

**RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT SUPPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATION OF AN
ELECTRONIC BLUEFIN TUNA CATCH DOCUMENT (eBCD) PROGRAMME**

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the multi-annual recovery plan for eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna and the commitment to develop an electronic bluefin tuna catch document (eBCD) programme;

RECOGNIZING the developments in electronic information exchange and the benefits of rapid communication with regard to the processing and management of catch information;

NOTING the ability of electronic catch documentation systems to detect fraud and deter IUU shipments, expedite the validation/verification process of bluefin tuna catch documents (BCDs), prevent erroneous information entry, reduce pragmatic workloads and create automated links between Parties including exporting and importing authorities;

RECOGNIZING the necessity to implement the eBCD programme to strengthen the implementation of the bluefin tuna catch documentation programme;

FOLLOWING the work of the eBCD Technical Working Group from 2011 to 2012 and the system design and cost estimates presented in the feasibility study; and

CONSIDERING the commitments previously made in *Recommendation by ICCAT Amending Recommendation 10-11 on an Electronic Bluefin Tuna Catch Document Programme (eBCD)* [Rec. 11-21] to seek “full implementation of the eBCD system before the 2013 purse seine season,” and recognizing that “a level of flexibility will be maintained based on the results of the pilot phase,” and given the progress in the on-going development of the eBCD system;

**THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION
OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) RECOMMENDS THAT:**

1. The eBCD system shall be fully completed and technically operational for all Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities (CPCs) by 16 May 2013.
2. During a transitional phase from 16 May 2013 to the end of February 2014, both eBCDs and existing paper BCDs shall be accepted. However, all paper-based BCDs validated after 16 May 2013 shall be submitted to the Secretariat in accordance with paragraph 19 of *Recommendation by ICCAT Amending Recommendation 09-11 on an ICCAT Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation Programme* [Rec. 11-20] and entered into the eBCD system by the Secretariat.
3. EBCDs will fully replace the paper-based BCDs by 1 March 2014.
4. The ICCAT Secretariat will submit to the Technical Working Group a Programme Manual and user group training plan for their review and endorsement by 1 March 2013. Any necessary revisions will be made by 1 October 2013, with the final version submitted to the Commission for consideration and adoption at the 2013 Annual Meeting.
5. CPCs are encouraged to communicate with the Secretariat on technical aspects of system implementation. CPCs shall report to the Permanent Working Group a summary of their experiences and suggestions before the 2013 Annual Meeting.
6. The Permanent Working Group will submit the eBCD programme to the Commission for formal consideration and adoption at the 2013 Annual Meeting.