



ICCAT Newsletter No.14

New ISSUE

September 2011


MESSAGE FROM THE ICCAT EXECUTIVE SECRETARY


The ICCAT Secretariat has the pleasure to present its readers with **ICCAT Newsletter No. 14**, informing of the latest events and activities of our organization.

We hope you enjoy reading this Newsletter and the Secretariat will be pleased to receive any comments aimed at improving this publication.





RECENT MEETINGS


 **Electronic Bluefin Tuna Catch Document (eBCD) Working Group.** The Meeting was held in Madrid, Spain on January 27 and 28, 2011. The Group reviewed technical matters to be considered for the implementation of an electronic bluefin tuna catch document system.


 **Workshop on the use of R Tools in the Data Preparatory Work ICCAT-SCRS.** The Meeting was held in Madrid, Spain from February 7 to 11, 2011.


The objective of this workshop was to make interested scientists familiar with the tools developed by the Secretariat to access the ICCAT database and process the information.

 **Inter-sessional Meeting of the Compliance Committee.** The Meeting was held in Barcelona, Spain from February 21 to 25, 2011. During the meeting the CPC compliance of ICCAT obligations was reviewed and, in particular, bluefin tuna fishing, inspection and capacity reduction plans in the east Atlantic and Mediterranean.


 **Working Group on the Organization of the SCRS.** The Meeting was held in Madrid, Spain from March 2 to 4, 2011. The main objective of the meeting was to present specific recommendations to the Commission and scientific organizations of the CPCs regarding the organization and the tasks of the SCRS, taking into account the recent changes approved by the Commission.


 **ICCAT Data Preparatory Meetings on Blue Marlin and White Marlin.** The Meeting was held in Madrid, Spain from April 25 to 29, 2011. The main objective of the meeting was to assess the blue marlin stocks in the Atlantic and review the data required to apply the different models which will be used in the white marlin stock assessment foreseen for 2012.


 **Inter-sessional Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Ecosystems.** The Meeting was held in Madrid, Spain from May 9 to 13, 2011. Among the objectives of the meeting was to obtain basic information on the ecosystem, aimed at assisting the development of ecosystem models in the Atlantic and continue with the identification of ecosystem indicators. Furthermore, a work plan was developed to assess the impact of tuna fisheries on sea turtle populations in the Atlantic and Mediterranean Oceans which will be carried out in 2012.


 **Second meeting of the Working Group on the Future of ICCAT.** The Meeting was held in Madrid, Spain from May 16 to 20, 2011. The objective of this meeting was to continue with work initiated in the first meeting of the Working Group in 2009. The Group reviewed the possible process to review the ICCAT Convention focusing on the following issues: the precautionary approach and considerations on the ecosystem; contributions scheme, provisions to strengthen the participation of non-member Parties to the Convention; decision making process and capacity building and assistance to developing countries.




 **Symposium on G-BFT Trap Fishing and related data sets.** The Symposium, within the framework of the GBYP, was held in Tangiers, Morocco from May 23 to 25, 2011. The objective of the symposium was to accumulate knowledge on trap fisheries and analyze the existing information on this traditional gear to maximize its scientific use.


 **Tropical tuna Species Group Intersessional Meeting on the Ghanaian Statistics Analysis (Phase II).** The meeting was held in Madrid, Spain from May 30 to June 3, 2011. The objective of the meeting was to revise the information and analysis developed during the first phase of the work plan designed by the SCRS and improve the current sampling system of Ghanaian fleets.

 **Sharks Data Preparatory Meeting for the application of the Ecological Risk Assessment.** The Meeting was held in Madrid, Spain from June 20 to 24, 2011. The main objective of this meeting was to increase and revise the current database to update the Ecological Risk Assessment carried out in 2008 in 2012.


 **Joint Meeting of the ICCAT Working Group on Stock Assessment Methods and the Bluefin Tuna Species Group to analyze the Assessment Methods developed within the framework of the GBYP and Electronic Tagging.** The Meeting was held in Madrid, Spain from June 27 to July 1, 2011. The double objective of the meeting was to carry out a specific work plan defined by the Working Group on assessment methods and a specific work plan defined by the GBYP. Among other issues, the meeting focused on researching the

thresholds, points of reference and use of harvest control rules (HCR) and analyze the assessment methods developed within the framework of the GBYP.


 **South Atlantic Albacore and Mediterranean Albacore Assessment Sessions.** The Meeting was held in Madrid, Spain from July 25 to 29, 2011. The main objective of the meeting was to assess the albacore stocks in the south Atlantic and Mediterranean.

 **Atlantic Yellowfin Stock Assessment Sessions.** The meeting was held in San Sebastian, Spain, September 5 to 12, 2011. The main objective of the meeting was to assess the Atlantic yellowfin stocks with particular emphasis on the effect of the increase in fishing effort in recent years on the stock.

Joint Tuna RFMO Meetings

 **3rd Joint Tuna RFMOs Meeting (Kobe III).** This meeting was held in La Jolla, California, United States, from July 12 to July 15, 2011. These joint meetings are part of the cooperation process among RFMOs to jointly confront the challenges and specific fields defined in the first joint Kobe meeting (http://www.iccat.int/Documents/BienRep/REP_EN_06-07_II_1.pdf).



 **Meeting of the Joint Working Group on By-catch.** The meeting was held in La Jolla, California, United States, on July 11, 2011. The Terms of Reference of this Group were defined in the international workshops on tuna RFMO management issues regarding by-catch which was held in Brisbane in June 2010.

CALENDER OF EVENTS

September

– *Species Group Meetings.* September 26 to 30, Madrid, Spain. These meetings will be held to update the available biological and statistical information on all species managed by ICCAT. The Sub-Committee on Statistics will also meet this week to review data

submissions as well as the progress made in the development of databases at the Secretariat.

October

– *Standing Committee on Research and Statistics*. October 3 to 7 in Madrid, Spain. The SCRS will meet to review the status of all stocks and prepare responses to the Commission concerning scientific issues.

Scientists wishing to submit papers to the SCRS meeting should contact the Secretariat.

November



– *Compliance Committee*. November 9 to 10 in Istanbul, Turkey.

– *22nd Regular Meeting of the Commission*. November 11 to 19 in Istanbul, Turkey. The Commission will review the results obtained from numerous stock assessments carried out during 2011 to adopt the recommendations and resolutions for the management of these resources.

For more information, agendas and hotel reservation forms for these meetings please see our web site at www.iccat.int and <http://www.iccatistanbul2011.com/>.

SECRETARIAT ACTIVITIES

The Secretariat has continued to support the activities of the SCRS and the Commission.

Following the 17th Special Meeting of the Commission, the Secretariat implemented the following decisions:

- Regional Observer Programme for Bluefin Tuna (ROP-BFT): to carry out the ROP-BFT established by the *Recommendation amending the Recommendation by ICCAT to Establish a Multiannual Recovery Plan*

for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean [Rec. 08-05 and 10-04], with the MRAG-COFREPECHE Consortium, the Secretariat has carried out the observer program on vessels and farms during the 2011 season.

Atlantic-wide research programme (GBYP)

In December 2010 the second phase of GBYP activities began. Activities in 2011 include: (a) continuation of data mining / recovery and elaboration, (b) continuation of aerial surveys on spawning aggregations, (c) biological and genetic sampling and analyses, (d) conventional tagging, including awareness and rewarding campaign, and (e) first steps of the modeling approaches. An important database is currently being developed for historical series from the beginning of the 16th century. During the 2011 fishing season three main areas in the Mediterranean have been aerially surveyed for more 276.000 km². Likewise, in 2011 a consortium of 13 research scientific institutions was set up to carry out the biological and genetic sampling and another six entities is carrying out the 2011 tagging programme.

During the first half of 2011, staff members of the Secretariat attended the following external meetings related to ICCAT activities:

→ *COFI Meeting (FAO, Rome, January 31 to February 5, 2011)*.

→ *Workshop on Exchange of Information and Maintenance of the Consolidated List of Authorized Vessels of Tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (Rome, February 7-9, 2011)*.

→ *35th Session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) (Rome, May 9-13, 2011)*.

→ *ISSF Stock Assessment Workshop (Rome, March 14-17, 2011)*.

→ *CREAM; Coordinating research in support to application of Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) and management advice in the Mediterranean and Black Seas (Rome, May, 2011).*

ICCAT played an active role in the various meetings with written and/or oral contributions.

Apart from the activities mentioned above, the Secretariat is responsible for the maintenance of the joint web page of tuna RFMOs (<http://www.tuna-org.org>).

ASSISTANCE FUNDS

The objective of these funds is to encourage the improvement of statistics of species under ICCAT mandate. Currently, there is a budget for special funds for data improvement established by the *Resolution by ICCAT on Improvements in Data Collection and Quality Assurance* [Res. 03-21].

These funds are supplied by voluntary contributions made by some Contracting Parties.

As well as these funds are the capacity building funds, initiated in 2008 by the European Union and United States aimed at supporting training on collection, data analysis, stock assessment methods and the ICCAT-Japan Data and Management Improvement Project (JDMIP) initiated in 2004.

Since the last *Newsletter*, these funds have financed the activities for statistical improvement and the participation of many of scientists to different SCRS meetings.

PUBLICATIONS

The following publications were issued in 2011:

Report for Biennial Period, 2010-2011, Part I (2010) Volumes 1 and 2, corresponding to the 2010 Commission Proceedings and SCRS Report. Since 2008 the Volume 3 is exclusively published in electronic format and only the summaries of the reports are translated into ICCAT's official languages. The Volume is published on the ICCAT web site. In 2011, the forth volume including the Secretariat reports on statistics and coordination of research, Administrative and Financial report have been

published for the first time, as well as the report to the Secretariat of the Compliance Committee of the Conservation and Management measures of ICCAT (COC) and the Permanent Working Group for the improvement of statistics and ICCAT conservation measures. This volume is published only in electronic format like Volume 3.

Five (5) issues of the *Collective Volume of Scientific Papers, Volume 66*.

Statistical Bulletin #40 which includes catch series by species and country since 1950 and which is published on CD format for the first time this year.

During this period the Secretariat has continued to collaborate with the Aquatic Living Resources Journal. A second joint volume of the journal has been published and work is being carried out on the third volume.

OTHER NEWS

Dr. M'Hamed Idrissi, Research Assistant to the GBYP Coordinator joined the Secretariat in March.

Dr. Idrissi is highly experienced in the work of the SCRS and is greatly recognized as an expert in the field tuna fisheries.

All recent ICCAT publications can be downloaded from <http://www.iccat.int>

To obtain copies of older publications please contact INFO@ICCAT.INT