Online Reporting Technology Working Group (WG-ORT)

2023 Status Report

Summary of 2023 Working Group activities

During 2023, the ICCAT Secretariat continued to progress during Phase 3 (2 years: 1 June 2022 to 31 May 2024) in the development of the ICCAT Integrated Online Management System (IOMS). Critical achievements advancing the working of the WG-ORT include finalizing the enhancements to the dynamic help system; further improving the Annual Report manager module; continuing the advancements to the development of the Vessel Manager module; and including the work on the UN/FLUX integration. In addition, improvements have been constantly made to several IOMS administrative tools and functionalities (user activity auditing manager, user's profiles/roles manager, notification manager, thread manager, change logger, etc.). Due to its complexity, the Vessel Manager module together with the UN/FLUX integration (where two specific implementation documents - vessel registration and fishing vessel authorizations - are being drafted by EU and the Secretariat, for a posterior consideration by the WG-ORT), represents the largest amount of development work that took place in 2023.

One virtual training workshop session was also conducted during 2023 to train registered IOMS users on the use of the IOMS, with a particular focus on the use of the Vessel Manager module. Additional training sessions exclusively dedicated to the Vessel manager will continue during 2024. In addition, the Secretariat also assisted all ICCAT CPCs with completing the 2023 Annual Reports in IOMS, as recommended by the WG-ORT.

The WG-ORT met virtually 7-8 February 2023 to review progress on the development of the IOMS and provide input on its continued development. The report from the meeting is available as document COC_302/2023. Among others, two important decisions were made:

a) The final adoption of the improved IOMS user roles characterization (profiles, access rights, read/write permissions, etc.), now with additional user types and higher resolution levels in IOMS functionality (users right per module/section/element), respectively presented in **Tables 4** and **5** of COC_302/2023. The revision of the IOMS user roles started in 2022.

b) Adoption of the Form Manager module (to manage and track all the ICCAT standard electronic forms that are reported by the CPCs) as a priority development task. This decision aims to make effective use of the IOMS on the CPCs data form provision to ICCAT and can potentially accelerate the IOMS development process. A detailed description is made in section 8.2 of COC_302/2023.

With Phases 1 and 2 completed and Phase 3 (2 years: June/2022 to May/2024) progressing as planned, the WG-ORT also discussed the activities of Phase 4 (2 years: June/2024 to May/2026). The 2022 workplan was rescheduled (as shown in the WG-ORT 2023 workplan) to accommodate the agreed changes of Phases 3 and 4, and also to delineate the activities planned for Phase 5. The adopted workplan is presented in **Appendix 1**. The Working Group approved the following activities for Phases 3 and 4 activities (shown by order of priority):

Phase 3
-   Vessel Manager module (includes the UN/FLUX integration)
-   Form Manager module (for all ST, CP, and TG standardized type forms)
-   Shark/Billfish Check Sheets Manager module (to continue in Phase 4)
-   Port Manager module (to continue in Phase 4)

Phase 4
-   Task 1 nominal catches manager
-   Compliance Tables manager

The IOMS workplan will be revised by the WG-ORT at the 2024 intersessional meeting (around February/2024), and potentially adjusted considering the progress achieved at the meeting, and the priorities determined by the Commission at the 2023 Annual Meeting. These adjustments will include a more detailed overview of the activities and priorities scheduled for Phase 5.

In addition to the 2023 development work, the IOMS development team had also worked on code maintenance of the existing IOMS (bug corrections and minor improvements) and to provide support to all the IOMS users (Secretariat staff, CPC officers, and ICCAT officers). The WG-ORT was concerned with the workload of the small IOMS development team and the tasks they are responsible for on a daily basis, including the three main roles described above. The WG-ORT determined that maintaining these three important roles with the current IOMS development team is unsustainable in the long run and agreed on the need to increase the ICCAT regular budget for the IOMS, with the goal of having a permanent team of three or four highly specialised developers dedicated to IOMS development and maintenance. The document STF-211/2023 "Proposed Commission budget for IOMS 2024-2025)", submitted by WG-ORT Chair, addresses this concern.

2023 intersessional tasks

In addition to the various IOMS enhancements (Table 3 of COC_302/2023) adopted by the WG-ORT together with the ICCAT Secretariat, the WG also agreed to continue to work intersessionally on the following tasks (during 2023 and until the next WG-ORT intersessional meeting, planned for Feb/2024):

a)   Review and approve[1] updated user roles and rights (especially for the Vessel Manager module and flag States).
b)   Review and approve[1] modifications to the workplan.
c)   Review and adopt February 2023 meeting report.
d)   ICCAT Secretariat to review the possibility of using annual report module to complete shark and Billfish Check sheet at an earlier date (before the next WG-ORT intersessional meeting).
e)   Plan and participate in Vessel Manager module training and testing (planned October 5, 2023)
f)   Draft and approve budget increase request to present to COC and STACFAD in 2023 (in advance of 90 days deadline/June 2023).
g)   ICCAT Secretariat to continue the study potentially redundant reporting requirements with the aim of developing a strategic plan to eliminate such redundancies (show progress at next meeting).
h)   Review and provide feedback on the standard responses of the annual report (31 July 2023 with assistance from the Chair of the Compliance Committee).
i)   ICCAT Secretariat to continue developing the ability for IOMS users to export all Annual Reports for a given year (prior to 15 September 2023).

These tasks have progressed as planned and with no major adjustments. Specifically, tasks a-c, e, f, and i are considered complete at the time of the 2023 Annual Meeting.

IOMS training sessions

The WG-ORT agreed to hold a unique IOMS training session in 2023 (held online on 16 October 2023) exclusively dedicated to the Vessel Manager module so that the CPCs could initiate testing of this important module. More than 70 participants from 32 CPCs as well as ICCAT Officers participated in the training sessions. Additional training sessions are planned for the vessel manager module due to its complexity.

To facilitate the planning of the 2024 Commission meetings calendar, the WG-ORT has planned in advance two additional training sessions in 2024. The exact dates will be agreed at the next intersessional WG-ORT meeting.

Complementary support was given to the IOMS users of several CPCs during 2023 following requests to the Secretariat for individual sessions. The ICCAT Secretariat recalled that this complementary user support modality will be maintained in the future and that recorded trainings remain available for CPCs to review.

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[1] Approval was undertaken as part of the adoption of the 2023 WG-ORT meeting report.

2023 Annual reporting

The ICCAT IOMS has been in production since 1 August 2021, with the annual report module (Part I/Annex 1 and Part II/Section 3) available online for the last three years. The submission of annual reports via IOMS for 2021 (experimental year) and 2022 (recommended for online completion) served mostly for training purposes, whereas submission of the annual report (Part I/Annex 1 and Part II/Section 3) via IOMS was a requirement in 2023 (paragraph 2 of Rec. 22-17).

A summary of statistical indicators regarding submission of annual reports via online completion (IOMS, as of 2023-11-04) for the years 2021, 2022 and 2023 are presented in **Table 1**. The indicators of 2021 and 2022 annual reports (IOMS probation years) were included for comparative purposes. In 2023, a total of 46 CPCs (41 Contracting Parties; 5 Cooperating non-Contracting Parties) used the IOMS (81% of the 57 CPCs) and completed the two sections (P1A1: Part 1/Annex 1; PA2S3: Part 2 /Section 3) of the 2023 Annual Reports via the online interface. There are, however, some CPCs that have yet to complete one or both sections of the 2023 annual report via the IOMS (P1A1: 11 CPCs; P2S3: 14 CPCs). Among all CPC that used IOMS, the number of CPCs requesting the Secretariat support to complete the two sections of the annual report decreased across 2021 and 2023 for both sections of the annual report (P1A1: 42% in 2021, 28% in 2022, 5% in 2023; P2S3: 42% in 2021, 23% in 2022, 2% in 2023). This trend likely indicates an increasing gain of autonomy on the utilization of the IOMS by the CPCs users, reflecting the reasonable investment and success of the IOMS user support policy over the last two years.

In line with paragraph 1 of Rec. 22-17, all the ICCAT CPCs have at least one IOMS users registered as of the 2023 Annual Meeting. This achievement was possible further to the recommendation of the WG-ORT for the ICCAT Secretariat to work together with WG-ORT Chair to contact urgently the CPCs without users registered in the IOMS. These statistics are also available to the IOMS registered users (both CPC roles: administrators and officers) in the IOMS online portal (https://ioms.iccat.int).

Part II, Section 5 of the 2023 Annual Report invited CPCs to inform the Commission of primary difficulties encountered in the implementation of and compliance with ICCAT conservation and management measures. No CPCs reported difficulties in using IOMS in this section (see COC_311/2023 for further details).

2024 and beyond

In order to continue the WG-ORT's progress in reducing the burden associated with ICCAT reporting requirements for both the Secretariat and the CPCs and to increase access to valuable information, the WG-ORT requests to meet virtually during the 2024 intersessional period to continue its work on Phases 3 and 4. The WG-ORT also supports the previously agreed additional IOMS training session(s) to take place in 2024.

Table 1. Number of annual reports (and relative ratios) in the IOMS for 2021, 2022, and 2023, by section, completion status, and completion mode (with/without Secretariat support). Values in "red" indicate the number of pending sections that have to be completed by various CPCs in the future.

Indicator	Section	Completion status	Party type	Year of annual report / Secretariat support [Yes/No])											
				2021				2022				2023			
				No	Yes	pending	Total	No	Yes	pending	Total	No	Yes	pending	Total
Number of annual reports	Compliance (P2S3: Part 2/Section 3)	complete	CP	18	19		37	32	10		42	37	1		38
			NCC	1	3		4	5			5	5			5
		incomplete	CP	3	2	10	15	1	3	6	10			14	14
			NCC			1	1								
	Total			22	24	11	57	38	13	6	57	42	1	14	57
	Statistical (P1A1: Part 1/annex 1)	complete	CP	17	21		38	32	10		42	36	1		37
			NCC	2	2		4	5			5	5			5
		incomplete	CP	4	1	9	14	1	6	3	10	2	2	11	15
			NCC			1	1								
	Total			23	24	10	57	38	16	3	57	43	3	11	57
Ratio (%)	Compliance (P2S3: Part 2/Section 3)	complete	CP	32%	33%		65%	56%	18%		74%	65%	2%		67%
			NCC	2%	5%		7%	9%			9%	9%			9%
		incomplete	CP	5%	4%	18%	26%	2%	5%	11%	18%			25%	25%
			NCC			2%	2%								
	Total			39%	42%	19%	100%	67%	23%	11%	100%	74%	2%	25%	100%
	Statistical (P1A1: Part 1/annex 1)	complete	CP	30%	37%		67%	56%	18%		74%	63%	2%		65%
			NCC	4%	4%		7%	9%			9%	9%			9%
		incomplete	CP	7%	2%	16%	25%	2%	11%	5%	18%	4%	4%	19%	26%
			NCC			2%	2%								
	Total			40%	42%	18%	100%	67%	28%	5%	100%	75%	5%	19%	100%

IOMS revised workplan (2023), covering the ongoing and future development phases

Phase start	Priority	Module / Task	Description	Data requirements	Dev. Status	Date start	Date end	Phase end	Budget	Remarks
1	1	Module	IOMS core/database	n/a	COMPLETE	2019-06-01	2021-08-01	2	COM-18	
1	2	Module	IOMS annual report (Part II/Section 3, Part I/Annex 1)	S:GEN01, M:GEN01	COMPLETE	2019-06-01	2021-08-01	2	COM-18	
1	3	Task	IOMS in production		COMPLETE	2019-06-01	2021-08-01	2	COM-18	
1	1	Task	Training/workshop sessions (Phase 1)		COMPLETE	2022-04-28	2022-09-01	2	COM-18	Two sessions (4 hours each)
1	1	Task	Maintenance (including improvements & error fixing)		Ongoing	2019-06-01	n/a	n/a	COM-18	Continuous task (maintenance)
2	1	Module	Dynamic Help system (module)	n/a	COMPLETE	2021-03-31	2022-03-31	2	**CPC (EU)**	EU voluntary contributions (2021, 2022)
2	1	Task	Adjustments to the new roles definition	n/a	COMPLETE	2022-02-15	2022-03-15	2	COM-19	Adopted by WG-ORT 2022
2	1	Module	ICCAT Vessel Manager	Up to 21 data requirements (Vessel registration, 11 authorisation lists, carriers, chartering arrangements, transhipment authorizations, previous year activity)	Ongoing	2021-03-01	2023-10-31	3	COM-19 & **CPC (EU)**	Development extended to Phase 3 (10 additional months) jointly with UN/FLUX integration. Partially covered by EU voluntary contributions (2021, 2022, 2023)
2	1	Task	UN/FLUX integration into Vessel Manager	All requirements of Vessel registration and authorizations (11 lists)	Ongoing	2022-04-01	2023-11-30	3	**CPC (EU)**	EU voluntary contributions (2021, 2022, 2023)
2	2	Module	Enhancements to Dynamic Help system (generalization)	n/a	Ongoing	2022-04-01	2023-03-31	3	**CPC (EU)**	Near completion (final tests)
2	1	Task	Vessels training/workshop session(s)	n/a	Planned	2023-10-05	2023-10-05	3	COM-19	IOMS users preliminary tests on Vessel module (1 session)
3	1	Module	Form Manager	Module to upload and manage all ICCAT forms (ST, CP, TG)	Planned	2023-07-01	2023-12-31	3	COM-21	**Start & end dates: estimates**
3	2	Module	Port Manager	M:BFT21, M:SWO10	Planned	2024-01-01	2024-05-31	3	COM-21	**Start & end dates: estimates**
3	1	Task	Form manager & Port manager training/workshop sessions	n/a	Planned	TBD	TBD	3	COM-21	To decide of 1 session each
3	1	Module	Shark/Billfish Check Sheets Manager	M:SHK05, M:BIL01	Planned	2024-05-01	TBD	4	COM-21	To study the possibilities of re-using AR module code / Start date may change
3	1	Task	Shark/Billfish Check Sheets training/workshop sessions	n/a	Planned	TBD	TBD	3	COM-21	
4	1	Module	T1NC (Task 1 nominal catches) Manager	S:GEN03	Planned	2024-06-30	TBD		COM-23	Start date may change (pending study on time required)
4	2	Module	Compliance tables (COCT) Manager	M:GEN03	Planned	2024-06-30	TBD		COM-23	Start date may change (pending study on time required)
4	1	Task	T1NC/COCT training/workshop sessions	n/a	Planned	TBD	TBD		COM-23	
4	1	Task	Improvements and error fixing	n/a	Planned	TBD	TBD		COM-23	
5	1	Module	SDP programs (SWO, BET)	M:TRO06, M:SWO01	Planned				COM-23	
5	2	Module	Bluefin tuna (BFT) weekly and monthly reports Manager	M:BFT22, M:BFT23, M:TRO14 weekly BET	Planned				COM-23	
5	3	Module	Task 2 - Catch and effort	S:GEN04	Planned				COM-23	
5	1	Task	Improvements and error fixing		Planned				COM-23	

* Preliminary dates (tentative) for ongoing (Date End) and future (Date Start/Data End) activities.