



CCSBT-EC/0910/13

## REPORT FROM THE EXTENDED SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

### Purpose

To consider the report of the Extended Scientific Committee (ESC).

### Discussion

The Report of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Scientific Committee is presented to this meeting as CCSBT-EC/0910/Rep01.

The independent Chair of the ESC will present the report of the ESC's meeting in September 2009. The report will include management advice on the status of the SBT stock, which will be used by the Extended Commission when discussing agenda item 10.

Amongst other things, the ESC's report describes the current status of the SBT stock and provides projections for a variety of TAC levels. In its report, the ESC recommends that:

1. In the light of the current stock status and concerns, management advice is as follows.
2. Positive factors affecting sustainability of future catches are:
  - the reported catch has reduced over recent years;
  - indicators and the assessment suggest that the 2003 and 2004 year classes are not as low as the weak 2000, 2001, and 2002 year classes; and
  - indicators of age 4+ SBT have exhibited some recent upward trends.
3. However, there remain serious sources of concern from new and previous information including:
  - a very low spawning stock (about 5% of  $SSB_0$  and 15% of  $SSB_{MSY}$ );
  - the three poor recruitments from 2000 to 2002, and indications of some further poor recruitments after 2004, which will lead to a further decline in spawning stock biomass;
  - a general decline in recruitment since about 1970, coincident with declining spawning stock sizes; and
  - Current fishing mortality is nearly double  $F_{MSY}$ .
4. The ESC **recommends** that the Extended Commission effect a meaningful reduction in catch below the current TAC of 11810t.
5. Noting the Extended Commission's intent to adopt a Management Procedure (MP) at its 2010 annual meeting, and given the high probability that such a MP will require catch and effort data as inputs, the ESC **recommends** that the Extended Commission take steps to ensure accurate future catch and effort reporting.