

November 13, 2018 (9:54 AM)

Original: English

**EXPLANATORY NOTE:
DRAFT RESOLUTION BY ICCAT ON AN INITIAL FRAMEWORK FOR
MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES FOR EASTERN AND WESTERN BLUEFIN TUNA**

Proposal submitted by Canada

The intention of this proposal is to seek agreement on a framework for management objectives for eastern and western Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFTE and BFTW), an important step in advancing the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) for BFT. This framework does not include quantitative elements that will be necessary to implement these objectives.

Fisheries management objectives can be framed in two ways: (1) conceptual objectives; or (2) operational objectives (Punt *et al.* 2016¹). Conceptual objectives are high-level aspirational objectives that verbalize a desired generic goal without including any specifics on a measurable target or timeframe for achievement. Operational objectives are more refined and more specific about measurable targets and associated likelihood of achieving those targets over determined timeframes. Operational objectives are the key foundational component of any MSE.

A previous version of this framework was discussed at the 2018 Standing Working Group on Dialogue between Fisheries Scientists and Managers Meeting (SWGSM). At that time, the Working Group agreed to begin with consideration of a framework as a basis for future determination of operational management objectives.

The key difference in this proposal as compared to what was presented at SWGSM is the application of the framework to both BFTE and BFTW. This is intended to develop a common framework to assess the stocks within the MSE. However, a common framework does not preclude differing quantitative elements being introduced for each stock during their refinement as operational management objectives.

It is proposed that Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities agree to the framework at the 21st Special Meeting of the Commission and direct Panel 2 to further develop the framework into fully operational management objectives by introducing quantitative elements. The operational management objectives resulting from the 2019 intersessional Panel 2 meeting would then be proposed to the Commission for adoption in 2019, which aligns with ICCAT's schedule for the BFT MSE.

¹ A.E. Punt, D.S. Butterworth, C.L. de Moor, J.A.A. De Oliveira, and M. Haddon. 2016. Management strategy evaluation: best practices. *Fish and Fisheries* 17:303-334.

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RECALLING that one of the main goals of the SCRS Science Strategic Plan 2015-2020 is to evaluate precautionary management reference points and robust harvest control rules (HCRs) through management strategy evaluations (MSE);

ANTICIPATING a transition to the use of management procedures, which the Commission has recommended for bluefin tuna and other priority stocks to manage fisheries more effectively in the face of identified uncertainties, and the need to identify management objectives consistent with the Convention and Recs. 11-13 and 15-07;

CONSIDERING that the Commission intends to complete a Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) for Atlantic bluefin tuna by 2020;

UNDERSTANDING that conceptual objectives are high-level aspirational objectives that verbalize a desired generic goal without including any specifics on a measurable target or timeframe for achievement, while Operational objectives are more refined and more specific about measureable targets and associated likelihood of achieving those targets over determined timeframes. Operational objectives are the key foundational component of any MSE;

NOTING ICCAT's need to commit to developing operational management objectives for bluefin tuna in 2019;

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

1. Management objectives should be established for Atlantic bluefin tuna. These objectives are to be based on the Convention's conceptual objective: to maintain populations at levels that will support maximum sustainable catch.
2. The following partial operational management objectives will be forwarded by the Commission to Panel 2 for refinement into complete operational management objectives. The framework is as follows:
 - a) Ensure that the stock has a greater than [__]% probability of occurring in the green quadrant of the Kobe matrix for [*period*];
 - b) Ensure that the stock has a less than [__]% probability of entering the red quadrant of the Kobe matrix for [*period*];
 - c) Ensure that there is a less than [__]% probability of the stock falling below B_{LIM} (*to be defined*) for [*period*];
 - d) Maximize catch levels, while achieving B_{MSY} (or an appropriate proxy) [*by/over time/period*]; and,
 - e) Limit change in TAC to [__]% between management periods.
3. The use of a common framework as described in paragraph 2 does not preclude differing quantitative elements being introduced for each stock during their refinement into complete operational management objectives.

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4. Panel 2 will work intersessionally in 2019 to further develop this framework into complete operational management objectives, through the introduction of quantitative elements. In addition, Panel 2 may consider modifying those listed in Paragraph 2 and/or introducing additional operational objectives.
5. This resolution will be repealed upon adoption of complete operational management objectives for Atlantic bluefin tuna by the Commission.