



CCSBT-EC/2410/11

Total Allowable Catch and its Allocation

PURPOSE

To provide relevant background information to support the Extended Commission's (EC) deliberations on:

1. TAC Determination;
2. Research Mortality Allowance for 2025; and
3. Allocation of the TAC.

(1) TAC Determination

At CCSBT 30, the EC agreed that the global TAC for 2024-2026 would be 20,647 t as calculated by the Management Procedure and recommended by the ESC.

The EC needs to confirm whether there are any exceptional circumstances that should cause the TAC for 2025 to be revised.

The evaluation of meta-rules by the Extended Scientific Committee (ESC) can be found in the Report of the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC 29). The relevant paragraphs are reproduced at **Attachment A** for convenience.

The overall conclusion of the ESC in relation to exceptional circumstances was that “there is no evidence of exceptional circumstances, and therefore confirms the TAC recommended for 2024-2026 of 20,647 t/year”.¹

In relation to confirming the TAC for 2025, the SC 29 report states that:

120. Application of the CTP in 2022 led to a recommended global TAC for 2024-2026 of 20,647 t/year. The 2024 ESC reviewed evidence of exceptional circumstances and confirmed that there is no need to modify the TAC recommended for the 2024-2026 fishing years.

121. The ESC therefore recommend that the 2025 global TAC should remain at 20,647 t.

(3) Research Mortality Allowance

CCSBT 29 agreed that an allocation of 6 t per year would continue to be made for Research Mortality Allowance (RMA) within the TAC for 2024 to 2026.

The ESC has endorsed the provision of the following amounts of RMA to cover research projects in 2024/2025:

- 1.5 tonnes for the CCSBT Gene Tagging Project;

¹ Paragraph 119 of Report of 29th Scientific Committee

- 1 t by Japan for trolling surveys of age-0 SBT in North West Australia and age-1 SBT in South West Australia; and
- 0.5 t by Australia in the event that a small number of popup satellite tags are released in 2024-25 to examine localised GAB movement and behaviour over the summer.

The EC should confirm whether it approves these requests for Research Mortality Allowance, totalling 3 t for 2024/25.

(4) Allocation of the TAC

The allocations and effective catch limits to Members 2024 - 2026 were agreed at CCSBT 30 as specified below²:

Member	Allocation (tonnes) (1)	Effective Catch Limit (2) ³
Japan	7,341	7,247
Australia	7,341	7,295
New Zealand	1,296	1,288
Korea	1,477	1,468
Taiwan	1,477	1,468
Indonesia	1,193	1,336 ⁴
European Union	13	13
South Africa	503	527

The special temporary allowance made to Indonesia and reflected in its Effective Catch Limit is subject to the following:

- an annual review of Indonesia's compliance undertaken at the Compliance Committee and an ability to revoke or reduce the temporary allowance;
- this arrangement will expire at the end of 2026 and not extended beyond; and
- not setting a precedent for, and being without prejudice to, future discussions on allocation and interpretation of CCSBT's decisions.

The annual review of compliance mentioned above will include an evaluation of performance against obligations, including in areas such as: catch against allocation, transshipment, CDS, management of small-scale fisheries, data exchange requirements, and observer requirements.

Prepared by the Secretariat

² This assumes that there are no exceptional circumstances that cause the TAC to be revised.

³ Includes voluntary transfers to Indonesia of 21 t from Japan and a special temporary allowance of 130 t. It also includes a voluntary transfer of 27 t to South Africa from Japan.

⁴ Figures for Indonesia in Table 1 do not include 91.3 t to be repaid by Indonesia every year until 2026 as part of an agreed Payback Plan.

Extract of Agenda Item 9.1 from the Report of SC 29

111. Australia presented paper CCSBT-ESC/2409/17 on Evaluation of exceptional circumstances – SBT 2024. The meta-rules adopted with the CCSBT Management Procedure (MP) provide a process to determine whether exceptional circumstances exist and a process and guidelines for action to address issues when identified. Review of the population dynamics, other indicators of the stock and fishery, and fishery operations, did not identify any unusual conditions. The CCSBT's total reported catches are below the TAC. The estimates of potential non-member unaccounted mortality were updated in 2023, and the MP has been tested to be robust to these levels. The most recent gene-tagging estimate of abundance, for the 2022 age-2 cohort, has been slightly delayed and is not yet available, but preliminary indications are that the estimate will be within the range of estimates seen previously. The close-kin data and CPUE index are within the expected range of values. This paper noted that there is no evidence for exceptional circumstances, and the MP recommended TAC for 2024-2026 should therefore remain unchanged.
112. Japan presented paper CCSBT-ESC/2409/26 on a Check of Operating Model Predictions from the Viewpoint of Implementation of the MP in 2024. Japan examined observations/information of input index/data (Japanese longline GAM CPUE, age 2 abundance estimate from the gene-tagging and close-kin mark recapture data) for the Cape Town procedure (CTP) comparing to the 2019 OM prediction. These examinations indicate that all the observations/information are consistent with the predicted ranges from the 2019 OM. Regarding the input index/data for the CTP therefore, there is no evidence to support a declaration of Exceptional Circumstances. Accordingly, regarding a decision on implementation of the recommended TAC (20,647 t, calculated by the CTP in 2022 to be applied to the 2024-2026 fishing seasons) for the 2025 season, it is concluded that no modification of the value of this TAC is required because: 1) there is no conclusive evidence to support a declaration of Exceptional Circumstances from the viewpoints of a check of the OM predictions and other potential factors (the extent by which the total reported global catch exceeds the TAC, unaccounted mortality, results of stock assessment conducted in 2023, issues related to biological sampling in Indonesia and changes in the operation pattern of Indonesian fishery); and 2) no unexpected change has been detected in the fisheries and scientific survey indicators examined.
113. Both papers noted issues of concern that, while not triggering exceptional circumstances, should continue to be monitored. These include:
- The absence (2021/22) or very limited collections (2022/23 and 2023/24) of adult tissue samples for CKMR analysis from the Indonesian fishery;
 - Changes in the distribution and operation of the Indonesian fleet from Area 1 to Area 2; and
 - Contraction of the Japanese longline fishery and any potential impact on CPUE.
114. The ESC also noted future potential concerns related to climate change and how this might affect recruitment or the overall distribution of SBT. The ESC expressed concern that the Strategic Plan does not mention climate change even though this was mentioned in the previous Performance Review.

115. The ESC further noted that the reported catch has been less than the global TAC every year since 2017, the 2023 stock status represents an improvement over the 2020 status estimated in the previous stock assessment conducted in 2020, and projections for the reference set indicated that the target of 30 % TRO_0 would be reached by 2035 with a probability of 0.51.
116. The ESC concluded that there is no evidence for exceptional circumstances, and that therefore the recommended TAC does not need to be modified.