

Report from the CCSBT Observer to the 2020 Discussions on Essential Commission
Business in Lieu of The 22nd Special Meeting of
The International Commission for The Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)

CCSBT Observer (Japan)

1. Introduction

Due to the pandemic of COVID-19, it was not possible to hold the 22nd Special Meeting of the Commission as originally foreseen. Notwithstanding, the CPCs agreed to carry out a decision-making process through correspondence.

2. Management Measures

(1) Atlantic bluefin tuna The Multi-annual Management Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean was rolled over, and the total allowable catch (TAC) for 2021 and 2022 kept at 36,000 t, in accordance with advice from the Standing Committee for Research and Statistics. The TAC for the Western Atlantic Bluefin Tuna of 2,350 t was also kept for 2021. In 2021, a new stock assessment will be conducted and the TAC will be reviewed and amended, in accordance with the SCRS advice.

(2) Tropical tunas

The multi-annual conservation and management programme for tropical tunas was rolled over, with the TAC for bigeye tuna of 61,500 t for 2021. The annual TAC for yellowfin will remain at the current level of 110,000 t. In order to reduce the fishing mortality of juvenile bigeye and yellowfin tuna, the three months prohibition on the use of fish aggregating devices (FADs) in 2021 was maintained, as was the reduction on the maximum number of FADs deployed by vessels, as agreed in 2019.

(3) North Atlantic shortfin mako

The Commission could not reach a consensus on the annual catch limits for the North Atlantic shortfin mako. Therefore, the Commission agreed to hold an intersessional meeting in 2021 to develop and propose additional measures towards achieving conservation and management objectives for this stock.

3. Next meeting

The 27th Regular meeting of the Commission will be held in November 2021 in a virtual format.