

## Eastern Atlantic Ocean Tuna – Purse Seine (French fleet) FIP Position Statement - ICCAT 28<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting 13-20 November 2023

Drafted with agreement from all Eastern Atlantic Ocean tuna - purse seine FIP (French fleet)  
Participants – October 2023

This FIP aims to meet the rising global demand for tuna in a sustainable manner by assuring catches do not exceed sustainable levels, promoting the ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management and strengthening policy and governance systems in the region. The end goal is to achieve certification under the [Marine Stewardship Council](#) Fisheries Standard.

As part of this FIP reaching MSC certification there are various actions that need to be undertaken that involve a range of different stakeholders. To ensure the FIP meets these objectives we seek the support of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and urge action at 28<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting on multiple topics laid out in this position statement.

The Eastern Atlantic Ocean tuna - purse seine FIP (French fleet) strongly urges ICCAT and its Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties to:

1. Adopt a workplan for the Compliance Committee to develop audit points for ICCAT management measures, such as those developed for sharks in Rec. 18-06.
2. Use the schedule of compliance issues and corresponding actions, adopted in 2022, for the 2023 review of CPC compliance.
3. Adopt procedures to identify and address non-compliance with TAC allocations.
4. Adopt a new recommendation for tropical tuna conservation and management that ensures bigeye and yellowfin stocks are maintained at sustainable levels in accordance with the ICCAT Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) advice and fully allocates the total allowable catch (TAC) between CPCs. The fleet strongly supports that:
  - a. An equitable system of allocation that ensures a level playing field between EU and non-EU vessels (especially purse seiners) is found.
  - b. Any overshoot of a CPC/category already subject to a quota should not be compensated by other CPC/categories as this would be unfair for CPCs respecting their catch limits.
  - c. The TAC utilization should be monitored in near real-time by all CPCs (every week or two weeks for example).
  - d. Developing CPCs planning to develop their fisheries should inform ICCAT of the fishing management plan, allowing the Commission to anticipate the need for quota transfers.

- e. Unused quotas should progressively be redistributed to a reserve quota for developing states.
5. Request the SCRS to carry out a yellowfin assessment in 2024.
6. Clarify that fish aggregating devices (FADs) must be fully non-entangling, i.e., without any netting or meshed materials.
7. Adopt the definition of “biodegradable” categories consistent with those of IATTC and WCPFC and establish a timeline for transition to biodegradable FADs similar to what was agreed in the IATTC.
8. Continue work with the Electronic Monitoring Systems Working Group, in consultation with SCRS, on the development of Electronic Monitoring (EM) Minimum Standards applicable onboard vessels and meeting scientific needs.
9. Support the development and harmonisation of National observer programs and, when missing or proved inefficient, the development of Regional Observer Schemes for all fishing vessels 24 meters LOA.
10. Adopt revisions to Rec. 21-15 to strengthen the regulation of at-sea transshipment in line with best practice standards, including requiring:
  - a. Near real-time electronic reporting (not longer than 24 hours after the event) for all transshipment activity;
  - b. That carrier vessels only to be flagged to CPCs; and
  - c. Ban of transshipment in the event of VMS system malfunction.
11. Adopt the harvest strategy for western Atlantic skipjack recommended by SCRS
12. Require all sharks be landed with fins naturally attached without exceptions.

If the above-mentioned actions are addressed effectively, they will have positive long term-sustainability implications and improve the overall health of the Atlantic marine ecosystem to allow for fisheries like our current FIP to achieve sustainability targets, particularly in line with MSC certification.

For more information, please do not hesitate in contacting the FIP coordinator Becky Caton at [b.caton@keytraceability.com](mailto:b.caton@keytraceability.com).

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

Eastern Atlantic Ocean Tuna – purse seine FIP (French fleet) Participants