

**RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT
ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CLOSED AREA/SEASON
FOR THE USE OF FISH-AGGREGATION DEVICES (FADs)**

RECALLING that in 1998 ICCAT adopted a *Recommendation Concerning the Establishment of a Closed Area/Season for the Use of Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs)* between 1 November 1999 and 31 January 2000;

RECALLING that the strict application of the minimum weight of 3.2 kg for bigeye and yellowfin would entail the loss of very important catches of adult skipjack;

NOTING that the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) has considered that this type of measure can significantly contribute to the reduction of the catches of juvenile bigeye;

NOTING that SCRS has considered that the effect of this measure would be higher if all the surface fleets fishing on FADs participate in this closure;

CONSIDERING that, for the first time in 2000, SCRS will analyze the impact of the measure on the stocks as well as the area and the dates of this measure, and will recommend any change that may be deemed necessary to improve its effectiveness;

CONSIDERING that for this measure to be most effective it has to be applied by all surface fleets fishing on FADs,

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

- 1 Fishing by surface fleets flying the flag of Contracting Parties, Non-Contracting Parties, Entities and Fishing Entities over floating objects, shall be prohibited during the period and the area specified in paragraphs 2 and 3 below:
- 2 The area referred to in paragraph 1 is the following:
 - Southern limit: parallel 4° South latitude
 - Northern limit: parallel 5° North latitude
 - Western limit: meridian 20° West longitude
 - Eastern limit: the African coast
- 3 The period covered by the prohibition of paragraph 1 will be from 1 November of one year to 31 January of the following year.
- 4 The prohibition referred to in paragraph 1 includes:
 - Prohibition to launch all floating objects;
 - Prohibition to fish over artificial objects;
 - Prohibition to fish over natural objects;
 - Prohibition to fish with auxiliary vessels;
 - Prohibition to set at sea artificial floating objects with or without buoys;
 - Prohibition to charge buoys in the floating objects found at sea;
 - Prohibition to remove floating objects and to wait that associated fish to the objects will be associated to the boat;
 - Prohibition to tug floating objects outside the zone.
- 5 The Commission requests SCRS to analyze, for the first time in 2000, the impact of this measure on the stocks and to recommend any change that may be deemed necessary to improve its effectiveness, in order to evaluate the possible modifications to apply to the closure.

- 6 Contracting Parties, Non-Contracting Parties, Entities and Fishing Entities shall ensure that all surface fleets concerned by this measure have an observer on board, during the whole duration of the period, who shall observe the respect of the prohibition referred to in paragraphs 1 to 4. The biological data collected on the fleet as a whole by these observers should be provided to the SCRS for the purpose of carrying out analyses identified in paragraph 5.
- 7 Contracting Parties, Non-Contracting Parties, Entities and Fishing Entities will establish internal procedures to penalize surface fleets flying its flag that do not comply with the closure. They will present an annual report on their implementation to the Secretariat. The Executive Secretary will make a report to the Commission.
- 8 The observers should possess the following skills in order to discharge their duties:
 - Sufficient experience to identify species and gear
 - Navigational skills
 - A satisfactory knowledge of the ICCAT conservation measures
 - The ability to carry out elementary scientific tasks e.g collecting samples, as requested and observe and record accurately,
 - A satisfactory knowledge of the language of the flag of the vessel observed.