

1. Objectives and rationale

Annual National Reports provide a mechanism for the provision to ICCAT of relevant information on the tuna-related activities of contracting parties during the preceding year. As such, they have formed an increasingly important source of information on national fishing, research and management efforts, for consideration by the Commission, the SCRS, the Species Panels, the Infractions Committee and the Working Groups. As the scope of interests, and the resultant information requirements, of these various sub-committees has grown, so the National Reports have increased in volume and complexity.

Initial attempts have been made by the SCRS and the Infractions Committee to provide informal guidelines for the information content of National Reports. However, the wide diversity in content and format of National Reports received to date has complicated efforts to extract specific information required by the various sub-committees. As a result, much of the information content has often not been directly considered by these committees. In particular, the diversity in National Report formats has prevented the ICCAT Secretariat from using them as a source of formal notification of matters of importance to the Commission. The following formalized National Report requirements are proposed to resolve some of these problems and to optimize the value of these reports to ICCAT.

2. Format of National Reports

In order to standardize the information provided, facilitate the extraction of specific information for particular sub-committees and minimize the amount of copying necessary to provide information to sub-committees, annual National Reports should adhere to the following format requirements, as determined and agreed to by the Commission.

2.1 General National Report requirements

All ICCAT contracting parties should be required to submit an annual National Report to the Commission, providing information on their tuna-related fishing activities, research activities and fisheries management efforts during the preceding year. These reports should adhere to the following general requirements:

- National Reports should be submitted to the ICCAT Secretariat at least one month before the start of the annual Regular or Special Commission Meeting. Where the meeting of the SCRS is held some time before the Commission meeting, such reports may be submitted at the start of the SCRS meeting, provided sufficient copies are submitted for circulation to all participants. Where the Secretariat is required to make the necessary copies, reports should be submitted one month before the start of the SCRS meeting. The exact submission dates and required number of copies should be annually determined by the Secretariat and timeously circulated to contracting parties.
- The main body of National Reports should be concise, and detailed additional information should be presented in appendices to the report. Where possible, clear tables and figures should be used to summarize and clarify information presented in National Reports.
- The main body of annual National Reports should not exceed 8 pages in length (two A4 pages per section), except that, where multiple fisheries are being reported on, reports could extend to 20 pages in length. The length of appendices should be unlimited.
- Where possible, contracting parties should provide the Secretariat with the text of their National Reports in electronic form, in a format to be determined by the Secretariat.

2.2 Report Sections

National Reports should contain specific, separate sections on fisheries, research, management and inspection activities, and may optionally include appendices containing additional information pertinent to these sections. Information presented in National Reports should be divided into the relevant sections to facilitate the extraction and copying of particular information required by the Commission and sub-committees. The main report sections should be:

2.2.1 National Fisheries Information

This report section should provide summarized information on the total catches, effort, CPUE and size-frequency trends in tuna fisheries during the preceding year. Attention should be given to changes in fishing patterns or new developments in such fisheries, as well as socio-economic factors which influence or explain such changes and developments.

2.2.2 Research and Statistics

This report section should provide a description of the statistical data collection systems implemented to monitor tuna fisheries, with an indication of the degree of coverage of catch, effort and size data for fishing operations in local and distant waters. Attention should be given to problems, changes and improvements in such statistical systems and, where possible, the coverage of retained catches of target and by-catch species, and of discarded catches.

This section should also present summarized information on tuna-related research activities and results of particular interest to ICCAT. In particular, research related to stock delineation, stock assessment, migration and environmental factors should be reported on.

2.2.3 Implementation of ICCAT Conservation and Management Measures

This report section should report on steps taken to implement ICCAT recommended conservation and management measures. In particular, this section may provide for the formal notification of implementation of ICCAT measures by contracting parties, including the dates of such implementation. Details of such implementation, including texts of the relevant domestic legislation, can be included in the relevant appendix. Attention should be given to problems with the implementation of ICCAT conservation and management measures, and the effects of such measures on tuna fisheries.

This section should also provide for the reporting of efforts to implement ICCAT Statistical Document Programs, where applicable. Summarized information should be provided on steps taken to implement such systems, and the results achieved. Additional information may be provided on other trade monitoring systems implemented. However, details of data collected and detailed import and export information should be included in the relevant appendix.

2.2.4 Inspection Schemes and Activities

This report section should provide information on efforts undertaken to inspect own and other nation tuna fishing activities and catches. In particular, this section should be used to describe steps taken to implement and administer the ICCAT Port Inspection Scheme, and to summarize results obtained under this scheme. Details of inspectorate designations and inspection results should be presented in the relevant appendix, which should be considered to be formal notification of such results.

This section may also be used to present relevant summarized information on other inspection schemes participated in by contracting parties, including domestic inspection schemes.

2.2.5 Other Activities

This report section should be used to provide summarized information on other tuna fishery related activities not included in the previous sections, including observer programs implemented for tuna fisheries.

2.3 National Report Appendices

In addition to the main body of annual National Reports to be submitted to ICCAT, provisions should be made for appendices to such reports. The purpose of such appendices should be to provide a mechanism for providing detailed supplementary information to the main sections of the National Reports. As such, information contained in such appendices should be considered to have been formally transmitted to the ICCAT Secretariat, as will be the contents of the body of National Reports. However, such appendices should not be included in subsequent publication of National Reports in the annual reports of the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics or the ICCAT Commission. The ICCAT Secretariat should annually determine, in cooperation with the Chairmen of the SCRS and the Commission, to what extent such appendices should be copied for distribution to participants in the SCRS and Commission meetings.

Provision should be made for the following specific appendices to the various sections of the National Reports:

2.3.1 Research and Statistical Information

This appendix may be used to provide detailed supplementary information to the report section on research and statistics. In particular, this appendix may be used to provide more detailed information on:

- Catch, effort and CPUE data for tunas and tuna-like species caught by ICCAT contracting parties.
- Information on by-catches and discards of tunas, sharks and incidental species caught in tuna-directed fisheries.
- Size-frequency and morphometric conversion information for tuna species caught.
- Data substitutions, raising factors and procedures to be used for raising catches of contracting parties to catch-at-size.

2.3.2 Implementation of ICCAT Conservation and Management Measures

This appendix may be used to provide details of steps taken to implement ICCAT conservation and management measures. Whereas the, relevant section of the main body of the National Report should be used to provide formal notification and summary of implementation of ICCAT management measures, this appendix may provide more details of how such measures have been implemented. In particular, copies of domestic legislation promulgated to implement ICCAT measures may be provided. Additional information may also be provided on supplementary efforts directed at improving implementation of ICCAT conservation and management measures.

2.3.3 Tuna Trade Information

This appendix may be used to provide tuna trade information, particularly details of steps taken to implement ICCAT Statistical Document Programs and other systems for monitoring trade in tuna species. In particular, detailed information of quantities of tuna species imported or exported by various countries should be reported in this appendix.

2.3.4 Details and Results of Inspection Schemes

This appendix may be used to provide detailed information on the implementation and results of the ICCAT Port Inspection Scheme or other tuna fishery inspection schemes or observer programs implemented by ICCAT members. In particular, this appendix may contain information on:

- Steps taken to implement the ICCAT Port Inspection Scheme, including information on official respondents and names of appointed inspectors.
- Results of inspections conducted under the ICCAT Port Inspection Scheme, particularly showing details of any transgressions detected during such inspections.

- Relevant results of other inspection schemes conducted by contracting parties, particularly concerning problems detected with the implementation of, or compliance with, ICCAT recommended management measures by contracting and non-contracting parties.

2.3.5 Other Activities

This appendix may be used to provide detailed information on other tuna fishery related activities reported on in the relevant section of the main report. In particular, this appendix may be used to provide detailed results of observer programs implemented for tuna fisheries.