



JUVENILE BLUEFIN TUNA CATCHES IN THE GULF OF LION

ICCAT REC. 24-05

ICCAT RECOMMENDATION AMENDING REC.22-08 ESTABLISHING
A MULTI-ANNUAL MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR BLUEFIN TUNA
IN THE EASTERN ATLANTIC AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

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REGULATORY FRAMEWORK



The ICCAT **Recommendation 22-08** establishes a multi-annual management plan for bluefin tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean. It aims to ensure **stock sustainability** by setting :

- catch quotas,
- control measures,
- and monitoring rules to combat illegal fishing.

The plan also includes **provisions for juvenile management**, catch traceability, and adjustment of fishing efforts based on scientific assessments.

JUVENILE CATCHES & MANAGEMENT



Management of juvenile bluefin tuna is regulated through several measures aimed at protecting young fish and ensuring stock sustainability. The key points are:

MINIMUM CATCH SIZE

- The recommendation establishes a minimum size for bluefin tuna to limit the capture of juveniles.
- Specific exemptions may be granted for certain artisanal or traditional fisheries, but under strict conditions.

LIMITATION OF BYCATCH

- A maximum threshold is set for juvenile catches in fisheries that do not directly target bluefin tuna.
- Any accidental catch exceeding this threshold must be reported and may lead to sanctions.

MONITORING AND CONTROL OF CATCHES

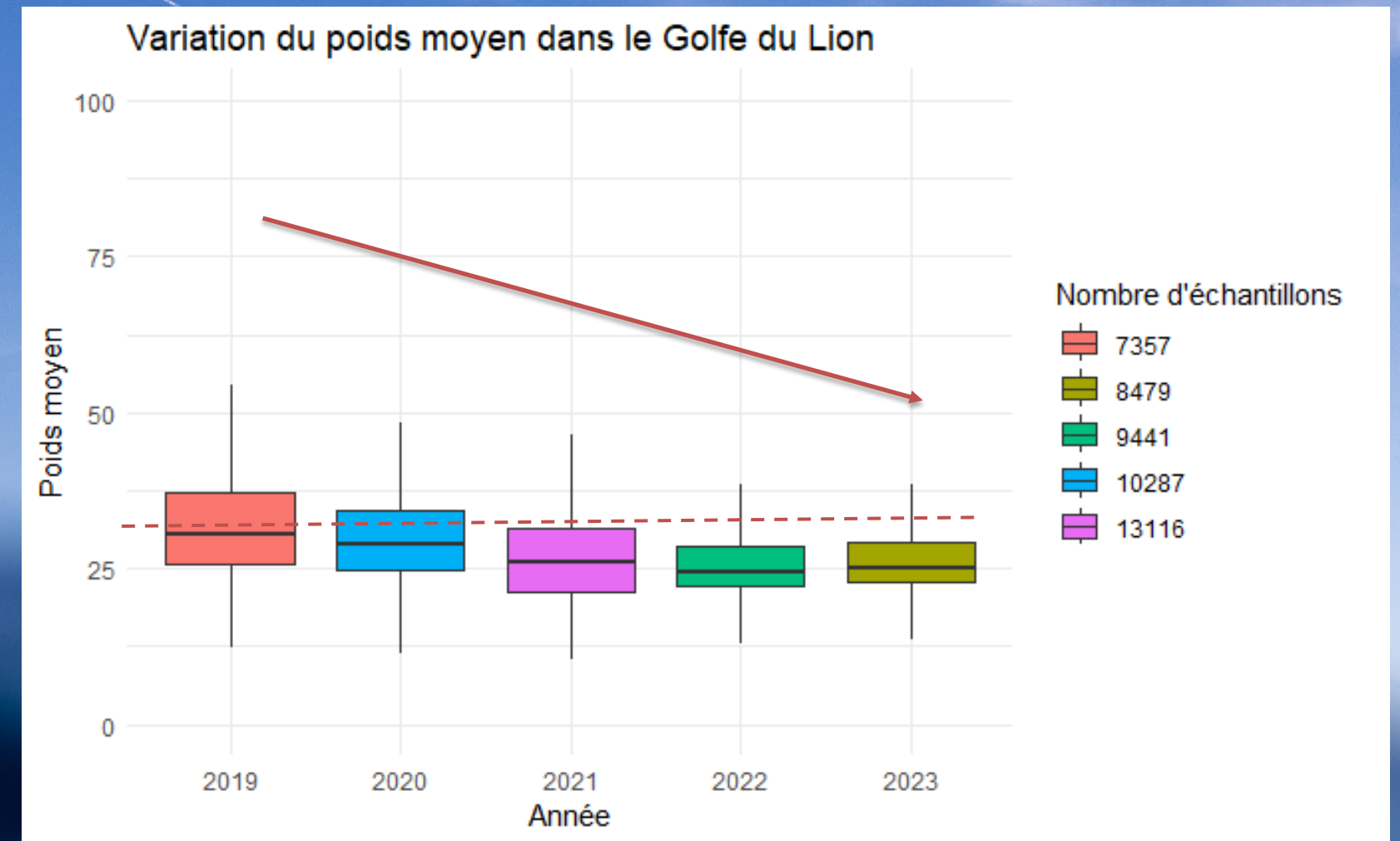
- Surveillance programs are required for vessels to ensure compliance with size limits and quotas.
- Traceability measures must be implemented to prevent the illegal commercialization of juvenile bluefin tuna.

ADAPTIVE MEASURES BASED ON SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENTS

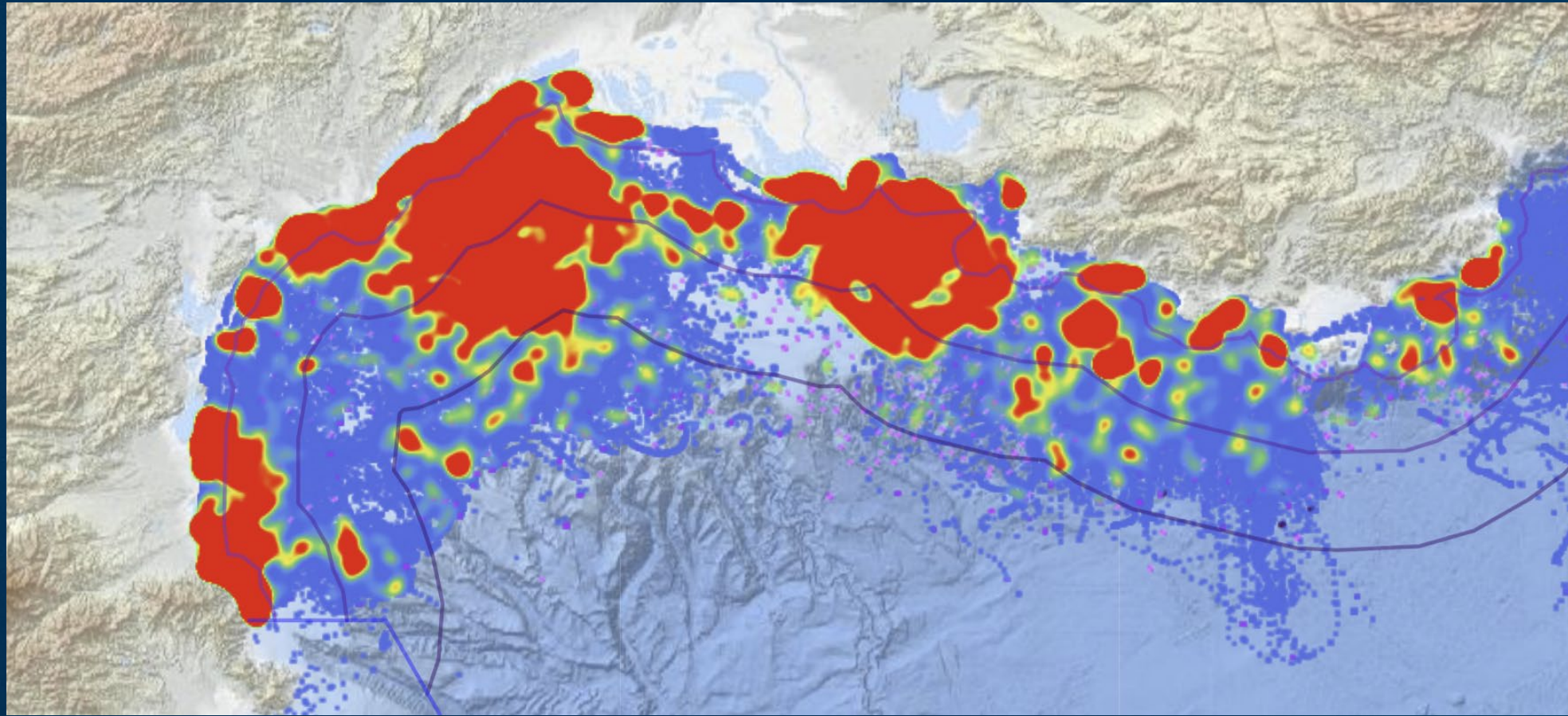
- ICCAT may adjust quotas and regulations if scientific data indicate a negative impact of juvenile catches on overall stock levels.
- Fishing area closures may be enforced to protect juvenile aggregation zones.

FISHERMEN'S OBSERVATIONS & RISK OF NON-COMPLIANCE

- For the past 5 years, bluefin tuna catches in the Gulf of Lion during June-July have consisted of a proportion of fish weighing 20-30 kg.
- This has led to constraints on the percentage of fish under 30 kg allowed (ICCAT REC = each CPC has an exemption to catch 2% of its TAC for fish weighing 8-30 kg).

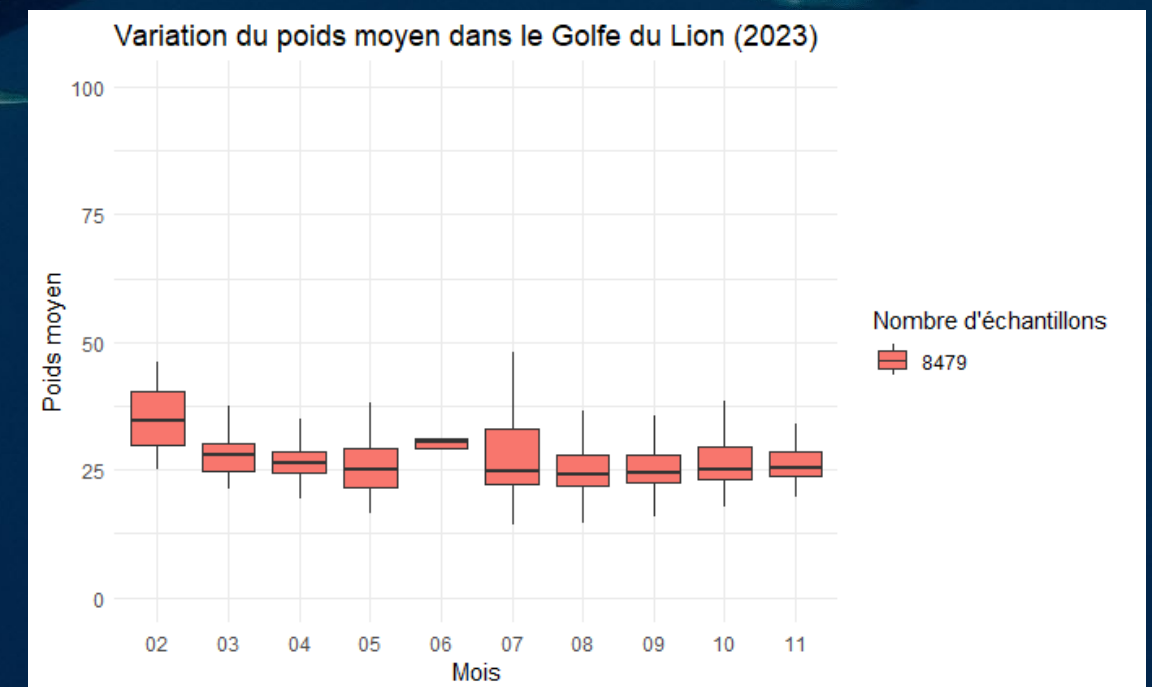
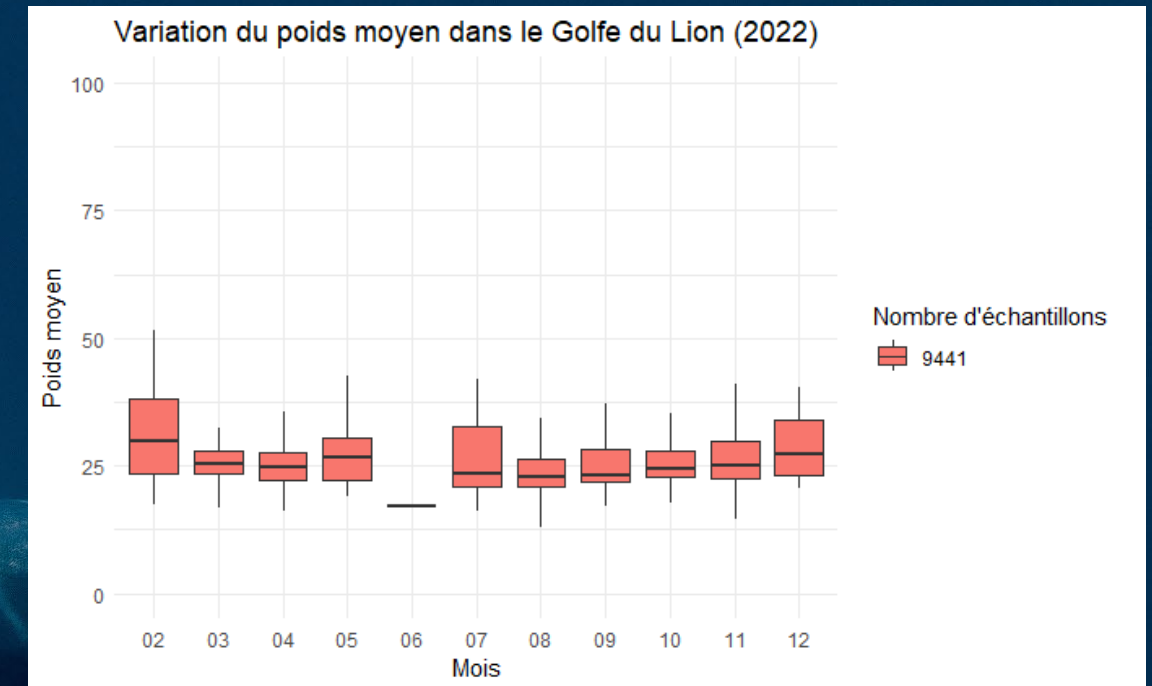
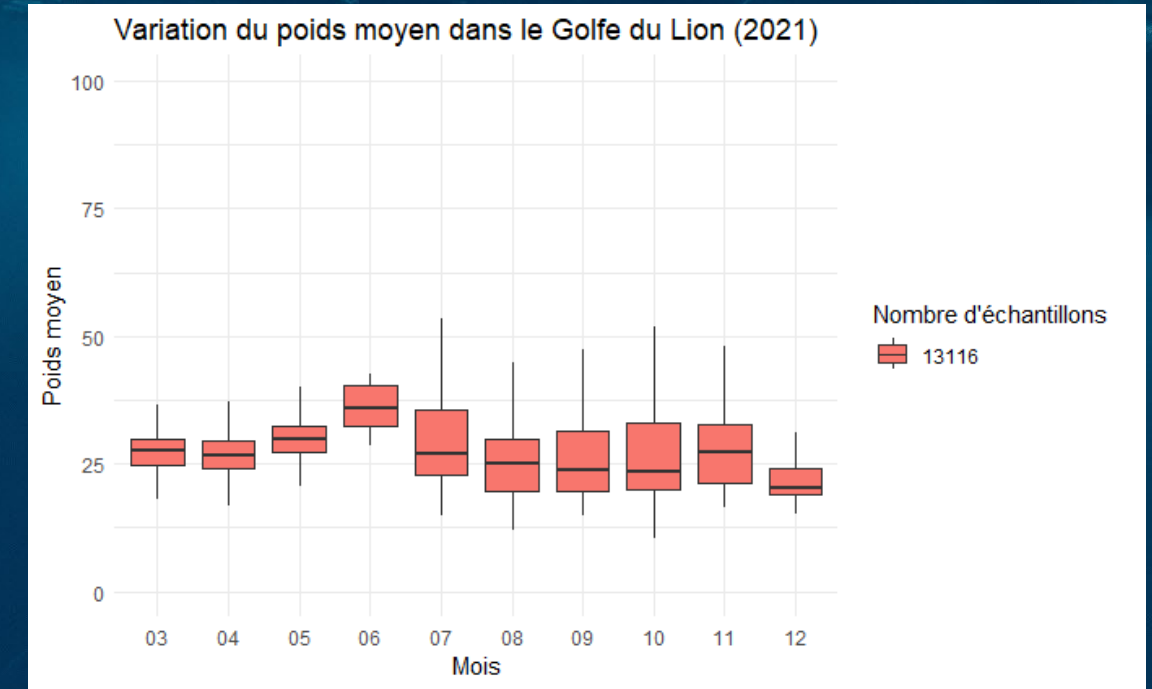


FISHERY MONITORING

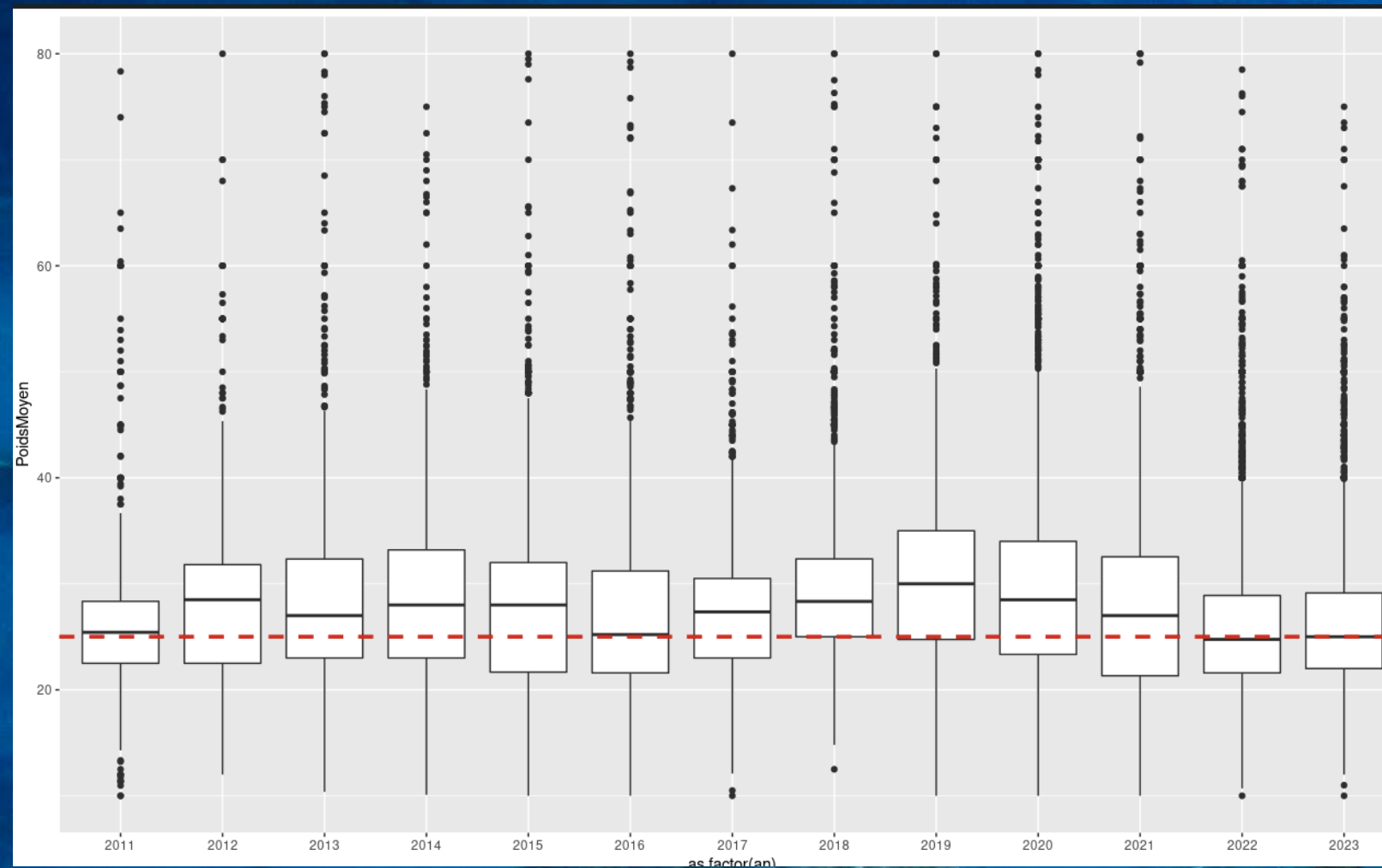


PART OF A COLLABORATION BETWEEN FISHERMEN AND SCIENTISTS

- Based on the catch data from professional fishermen – with support from the scientific organisation IFREMER
- For SATHOAN cooperative: Over 1500 fishing trips and 16,000 individual bluefin tuna recorded in the cooperative's databases, with a fishing effort of approximately 700.000 hooks deployed to track catch evolution over time and space.
- This is complemented by several scientific programs for bluefin tuna tagging and monitoring.



FISHERIES DATA

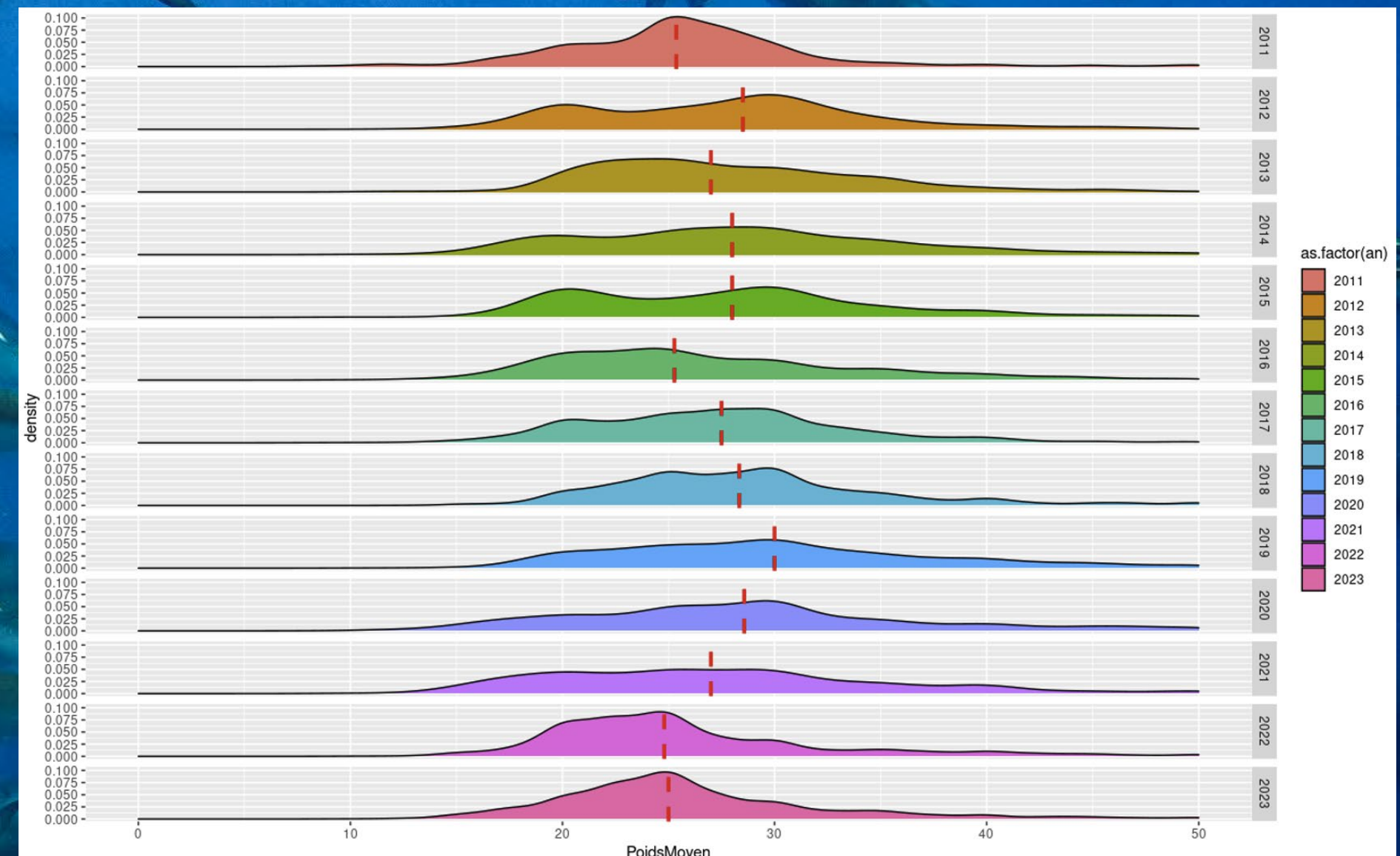


Evolution of the average weight of bluefin tuna caught by the longline and artisanal pole-and-line fleets in the Gulf of Lion

Without revealing clear trends, some years show a higher proportion of fish under 30 kg.

However, the **key point is that there is no change in the exploitation pattern**, as the same cohort—meaning the same size and age class of fish—is consistently targeted

That is why, based on the SCRS opinion, increasing the exploitation rate of juvenile bluefin tuna (8 to 30 kg, average 22 kg) **from 2% to 4% of the total bluefin tuna TAC has no impact on stocks and management measures**



ICCAT REC. 24-05



FISHING PLAN

- Set a maximum number of pole-and-line vessels, handliners, and longliners (ref. 2006)
- Set a maximum number of "small coastal vessels" (ref. 2008) – exemption +10% in the Gulf of Lion
- Set a maximum number in the Adriatic (ref. 2008)

Each CPC must allocate individual quotas to the concerned vessels:

- Each CPC may allocate a maximum of 7% of its BFT TAC to its pole-and-line vessels and handliners.
- Each CPC may allocate a maximum of 2% of its BFT TAC to its small coastal vessels targeting fresh fish in the Mediterranean.

-> However, in the Gulf of Lion, this percentage can reach 4%.

CPCs with pole-and-line vessels, longliners, and handliners must ensure that:

- Tags are affixed to each bluefin tuna immediately after unloading.
- Each tag has a unique identification number recorded in the eBCD system, along with the box/crate/bag information.

PERSPECTIVES AND PROPOSALS

OPEN THE DISCUSSION ON THE POSSIBILITY OF REPLICATING THIS SUCCESS STORY IN OTHER COASTAL COMMUNITIES.

→ Are there other areas where this model could be successfully applied?

We invite members to share their suggestions and experiences to identify new opportunities for adaptation and implementation.

→ Proposal of topics for the next EFCA workshop

Members are also encouraged to suggest other topics to be addressed with the EFCA during the June workshop. Feel free to submit your ideas and priorities.