

STATEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES TO PANEL 1 – ROUND 3

The United States thanks the Chair, the Secretariat, and Panel 1 members for their work on the challenging issues facing ICCAT related to tropical tunas. We are encouraged that the Panel was able to agree on a one-year roll-over of expiring provisions of Recommendation 19-02.

However, regarding PA1_502B our position remains unchanged: we cannot endorse this document. The substantive content of PA1_502B has been incorporated into the Compliance Tables (COC_304C), which sufficiently clarifies how CPCs subject to catch limits should be managing their fisheries. We reiterate our suggestions: Panel 1 should simply take note of the document and its potential utility in supporting future allocation discussions, particularly its annex, which provides important context.

The United States was disappointed to see that much of the specificity in the original roadmap was lost in version PA1_511A. It is also not clear why our detailed suggestions on the roadmap were not included in PA1_520 Annex 3. We are concerned that our suggestions continue to be ignored. We request that Annex 3 be updated to reflect our suggested edits to PA1_511, as well as the comments provided in PA1_516. We noted South Africa's suggestion in PA1_519 to review 2020 implementation of Rec. 19-02, and believe our suggestion of reviewing fishery management plans fits well with that discussion. We have also taken note of the emphasis many CPCs have placed on discussions related to paragraph 66 of Rec. 19-02, and believe this should be reflected on the agenda for one of the intersessional meetings. Even without new SCRS advice, there is enough information available to support a second FAD-focused virtual intersessional in April, as well as the discussion of supply vessel management deferred from the 2019 annual meeting. We reiterate our requests to the SCRS, as follows, which, although submitted, were not circulated in round 3:

Requested SCRS advice to support Panel 1 Priorities

- Advice on the efficacy of time/area closures (requested in Rec. 19-02 paragraphs 28 and 66).
- Advice on maximum number of FAD sets which should be established per vessel or per CPC (requested in Rec. 19-02 paragraph 31), and if not possible, any advice on what information should be provided by CPCs to support this analysis.
- Analysis on the impact of support vessels on the catches of juvenile yellowfin and bigeye tuna (Rec. 19-02 paragraph 33).
- Updated advice on the impacts to MSY of yellowfin and bigeye tuna catch by gear type (e.g., the decision support tool from the 2018 SCRS report) based on the 2019 yellowfin assessment and 2021 bigeye assessment.

In order to avoid prolonging the discussion, the United States can agree to version PA1_511A of the 2021 roadmap on the condition that it be considered a minimum list of topics to cover in 2021, and that this is reflected in the report of this decision-making process. We will work with the Chair to ensure U.S. concerns are taken into account in the development of agendas for 2021 Panel 1 intersessionals and encourage other CPCs to do the same.