

**EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN (EAP) BY TUNISIA
ON PROTECTING THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF OBSERVERS
WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE ICCAT REGIONAL OBSERVERS PROGRAM**

This Emergency Action Plan (EAP) intends to establish the operational procedures of operators/captains of fishing vessels flying a Tunisian flag and embarking ICCAT regional observers. It is applied in cases of emergency at sea when the health and/or safety of observers is at risk.

In accordance with this emergency action plan, the above-mentioned operators and/or vessel captains, as well as the competent national services will ensure the following procedures:

1. General safety and welfare of Observers

In the event that there are reasonable grounds to believe an observer has been assaulted, intimidated, threatened, or harassed such that their health or safety is endangered and the observer or the ROP observer provider notifies the competent authority (Ministry of Agriculture, Hydraulic Resources and Fisheries) that they wish for the observer to be removed from the fishing vessel, the captain of the fishing vessel shall:

- immediately take action to preserve the safety of the observer and mitigate and resolve the situation on board,
- Notify the competent authority and the ROP observer provider of the situation as soon as possible, indicating in particular the status and location of the observer,
- cooperate fully in all official investigations regarding the incident.

In the event that there are reasonable grounds to believe that a ROP observer has been assaulted, intimidated, threatened, or harassed, but neither the observer nor the ROP observer provider wishes that the observer to be removed from the fishing vessel, the captain of the vessel shall:

- immediately take action to preserve the safety of the observer and mitigate and resolve the situation on board,
- notify the competent authority and the ROP observer provider of the situation as soon as possible,
- cooperate fully in all official investigations regarding the incident.

2. Emergency plan in case of illness or injury:

- immediately cease all fishing operations,
- immediately notify the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC Tunis/Bizerte/Sfax) to advise if a medical evacuation is warranted;
- take all reasonable actions to care for the observer and provide any medical treatment available and possible on board the vessel,
- notify the competent authority and the ROP observer provider of the situation as soon as possible,
- facilitate, where necessary, the disembarkation and transport of the observer to a medical facility equipped to provide the required care as soon as practicable,
- cooperate fully in all official investigations into the cause of the illness or injury.

3. Emergency plan in the event of missing at sea

- immediately cease all fishing operations,
- immediately notify the Maritime Rescue Coordination Center (MRCC Tunis/Bizerte/Sfax), the competent authority, and the ROP observer provider;
- immediately commence search and rescue of the observer and cooperate fully in all investigation and rescue operations,
- immediately alert other vessels in the vicinity by using all available means of communication,
- promptly return to the nearest port for further investigation,
- promptly provide a report on the incident to the observer provider and competent authority,

- cooperate fully in all official investigations and preserve any potential evidence and the personal effects of the observer.

4. Emergency plan in the event of death at sea

In the event of death of an ICCAT regional observer while deployed, the operator shall immediately notify the competent services by using all the available means, such as:

- *In the event of death at sea:*
 - The centre of Maritime Rescue Coordination Center (MRCC Tunis-Bizerte-Sfax).
 - Competent Authority
- *In the event of death ashore:*
 - The territorially competent legal service.
 - Competent Authority.

A legal investigation will be initiated immediately by the competent services and the captain and the vessel operator concerned must facilitate the access of all the information considered useful for the investigation process. To this end, the body of the observer will be properly conserved for the purposes of the autopsy.

5. Notifying the stakeholders

In the above-mentioned cases in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4, the competent authority shall:

- investigate the event based on the information provided by the ROP service provider and take any appropriate action in response to the results of the investigation,
- cooperate fully in any investigation conducted by the observer provider, in particular, providing the report of the incident to the ROP observer provider and stakeholders concerned,
- promptly notify the ROP service provider and the ICCAT Secretariat the results of its investigation, as well as any measures taken.