

-- RESOLUTION --
ON RECOVERY SCENARIOS FOR NORTH AND SOUTH ATLANTIC SWORDFISH

Resolution adopted by the Commission at its 11th Special Meeting (Santiago de Compostela, Spain-November, 1998). Report for Biennial Period, 1998-99, Part I. Officially transmitted to the Contracting Parties: December 22, 1998.

RECOGNIZING that the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) estimated the 1996 biomass of North Atlantic Swordfish to be 58 % of that needed for maximum sustainable yield (MSY) with a relative fishing mortality (F_{1995}/F_{MSY}) of 2.05, and identified the North Atlantic stock as over-exploited;

NOTING that the SCRS estimated the 1996 biomass of South Atlantic swordfish to be 99 % of that needed for MSY, and a relative fishing mortality of 1.24, with preliminary analyses indicating that current levels of harvest are not sustainable;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that the goal of ICCAT is to maintain populations of tuna and tuna-like fishes in the Atlantic at levels that will support maximum sustainable catch;

CONSIDERING the need for action to ensure the effectiveness of ICCAT objectives to conserve and manage North and South Atlantic Swordfish;

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

- 1 If the results of the 1999 stock assessments of North Atlantic and South Atlantic swordfish indicate that biomass of either stock is below levels that would produce MSY, the SCRS develop at its 1999 assessment meeting rebuilding options for North and South Atlantic swordfish.
- 2 Based on stock projections the SCRS shall estimate a series of annual total allowable catches (TACs), including dead discards, that are necessary to rebuild to biomass levels that would support MSY with a probability of greater than 50 %, within time periods of 5, 10, and 15 years and/or other appropriate times. The rebuilding plans shall include scheduled assessments of the progress being made toward accomplishing the rebuilding goals.
- 3 The SCRS shall explicitly describe the method by which discards were estimated and included in its assessment and projections.
- 4 The SCRS evaluate the effectiveness of the current swordfish regulations for achieving the ICCAT swordfish conservation measures especially the minimum size, and evaluate alternative methods for reducing small fish mortality.
- 5 All Contracting Parties, non-contracting parties, entities, and fishing entities undertake to provide SCRS with the best available Task I, Task II, catch at size, (including discard mortality) and CPUE data to support this assessment.
- 6 In addition, studies should be carried out to clarify the criteria to follow in assigning to the North Atlantic or Mediterranean stocks, catches taken by those fleets that fish in the areas close to the Strait of Gibraltar.