

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS



COMMISSION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA
CONSERVATION DES THONIDES DE L'ATLANTIQUE

COMISION INTERNACIONAL PARA LA
CONSERVACION DEL ATUN ATLANTICO

Madrid, 2 February 2026

ICCAT CIRCULAR # 00641 / 2026

SUBJECT: LETTER FROM THE UNITED STATES DELEGATION REGARDING RECREATIONAL CATCHES OF WESTERN ATLANTIC BLUEFIN TUNA

I would like to transmit herewith a letter from the Head Delegate of the United States, Mr Andrew Lawler, regarding recreational catches of western Atlantic bluefin tuna.

The Chair of Panel 2 and the Secretariat have taken note of the interpretation of the *Recommendation by ICCAT for a conservation and management plan for western Atlantic bluefin tuna (Rec. 22-10)* provided by the United States delegation. While this interpretation differs from the understanding of the Chair of Panel 2 and the Secretariat, it is noted that the interpretation of ICCAT Recommendations does not fall within the mandate or authority of either the Chair of Panel 2 or the Secretariat.

In light of the above, the Chair of Panel 2 and the Secretariat would be grateful if Panel 2 members could provide any comments on this matter no later than **20 February 2026**, for possible further discussion during the Intersessional Meeting of Panel 2 to be held from 3 to 5 March 2026, if required. The ICCAT Secretariat will compile all comments received by the date referred to above and present them during the Intersessional Meeting of Panel.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Executive Secretary

Camille Jean Pierre Manel

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Attachment: Letter sent by the United States [ICCAT Entrada #00781 of 28 January 2026].

January 27, 2026

Mr. Camille Jean Pierre MANEL
ICCAT EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
C/ Corazón de María 8, 28002 Madrid, Spain

Dear Camille;

This letter is to acknowledge that the Western Bluefin Recommendation 22-10 does not require Western harvesters to count their recreational catch of Bluefin toward their quota. As such, beginning January 1, 2026 and henceforth, the United States will continue to report its recreational catch of bluefin tuna for management purposes but will not count its recreational catch toward its current quota of 1572mt, which will be solely allocated to its commercial catch.

Respectfully,

Andrew Lawler

Andrew "Drew" Lawler
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
NOAA International Fisheries