

**RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT ON CONTINUING TO ENHANCE THE
DIALOGUE BETWEEN FISHERIES SCIENTISTS AND MANAGERS**

CONSIDERING scientific advice released by the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) as the cornerstone for establishing a proper management framework on stocks and fisheries under the purview of ICCAT;

RECOGNIZING that an in depth understanding by the Commission of scientific advice and management recommendations made by the SCRS should ease the adoption by the Commission of relevant and effective conservation measures;

NOTING that the *Resolution by ICCAT on best available science* (Res. 11-17) recommends improving the communication between CPCs, the Commission, and the SCRS by enabling a constant dialogue;

RECALLING the work in the Working Group of Fisheries Managers and Scientists held in June 2013 in support of the BFT-W stock assessment;

HIGHLIGHTING the need to further enhance the dialogue between fisheries managers and scientists in the coming years in order to achieve the Convention objectives in the most efficient and effective way;

STRESSING that such enhanced dialogue should, in particular, allow the Commission to focus on the establishment of management frameworks that take into account Target and Limit Reference points, associated level of risks and related Harvest Control Rules consistent with Recommendation 11-13;

STRESSING FURTHERMORE that such enhanced dialogue should also allow the Commission to review and provide input to the SCRS on the establishment of research priorities, considering more particularly the development of the Strategic Plan on Science, and to explore further improvements in ICCAT science and management processes;

RECALLING that provisions laid down in Recommendation 11-26 establishing a Meeting Participation Fund should ease the attendance of fisheries scientist and managers from developing Contracting Parties and therefore contribute to an inclusive and participative dialogue;

EMPHASIZING that the Commission management decisions should be based on the best available science independently developed by the SCRS;

RECOGNIZING that the first meeting of the Standing Working Group for Enhancing the Dialogue between Fisheries Scientists and Managers (SWGSM) was an important step to facilitate the dialogue between scientists and managers;

NOTING that the SCRS and the Commission strongly supports the continuation of this initiative;

FURTHER NOTING that that development of harvest control rules and application of the management strategy evaluation to ICCAT fisheries is dependent upon input and guidance from fishery managers;

RECALLING the review of the SCRS Science Strategic Plan for 2015-2020;

RECOGNIZING the work of the SCRS Workshop held in March 2024 aimed at the preparation of the SCRS Science Strategic Plan for 2026-2031;

RECALLING the *Resolution by ICCAT on Climate Change* (Res. 22-13), the *Resolution by ICCAT on next steps of the Joint Expert Group on Climate Change in 2024* (Res. 23-19), and conversations at the Joint Experts' Meetings in 2023 and 2024 that emphasized the need for close communication and coordination between the Commission and SCRS on matters related to Climate Change;

FURTHER RECALLING the *Resolution by ICCAT on the implementation of biodiversity conservation instruments* (Res. 23-23);

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

1. A Standing Working Group on Dialogue between Fisheries Scientists and Managers (SWGSM) is established under the following objectives and rules.
2. The objective of the SWGSM is to enhance communication and foster mutual understanding between fisheries managers and scientists by establishing a forum to exchange views and to support the development and effective implementation of management measures and scientific work related to cross-cutting issues including, inter alia:
 - prioritization of the work of the SCRS, including efficient use of resources, the development of the SCRS annual work programme and the SCRS Science Strategic Plan,
 - the development of management strategies,
 - the implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management,
 - the inclusion of Climate Change related issues in ICCAT's work, and
 - consideration of broader developments related to biodiversity conservation.

The SWGSM shall, as necessary, make recommendations to the Commission and provide feedback to the SCRS.

3. The SWGSM shall carry out this work through, inter alia:
 - a. improving managers and scientists' mutual understanding of concepts related to management strategies, including:
 - i. the adoption of Limit and Target Reference Points (LRPs and TRPs);
 - ii. the development of Harvest Control Rules (HCRs);
 - iii. the application of Management Strategies Evaluation (MSE);
 - b. promoting an efficient use of scientific resources;
 - c. identifying SCRS research priorities, taking into consideration the needs of the Commission, in particular in relation to the SCRS annual work programmes and the SCRS Science Strategic Plan;
 - d. identifying opportunities / approaches that would enhance available data relevant to ICCAT's work;
 - e. identifying possible social and economic research topics;
 - f. reviewing ICCAT's Plan of Action on Climate Change and the tracking of its implementation.
4. The SWGSM shall elect its own co-chairs, which shall consist of a fishery manager from the Commission and a scientist from the SCRS.
5. The SWGSM shall meet intersessionally and its meetings shall be open to fisheries managers of Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities and Fishing entities (CPCs), SCRS scientists and accredited observers. Fishery managers of the CPCs and fishery scientists of the SCRS shall be considered on an equal footing during the standing working group meetings. Other experts may be invited to specific meetings of the standing working group depending on the topics to be discussed.
6. The structure of the meetings shall include an open forum/dialogue. Recommendations to the Commission shall be developed through formal sessions of the SWGSM, which should ensure a balanced presence and an active participation of scientists and managers.
7. The SWGSM shall develop a workplan and periodically update it, as necessary. Taking into account this workplan, the Commission shall develop a schedule for future meetings of the SWGSM.
8. This Recommendation repeals and replaces the *Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation by ICCAT for enhancing the dialogue between fisheries scientists and managers* (Rec. 14-13).