

Position Statement for the ICCAT Annual Commission Meeting 11-18 November 2024

Drafted with agreement from all FIP Participants – October 2024

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 need the support of ICCAT and urge action at the ICCAT annual meeting this year on multiple topics laid out in this position statement.

The FIP strongly urges ICCAT and its member states to ensure the following:

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. Adopt procedures to identify and address non-compliance with TAC allocations.
3. Adopt a new Recommendation for tropical tuna conservation and management that ensures bigeye and yellowfin stocks are maintained at sustainable levels. This will require stronger management measures to reduce the yellowfin catch. The measure needs to fully allocate the total allowable catch (TAC) between CPCs, especially for yellowfin.
4. Maintain the current TAC for Mediterranean albacore.
5. As part of the revised tropical tuna conservation measure, and in line with ISSF's established approach to strengthening 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 or IOTC; and
 - Establish a timeline to develop a FAD register.
 - If the Commission extends the current Recommendation for tropical tuna conservation and management for another year, adopt a stand-alone FAD measure that includes all of the above asks.
6. Increase observer coverage by large-scale longline vessels, allowing for the use of EM to reach this level.
7. 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.
8. Adopt a management procedure for western Atlantic skipjack recommended by SCRS, as well as multi-stock management objectives for bigeye, yellowfin and eastern skipjack.
 9. Panel 3 begins to plan for the development of a management procedure for South Atlantic Albacore
 10. Require all sharks be landed with fins naturally attached without exceptions.
 11. Request the SCRS to review science-based mitigation techniques for seabird bycatch so the Commission can adopt revisions to Rec.11-09 that reflects up-to-date scientific bycatch mitigation best practices in 2025.
 12. Give full effect to Recs. 23-12 and 23-14 on whale sharks and mobulid rays such that they enter into force on 1 January 2025 and 1 July 2025, respectively.

If the above-mentioned are addressed effectively it 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.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.