



# Report back from the intersessional discussion group on predated southern bluefin tuna

## **New Zealand**

Prepared for the Compliance Committee of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna

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# 1 Background

During last year's Compliance Committee meeting, it was agreed that there should be consistency amongst members in accounting for predated southern bluefin tuna (SBT). The need for further discussion on the issue was identified during discussion on agenda item 2, *Other matters*, and reported as follows:

*There was discussion on whether depredation should be included in Members' Attributable SBT Catch. The Secretariat read out the CCSBT's definition of the Attributable SBT Catch. It was noted that the definition includes "the total Southern Bluefin Tuna mortality resulting from fishing activities within its jurisdiction or control". However, the inter alia examples provided in the definition did not include depredation. The meeting agreed that depredation had not been contemplated when the definition of the Attributable SBT Catch was adopted and that it is uncertain as to whether depredation should be included.*

## 2 Introduction

New Zealand offered to lead an intersessional discussion group to discuss how predated SBT should be covered in the application of Attributable SBT Catch.

On 24 February 2021, New Zealand, via the Secretariat, circulated a request to Members of the discussion group to populate a table detailing how predated SBT are currently accounted for.

Members provided information in the table on whether predated SBT were currently accounted for and, if so, under which component of Attributable SBT Catch. Members also provided information in the table on:

- the sources of information available on predated SBT;
- the methodology used to estimate the quantity of predated SBT; and
- potential uncertainties in that methodology.

## 3 Results and discussion points

The compilation of responses provided by Members<sup>1</sup> can be found in the Appendix.

In summary, there are three key issues that the responses highlight:

1. There is a variety of different approaches that members are taking to account for predated SBT;
2. Not all members estimate predated SBT; and
3. Not all members account for predated SBT within their allocations.

The responses highlight that there are varying current practices amongst Members in relation to predated SBT. The varying practices have meant that the group is not in a position to put forward a preferred method, and is seeking further guidance from the Compliance Committee.

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<sup>1</sup> With the exception of the EU, all Members populated the table.

Guidance and advice that could be helpful to the group would be in regard to:

*How to account for predated SBT:*

1. If predated SBT is to be accounted for as part of Attributable SBT Catch, from a Compliance perspective, which component should it be included in:
  - a. Commercial catch
  - b. Discard mortality; or
  - c. Be its own component of attributable catch?

*How to estimate predated SBT:*

2. Should advice be sought from the Extended Scientific Committee on what information would be needed from Members to be able to provide advice on how the quantity of predated SBT should be estimated?

## **4 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the many differing approaches used by Members when dealing with predated SBT did not allow the working group to identify a preferred method at this stage. The group is now seeking further guidance from the Compliance Committee on how best to continue developing a consistent approach.

New Zealand wishes to thank Members for their participation in the process so far.

## Appendix: Compilation of responses

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Member	Are predated fish currently accounted for within your reporting of attributable catch?	If you responded 'Yes' in column B, in which component of attributable catch do you currently account for predated fish?	What are the primary sources of information that you use to account for predated fish?	How are predated fish reported to your member authority?	How is the total estimate for predated fish from the fleet calculated?	What are the main sources of uncertainty in accounting for predated fish?	How are those uncertainties dealt with?
Australia (surface fishery)	Yes.	Commercial catch in the purse seine sector of the fishery is deducted from commercial quota. All dead fish must be accounted for with quota.	Catch disposal records, Log book reporting of commercial catch, observer coverage.	The weight of predated fish in the purse seine sector is estimated and reported.	Log book reporting provides all data for commercial catch (validated by observer coverage).	The potential for underreporting of predated fish on unobserved fishing trips.	Estimates from observed trips are compared to unobserved trips.
Australia (longline fishery)	Yes, partially.	Fish with minor damage in longline sector are required to be landed and deducted from commercial quota and this is verified by e-monitoring. Recreational sector: allowed for in Australia's set aside for recreational catch.	Catch disposal records, Log book reporting of commercial catch. E-monitoring Recreational sector: recreational surveys	Fish that are not fit for human consumption due to extensive predation damage on longlines are allowed to be released at sea. These are required to be held in front of an e-monitoring camera to verify damage and is recorded in logbooks.	Log book reporting provides all data for commercial catch (validated by observer coverage or electronic monitoring information).	The potential for underreporting of any unseen mortality and weight estimates for partial fish released at sea.	Only data from obvious predation is recorded. Fish with predation damage are required to be held for 3 seconds in front of an e-monitoring camera to allow for the verification of damage.
Fishing Entity of Taiwan	Yes.	Commercial catch and discards.	Observer reporting.	Both the weight and the number of predated fish is reported by observers.	There is no total estimate for predated fish.	In our data collection system, it is not required to record the predated fish data. It is difficult to understand the information of predated fish from the operational fleet without scientific observers on board.	We haven't estimated the predated fish at this point.
Indonesia	No.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	Scientific observers onboard.	Currently not calculated.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Japan	Yes, at least partially	Commercial catch Releases and/or discards	Records of scientific observers	Scientific observers onboard some of the FVs record predation, some of which are retained.	Currently not calculated.	Predated fish are not specifically counted in unobserved fishing trips.	Currently total estimate is not calculated.
New Zealand	Yes.	Commercial catch Releases and/or discards	Observer reporting (of authorised observer discards).	The actual weight of the predated fish remnants is used. The number of predated fish is not currently reported.	Observer authorised discards are extrapolated up to total effort.	The potential for underreporting of predated fish on unobserved fishing trips.	Observer authorised discards are extrapolated up to total effort.
Republic of Korea	Yes.	Releases and/or discards.	Observer reporting (of authorised observer discards).	The actual number of the predated fish is used. The weight of predated fish is not currently reported but estimated.	Observer authorised discards are extrapolated up to total effort.	The potential for underreporting of predated fish and species misidentification on unobserved fishing trips.	Observer authorised discards are extrapolated up to total effort and the data between observer and vessel are compared.
South Africa	No.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	Scientific Observers on-board.	Not calculated at the moment.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.