

PROGRESS ON THE ALLOCATION AND MANAGEMENT OF FISHING CAPACITY BY ICCAT

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1. Allocation criteria

- For management of tuna and tuna-like species, ICCAT uses a variety of tools, among which is the limitation of catch and/or effort (e.g., setting of TACs and individual catch limits and quotas).
- Recognising the need for an equitable allocation of fishing possibilities concerning these stocks, ICCAT established a Working Group on Allocation, in charge of developing the criteria for the allocation of fishing possibilities, which was adopted in 2001 [Ref. 01-25].
- The *ICCAT Criteria for the Allocation of Fishing Possibilities* [Ref. 01-25] has been adopted and defines the allocation criteria.
- These criteria establish the basis for the allocation of available and take into account, among others:
 - The interests of artisanal, subsistence and small-scale coastal fishing.
 - The needs of the coastal fishing communities highly dependent on fishing.
 - The needs of the coastal States of the region whose economies depend on the exploitation of living marine resources regulated by ICCAT.
 - The socio-economic contribution of the fisheries regulated by ICCAT to the developing States, particularly small island developing States and developing territories.
 - The respective dependence of the coastal States and of the other States that fish species regulated by ICCAT.
 - The economic and/or social importance of fishing for qualifying participants whose fishing vessels have habitually fished in the Convention area.
 - The contribution of the fisheries for the stocks regulated by ICCAT to the national food security/needs, domestic consumption, income resulting from exports, and employment of qualifying participants.
- One of the conditions for applying the criteria is that they *should be applied ... in a manner that encourages efforts to prevent and eliminate over-fishing and excess fishing capacity and ensures that levels of fishing effort are commensurate with the ICCAT objective of achieving and maintaining MSY.*

2. Management measures on fishing capacity by species

- As regards **yellowfin tuna**, the first management measure limiting fishing effort was adopted in 1993 [Rec. 93-04]. This subsequently led to the freeze on effort in recognizing possible over-capacity.
- The possibility of over-capacity was recognized almost two decades ago by ICCAT, and resulted in an effort limitation on yellowfin tuna through the *Recommendation by ICCAT on Supplemental Regulatory Measures for the Management of Atlantic Yellowfin Tuna* [Rec. 93-04].
- Notwithstanding, the freeze or reduction of fishing effort does not resolve the problem of over capacity, which was addressed for the first time in 1998 through the adoption the *Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning the Limitation of Fishing Capacity on Northern Albacore* [Ref. 09-08].

- For **bigeye tuna**, Recommendation 93-13 was adopted concerning juveniles and fishing fleet size, which has since been strengthened by measures limiting the number of fishing vessels by Recs. 98-03; 04-01; 06-01 and 09-01. Measures currently in force for bigeye establish specific limitations on the number of vessels as well as a provision that *“Each CPC shall adjust fishing effort commensurate with the available fishing opportunities”*.
- In the case of **bluefin tuna**, the limit on capacity has always been at the centre of the Commission’s work, which was crowned by the adoption of Recommendation 06-05 by the *establishment of a Multiannual Recovery Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean*, which was amended by Rec. 08-05 and Rec. 09-06.
- Eastern bluefin tuna is the only stock for which annual capacity plans are required to be submitted, and which not freezes capacity of fishing vessels and the traps.
- Each CPC is also required to reduce its fishing capacity so as to ensure for 2010 that at least 25% of the difference between its fishing capacity and that corresponding to its allocated quota in 2010 be achieved.
- It is important to note that the freeze may not apply to certain CPCs, in particular developing States that demonstrate that they need to develop their fishing capacity so as to fully use their quota. Although the plans put forward were approved by the Commission at its meeting in 2009, the adoption of Rec. 09-06 called for further reductions in line with the reduced TAC. This has caused some delays in the finalization of vessel lists and quota management required by other provisions of Rec. 08-05, but the revised capacity plans, reaching the required reductions in excess capacity, were approved by the Compliance Committee at its inter-sessional meeting in February 2010.

The following Table shows the reduction in number of vessels, although the actual number of large and medium purse seiners actually fishing during the 2010 has been considerably less than shown in the Table (with 94 units authorized and 92 actually fishing).

	2008 level	2010 (as reported 2009)	2010 REV (as reported Feb 2010)
PS large	127	56	44
PS medium	203	138	130
PS small	134	38	32
LL large	9	40	39
LL medium	9	13	17
LL small	395	324	196
Baitboat	68	69	69
Handline	102	310	47
Trawler	187	79	79
Trap	33	29	26
Other artisanal	253	2	376
TOTAL units	1520	1098	1055

The importance of a more global approach to fishing capacity management was also taken into account in relation to bluefin, with Rec. 08-04 stipulating that in order to avoid increasing fishing mortality of bluefin tuna in the eastern or western Atlantic, Contracting Parties, non-Contracting Parties will continue to take measures to prohibit any transfer of fishing effort from the western Atlantic to the eastern Atlantic and from the eastern to the western Atlantic [Rec. 08-04].

The recognition of over-capacity is important, as the current ICCAT measures have been adopted in a somewhat piecemeal fashion by species/fishery, without sufficient guarantees to ensure that the reduction in capacity in one fishery does not have adverse effects on other fisheries, either within the Convention area or in other oceans. There is also the need for a more reliable estimate of fishing capacity, in order to evaluate whether or not over-capacity actually exists, and the effects of a capacity reduction in one fishery on other species/oceans.

This was noted by the ICCAT Working Group on Stock Assessment Methods which indicated that detailed information is needed to provide an informed basis for capacity management decisions and that level of detail is generally lacking for the Atlantic tuna fleets.

The Group concluded that information on fleets among the various lists and data sets held by the Secretariat is very incomplete, and recognized that economic data collection and analysis on tuna and tuna like-species are indispensable parts of future research and policy developments regarding this issue.

The Group recommended that CPCs engage in this research and provide input to guide the Commission's policy debates regarding fishing capacity management, and concluded that capacity-based management procedures may be insufficient to provide adequate safeguard against the risk of over-exploitation of tuna resources. This Working Group was of the opinion that access or effort controls are necessary to ensure populations are not unsustainably exploited. If the fishery is perceived to be over capacitated, buy back or capacity reduction schemes should be considered. This group also indicated that definitions of terms used should be standardized, suggesting that over-capacity is the generic term for excessive levels of capacity. It is measured by the difference between harvesting capacity and a sustainable management target.

- The ICCAT Working Group on Capacity, which has met twice to date, has identified the need for more detailed and reliable information and work is still ongoing in this area.
- Progress has been made through the adoption of Rec. 09-04, which provides for the collection of information necessary for calculating the current capacity in the Mediterranean swordfish fishery.
- I hope that the outcomes of this workshop will be able to assist ICCAT steer a clear course on this issue.

Thank you.