

**JOINT STATEMENT BY EGYPT AND THE EUROPEAN UNION TO PANEL 2  
MEDITERRANEAN ALBACORE REBUILDING PLAN**

During Panel 2 discussions on the European Union proposal for a rebuilding plan of Mediterranean albacore, Egypt supported the European Union proposal and recognised the importance of protecting this stock. Moreover, Egypt declared that the provision on capacity limitation (paragraph 5 of the Mediterranean albacore rebuilding plan) cannot currently be implemented at domestic level, as the system of licences used in Egypt is based on gears, rather than species.

Recommendation 17-05 (*Recommendation by ICCAT establishing management measures for the stock of Mediterranean albacore*) establishes an obligation for all CPCs to issue licenses for vessels targeting this species. As per the SCRS tables, Egypt declared catches of Mediterranean albacore in 2018 (429 t) and in 2020 (316 t). Notwithstanding the challenges faced by Egypt, due to its internal legal framework, it was not possible to accommodate Egypt's request to modify the provision on capacity limitation of the Mediterranean albacore proposal, since, as highlighted by other CPCs, for example in the context of discussions in Panel 3 regarding South Atlantic albacore, the lack of licenses for vessels catching a certain species as bycatch can create a loophole in terms of compliance and control within the ICCAT framework.

Acknowledging that the status of its internal legislation will need to be improved, in order to avoid potential compliance issues, Egypt commits to adopt, in the first quarter of 2022, the appropriate legislation that will allow issuance of licences by type of species. In that context, Egypt commits to establish a reference list of vessels which have documented, as of 2018, track record of catches of Mediterranean albacore and to submit this list, together with associated catches per vessel and an explanation on how these catches were determined and verified, to Panel 2 for validation.

In light of these commitments, the European Union and Egypt would like to have the opportunity to engage in further discussions in Panel 2, at the next annual meeting and in intersessional sessions, on a possible review of the capacity limitation provision of the Mediterranean albacore rebuilding plan (Doc. No. PA2\_610A /2021), provided Egypt has adapted its internal legislation, so as to allow it to fulfil the above commitments.