



## ICCAT Press Release

# ICCAT agreed on a reviewed multi-annual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean

### 21st Special Meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas

19 November 2018, Dubrovnik, Croatia – On the backdrop of the beautiful scenery of Dubrovnik, ICCAT (International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas) agreed on a reviewed multi-annual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean. In addition the Commission agreed to roll over current measures for tropical tunas and to work in advance of the 2019 Commission meeting to develop a new plan acceptable to all. New recommendations on reporting formats for the implementation of billfish and shark measures, as well as several refinements to Monitoring, Control and Surveillance measures such as the development of the IUU vessel list, port State measures and vessel monitoring system (VMS) have also been approved.

Have bluefin tuna emulated Richard the Lionheart and found shelter from the storm of overfishing in old Ragusa? Heaven on earth becomes paradise of the sea at the 21st Special Meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas. Known throughout history for its many qualities such as diplomacy, early abolition of slavery, unbreachable walls, as well as its beautiful scenery, Dubrovnik, pearl of the Adriatic, has set the scene for agreement on several important commercial fish stocks, namely eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna.

The Commission convened to evaluate the results of the 2018 working plan together with the current status of application of the regulatory measures in force and to establish the conservation and management measures for the future. During 2018, two species were subject to a full scientific stock assessment: **bigeye tuna** (*Thunnus obesus*) and **blue marlin** (*Makaira nigricans*). Overall 12 new Recommendations and two Resolutions were adopted covering relevant issues on Atlantic tuna and tuna-like species conservation and fisheries management.

The Commission agreed to move forward to adopt the package of comprehensive amendments to modernize the ICCAT Convention, which had been developed over the past five years within the Working Group on Convention Amendment. Contracting Parties will work over the coming year to ensure that these amendments, and related measures, will be formally adopted at the 2019 Commission meeting.

While a wave of cooperation allowed significant improvements in the discussions aimed at a new conservation and management programme for tropical tuna, the Commission could not reach a consensus and the annual catch limits for bigeye tuna will continue to apply through 2019. In addition the Commission agreed to roll over current measures for tropical tunas and blue and white marlin stocks, and to work in advance of the 2019 Commission meeting to develop new plans acceptable to all.



## INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS

An additional two days for compliance issues was acclaimed as productive by all, allowing time for a more in depth review of several issues which sometimes get put on the back boiler during the exceptionally busy ICCAT meetings.

The Commission also took several decisions to ensure the sustainable financial security of the organization. Finally it was announced that the 2019 Annual ICCAT meeting will be held in Curaçao (18-25 November, 2019).

A spirit of consensus was heralded by the new ICCAT Executive Secretary, Mr. Camille Jean Pierre Manel, as the Commission also paid tribute, in an emotional farewell ceremony, to his predecessor Mr. Driss Meski.

The 21st Special Meeting of ICCAT was opened by the Vice-prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Croatia, who welcomed over 650 delegates from 45 Contracting Parties, two cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities; and observers from one non-Contracting Party, two international organisations and 21 Non-Governmental Organizations. The new ICCAT Chair, Mr Raul Delgado, in his final speech, thanked all Contracting Parties for the transparency with which they had carried out their work and their good will to ensure achievement of the objectives of this Commission: conservation of the stocks. He also signaled that ICCAT needs good fisheries management to effectively contribute to people's livelihood.

Finally, ICCAT would like to express the most sincere gratitude to the Government of Croatia and the European Union, and to everybody who, directly or indirectly, individually or as representatives, made this meeting possible.

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**21<sup>st</sup> Special Meeting of the International Commission  
for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas**

**List of adopted Recommendations and Resolutions**

- *Recommendation by ICCAT on Improvement of Compliance Review of Conservation and Management Measures Regarding Billfish Caught in the ICCAT Convention Area*
- *Recommendation by ICCAT to Amend ICCAT Reporting Deadlines in Order to Facilitate an Effective and Efficient Compliance Process*
- *Recommendation by ICCAT to Replace Recommendation 16-13 on Improvement of Compliance Review of Conservation and Management Measures Regarding Sharks Caught in Association with ICCAT Fisheries*
- *Recommendation by ICCAT Establishing a Multi-Annual Management Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea*
- *Recommendation by ICCAT to Replace Rec. 15-05 to Further Strengthen the Plan to Rebuild Blue Marlin and White Marlin Stocks*
- *Recommendation by ICCAT Amending Four Recommendations and One Resolution*
- *Recommendation by ICCAT on Establishing a List of Vessels Presumed to have Carried out Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing Activities*
- *Recommendation by ICCAT on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing*
- *Measure Supplementing and Amending Recommendation 16-01 on a Multi Annual Conservation and Management Programme for Tropical Tunas*
- *Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning Minimum Standards for Vessel Monitoring Systems in the ICCAT Convention Area*
- *Recommendation by ICCAT Amending Recommendation 15-10 on the Application of the eBCD System*
- *Recommendation by ICCAT Amending Recommendation 11-20 on an ICCAT Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation Program*
- *Resolution by ICCAT Establishing a Pilot Program for the Voluntary Exchange of Inspection Personnel in Fisheries Managed by ICCAT*
- *Resolution by ICCAT on Development of Initial Management Objectives for Eastern and Western Bluefin Tuna*