

POSITION PAPER BY TURKEY FOR PANEL 2

Turkey has been among the leading CPCs that exerted the highest efforts with the utmost degree of sacrifice and commitment for the success of the multi-year conservation and management plans towards recovery of E-BFT stocks. When Recommendation 98-5, introducing E-BFT catch limitations for the first time, had entered into force in 1999, total allowable catch limit was set as 32.000 metric tons. At that time, Turkey had made an E-BFT catch of 5.899 metric tons, constituting 15% of total E-BFT catch of the CPCs in 1998 even before its membership to ICCAT. Later on, Turkey reduced its 1998 catches fivefold in 1999 voluntarily when the period of substantial catch limitations / TAC reductions was commenced for the first time.

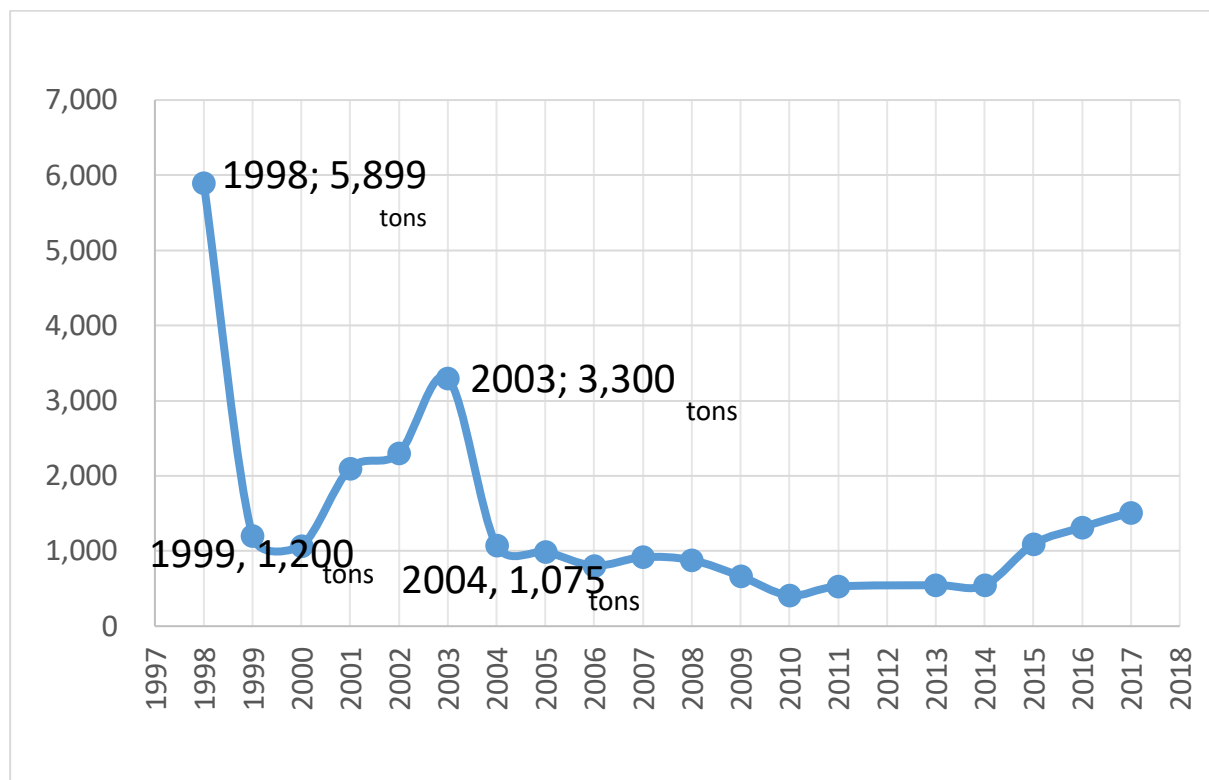


Figure. E-BFT Catches of Turkey by years (1998-2017), metric tons.

Becoming a full member of ICCAT, Turkey started to benefit from the limited quota, namely “Others”, as from 2004 by further limiting its E-BFT catches voluntarily with the aim of further contributing to ICCAT’s multi-year conservation and management plan. In fact Turkey did use to catch the full amount of “Others” quota separately by herself already before starting of substantial TAC reductions in 1998 and before it was included in “Others” quota segment. Notwithstanding, the current allocation level of 4.15% as set by ICCAT definitely ignores Turkey’s traditional shares, thus it is not fair or tone.

As to the current state of affairs, it is understood from SCRS’s advice that increasing of TAC up to a level of 32.000 metric tons or above as from 2018 would still keep the stocks within biological safe limits. Obviously, 32.000 metric tons was also the level of TAC at the beginning of the vicennial period of substantial TAC reductions that started in 1998/1999.

Since it is time to bring TAC to the historical levels of 1998/1999’s, the time has also come to fix up individual CPC quotas through a fair and equitable allocation scheme that will not left out Turkey from quota recovery to the levels before gradual and substantial TAC reductions.

From the beginning of Turkey's membership to ICCAT, Turkish fishermen and the fishing industry have fulfilled their obligations by making enormous contributions to the success of management and conservation initiatives introduced by ICCAT towards E-BFT. Compared to the period before 2004, Turkey managed to realize a tenfold deduction in terms of fishing capacity, number of vessel and total catch yield by sacrificing a lot from fishermen's livelihood and from the well-being of industry as a whole.

In this context, Turkey's individual quota should be recovered in line with its traditional share in the 1990s' since Turkey has incurred the highest losses in terms of E-BFT catch quantities and fisheries by showing the utmost commitment and sacrifice throughout the vicennial period of substantial TAC reductions. In the case that TAC becomes 32,000 t and the current allocation keys are applied; only Turkey would be left out without recovery of its quota to the level before TAC reductions.

Though, it is observed that the individual CPC quotas starting from 1999 have been allocated on the basis of E-BFT catches of CPCs at 1993-1994 reference years and that this conjecture is still valid since quota shares of CPCs have remained almost the same, as unchanged over the years, except for that of Turkey.

Consequently, compared to other CPCs Turkey has never been availed of a fair level of quota despite the fact that it has incurred the highest losses in terms of E-BFT catch quantities and fisheries and that it has made the utmost sacrifice and commitments for the success of multi-year conservation plans throughout a period of 20-year-long substantial TAC reductions.

Turkey has suffered the most, among other CPCs benefiting from E-BFT quotas since 2004, and if the current Turkish allocation key is maintained unchanged, Turkey would not be compensated fairly, even when TAC is raised at 32.000 metric tons.

It is time to bring TAC up to the historical levels of 1990s when period of substantial reductions did start for the first time. With a substantially increased TAC as from 2018, Turkey's E-BFT catch quota should be restored in line with its traditional share, i.e., 7.73% of the TAC.