

Science, Service, Stewardship



Species Working Group
Recommendations
ICCAT Advisory Committee

October 13, 2011

**NOAA
FISHERIES
SERVICE**



Atlantic Bluefin Tuna

Recommendations by IAC Species Working Group:

- The United States should ensure a three-year recovery plan is adopted for Eastern BFT with the goal of achieving Bmsy by 2023 with a 60% probability.
- **The United States should ensure increased timeliness in reporting of landings and discards in all categories and take inseason action as necessary to make sure the U. S. remains in compliance with its quota.**
- The United States should advance a requirement that negotiations be set in line with SCRS advice.
- Clear and timely identification of current position of agency regarding negotiating position in light of the advice of the working group and IAC.
- The United States should limit participation in 3rd party agreements to transfer quota that adversely affect U.S. fishing interests.



Atlantic Bluefin Tuna

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- The United States should ensure increased timeliness in reporting of landings and discards in all categories and take inseason action as necessary to make sure the U. S. remains in compliance with its quota.

Action:

- After considering best available data for 2009 and 2010, NMFS took inseason action to set recreational daily retention limit for 2011 consistent with available quota and subquotas. Prohibited retention of BFT 59 to less than 73”.
- Current estimates for 2011 season are on track to maintain compliance with ICCAT obligations.
- LPS preliminary estimates are provided within 30 days of the month.
- MRIP Massachusetts BFT census pilot study initiated.



North Atlantic Swordfish

Recommendations by IAC Species Working Group:

- Evaluate any new CPC NSW0 fishery development and utilization of quota in 2008 - 2010 as a result of transfer of U.S. underharvest.
- Ensure that any underharvest quota transfers remain temporary.
- Prioritize any underharvest quota transfers to CPCs which do not enter the U.S. swordfish market.
- **Assure ability of United States to utilize its quota, including plans to revitalize the SWO fishery.**
- Prioritize maintaining Canadian port access.
- **Continue assessment of relatively “clean” fishery technology in areas other than Florida Straits.**
- **Enhance reporting of recreationally caught swordfish, including increased enforcement.**



North Atlantic Swordfish

Recommendation by IAC Species Working Group:

- Assure ability of United States to utilize its quota, including plans to revitalize the SWO fishery.

Actions: Revitalization Efforts:

- SWO General Handgear permit discussions – 2010 and 2011.
- Establishment of incidental HMS squid trawl permit – 2011.
- Eliminated one-year sunset provision for tuna LL permits & allowed renewal of tuna LL permits – 2008.
- PLL closed area research study began – 2008.
- Increased SWO retention limits for incidental permit holders (2 to 30); Increased retention limits for squid trawl (5 to 15); Eased upgrade restrictions for limited access permit holders; Increased bag limits for angling (3 to 4), Charter (3 to 6), headboat (3 to 15) – 2007.
- Authorized SWO buoy gear – 2006.



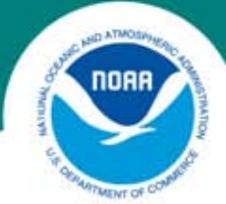
North Atlantic Swordfish

Recommendation by IAC Species Working Group:

- Continue assessment of relatively “clean” fishery technology in areas other than Florida Straits.

Action:

- SWO General Category permit discussions at the 2011 Sept HMS AP mtg.
 - Interest in pursuing this permit concept through a separate permit rather than adding swordfish to the Atlantic Tunas General Category permit.
 - Continuing concern about additional fishing effort in Florida Straits, which is considered a swordfish nursery area.
 - Concern about overcapitalization in the fishery; consider a “sunset provision”.
 - Some support for open access permit; Some suggested eligibility requirements or lottery for permit issuance.
- BREP contract in 2011 to study greenstick gear in Gulf of Mexico.



North Atlantic Swordfish

Recommendation by IAC Species Working Group:

- Enhance reporting of recreationally caught swordfish, including increased enforcement

Actions:

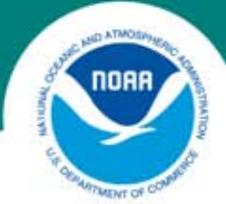
- 2010 HMS AP working group on Recreational Monitoring
- 2011 HMS AP suggestion to pursue body tag at landing and increase reporting and enforcement
- Continue to work with NOAA Enforcement to address this issue



Bigeye, Albacore, Yellowfin and Skipjack Tunas

Recommendations by IAC Species Working Group:

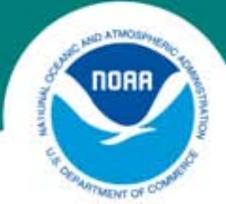
- Support adoption of an expanded Gulf of Guinea time/area closure to protect juvenile BET and YFT.
- Engage with West African partners to encourage support for adoption of long-term management measures.
- Support measures based on SCRS advice for S. Atlantic and Mediterranean ALB.
- The United States should explore the possibility of expanding trade tracking programs for frozen bigeye tuna to address IUU fishing.



Sharks

Recommendations by IAC Species Working Group:

- Propose and get co-sponsors for a fins naturally-attached measure.
- Stress the importance of fulfilling catch data reporting and reducing fishing mortality for shortfin mako sharks.
- Make, co-sponsor, or support a proposal to prohibit porbeagle retention.
- Support and consider proposing management measures for common thresher sharks in line with U.S. measures.
- Support or consider co-sponsoring proposals to prohibit retention of longfin mako & other shark species on the U.S. prohibited list.
- Make or co-sponsor proposal to prohibit silky shark retention.



Billfish

Recommendations by IAC Species Working Group:

- Investigate alternative CPUE indices and assessment techniques.
- Seek support for expanded observer coverage for fleets interacting with billfish.
- Re-evaluate sailfish measures after next assessment.
- Evaluate BUM measures in 2011 & maintain existing ICCAT measures on WHM until after 2012 assessment.
- Emphasize the need for socio-economic research on value of recreational Atlantic billfish fisheries to evaluate value of fisheries.