

East Atlantic Ocean Tuna Pole & Line FIP (EAT P&L FIP)  
Management of tropical tuna species  
October 2023

ATTN: Heads of ICCAT Delegation

I am writing on behalf of East Atlantic Tuna P&L FIP in support of urgently needed tuna management measures in the Atlantic Ocean, a region for which your government serves as an important leader as a member of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).

The East Atlantic Tuna P&L FIP works closely with the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF), a global coalition of acclaimed scientists, seafood industry leaders, and environmental champions. ISSF's mission is to undertake and facilitate science-based initiatives to continuously improve the sustainability of global tuna fisheries and the health of the ecosystems that support them.

We have grown increasingly concerned with the management of tuna resources in the Atlantic Ocean. Our FIP operates in this region and the sustainability of these stocks is integral to not only our business, but also to the overall marine environment. .

We strongly urge all delegates to ensure the ICCAT acts in November at its Annual Commission Meeting to:

**1. Compliance Processes**

- 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](#).
- Use the [schedule of compliance issues and corresponding actions](#), adopted in 2022, for the 2023 review of CPC compliance.
- Adopt procedures to identify and address non-compliance with TAC allocations.

**2. Tuna Stock Conservation**

- 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, especially for yellowfin.
- Request the SCRS to carry out a yellowfin assessment in 2024.

**3. FAD Management**

- Clarify that fish aggregating devices (FADs) must be fully non-entangling, i.e., without any netting or meshed materials.
- 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.

**4. Electronic Monitoring and Reporting & Observer Coverage**

- Adopt the Electronic Monitoring (EM) Minimum Standards developed by the Electronic Monitoring Systems Working Group in consultation with SCRS.
- Direct the Working Group on Integrated Monitoring Measures to develop an ICCAT Regional Observer Program (per Rec. 22-01) for recommendation to the Commission in 2024.

#### **5. Transshipment Regulation**

Adopt revisions to Rec. 21-15 to strengthen the regulation of at-sea transshipment in line with [best practice standards](#), including requiring:

- near real-time electronic reporting (not longer than 24 hours after the event) for all transshipment activity;
- that carrier vessels only to be flagged to CPCs; and
- that AIS data are reported in addition to required VMS data.

#### **6. Effective Management Procedures (Harvest Strategies)**

Adopt the harvest strategy for western Atlantic skipjack recommended by SCRS.

#### **7. Bycatch Mitigation & Shark Protections**

- Require all sharks be landed with fins naturally attached without exceptions.
- Reduce the TACs for both blue shark stocks to levels that will ensure a high probability that the stocks will remain in a healthy state in line with SCRS advice, and allocate the TACs by CPC.
- Implement the SCRS advice on catch limits for shortfin mako stocks.
- Request the SCRS to review science-based mitigation techniques for seabird bycatch so as to align Rec. [11-09] to best practice in 2024.

As a member of East Atlantic Tuna P&L FIP engaging in proactive tuna fisheries improvement activities in the Atlantic Ocean, we urge you to ensure that your government fully supports action on the above issues at the ICCAT Commission Meeting in 2023, and that your positions will testify to your support for addressing these issues.

We look forward to your continued leadership in the Atlantic Ocean, a region rich in tuna resources that are in need of continued science-based conservation and management.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

Youssef Jaridi  
Coordinator EAT P&L FIP  
Enc. 2023 ISSF ICCAT Position Statement