 5, which exceed their individual catch limits shall have their catch limits reduced by 100% of the total exceeded amount in the year after their catches have been reviewed at the ICCAT Commission meeting.
 13. Should Japan exceed its southern albacore by-catch limit of 4% by weight of its total longline bigeye tuna catch in the Atlantic Ocean south of 5°N in 2012 or 2013, then the matter shall be referred to the subsequent Commission meeting to determine an appropriate catch limit to be implemented in the subsequent management period.
 14. Should the total catches exceed 24,000 t (TAC) in any given year until 2013, without any participant exceeding its catch limits, then the amount caught in excess of the TAC shall be reduced from the sharing arrangement in the subsequent year in which the over-catch has been reviewed by the ICCAT Commission.
 15. No provision shall be made for carry-over of under-harvests under the previous conservation measure [Rec 07-03] to the current conservation measure. Underages in any given year of this conservation measure may not be carried over to the subsequent year.
 16. Those Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities fishing actively for southern albacore shall immediately improve their catch reporting systems to ensure the reporting of accurate and validated southern albacore catch and effort data to ICCAT in full accordance with the ICCAT requirements for provision of Task I and Task II catch, effort and size data.
 17. The next stock assessment of southern albacore shall be brought forward to 2013 given the need to reduce the uncertainty of the 2011 stock assessment. Scientists of entities actively fishing for southern albacore are strongly encouraged to analyse their fisheries data and to participate in the 2013 assessment.
 18. All aspects of the southern albacore catch limit and sharing arrangement shall be reviewed and revised at the 2013 ICCAT Commission meeting, taking account of the results of the updated southern albacore stock assessment to be conducted in 2013. This review and revision shall also address any over-harvests made in excess of the 2012 and 2013 TAC.
 19. This Recommendation replaces, in its entirety, the 2007 *Recommendation by ICCAT on the Southern Albacore Catch Limit for 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011* [Rec. 07-03].