

DRAFT RESOLUTION BY ICCAT ON DEVELOPMENT OF INITIAL OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES FOR WESTERN ATLANTIC SKIPJACK
(submitted by Brazil, South Africa and Uruguay)

RECALLING the intent of the Commission to adopt Management Procedures (MPs) tested through Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) for priority stocks, including western skipjack tuna, as established in the *Recommendation by ICCAT on the Development of Harvest Control Rules and of Management Strategy Evaluation* (Rec. 15-07) to manage fisheries more effectively in the face of identified uncertainties;

RECALLING the application of the precautionary approach in accordance with relevant international standards as established in the *Resolution by ICCAT Concerning the Use of a Precautionary Approach in Implementing ICCAT Conservation and Management Measures* (Res. 15-12);

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the efforts to sustainably manage the western Atlantic skipjack stock, consistent with the objectives of the Convention and the *Recommendation by ICCAT on the Principles of Decision Making for ICCAT Conservation and Management Measures* (Rec. 11-13);

NOTING the conclusions of the 2022 stock assessment conducted by ICCAT's Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) which indicated that the western Atlantic skipjack stock is most likely located in the green area of the Kobe plot, indicating that the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring;

UNDERSTANDING that conceptual objectives are high-level aspirational objectives that verbalize a desired generic goal without including specifics on a measurable target or timeframe for achievement, while operational objectives are a key foundational component of any MSE and provide specific and measurable targets, with associated likelihoods of achieving those targets over determined timeframes;

RECALLING that the preliminary performance indicators agreed to by the Commission for tropical tunas, as outlined in *Recommendation by ICCAT on a Multi-annual Conservation and Management Programme for Tropical Tunas* (Rec. 16-01), included four categories of management objectives, namely status, safety, yield and stability;

CONSIDERING that the Commission intends to adopt an MP for western Atlantic skipjack in 2023;

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

1. Management objectives should be established for western Atlantic skipjack tuna consistent with the Convention's objective: to maintain populations at or above levels that will support maximum sustainable catch (usually referred to as MSY).
2. The candidate operational management objectives for western skipjack tuna are:
 - a. Stock Status
 - The stock should have a [60% or greater] probability of occurring in the green quadrant of the Kobe matrix [at the end of the X-year projection period as determined by the SCRS];
 - b. Safety
 - There should be no greater than [15%] probability of the stock falling below B_{LIM} ($40\% * B_{MSY}$) at any point during the X-year projection period;
 - c. Yield
 - Maximize overall catch levels in the short (1-3 years), medium (4-10 years) and long (11-30 years) terms; and

- d. Stability
- Any changes in TAC between management periods should be less than [20]% or less.
3. In further developing initial operational management objectives, the candidate [operational] management objectives in paragraph 2 may be rejected, modified, or supplemented, as appropriate, by Panel 1 and these initial operational management objectives will be forwarded to the SCRS Tropical Tunas Species Group for review and evaluation through the MSE process.
 4. Panel 1 will provide its recommendations for final management objectives for western Atlantic skipjack tuna, considering the SCRS input, to the Commission for consideration at its 2023 annual meeting as part of the selection of a management procedure.