

**RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT ON THE SOUTHERN ATLANTIC
ALBACORE CATCH LIMITS FOR THE PERIOD 2023-2026**

NOTING the conclusions of the 2020 SCRS Report, that the southern Atlantic albacore stock is, most probably, not overfished and overfishing is not occurring;

FURTHER NOTING that the SCRS concluded that southern Atlantic albacore stock projections at a constant catch level of 28,000 t would result in an 83% probability of being in the green quadrant of the Kobe plot by 2033;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the southern Atlantic albacore catches have been well below the current Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of 24,000 t, except for 2021;

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING that total annual declared catches have been considerably lower than Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY);

RECOGNISING the objective of the Convention is to maintain populations at levels that will support maximum sustainable catch (usually referred to MSY);

FURTHER RECOGNISING the interests of developing coastal States to develop their fishing opportunities;

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

1. The annual Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for albacore caught in the Atlantic Ocean south of 5°N shall be 28,000 t for the period 2023-2026.
2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1, should the total reported southern Atlantic albacore catches in 2022, as reported to the 2023 ICCAT meeting, exceed 28,000 t, the TAC for 2024 shall be reduced by the full amount of the 2022 catch in excess of 28,000 t.
3. The annual catch limits for southern Atlantic albacore shall be as follows:
 - a)

| | <i>Catch limits (t)*</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Angola | 60 |
| Belize | 300 |
| Brazil | 2,600 |
| China | 240 |
| Chinese Taipei | 10,340 |
| Côte d'Ivoire | 120 |
| Curaçao | 60 |
| European Union | 1,765 |
| Japan | 1,630 |
| Korea | 170 |
| Namibia | 4,320 |
| South Africa | 5,280 |
| St Vincent and Grenadines | 170 |
| United Kingdom ¹ | 120 |
| Uruguay | 530 |
| Philippines | 30 |

* The following annual transfers of catch limits shall be authorized:
 From Brazil to Japan: 100 t in 2023-2026
 From Uruguay to Japan: 100 t in 2023-2026
 From South Africa to Japan: 100 t in 2023-2026

¹ The United Kingdom became a member of ICCAT in 2020 and it includes the Overseas Territories of the United Kingdom.

- b) All other CPCs not listed above shall limit their catches to 30 t.
 - c) The catch limits described in this Recommendation do not constitute long term rights and are without prejudice to any future process of allocation.
4. Any unused portion or excess of the individual annual catch limits may be added to/shall be deducted from, according to the case, the respective catch limit during or before the adjustment year, in the following way for southern Atlantic albacore:
- a) Underages of the annual quota may be added to the respective quota for each CPC, to the maximum limit of 25% of their original quota, in the following way:

| <i>Year of catch</i> | <i>Adjustment year</i> |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 2022 | 2024 |
| 2023 | 2025 |
| 2024 | 2026 |
| 2025 | 2027 |
| 2026 | 2028 |

- b) By the time of the Commission Meeting, those CPCs with underages in the previous year shall inform the amount of their underage they intend to use in the following year. The total underage from the TAC from one given year, minus the underages to be used by those CPCs wishing to do so, may be shared among those CPCs wishing to complement their quota, irrespective to their underages, to the limit of 25% of their original quota.
 - c) In the case the total amount of underages requested by all CPCs exceeds the total amount made available under this mechanism, the amount of underages shall be shared pro rata among those CPCs requesting complementation of their quotas, in the proportion of their original quotas.
 - d) In respect of the 2022 catches and TAC, underages may only be used to the extent of the available underage of total TAC.
 - e) The carry-over of underages is only applicable to those CPCs specifically referred to in paragraph 3 a).
 - f) In respect of South Africa, Brazil and Uruguay, should any of these CPCs reach their individual catch limits by 31 December, and any other aforementioned CPCs have underage available within the same year, then any or all of their underage available shall automatically transfer, up to a maximum of 1,000 t collectively, in proportion to their respective original quotas to any of the three CPCs which has reached its catch limit for that year, on condition that such transfer of underage does not prejudice the transferring CPCs respective maximum underage allowance as set out in paragraph 4 b). Such transfers shall be reported in CPC Compliance Reporting Tables and be communicated to all CPCs through an ICCAT Circular.
5. Should a given CPC exceed its quota, the over-catch must be deducted from its original quota by 100% of the total exceeded amount in accordance with the schedule in paragraph 4 and that CPC will be prohibited of requesting any underages made available under the present mechanism in the following year.
6. Notwithstanding the *Recommendation by ICCAT regarding the temporary adjustment of quotas* (Rec. 01-12), all CPCs specifically referred to in paragraph 3 a) may transfer a portion of their quota to another CPC subject to both CPCs agreeing and providing prior notification to the ICCAT Secretariat in terms of the quantity to be transferred. The Secretariat shall disseminate this notification to all CPCs.

7. Those CPCs that are catching southern Atlantic albacore, shall immediately improve their catch reporting systems to ensure the reporting of accurate and validated southern Atlantic albacore catch and effort data to ICCAT in full accordance with the ICCAT requirements for provision of Task 1 and Task 2 catch, effort and size data. In addition, port states CPCs in the South Atlantic shall report the results of their port inspections to the ICCAT Secretariat in accordance with the *Recommendation by ICCAT on port state measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing* (Rec. 18-09). The ICCAT Secretariat shall forward the reports to the flag CPC.
8. The next stock assessment of southern Atlantic albacore shall be conducted in 2026. Scientists of entities actively fishing for southern Atlantic albacore are strongly encouraged to analyse their fisheries data and to participate in the 2026 assessment.
9. All aspects of the southern Atlantic albacore catch limit and sharing arrangement shall be reviewed and revised at the 2026 ICCAT Commission meeting, taking account of the results of the updated southern Atlantic albacore stock assessment to be conducted in 2026. This review and revision shall also address any over-harvests made in excess of the 2023 to 2026 TAC.
10. CPCs shall issue specific authorizations to vessels 20 meters LOA or greater flying their flag that are authorized to fish southern Atlantic albacore in the Convention area. Each CPC shall indicate which of such vessels it has so authorized on its vessel list submitted pursuant to the *Recommendation by ICCAT concerning the establishment of an ICCAT Record of Vessels 20 meters in length overall or greater authorized to operate in the Convention area* (Rec. 21-14). Such vessels not entered into this record or entered without the required indication that fishing southern Atlantic albacore is authorized are deemed not to be authorized to fish for, retain on board, tranship, transport, transfer, process or land southern Atlantic albacore.
11. CPCs may allow bycatch of southern Atlantic albacore by vessels not authorized to fish southern Atlantic albacore pursuant to paragraph 10 only, if the CPC establishes a maximum per trip onboard bycatch limit of no more than 5% for such vessels and the bycatch is accounted for within the CPC's catch limit. Each CPC shall provide in its Annual Report the maximum per trip bycatch limit it allows for such vessels and the total amount of southern Atlantic albacore harvested as bycatch. That information shall be compiled by the ICCAT Secretariat and made available to CPCs.
12. The Recommendation repeals and replaces the *Recommendation by ICCAT on the southern albacore catch limits for the period 2017 to 2020* (Rec. 16-07) and further repeals and replaces the *Supplemental Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 16-07 on South Atlantic albacore catch limits for the period 2017-2020* (Rec. 21-05).