



ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS
OF FISHING ENTERPRISES IN THE EU

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Europêche position on ICCAT negotiations 2018

Bluefin Tuna

Recitals :

- EUROPECHE takes note of the outcomes of the last SCRS stock assessments of the eastern Atlantic Bluefin Tuna (BFT) which indicated that this stock is now considered optimally exploited and meets the management objectives established within ICCAT ;
- In 2017, SCRS presented short-term projections in accordance with the basic case of the assessment model. Constant annual catches up to 36,000 tons have probabilities to achieve B_{MSY} in 2022 with at least 60% probability ;
- EUROPECHE recalls that SCRS have recommended in 2017 and 2018 that the ICCAT would consider replacing the current recovery strategy plan with a management plan, without weakening existing monitoring and control measures ;
- EUROPECHE stresses that the obligation to slaughter all tuna at a given time, with no possibility of carry-over, would cause prices to fall especially because buyers and customers would wait to purchase the product by the end of the deadline established. This is especially true in light of the existing stock-keeping warehouses and refrigerators in certain 3rd countries which are currently regulating international markets according to the prices ;
- EUROPECHE emphasizes that a measure aimed at limiting or eliminating the carry-over would terminate with one of the most sustainable and responsible fishing business models in the European Union. The lack of control by certain governments is the cause of the problems and not the carry-over ;
- Considering the good state of the stock confirmed by the latest SCRS scientific advice, which recommended TAC increases and considering that the objectives of the recovery plan and the conditions for a full sustainable exploitation of the stock are today reached ;

EUROPECHE :

- Proposes to move from a BFT recovery plan to a BFT management plan.
- Considers that specific control measures must be maintained, especially the minimum sizes. However, current measures are considered too complicated by many fishing enterprises which can result in particularly damaging sanctions for professional fishermen in terms of respecting the excessive procedures to control landings. New control measures should be adapted, especially for vessels that do not target as main species bluefin tuna and have BFT by-catches.
- Recalls that a progressive TAC increase as adopted last year must be maintained. European professional fishermen must also benefit from this progressive increase in the TAC. EUROPECHE notes that the European Union allocation key has already been reduced by more than 5% between 2017 and 2020 (59.24% in 2017 to 53.77% in 2020).
- EUROPECHE rejects any measure aimed at limiting or eliminating the carry-over which would terminate with one of the most sustainable and responsible fishing business models in the European Union.
- Proposes the carry-over to be filmed in the same way as the catch being introduced for the first time in pools, and that this filming, at least in Europe, is carried out by the Commission's inspection control center (EFCA).
- Recommends the mandatory registration in the eBCD, at least in Europe, of all commercial operations of specimens of fish (whole and gutted with and without head). This would be a great measure of control in the market, avoiding any possible falsification of documents.