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PRESS RELEASE

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CITES FAILS TO PROTECT ATLANTIC BLUEFIN TUNA

Oceana, the world's largest ocean conservation organization, released the following statement from campaigner María José Cornax today following the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species' (CITES) failure to protect Atlantic bluefin tuna at the 15th Conference of the Parties: *"In a clear win by short-term economic interest over the long-term health of the ocean and the rebuilding of Atlantic bluefin tuna populations and fishery, CITES today voted to deny prohibition of the international trade of the species"*.

Although there were repeated calls from delegates from the E.U., U.S. and Monaco to allow time for parties to meet and arrive at a compromise position, a Libya delegate forced a preemptory vote on the E.U. proposal, which resulted in a 43 to 72 vote, with 14 abstaining. The final vote on the Monaco proposal was 20 to 68, with 30 abstaining. *"However not everything is lost. There's a small chance that the proposal is brought up during the debates again"*, added Cornax.

About Atlantic Bluefin Tuna and CITES:

From March 13 to 25, representatives from 175 countries are meeting in Doha, Qatar, for the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species' (CITES) 15th Conference of the Parties. During these two weeks, countries will decide on the inclusion of Atlantic bluefin tuna in CITES Appendix I. An Appendix I listing would ban international trade of the species.

Atlantic bluefin tuna is one of the world's most valuable fish species and is highly traded in international markets. The demand for international trade and resulting overfishing has driven Atlantic bluefin tuna to the edge of extinction.

This top predator has been traditionally harvested in the Eastern Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea. However, in recent decades an industrial fishing fleet has been widely developed, fuelled by government subsidies. This industry has also been characterised by high percentages of catch misreporting and illegal fishing, leading to higher levels of overfishing.

The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas' (ICCAT) Standing Committee of Research and Statistics (SCRS) has estimated that the North Atlantic bluefin tuna spawning biomass has been decimated to less than 15 percent of its unfished biomass, with the sharpest decline occurring in the last decade. Bluefin tuna meets the criterion C "marked decline" for inclusion in CITES Appendix I as a species endangered with extinction.

To learn more about Atlantic Bluefin Tuna and CITES, and for downloadable images, please visit www.oceana.org/CITES.

[Fact sheet: Atlantic bluefin tuna and CITES](#)

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Oceana campaigns to protect and restore the world's oceans. Our team of marine scientists, economists, lawyers and other collaborators are achieving specific changes in the legislation to reduce pollution and prevent the irreversible collapse of fish stocks, protect marine mammals and other forms of marine life. With an international perspective and dedicated to conservation, Oceana has offices in Europe, North America, South America and Central America. Over 300,000 collaborators and cyber activists in 150 countries have already joined Oceana. For more information, visit www.oceana.org

MarViva is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation that collaborates with local communities, private companies and various social sectors to protect coastal and marine resources. The organisation has offices in Costa Rica, Colombia, Panama and Spain. MarViva has coproduced The End of the Line. For more information, visit www.MarViva.net