

BLUEFIN TUNA IN THE EASTERN ATLANTIC AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

(From recovery plan to management plan)

and other issues regarding Mediterranean stocks
(Swordfish and albacore)

**MEDAC WG 2 (Highly migratory
species) 10/10/2017**



BFT BACKGROUND ON CONSERVATION

- ✓ *The advice is for a TAC set at 36000t, to be reached by 2020 in a gradual stepwise way.*
- ✓ *In the context of reasonable concerns linked to the assessment uncertainties and the subsequent reduction of the capability of the stock to respond to unfavourable conditions, it will be paramount to ensure two things:*
 - firstly that the capacity does not explode in the coming years, including for developing countries
 - secondly that the controls remain effective and that this fishery does not become a free for all.
- ✓ *Next stock assessment will take place in 2020*
- ✓ *The current status of the stock may no longer requires the emergency measures introduced with the recovery plan.*

OBJECTIVES

- ✓ a) change the conservation objectives of the plan; from recovery plan to management plan with the goal of maintaining the biomass at $B_{0.1}$. (this is achieved by fishing at $F_{0.1}$)
- ✓ b) introducing additional flexibility for the small scale and artisanal operators, that could allow artisanal fleets to come back to the fishery,
- ✓ c) address existing loopholes in relation to the controls of the live trade. Maintaining, if not re-enforcing the control framework for live fish.

In a few words that will require striking the right balance between softening some of the requirements without jeopardizing the success of the recovery plan and the culture of compliance which has developed over time.

SOME EXAMPLES OF CHANGES

✓ *Regarding quotas:*

- ✓ objective to have in place harvest control rules by 2019;
- ✓ carry-over of under harvested is not considered

✓ *Regarding Capacity:*

- ✓ the objective is to ensure that this is commensurate with the allocated quota by using the relevant parameters (yearly catch rates)
- ✓ Considering the increase of the TAC being advised (close to the high historical levels), it will be crucial not to trigger a massive increase of capacity in the Med. There should not be new boats being built otherwise we will return to the 2006 situation.

- ✓ It is important to ensure that vessels < 12m that were excluded from the fishery could come back under certain conditions (specific measures are currently under discussion).
- 26/10/2017

SOME EXAMPLES OF CHANGES II

- ✓ ***Fishing seasons:*** keep exclusively the fishing season for purse-seiners and recreational and sport fisheries. Flexibility to modify the dates of the open season for purse-seiners in the Adriatic.
- ✓ ***Communication of catches:*** monthly catch report with the exception of purse-seiners that should continue with the same reporting regime (every 24 hours). When TAC consumption goes beyond 90% the reporting frequency should change to weekly.
- ✓ ***Prior notifications and landings in designated ports:*** a threshold is defined to pre-notify and to land in a designated port (threshold should be defined based on cumulative fresh landings).

Mediterranean Swordfish

- Allowable quotas transposed in the Regulation on fishing opportunities. (lineal reduction of 3% from 2018 to 2022);
- Derogation to landing obligation would be published before the end of 2017;
- Recovery plan has been drafted and it is now under Inter-services consultation.

Mediterranean Albacore

- The status of the stock is highly uncertain with respect to both fishing mortality and biomass. This is perceived as **NOT LIKELY** overfished or subject to overfishing.
- Measures should be designed to avoid increases in catch and effort directed at Mediterranean albacore.