



Improved management measures for swordfish in the framework of ICCAT

Draft proposals



European
Commission
Maritime Affairs
and Fisheries

DG MARE D2

Meeting with Member States - 8 September 2011

What happened since last ICCAT annual meeting?

- 22 March 2011: MEDRAC Ad-hoc working group on MED swordfish
- 30 June 2011: Written adoption of the ad-hoc working group opinion by the working group
- 6 June 2011: Adoption of the opinion by the MEDRAC EXCOM

- 8 Sept. 2011: meeting with MS: exchange of views on draft proposals for comprehensive management plan for MED swordfish

- 20 Sept. 2011: meeting with MEDRAC

Objectives in 2011

To present areas of improvements to the current ICCAT Recommendation 09-04 for a management framework for the sustainable exploitation of Mediterranean swordfish:

→ through a package of integrated management measures

Basis?

ICCAT SCRS Recommendations (October 2010) identified three aims that could be improved:

- *Objective 1: to reduce the juveniles in the catches*
- *Objective 2: to reduce the fishing mortality*
- *Objective 3: to reduce and better control fishing capacity*

+ Need to further improve the system of lists of authorised vessels as already implemented through ICCAT Rec. 09-04

How to reach the objectives

1. Ring-fencing of the vessels authorized to carry out a certain pelagic longline fishery (**Lists**)
2. Swordfish **by-catch threshold** for pelagic longline fisheries targeting other than swordfish.
3. Catch limit (**TAC & quota allocation**).
4. **Extension** of the period of the **closed season** for all pelagic longline fisheries (i.e. irrespective of the target species)
5. Minimum catching **size**.
6. Minimum **size** for the height of the **hooks** for swordfish and bluefin tuna pelagic longline fishing.
7. Maximum **number** of **hooks** and maximum **length** of pelagic longlines.

MEDRAC opinion vs new proposal

MEDRAC opinion	Draft proposal
<p><u>FLEET:</u> important to make <u>a census of the catching vessels</u> actually engaged in fishing swordfish so that it will be validated, at a second stage, by the EU. For this purpose it is necessary to make a distinction between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catching vessels actually engaged in <u>active fishing swordfish</u>, exclusively with long-lines and harpoons. • Catching vessels <u>not fishing actively</u> (by-catch catching less than 2 tons per year) • <u>Recreational fisheries'</u> vessels dedicated to catch swordfish. 	<p>The list of fishing vessels authorised to catch swordfish, both as target species or by-catch, shall distinguish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Vessels targeting swordfish – where swordfish is at any time after the end of the fishing operation <u>the majority of the fish caught and/or retained on board</u> •Vessels catching swordfish as by-catches - where the swordfish is at any time after the end of the fishing operation <u>the minority of the fish caught and/or retained on board</u>; •<u>Recreational fisheries</u>
<p><u>BY-CATCH:</u> it is deemed necessary to establish a limit for <u>by-catches of the order of 5%</u> (by weight or/and number of pieces) for this fishing activities and of fleet.</p>	<p>Catching vessels authorized to participate in pelagic longline fisheries for highly-migratory pelagic stocks and not authorized to target for swordfish are not authorized to retain on board or land swordfish exceeding more than <u>5% of the total catch on board by weight or/and number of pieces of other highly-migratory stocks.</u></p>

MEDRAC opinion	Draft proposal
<p><u>MINIMUM SIZE:</u> minimum size of 90 cm from the lower mandible to the fork <u>with a tolerance of 10% as to the number of fish of smaller size</u> on the overall number of swordfish of allowable size caught in each sea trip.</p>	<p>Necessary measures shall be taken to prohibit catching, retaining on board, transshipping, landing, transporting, storing, selling, displaying or offering for sale swordfish measuring less than 90 cm LJFL or, in alternative, weighing less than 10 kg of round weight or 7,5 kg of gilled and gutted weight.</p> <p><u>No tolerance should be allowed to the minimum catching size and weights.</u></p>
<p><u>HOOKS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a more limited maximum number of hooks is being proposed and accepted, that is 2.800. • length of the hook cannot be less than 7 cm. • second series of tied and not set-up fishing hooks for fishing trips of more than 2 days is authorized 	<p>The maximum number of hooks that can be set or taken on board of vessels by fishery (defined on the basis of the more abundant species anytime on board) should be fixed at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>1600 hooks for bluefin tuna,</u> ○ 2800 hooks for swordfish, ○ 4000 hooks for albacore. <p>A second set of hooks may be allowed on board for trips longer than 2 days.</p> <p>Hook size should never be smaller than 7 cm of height for fishing targeting swordfish.</p> <p><u>The length of the pelagic longline will be of maximum 30 NM (55 km).</u></p>

MEDRAC opinion	Draft proposal
<p><u>CLOSED FISHING SEASON:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•important socio/economic impact of this issue on the sector is very strong if it is not accompanied by any parallel measure of aid. The participants ask for this issue to be taken into account by the Commission since this fleet has received a double blow both for the fishing of blue-fin tuna and for the fishing of swordfish.• various points of view as to a ban or a temporary seasonal ban on fishing as well as to whether this ban should concern the type of fishing or the fishing gear (“long-line”).•Finally: agreement is on <u>maintaining status quo</u>	<p>Swordfish fishing, both as a targeted fishery and as by-catch, shall be prohibited in the Mediterranean by pelagic longline vessels during the period from <u>(3 months period, in any case including October and November)</u>.</p> <p>Mediterranean swordfish shall not be retained on board, transhipped or landed during the period of closure.</p>

MEDRAC opinion	Draft proposal
<p><u>DECREASE OF THE FISHING CAPACITY AND TAC:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • impossible to conduct a study on whether it is possible to arrive at a certain decrease of the fishing capacity since today's situation as to fishing in the Mediterranean is unknown. • <u>As a result and since we do not have this “picture”, we cannot examine this probability.</u> • <u>necessary to wait for the results of the implementation of the measures above.</u> • necessary to <u>improve the transfer of data</u> from all the member countries practicing this type of fishing. • any decision on TAC would be also problematic since it would validate data from a fishing activity that has been practiced by illegal fleets, as an example the case of Morocco that shall prohibit, by the end of the year, fishing with driftnets. 	<p>The total allowable catches (TACs) for Mediterranean swordfish is set at 12,100 t on a multiannual basis for the years 2012 and 2013.</p> <p>The TAC for 2014 onwards, if advisable, may be adjusted following the SCRS advice in 2013. Necessary measures shall be taken to ensure that the fishing effort of its catching vessels is commensurate with the fishing opportunities on swordfish available.</p>
<p><u>GENERAL REMARKS :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need to base themselves from now on reliable and solid data concerning fishing vessels and catches. • to start a harmonization process of all the legislations both of the community and the extra community countries who have fishing activities. 	

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Thank you!

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