

November 9, 2018 (9:07 AM)

Original: English

**EXPLANATORY NOTE:
DRAFT RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT ON CONCEPTUAL MANAGEMENT
OBJECTIVES FOR EASTERN AND WESTERN BLUEFIN TUNA**

Proposal submitted by Canada

The intention of this proposal is to seek agreement on conceptual management objectives for eastern and western Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFTE and BFTW), an important step in advancing the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) for BFT. These conceptual management objectives would be refined into operational management objectives through intersessional work of Panel 2. The operational management objectives would then be proposed to the Commission for adoption in 2019, which corresponds to ICCAT's schedule for the BFT MSE.

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.

Conceptual objectives were 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 conceptual management objectives 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 conceptual management objectives framework to both BFTE and BFTW. This is intended to develop a common framework to assess the stocks within the MSE, recognizing that mixing dictates that achieving the objectives for one stock is dependent on policies set for the other. However, a common set of conceptual management objectives does not preclude differing quantitative elements being introduced for each stock during their refinement as operational management objectives.

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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**DRAFT RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT ON CONCEPTUAL MANAGEMENT
OBJECTIVES FOR EASTERN AND WESTERN BLUEFIN TUNA**

(a new proposal)

Proposed by Canada

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;

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

NOTING ICCAT's "Road Map for the Development of Management Strategy Evaluation and Harvest Control Rules" and the commitment therein to develop operational management objectives for bluefin tuna in 2019;

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

1. Conceptual management objectives be adopted by the Commission. These conceptual management objectives are as follows:
 - a) Ensure that the eastern Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFTE) and western Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFTW) stocks have a greater than [__]% probability of occurring in the green quadrant of the Kobe matrix for [*period*].
 - b) Ensure that the BFTE and BFTW stocks have 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 BFTE and BFTW stocks falling below B_{LIM} (*to be defined*) for [*period*].
 - d) Maximize catch levels, while achieving B_{MSY} (or an appropriate proxy) by [*time*].
 - e) Limit change in TAC to [__]% between management periods.
2. These conceptual management objectives will be forwarded to Panel 2 to help inform the development of operational management objectives in 2019.
3. This recommendation will be repealed upon adoption of operational management objectives for bluefin tuna.