

**RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT
ON THE SOUTHERN ALBACORE CATCH LIMIT FOR 2005, 2006 AND 2007**

NOTING that the current estimated MSY from the base case of the 2003 stock assessment is 30,915 t, that the 2003 assessment results were similar to those obtained in 2000, and that the confidence intervals were substantially narrower in 2003 than in 2000.

NOTING FURTHER the conclusions of the 2003 Albacore Assessment Meeting, and of the 2003 and 2004 SCRS reports, that the southern albacore stock is not considered to be over-exploited, that the current best estimate of $B_{current}/B_{MSY}$ is 1.66, that the current best estimate of $F_{current}/F_{MSY}$ is 0.62, and that current average catches are close to MSY;

RECOGNIZING the need to implement measures to maintain the southern albacore stock at MSY levels, this being the management objective of ICCAT;

RECOGNIZING also that further work is needed before sharing arrangements for southern albacore based on the ICCAT *Criteria for the Allocation of Fishing Possibilities* [01-25] can be developed and agreed on;

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION
OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) RECOMMENDS THAT:

- 1 The annual total catch limit for albacore caught in the Atlantic Ocean South of 5°N shall be set at 30,915 t for 2005, 2006 and 2007, this being the current base case estimate of the MSY of the stock.
- 2 Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1, should total reported albacore catches in 2004, as reported to the 2005 ICCAT meeting, exceed 29,200 t, the TAC for 2006 shall be reduced by the full amount of the 2004 catch in excess 29,200 t.
- 3 Similarly, should total reported albacore catches in 2005, as reported to the 2006 ICCAT meeting, exceed the 2005 TAC, the TAC for 2007 shall be reduced by the full amount of the 2005 catch in excess of the revised 2005 TAC.
- 4 Should total reported albacore catches in 2004 or 2005, as reported to the 2005 or 2006 ICCAT meetings respectively, exceed 30,915 t, those Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities fishing for southern albacore shall participate in an inter-sessional meeting of Panel 3, to be held in the year following the detection of such over-catch, to develop proposals for a sharing arrangement based on the ICCAT *Criteria for the Allocation of Fishing Possibilities* [01-25] adopted in 2001.
- 5 Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities not actively fishing for southern albacore and having caught, on average, less than 100 t of southern albacore per year during 1998-2002 shall be subject to a catch limit of 100 t.
- 6 Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities not fishing actively for southern albacore and having caught, on average, more than 100 t of southern albacore during 1992-1996, but excluding Japan, shall be subject to an annual catch limit of 110% of their respective average 1992-1996 catches of albacore in the Atlantic Ocean South of 5°N.
- 7 Japan shall endeavor to limit its total catch of southern albacore to 4% by weight of its total longline bigeye tuna catch in the Atlantic Ocean South of 5°N.
- 8 No provision shall be made for carry-over of any under-harvests made under this sharing arrangement.
- 9 Those Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities fishing actively for southern albacore shall improve their catch reporting systems to ensure the reporting of

accurate and validated southern albacore catch and effort data to ICCAT in full accordance with the ICCAT requirements for provision of Task I and Task II catch, effort and size data.

- 10 All aspects of the southern albacore catch limit and sharing arrangement shall be reviewed and revised at the 2007 ICCAT Commission meeting, taking account of the results of the updated southern albacore stock assessment to be conducted in 2007. This review and revision shall also address any over-harvest made in excess of the 2006 TAC.
- 11 This Recommendation replaces, in its entirety, the 2003 *Recommendation by ICCAT on the Southern Albacore Catch Limit and Sharing Arrangement for 2004* [Rec. 03-07].