

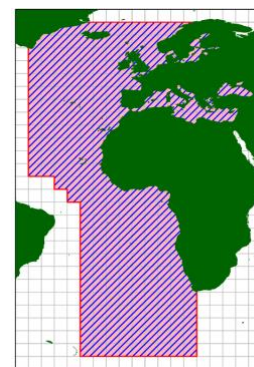
# EAST ATLANTIC & MEDITERRANEAN BLUEFIN TUNA



## East Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea

### ADVICE FOR 2023

ICCAT has carried out a new assessment and management strategy evaluation (MSE) for this stock. A new management procedure will be selected in December 2022, therefore, no new advice was available at the time of publication.



### KEY POINTS

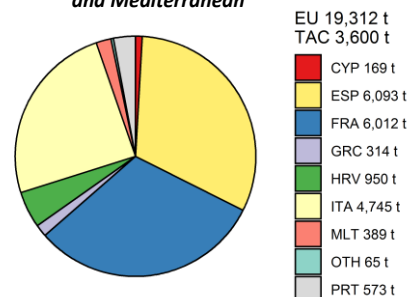
ICCAT advice basis	Previous advice and indicators	
Management Plan	ICCAT Management Strategy Evaluation (Rec. 18-02*) Catch = 36,000 t	
ICCAT MSY	MSY lower	Not available
	MSY	Not available
	MSY upper	Not available
Landing Obligation	From 2015	No derogations or exemptions

\* Recommendation by ICCAT Establishing a Multi-Annual Management Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea 18-02. A new MSE has been now carried out and will form the basis of management in the future.

### MANAGEMENT IN 2022

- The TAC covers the entire North Atlantic Ocean east of 45°W and the also the Mediterranean Sea.
- Ireland has no target fisheries. Bycatches in any fishery are subject to an unallocated bycatch quota for EU vessels (65t in 2022). This restrictive bycatch allowance may make blue fin a potential choke species in other pelagic fisheries especially as the stock rebuilds.
- In 2022, 22 charter angling vessels have been authorised to participate in the Irish catch, tag and release programme.
- EU member states' retained recreational catches must be deducted from available quotas. The quota that Ireland has access to is designated for bycatch only, and not for target fisheries.

2022 Quota Allocations  
Atlantic Ocean, east of 45° W,  
and Mediterranean



### KEY STOCK CONSIDERATIONS

- A new assessment and MSE was carried out in 2022 by ICCAT the results of that are being used to define a new management procedure and 2023 TAC for this stock.
- Previously, the ICCAT recommendation 09-06 sets the objective of achieving  $F_{MSY}$  and  $B_{MSY}$  by 2022 with at least a 60% probability and fishery indicators did not provide a reason to alter current management advice (36,000 t).
- The Marine Institute commenced a research programme on bluefin tuna in 2016 in partnership with Stanford University USA, University of Acadia Canada, Trinity College Dublin and ICCAT. A total of 120 Bluefin Tuna were tagged with pop off satellite tags (109) and accelerometer tags (11) from the Donegal and south coast during years 2016-2022. Results suggest a very high survival rate of tagged fish. Tags recovered to date show that fish tend to migrate to the mid-Atlantic for overwintering with some passing through the Bay of Biscay. Several fish have been observed in the Mediterranean at spawning time before subsequently returning to Irish waters a year later. The Marine Institute and partners plan to continue the research programme in 2023.

- A management plan for Bluefin tuna in the Mediterranean and East Atlantic, proposed by the ICCAT in 2018 allows for countries with no assigned quota to set up a recreational /sport catch/conventional tag/release fishery. This allows member states to collect scientific data regarding the numbers of BFT in particular areas and their migratory habits. Specifically:
  - Vessels would require specific authorisations
  - Vessels must be operating in the context of a scientific project of a research institute integrated in a scientific research programme.
  - Results would also need to be communicated to the Standing Committee on Research and Science (SCRS of ICCAT) on a yearly basis.
  - Tagging must be performed by trained personnel.
- Since 2019 Inland Fisheries Ireland, the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority and the Marine Institute have been running the Irish catch and release programme for bluefin tuna caught on charter angling vessels in Irish waters. To date approximately 1,300 bluefin tuna have been tagged using conventional floy tags.