

August 24, 2010

Dr. Rebecca Lent, U.S. ICCAT Federal Commissioner
Ms. Randi Thomas, U.S. ICCAT Commercial Commissioner
Raymond Bogan, Esq. U.S. Recreational Commissioner
Dr. John Graves, U.S. ICCAT Advisory Committee Chairman

Subject: CITES and ICCAT

Dear Commissioners and Chairman Graves:

As you no doubt are aware, Monaco has already submitted to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES) Secretariat a proposal to list Northern Atlantic Bluefin Tuna for consideration of an Appendix 1 listing to ban all international trade in this species and presumably any "similar in appearance" tuna species for enforcement purposes.

The primary reason given is the failure of eastern Atlantic and North African countries failure to follow the scientific advice of the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). The SCRS advice calls for total allowable catches to be limited in the range of 8,000 to 15,000 metric tons (MT) per year. Best estimates of recent catches by SCRS place the total somewhere in the 40,000 to 61,000 mt range. The specific actual catch is unknown because of non reporting and misreporting by eastern Atlantic fishing nations. The scientific advice includes a warning that the actual levels of catch are not sustainable and could potentially lead to a collapse of the eastern fishery. There is no SCRS discussion of stock endangerment and no mention of threat of extinction.

France, England, Netherlands and Germany have announced their intention to support the Monaco proposal at the March 2010 meeting of CITES in Doha, Qatar starting next March 13. Further, with disappointment we see in a draft document from the European Commission's environment section the erroneous conclusion that "From a scientific and technical point of view, the criteria for the listing of Atlantic bluefin tuna (as an endangered species) appear to be met".

We believe that this development requires reopening of the 2008 ICCAT agreement for the eastern Atlantic, specifically Part II TAC and quotas which calls for a TAC of 22,500 TAC for 2010. We believe the US must lead a coalition of parties insisting that the 2010 quota be reduced to below 15,000 mt, first in the interest of following the scientific advice and sustainable fishing and second, to demonstrate to CITES that ICCAT is the competent authority to manage highly migratory tunas.

This letter is to urge that Dr. Rebecca Lent write the Secretariat and request that all parties be informed that the US desires discussion and action within Panel 2 and the Plenary to achieve the above change to the 2008 eastern Atlantic agreement to achieve consistency with the scientific advice and begin rebuilding and protecting northern Atlantic bluefin tuna. After 30 years of following the scientific advice in the western Atlantic bluefin fisheries (including strict adherence to TAC levels and minimum sizes well above the ICCAT minimums) the evidence is mounting that due to mixing the biological objectives for

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the western bluefin stock unit cannot be achieved with the eastern fisheries not also following the scientific advice. Catches of western fish in eastern fisheries and reduced availability of eastern fish traditionally migrating to western fishing grounds raises fishing mortality of the western unit and prevents rebuilding of the smaller western spawning stock biomass.

In our efforts to convince ICCAT parties to alter the eastern Atlantic TAC's consistent with the scientific advice, it is unacceptable that the US offer or allow transfer of either swordfish or western bluefin quota underages or quota share. Given our history of conservation leadership any such transfers would not only be insulting but the loss of real or potential future economic benefits unacceptable to coastal fishermen and dependent support industries already doing more than their fair share to establish sustainable, ecosystem friendly fishing practices. It is entirely appropriate that the US immediately implement the Magnuson Act and other laws mandating prohibitions against access to US fish markets by countries either engaged in Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU fishing) or market sanctions on countries not employing comparable ecosystem friendly fishing practices required of all US HMS fishermen.

We believe such a letter to the Secretariat must be done as soon as possible and the intention is the focus of upcoming pre-ICCAT strategic meetings. We also would appreciate substantial discussion of a strategy to avoid a CITES listing by the US ICCAT Advisory Committee.

Thanks you and we look forward to a response.

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CC: Kimberly Blankenbaker for distribution to US IAC Members