

IPNLF Summary Statement to ICCAT Panel 1

IPNLF applauds the rollover of expiring PA1 measures and the provided clarification on the interpretation of the interim bigeye tuna catch limit table. We are pleased to see that virtual meetings have been proposed that will focus on improving FAD management and reviewing MCS and reporting requirements to promote the effective implementation of limits. We also gladly note the proposed in-person intersessional meeting to address the bigeye tuna TAC for 2022 and beyond, including a crucially needed TAC allocation scheme and means of addressing (over)capacity. Having witnessed the difficult negotiations in 2019, and noting the unlevel playing field to effectively participate in online meetings, we agree that an inclusive in-person meeting is the appropriate way forward.

We would like to stress again that bigeye and yellowfin tuna catches must be reduced to comply with the agreed TACs in Rec. 19-02. In 2019, the TAC of overfished bigeye tuna was overshoot by 14%. In 2016 - 2017 catches exceeded the TAC by 20% and in 2018 by 13%. In 2019, the SCRS determined that those catch rates provided only a 1% probability of BET recovery by 2033. While yellowfin tuna was not considered overfished in 2019, the TAC of this stock was overshoot by 20% in 2019, and the SCRS expressed that such catch levels are expected to further degrade the condition of the stock.

We specifically urge the following matters be addressed as a matter of priority:

- An equitable bigeye tuna allocation mechanism that respects Res. 15-13, thereby aligning with the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines), with an increased number of CPCs represented on the allocation table to improve accountability.
- At least 20% longline observer coverage by 2022.
- Assess effectiveness of the FAD closure and adjust as/if needed to meaningfully reduce juvenile bigeye and yellowfin tuna fishing mortality.
- Improve the monitoring and control of FADs to ensure compliance with limits that can be appropriately verified. Please note this new paper on the IUU nature of FADs: <https://bit.ly/37RN08N>
- Ensure the intent of para 40 of Rec. 19-02 is respected, preferably prohibiting all netting on FADs by 2022.
- Reduce the capacity of industrial longline and purse seine fleets while not undermining the legitimate rights of developing coastal States.
- Adding to flag State catch data, ICCAT should transparently share data on catches by EEZ.
- Further advance the development and implementation of harvest control rules (HCRs) for key tuna species.
- Adopt measures to reduce bycatch and protect endangered, threatened, or protected species, including sharks, seabirds, cetaceans, and turtles.

IPNLF's more elaborate opening statement is available at

https://www.iccat.int/com2020/TRI/PA1_504_IPNLF_STATEMENT.pdf

