

Original: English

**DRAFT RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT AMENDING THE RECOMMENDATION FOR
THE CONSERVATION OF SOUTH ATLANTIC SWORDFISH, [REC. 16-04]**

(Proposal submitted by the European Union)

CONSIDERING that the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) indicates that substantial unquantified uncertainties affect this stock, in particular due to lack or inconsistencies of available data;

CONSCIOUS that the SCRS underlined that due to the existing uncertainties there is no room to increase the existing TAC;

RECOGNIZING that this multi-annual approach for the management of South Atlantic swordfish reflects the thrust of the *Resolution by ICCAT on Criteria for the Allocation of Fishing Possibilities* [Res. 15-13], adopted by the Commission in 2015, for the period concerned;

RECOGNISING that it would be appropriate, as already applicable to other stocks under the purview of ICCAT, to establish an ICCAT register of vessels authorized to fish South Atlantic swordfish;

ACKNOWLEDGING that based on the 2017 stock assessment, the SCRS advised that the current TAC of 15,000 t has only a 26% probability of rebuilding the South Atlantic swordfish stock to within MSY reference levels by 2028, whereas a TAC of 14,000 t would have a 50% probability of rebuilding the stock;

ACKNOWLEDGING that following the 2017 stock assessment the SCRS confirmed that the stock of South Atlantic swordfish is overfished;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the concerns expressed by the Panel of the second ICCAT performance review regarding the possibility to transfer high underage from year to year and that this practice is inconsistent with sound management of the stocks;

SEEKING to ensure that the total catch does not exceed the annual Total Allowable Catch;

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

TAC and catch limits

1. For 2018, 2019, and 2020, the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and the catch limits shall be as follows:

	<i>(Unit: t)</i>
TAC ⁽¹⁾	14,000
Brazil ⁽²⁾	3677.33
European Union	4502.40
South Africa	934.27
Namibia	1090.13
Uruguay	1168.53
United States	93.33
Cote d'Ivoire	116.67
China	292.13
Chinese Taipei	428.40
United Kingdom	23.33
Japan	840.93
Angola	93.33
Ghana	93.33

St. Tomé & Príncipe	93.33
Senegal	389.20
Korea	46.67
Belize	116.67

- (1) The total catch for the three-year management period of 2018-2020 shall not exceed 42,000 t (14,000 t x3). If the yearly total catch of any of the three years exceeds 14,000 t; the TAC(s) for the following year(s) shall be adjusted to ensure that the three-year total will not exceed 42,000 t. In general, these adjustments shall be carried out through prorated reduction of the quota for each Contracting Party and Cooperating non-Contracting Party, Entity and Fishing Entity (CPC).
- (2) Brazil may harvest up to 200 t of its annual catch limit within the area between 5 degrees North latitude and 15 degrees North latitude.

Underage or overage of catch

2. If the annual catch exceeds the TAC of 14000 t, CPCs that have exceeded their individual catch limits shall pay back their overharvest. Such excess of the annual quota shall be deducted from the respective quota/catch limit in the year following the excess. Unused portions of each CPCs catch limit shall no longer be available for harvest during future years.
3. If any Contracting Party exceeds its catch limit during any two consecutive management periods, the Commission will recommend appropriate measures, which may include, but are not limited to, reduction in the catch limit equal to a minimum of 125% of the excess harvest, and, if necessary, trade restrictive measures. Any trade measures under this paragraph will be import restrictions on the subject species and consistent with each Party's international obligations. The trade measures will be of such duration and under such conditions as the Commission may determine.

Transfers

4. Japan shall be allowed to count up to 400 t of its swordfish catch taken from the part of the North Atlantic management area that is east of 35 degrees W and south of 15 degrees N, against its uncaught South Atlantic swordfish quota.
5. The European Union shall be allowed to count up to 200 t of its swordfish catch taken from the North Atlantic management area against its uncaught South Atlantic swordfish quota.
6. The 50 t quota transfers from South Africa, Japan and United States to Namibia (total: 150 t), the 25 t quota transfers from United States to Côte d'Ivoire, the 25 t quota transfer from United States and the 50 t quota transfers from Brazil and Uruguay to Belize (total: 125 t) shall be authorized. The quota transfers shall be reviewed annually in response to a request from an involved CPC.

Minimum size

7. In order to protect small swordfish, CPCs shall take the necessary measures to prohibit the taking of and landing of swordfish in the entire Atlantic Ocean weighing less than 25 kg live weight, or in the alternative, 125 cm lower jaw fork length (LJFL); however, the CPCs may grant tolerances to boats which have incidentally captured small fish, with the condition that this incidental catch shall not exceed 15 percent of the number of swordfish per landing of the total swordfish catch of said boats.
8. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 6, any CPC may choose, as an alternative to the minimum size of 25 kg/125 cm LJFL, to take the necessary measures to prohibit the taking by its vessels in the Atlantic Ocean, as well as the landing and sale in its jurisdiction, of swordfish (and swordfish parts), less than 119 cm LJFL, or in the alternative 15 kg, provided that, if this alternative is chosen, no tolerance of swordfish smaller than 119 LJFL, or in the alternative 15 kg, shall be allowed. For swordfish that have been dressed, a cleithrum to keel (CK) measurement of 63 cm can also be applied. A Party that chooses this alternative minimum size shall require appropriate record keeping of discards. The SCRS should continue to monitor and analyze the effects of this measure on the mortality of immature swordfish.

ICCAT Record of vessels authorized to fish South Atlantic swordfish

9. CPCs shall issue specific authorizations to vessels 20 meters LOA or greater flying their flag that are authorized to fish for South Atlantic swordfish in the Convention area. Each CPC shall indicate which of such vessels it has so authorized on its vessel list submitted pursuant to the *Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning the Establishment of an ICCAT Record of Vessels 20 meters in Length Overall or Greater Authorized to Operate in the Convention Area* [Rec. 13-13]. Such vessels not entered into this record or entered without the required indication that fishing for South Atlantic swordfish is authorized are deemed not to be authorized to fish for, retain on board, transship, transport, transfer, process or land South Atlantic swordfish.
10. CPCs may allow bycatch of South Atlantic swordfish by vessels not authorized to fish for South Atlantic swordfish pursuant to paragraph 9, if the CPC establishes a maximum on board bycatch limit for such vessels and that the bycatch in question is accounted for within the CPC's quota or catch limit. Each CPC shall provide in its Annual Report the maximum bycatch limit it allows for such vessels. That information shall be compiled by the ICCAT Secretariat and made available to CPCs.

Availability of data to SCRS

11. CPCs shall endeavor to recover any missing catch data for years up to 2015, including reliable Task I and Task II data. CPCs will make available the above data to the SCRS as soon as possible. From 2017 onwards, CPCs will ensure accurate and timely data submission to the SCRS.
12. All CPCs catching swordfish in the South Atlantic shall endeavor to provide annually the best available data to the SCRS, including catch, catch at size, location and month of capture on the smallest scale possible, as determined by the SCRS. The data submitted shall be for broadest range of age classes possible, consistent with minimum size restrictions, and by sex when possible. The data shall also include discards (both dead and alive) and effort statistics, even when no analytical stock assessment is scheduled. The SCRS shall review these data annually.
13. When assessing stock status and providing management recommendations to the Commission in 2017, the SCRS shall consider the interim limit reference (LRP) of $0.4 \cdot B_{MSY}$ or any more robust LRP established through further analysis.

Final provisions

14. None of the arrangements in this Recommendation shall be deemed to prejudice a future arrangement relating to South Atlantic swordfish.
15. The *Recommendation by ICCAT for the Conservation of South Atlantic Swordfish* [Rec. 16-04] is repealed and replaced by this Recommendation.