

## Eastern Atlantic Ocean tuna – purse seine (Ghanaian fleet) and Ghana tuna pole and line FIPs Position Statement

ICCAT Annual Meeting November 11<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> 2024

Drafted with agreement from all FIP Participants

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The Ghanaian purse seine and pole and line FIPs aim to meet the rising global demand for tuna in a sustainable manner. This can be achieved by assuring sustainable stock status for all the target tunas that is consistent with the maximum sustainable yield (MSY). Through overall strengthening of management systems at the national and international levels, improvements can be made to ensure sustainable and equitable management of target and vulnerable species, habitats, and fishery ecosystem by utilising best scientific information available. The fisheries aim to achieve certification under the [Marine Stewardship Council](#) (MSC) Fisheries Standard.

As FIPs, we are concerned with the status of the tuna stocks in the Atlantic Ocean and their effective management. We operate in this region and the sustainability of these stocks is integral to not only our business, but also to the overall marine environment.

ICCAT must ensure the uninterrupted, sustainable management of the tuna stocks and marine ecosystems under its purview. There are several critical measures and issues that require immediate attention by ICCAT this year. We therefore strongly urge that the ICCAT acts in November 2024 at the annual meeting of the ICCAT Commission to:

1. Adopt a workplan or 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 allocation.
3. Adopt a new Recommendation for tropical tuna conservation and management that ensures bigeye and yellowfin stocks
4. 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.
5. Maintain the current TAC for Mediterranean albacore.
6. As part of the revised tropical tuna conservation measure and in line with ISSF's approach to FAD management:
  - a. Clarify that Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) must be fully non-entangling, i.e., without any netting or meshed materials;
  - b. 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
  - c. Establish a timeline to develop a FAD register.
  - d. 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.
7. Develop a Regional Observer Program for tropical tuna fisheries.
8. 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. That AIS data are reported in addition to required VMS data.
9. Adopt a management procedure for western Atlantic skipjack recommended by SCRS, as well as multi-stock management objectives for bigeye, yellowfin and eastern skipjack.
10. Panel 3 begins to plan for the development of a management procedure for South Atlantic Albacore.
11. Require all sharks be landed with fins naturally attached without exceptions.
12. 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.
13. 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.

The Ghanaian FIPs look forward to the continued leadership of the ICCAT in the Atlantic Ocean, a region rich in tuna resources that are in need of continued science-based conservation and management. Many thanks for taking time to read our position statement.