

4.4 REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP MEETING ON SPORT AND RECREATIONAL FISHERIES (Recife, Brazil – November 6, 2009)

1. Opening of the Meeting

The meeting was opened by the Commission Chairman, Dr. Fabio Hazin, who welcomed the participants and stressed the important nature of this meeting which is held for the first time in accordance with *Resolution by ICCAT to Establish a Working Group on Sport and Recreational Fisheries* [Res. 06-17].

2. Election of the Chairman

Mr. Abdou Got Diouf (Senegal) was elected as Chairman of the Working Group on sport and recreational fisheries.

3. Designation of the rapporteur

Mr. Jonathan Lemeunier (European Community) was designated as rapporteur.

The Agenda was adopted with no changes and is attached as **Appendix1 to ANNEX 4.4**.

4. Review of the biological and economic impact of the sport and recreational activities on the stocks under ICCAT mandate and assessment of the level of catches.

Dr. Gerry Scott, SCRS Chairman, conducted a presentation on the information currently available on data regarding sport and recreational fisheries which is currently available. Dr. Scott indicated that there did not exist an official definition of these fisheries prior to 2006, catches were declared by gear categories which did not indicate whether there was intention to trade. At present, the data collection is being carried out following two categories of activities: a rod and reel (RR) category and a “*sport*” (SP) category. Furthermore, Dr. Scott stated that from the available data it is impossible to distinguish the catches which have been taken by fishermen carrying a sport or recreational fishing license or adhering to a sport organization. Moreover, some catches carried out with rod and reel are commercialized and thus the collection of data by gear does not probably adjust to the definitions of sport and recreational fisheries as stated in Recommendation 08-05 as non-commercial fisheries.

A survey which started in 1997 and which was updated in 2007 by the SCRS identified the type of sport and recreational fisheries by CPC and by species managed by ICCAT. It seems that some CPCs have not collected or declared these fishery statistics to ICCAT during all the years of the survey and for all the species. Some CPCs do not have mechanisms or infrastructures to collect reliable data on sport and recreational fisheries. In general, the Task I data show a decline of total catches for all species and flags in recent years (from 17,500 t in 2004 to 6,000 t in 2008). This decline could be a result of the reduction in fishing mortality associated with some fisheries where there is a satisfactory level of transmittal including in particular, a decline of rod and reel catch landings, but also due to the lack of programs adapted for the collection of data in some States.

The Working Group agreed on the important nature of sport and recreational fisheries in socio-economic terms and on the need to substantially improve the knowledge of these fisheries for an improved assessment of their potential impact on the stock species under ICCAT mandate. It was recognized that at present it is difficult to calculate this impact considering the limited data transmitted to ICCAT. Thus, a consensus was reached on the urgent need to make all the reliable data available and define common methodologies for the collection of these data: the collection models developed by the CPCs with significant experience regarding the management of sport and recreational fisheries could also serve as guidelines. Moreover, it was stated that the implementation of tagging and sampling programs, including studies of post-mortality release, could provide valuable additional information for scientific assessment of the impact of these fisheries.

Sport and recreational fisheries Associations (CIPS, IGFA) intervened during the meeting of the Working Group and presented some specific proposals as well as their concerns. Underlining the socio-economic importance of

this type of fishery, the Associations recognized the need to proceed with the collection of data and expressed their will and intention to collaborate to this end.

5. Identification of management approaches of sport and recreational activities in ICCAT fisheries

The Working Group recognized that the concepts on sport and recreational fisheries comprise very different activities: thus, the Working Group considered that currently one of the main objectives is to work with the aim of developing of a common definition at ICCAT level allowing the encompassing of all these realities. The discussions mainly focused on the non commercial nature of these fisheries which could be a main criterion of this definition. In response to a proposal and with the information of CPCs that participated in the Working Group, the Secretariat distributed a document comprising the different definitions that currently exist at the level of FAO, ICCAT (Rec. 08-05), the European Community and other authorities (see **Appendix 2 to ANNEX 4.4**). This document will serve as a basis for consideration by ICCAT with the aim of reaching a common definition of sport and recreational fisheries. It was recognized that this list of definitions was not exhaustive and could be completed with additional definition proposals.

Later, the CPCs presented their internal mechanisms for the management, control and monitoring of their sport and recreational fisheries: thus it is shown that the levels of management, control and monitoring of these fisheries could be very different according to the States and that it is globally necessary to significantly strengthen the management mechanisms applicable in this field. It was also recognized that some CPCs (in particular United States) have more experience in this field from which other CPCs could benefit when developing standardized management, control and monitoring measures. In this regard, some CPCs have requested assistance from ICCAT and its members which would enable them to improve the organization of the management and monitoring of their sport and recreational fisheries.

In general, the Working Group considered under ICCAT's mandate it can establish certain rules and guidelines regarding the management of sport and recreational fisheries for the species contemplated by the Convention, which does not exclude in any form the actual competences of the CPCs to adopt at internal level specific mechanisms adapted to the context and national fisheries. In this regard, it was stressed that it should be established that all CPCs must notify their complete information to ICCAT on the implementation of national mechanisms. One of the main objectives of the Working Group is to guarantee that the CPCs establish an appropriate monitoring of their sport and recreational fisheries activities.

6. Review of the recommendations focused on the next procedures to be carried out to manage the sport and recreational fisheries activities in the Convention Area.

On the basis of the discussions that were maintained during the first meeting, the Working Group on sport and recreational fisheries proposed a work plan to the ICCAT Commission in accordance with the guidelines below:

- The Working Group recommends the Commission to request all CPCs to submit detailed, complete and reliable data on their sport and recreational fisheries for all species under the ICCAT mandate, including estimates of post-release mortality, where available.
- To aim to establish a framework for the presentation of these data, during its 2010 meeting, the Commission should define common methodologies for the collection of data, based on a proposal of the SCRS and including, in particular, the data from sampling, tagging and counting programs.
- During its 2010 meeting, the Commission should also work to develop a common definition of sport and recreational fisheries on the basis of the attached document (**Annex 2**) and complementary definition proposals which could be presented by the CPCs, considering the criteria related to the non commercial nature of these fisheries.
- Prior to June 30, 2010, all CPCs will provide a report describing their sport and recreational fisheries and detailing the mechanisms implemented by CPCs at national level aimed at managing, controlling and monitoring these fisheries.
- During the 2010 meeting, the Commission will review the different measures that could be adopted at ICCAT level regarding management, control and monitoring.

It was also recommended that the Working Group continue to work during the inter-sessional period to prepare the Commission's work during its 2010 meeting. The work carried out during the inter-sessional period will be

supported by a think tank Group, composed of CPCs that have advanced experience regarding the management of sport and recreational fisheries (in particular Canada, European Community and United States) and other CPCs interested, as well as observer organizations (in particular CIPS and IGFA).

7. Other matters

No other matters were discussed.

8. Adoption of the report

The report was adopted by the ICCAT Commission during its 2009 plenary session.

9. Closure

After discussing all the items of the Agenda, the Chairman of the Working Group on sport and recreational fisheries thanked all the delegations of CPCs for their active participation and the first meeting of the Working Group was adjourned.

Appendix 1 to ANNEX 4.4

Agenda

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Election of Chair
3. Nomination of Rapporteur
4. Examination of the biological and economic impact of recreational and sport fishing activities on ICCAT managed stocks and assessment of the level of harvest.
5. Identification of approaches for managing the recreational and sport fishing activities in ICCAT fisheries.
6. Consideration of recommendations for next steps to manage the recreational and sport fishing activities in the Convention area.
7. Other matters
8. Adoption of the Report
9. Adjournment

Appendix 2 to ANNEX 4.4

Definitions of Sport and Recreational Fisheries

1. From Rec. [08-05]:
 - "Sport fishery" means a non-commercial fishery whose members adhere to a national sport organization or are issued with a national sport license.
 - "Recreational fishery" means a non-commercial fishery whose members do not adhere to a national sport organization or are not issued with a national sport license.
2. From: FAO Studies and Reviews No. 81 (2007) "*Recreational Fisheries in The Mediterranean Countries: A Review of Existing Legal Frameworks*"

In general, recreational fisheries can be defined as a non-commercial (i.e. not for sale, barter, or trade) subset of capture/harvest fisheries; motivated by catching fish for fun, pleasure, or sport.¹⁰ More formally, Cacaud (2005) defined recreational fisheries as "all types of fishing activities including sport fishing activities undertaken by any individual, with or without a boat, for leisure purposes, and does not involve the selling of

fish or other aquatic organisms”. This definition further assumes that RF activities are not motivated by a dependence on fish for food. Within this broad definition, one may further categorize recreational fisheries into amateur, tourism, and sport/competition recreational fishing; each having their own associated goals and defined as follows:

Amateur fishing,¹ for the purposes of this review, is defined as unorganized hobby fishing.

Unorganized in the sense that it is not associated with specific events or competitions. Catches from amateur fishing are either released (catch & release) or are retained for private consumption.

*Sport fishing*² is described as “an organized activity involving free competition between fishermen to catch the largest fish of certain species, the largest number of specimens or the largest total weight depending on the rules of each particular competition” (SFITUM, 2004).

Tourism fishing can be understood as a fishing activity carried out by a third party who organizes a fishing expedition for tourists. Tourism fishing can be conducted by commercial fishermen (*pescaturismo*) or by recreational fishing professionals (“charter”); one main difference being the type of the boat used (commercial fishing boat vs. leisure boat). The aim of charter fishing is mainly to fish; whereas, with the concept of *pescaturismo*, the purpose is not only fishing but also to practice snorkelling, to eat on board fish cooked in a traditional way and just enjoy a day on a boat in middle of the sea. Legislation will differ for each segment of tourism fishing.

3. From FAO Glossary of Fisheries Terms

Recreational Fisheries: Harvesting fish for personal use, fun, and challenge (e.g. as opposed to profit or research). Recreational fishing does not include sale, barter or trade of all or part of the catch.

4. From the Senegalese Sports Fisheries Federation (FIPS)

- In general and according to FIPS basic texts (regulations), sport fisheries is understood as the catch or the attempt to catch a fish, at the surface or in deep waters with the aid of a rod, reel, fishing line or hook. This aimed at an achievement which is based on international regulations for sea or fresh water fishing.
- Some specialists define sport fisheries as being a non-commercial fishing activity, with various objectives, including tournaments, sport, recreation, exploitation and relaxation. Likewise, CIPS prefers to refer to the term sport fisheries when referring to recreational angling. Recreational fishing can also be defined as the fishing activity which is mainly carried out for sport purposes with a second objective to catch fish for consumption.

We can therefore regroup together the definitions (recreational fishing, sport fishing and leisure fishing) under sport fisheries. By this term, we understand all the angling activities carried out for recreational, enjoyment or sport purposes, without the main objective for commercialization.

5. From the European Community

Recreational Fisheries means a non-commercial fishing activity exploiting marine living aquatic resources for recreation, tourism or sport.

¹ Amateur fishing is sometimes referred as recreational fisheries. For the purpose of this study we will understand as recreational fisheries, amateur fisheries, sport fisheries and tourism fisheries.

² Sport fishing is also referred to as tournament, competition and contest, and big-game fishing.