



CONTRIBUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) TO THE REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY GENERAL ON OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA on

This report is a brief summary of the main recent developments of the Commission in relation to the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 78/69 of 5 December 2023

It should be noted that the main aim of the ICCAT Commission under the current International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas is to co-operate in maintaining the populations of tuna and tuna-like fishes found in the Atlantic Ocean at levels which will permit the maximum sustainable catch for food and other purposes. The ratification of the Protocol adopted in 2019 to Amend the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas is ongoing with the FAO.

As of May 28th, 2024, the total catches in 2022 of ICCAT and associated species was 883,485 t and the provisional catches in 2023 of ICCAT and associated species was 45,815 t.

Since August 2023, ICCAT is conducting full scientific stock assessments for Mediterranean Albacore, Atlantic Blue marlin and Atlantic Yellowfin tuna and three Management strategy evaluation (MSE) meetings have been held for four stocks, i.e., North Atlantic Swordfish, Bluefin tuna, Northern Albacore and Western Skipjack; and one species, Swordfish.

In 2023, The Commission convened in a hybrid format in New Cairo, Egypt, to evaluate the current status of the application of the regulatory measures in force and to establish the conservation and management measures for the future.

In total, following the intersessional work of its subsidiary bodies and *ad hoc* working groups, the Commission adopted nineteen new Recommendations, four Resolutions and two Reference documents covering relevant issues on Atlantic tuna and tuna-like species conservation and fisheries management (see list attached). All ICCAT Conservation and Management measures can be found at: <https://www.iccat.int/en/RecRes.asp>.

In addition to updating measures on the major ICCAT commercial species, the Commission also adopted measures relating to several shark species associated with ICCAT fisheries. In addition, decisions were taken in relation to identifying the the potential effects of Climate Change on ICCAT Fisheries, and also in relation with the BBNJ Agreement, and in monitoring the development of other effective area-based conservation measures. Further measures were also adopted by the Commission to prevent, deter, and eliminate illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing (IUU).

Science continues to underpin the basis of Commission decisions, and in addition to the stock assessments carried out, seven research programmes are ongoing, including the ICCAT Atlantic-Wide Research Programme for Bluefin Tuna (ICCAT/GBYP), a special scientific programme that was launched in 2010. These aim to improve basic data collection and further develop current knowledge of the key biological and ecological processes of tunas and tuna-like species, as well as to refine assessment models, to support the provision of scientific advice on stock status and ICCAT fisheries management.



In pursuit of its objectives, ICCAT continues, through various instruments, to expand its collaboration with many organizations, including all four of the other tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organizations. Others include: the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC), the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES), the International Whaling Commission (IWC), Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP), South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO), Sargasso Sea Commission (SSC), the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC), FAO Common Oceans Project, and NGOs that are observers.

List of Recommendations, Resolutions and Other Decisions adopted in 2023

Key	Title
23-01	Recommendation by ICCAT extending and amending Recommendation 22-01 on a Multi-annual Conservation and Management Programme for tropical tunas
23-02	Recommendation by ICCAT on Brazil's bigeye tuna payback plan
23-03	Recommendation by ICCAT on Senegal's bigeye tuna payback plan
23-04	Recommendation by ICCAT replacing Recommendation 22-03 extending and amending Recommendation 17-02 for the conservation of North Atlantic swordfish
23-05	Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 21-04 on conservation and management measures, including a management procedure and exceptional circumstances protocol, for North Atlantic albacore
23-06	Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 22-08 establishing a Multi-annual Management Plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean
23-07	Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 22-09 establishing a management procedure for Atlantic bluefin tuna to be used for both the western Atlantic and eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean management areas
23-08	Recommendation by ICCAT for a pilot project for farming bluefin tuna (<i>Thunnus thynnus</i>) in the Cantabrian Sea
23-09	Recommendation by ICCAT on Curaçao's blue marlin payback plan
23-10	Recommendation by ICCAT to replace Recommendation 19-07 on management measures for the conservation of North Atlantic blue shark caught in association with ICCAT fisheries
23-11	Recommendation by ICCAT to replace Recommendation 19-08 on management measures for the conservation of the South Atlantic blue shark caught in association with ICCAT fisheries
23-12	Recommendation by ICCAT for the conservation of whale sharks (<i>Rhincodon typus</i>) caught in association with ICCAT fisheries
23-13	Supplemental Recommendation by ICCAT amending Recommendation 22-12 on the bycatch of sea turtles caught in association with ICCAT fisheries
23-14	Recommendation by ICCAT on mobulid rays (family Mobulidae) caught in association with ICCAT fisheries
23-15	Resolution by ICCAT on cetaceans encirclement



23-16	Recommendation by ICCAT amending Recommendation 21-13 on establishing a list of vessels presumed to have carried out illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities
23-17	Recommendation by ICCAT amending Recommendation 18-09 on Port State measures to prevent, deter, and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing
23-18	Recommendation by ICCAT to establish minimum standards and programme requirements for the use of Electronic Monitoring Systems (EMS) in ICCAT fisheries
23-19	Resolution by ICCAT on next steps on the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change in 2024
23-20	Resolution by ICCAT on core principles on labour standards in ICCAT fisheries
23-21	Recommendation by ICCAT amending and replacing Recommendation 18-13 on an ICCAT Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation programme
23-22	Recommendation by ICCAT on establishment of a Standing Catch Document Scheme Working Group (CDS WG)
23-23	Resolution by ICCAT on the implementation of biodiversity conservation instruments
23-24	Revised Guidelines for the Preparation of Annual Reports
23-25	Rules of procedure for the administration of the special Meeting Participation Fund