

**RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT CONCERNING
SWORDFISH CATCHES BY THE TUNA LONGLINE FISHERY**

RECALLING that in 1999, the Commission adopted the *Recommendation by ICCAT to Establish a Rebuilding Program for North Atlantic Swordfish*, to rebuild swordfish of the North Atlantic to the level that will produce the maximum sustainable yield;

RECOGNIZING that tuna are the target species of the Japanese longline fishery in the North Atlantic, but that swordfish are taken as by-catch;

REALIZING that the catch of swordfish taken as by-catch by the Japanese longline fishery in the North Atlantic will exceed the Japanese five-year catch quota for swordfish, unless steps are taken to prevent it from doing so;

ACKNOWLEDGING that Japan has already taken steps to reduce the mortality of swordfish caused by the longline by-catch, by releasing all swordfish caught, and by avoiding fishing grounds where the by-catch of swordfish is relatively high;

NOTING that some countries, such as the United States, caught less than their North Atlantic swordfish quota due to temporary circumstances, and that they are entitled to carry over their uncaught quota;

FURTHER RECALLING that SCRS in 2000 stated that the precise boundary between the North Atlantic and South Atlantic stocks of swordfish is uncertain, and that mixing is expected to be highest near the boundary in the tropical zone;

FURTHER NOTING that in 1999 the Commission resolved that Contracting Parties should support research to reduce uncertainty about stock structure, mixing and boundaries of swordfish stocks, and that the SCRS in 2000 made several research recommendations aimed at the same objective; and

HIGHLIGHTING the Commission's desire to respond positively to Japan's efforts to adhere to its North Atlantic swordfish quota, so long as the Commission's rebuilding program for North Atlantic swordfish is not jeopardized;

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

- 1 Japan shall be allowed to count up to 400 metric tons (MT) of its 2001 swordfish catch taken from the part of the North Atlantic management area that is East of 35 degrees W and South of 15 degrees N, against the uncaught U.S. North Atlantic swordfish quota, with 1 MT of catch by Japan counted as 1 MT of the U.S. quota. Japan is encouraged to shift tuna longline effort out of the North Atlantic, as a means of reducing its swordfish by-catch.
- 2 Japan shall be allowed to count up to 400 MT of its 2002 swordfish catch taken from the part of the North Atlantic management that is East of 35 degrees W and South of 15 degrees N, against its uncaught South Atlantic swordfish quota, with 1 MT of catch from the aforementioned area of the North Atlantic swordfish management area counted as 2 MT of quota from the South Atlantic swordfish management area;
- 3 Japan implement a national observer program on 5% of vessels operating in the North Atlantic for 2001 and endeavor to increase such coverage to 10% for 2002;

- 4 In 2001 and 2002, the Japanese catch, including discards, will be reviewed by the SCRS and provided to the Commission, based upon the best available scientific information including new observer data for the Japanese fleet as well as data from other sources.
- 5 Japan shall conduct research that significantly improves the understanding of the stock structure and of mixing of Atlantic swordfish, as described in the 1999 SCRS Detailed Report for Swordfish, with emphasis on electronic tagging and genetic studies. A research plan and progress report for this new Japanese scientific research on swordfish should be reviewed by the SCRS in 2001.
- 6 In 2002, the SCRS update the swordfish stock assessment for the North Atlantic and South Atlantic management areas; and
- 7 It be understood by all Contracting Parties that the arrangement for Japan to count some of its North Atlantic swordfish catch against its South Atlantic swordfish quota, as described in paragraph 2, is for 2002 only, unless renewed by a future Commission recommendation.