Atlantic bluefin tuna

**IDENTIFICATION**

**SCIENTIFIC NAME**
Thunnus thynnus

**SPECIES NAME(S)**
Atlantic bluefin tuna

**STOCK IDENTIFICATION**

Although Atlantic bluefin tuna is managed as two stocks – Eastern Atlantic (and Mediterranean Sea) and Western Atlantic, separated by the 45ºW meridian, the population structure is poorly understood and suspected to be far more complex.

In the NW Atlantic, the majority of Atlantic bluefin are caught by longlines, followed by other surface gear such as handlines and harpoon. A very small amount is caught by purse seine (2 t in 2012) and traps (17 t in 2012) (ICCAT 2012).

**RELATED LINKS:**
- International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)

**ASSESSMENT**

**Strengths**

The stock is assessed regularly; data and methods are publicly available. ICCAT has adjusted the TAC in recent years. Atlantic bluefin tuna have been under a 20 year rebuilding plan since 1998.

**Weaknesses**

There is a great degree of uncertainty surrounding Atlantic bluefin tuna’s status in the NW Atlantic. The current assessment includes two scenarios (high and low recruitment) that provide opposing results. This complicates management and proper setting of the TAC. Catches have been over the set TAC in recent years.

**Options**

The extent of mixing of eastern and western stocks needs to be further clarified, through otolith constituent and genetic analyses. A regular fishery sampling programme should be instituted to allow the age structure of the catch to be characterized. Continued work to determine what assessment scenario to use is needed.

**SCORES**

**Management Quality:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Compliance</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Compliance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management Strategy</td>
<td>≥ 6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stock Health:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Health</td>
<td>≥ 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Health</td>
<td>≥ 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIPS**

No related FIPs

**MSC**

No related MSC fisheries
Fisheries

Within FishSource, the term "fishery" is used to indicate each unique combination of a flag country with a fishing gear, operating within a particular management unit, upon a resource. That resource may have a known biological stock structure and/or may be assessed at another level for practical or jurisdictional reasons. A fishery is the finest scale of resolution captured in FishSource profiles, as it is generally the scale at which sustainability can most fairly and practically be evaluated.

Management Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MANAGEMENT UNIT</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>FISHING AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICCAT</td>
<td>International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)</td>
<td>FAO 21, FAO 22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>