

**RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT FOR A MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR THE
SUSTAINABLE EXPLOITATION OF MEDITERRANEAN SWORDFISH
AND REPLACING ICCAT RECOMMENDATION 08-03**

RECOGNISING that the Commission's Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) indicated in its 2007 stock assessment that the fishing mortality needs to be reduced to move the stock toward the Convention objective of biomass levels which could support Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY), and that seasonal closures are considered to be beneficial in moving the stock condition closer to the Convention objective,

NOTING that the SCRS in its assessment in 2007, as reaffirmed in its 2009 advice, estimated that fish less than three years old usually represent 50-70% of the total yearly catches in terms of numbers and 20-35% in terms of weight and indicates that a reduction in the volume of juvenile catches would improve yield per recruit and spawning biomass per recruit levels,

RECALLING the *Recommendation by ICCAT Relating to Mediterranean Swordfish* [Rec. 03-04], which encourages Contracting Parties, and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities (hereafter referred to as CPCs) to take measures to reduce juvenile Mediterranean swordfish catches,

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the SCRS advice given in 2008 and 2009, advocating seasonal closures pending the adoption of a more comprehensive management plan for Mediterranean swordfish,

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that the SCRS advise that swordfish and in particular juvenile swordfish is also caught as a by-catch in other fisheries and that all catches of swordfish should stop during the closed period,

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that *Recommendation by ICCAT on Mediterranean Swordfish* [Rec. 08-03] needs to be replaced to set the basis for such a more comprehensive management plan for Mediterranean swordfish,

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

1. Catching of swordfish, both as a targeted fishery and as by-catch, shall be prohibited in the Mediterranean during the period from 1 October to 30 November each year, until a long-term management plan is decided by ICCAT. Mediterranean swordfish shall not be retained on board, transhipped or landed during the period of closure.
2. CPCs shall monitor the effectiveness of this closure and submit relevant information on appropriate controls and inspections to ensure compliance with the measure by 15 October each year.
3. CPCs shall ensure the maintenance or development of adequate scientific information in the formats requested by ICCAT and in the smallest time-area possible on the swordfish catches, on the size and age distributions of all swordfish catches and on the fishing effort (fishing days per vessel, number of hooks per vessel, longline units per vessel, overall length of longline per vessel) by each pelagic longline fishery for highly migratory pelagic stocks in the Mediterranean. They shall provide these data annually by 30 June to the SCRS.
4. The Commission shall establish and maintain an ICCAT list of all fishing vessels authorised to catch swordfish in the Mediterranean Sea and make it available at the latest by 31 August each year. For the purposes of this recommendation, vessels not entered into the ICCAT list of all vessels authorised to swordfish in the Mediterranean Sea are deemed not to be authorised to catch, retain on board, tranship, transport, process or land swordfish.

5. CPCs shall communicate electronically to the ICCAT Secretariat not later than 30 June each year, the list of its fishing vessels that were authorized to carry out pelagic longline fisheries for highly migratory pelagic species in the Mediterranean during the preceding year in the format set out in the Guidelines for Submitting Data and Information Required by ICCAT. The list of vessels shall contain the following information for each vessel:
 - name of vessel;
 - register number;
 - external marking;
 - previous name (if any);
 - previous flag (if any);
 - type of vessel, length and gross tonnage (GT) and/or gross registered tonnage (GRT);
 - period(s) fished and total annual number of fishing days by fishery (i.e. by target species and area);
 - geographical areas, by ICCAT statistical rectangles, where fishing by fishery (i.e. by target species and area) was carried out;
 - number of hooks used by fishery (i.e. by target species and area);
 - number of longline units used by fishery (i.e. by target species and area);
 - overall length of all longline units by fishery (i.e. by target species and area).
6. Procedures referred in the *Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning the Establishment of an ICCAT Record of Vessels over 20 Meters in Length Overall or Greater Authorized to Operate in the Convention Area [09-08]* shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.
7. CPCs shall grant special fishing permits to vessels authorised to participate in pelagic longline fisheries for highly-migratory pelagic stocks in the Mediterranean for each fishery (i.e. by target species and area).
8. The SCRS shall provide in 2010 an updated assessment of the state of the stock on the basis of updated data from 2009. It shall assess the effects of the seasonal closure and provide advice on possible spatial temporal closures, as well as other possible technical measures, pertaining notably to rigging techniques, hook sizes and shapes, with a view to reducing by-catches of juvenile swordfish by pelagic longline fisheries. On the basis of the information provided under paragraph 5, the SCRS shall also provide an assessment of fishing capacity and possibly on a minimum catching size to achieve high yields and compatible with the selectivity of the fishing gear.
9. Based on such scientific advice, the ICCAT shall decide, by end of 2010, a more comprehensive long-term management plan for swordfish including, in particular, the identification of closure periods for specific areas, the establishment of fishing effort reference level and technical measures for all pelagic longline fisheries catching swordfish either as targeted or as by-catch.
10. This Recommendation replaces the *Recommendation by ICCAT on Mediterranean Swordfish [Rec. 08-03]*.