




MESSAGE FROM THE ICCAT EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

The ICCAT Secretariat has the pleasure to present its readers with **ICCAT Newsletter No. 11**, informing of the latest events and activities of our Organization.

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RECENT MEETINGS

 **2009 Meeting of the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS).**



The SCRS held a meeting on October 5-9, 2009 in Madrid, Spain. The report of the meeting will be included in the ICCAT Biennials and will be published in February 2010. The electronic version is currently available from the ICCAT web site.

The SCRS carried out stock assessments in 2009 on north Atlantic albacore, Eastern and Western Atlantic sailfish, north and south Atlantic swordfish, as well as a joint assessment with CITES on Atlantic shortfin mako sharks.

The Sub-Committee on Ecosystems finished the seabird assessment. The Assessment Group on Methods made progress as regards the CPUE standardization. The Tropical Species Group assessed the impact of different time/area closure alternatives in the Gulf of Guinea.

 **2009 Working Group meeting on Sport and Recreational Fisheries.**



(Image courtesy of Southeast Fisheries Science Center)

First meeting of this group established in accordance with the provisions of *Resolution by ICCAT to Establish a Working Group on Sport and Recreational Fisheries* [Res. 06-17]. The meeting was held on November 6 in Recife (Brazil).



21st Regular Meeting of the Commission



The 21st Regular Meeting of the Commission was held in Recife (Brazil) from November 9 to 15, 2009. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Fabio Hazin. The excellent work of the Brazilian government and the city of Recife guaranteed the success of the meeting.

Eleven Recommendations and one Resolution were adopted by the Commission at its 21st Regular Meeting:

Recommendation by ICCAT to Amend the Recommendation by ICCAT on a Multi/year Conservation and Management Program for Bigeye Tuna [Rec. 09-01].

Supplemental Recommendation by ICCAT to Amend the Rebuilding Program for North Atlantic Swordfish [Rec.09-02].

Recommendation by ICCAT on South Atlantic Swordfish Catch Limits [Rec. 09-03].

Recommendation by ICCAT for a Management Framework for the Sustainable Exploitation of Mediterranean Swordfish and Replacing ICCAT Recommendation 08-03 [Rec. 09-04].

Recommendation by ICCAT to Establish a Rebuilding Program on North Atlantic Albacore [Rec. 09-05].

Recommendation by ICCAT Amending Recommendation 08-05 to Establish a Multiannual Recovery Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean [Rec. 09-06].

Recommendation by ICCAT on the Conservation of Thresher Sharks caught in Association with Fisheries in the ICCAT Convention Area [Rec. 09-07].

Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning the Establishment of an ICCAT Record of Vessels 20 Meters in Length Overall or Greater Authorized to Operate in the Convention Area [Rec. 09-08].

Recommendation by ICCAT Amending Three Recommendations in Conformity with the 2009 Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning the Establishment of an ICCAT Record of Vessels 20 Meters in Length Overall or Greater Authorized to Operate in the Convention Area [Rec. 09-09].

Recommendation by ICCAT Further Amending the Recommendation by ICCAT to Establish a List of Vessels Presumed to have Carried out Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing Activities in the ICCAT Convention Area [Rec. 09-10].

Recommendation by ICCAT Amending Recommendation 08-12 on an ICCAT Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation Program [Rec. 09-01].

Resolution by ICCAT for the Pilot Application of the Kobe 2 Decision Matrix [Res. 09-12].

The Recommendations should enter into force on June 1, 2010.

The full texts of the Recommendations and Resolutions are available on the ICCAT web page: www.iccat.int.

During the Meeting, Dr. Fabio Hazin, was reelected ICCAT Chairman for a second mandate. The Commission also elected the following:

- First Vice Chairman: Mrs. Z. Driouich.
- Second Vice Chairman: Mr. P. N. Keita.
- Chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance and Administration (STACFAD): Ms. S. Lapointe.
- Chairman of the ICCAT Conservation and Management Measures Compliance Committee (COC): Mr. C. Rogers.
- Chairman of the Permanent Working Group for the Standing Committee for the Improvement of ICCAT Statistics and Conservation Measures (GTP): Mr. A. Share.

CALENDER OF EVENTS, 2010

A considerable number of SCRS meetings and to a lesser extent, Commission meetings are scheduled for 2010.

Below is a list of the meetings scheduled up to the distribution of the next issue of the Newsletter which will be published in September.

February

- 6th Working Group Meeting on Integrated Monitoring Measures, February 22-23, Madrid, Spain. Issues related to observer and inspection programs, amongst other, will be discussed at the meeting.
- Compliance Committee Intersessional Meetings, February 24-26, Madrid, Spain. The main objective of the meeting is to assess the compliance of obligations by the Contracting Parties as members of ICCAT and, in particular, Recommendations 08-05.

April

- ICCAT Working Group on Stock Assessment Methods, April 21-23, Madrid, Spain. One of this Group's primary objectives is to consider the request proposed in the 2009 Meeting of the Working Group on the Future of ICCAT on the best way to reflect the precautionary approach in the Convention.
- Data Preparatory Meeting on Bigeye, April 26-30, Madrid, Spain. The meeting's objective is to prepare the necessary data for the Atlantic bigeye stock assessment.

May

- Data Preparatory Meeting on Billfish, May 17-21, Madrid, Spain. The meeting's objective is to prepare the necessary data for the Atlantic billfish stock assessment.
- Inter-sessional Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Ecosystems, May 31 to June 4, Madrid, Spain. The main objectives of the meeting are to make progress in the definition of the best observer coverage to obtain reliable by-catch estimations and develop indicators of the status of ecosystems, valuable for the SCRS.

June

- Data Preparatory Meeting on Bluefin Tuna, June 14-19, Madrid, Spain. The meeting's objective will be to prepare the necessary data for the assessment of bluefin tuna stocks.
- Mediterranean Swordfish Stock Assessment Session, June 28 to July 3, Madrid, Spain. During this session Mediterranean swordfish will be assessed.
- Data Preparatory Meeting on Mediterranean Albacore, June 28 to July 3, Madrid, Spain. The meeting's objective will be to prepare the available data on Mediterranean albacore aimed at preparing the first assessment of this stock.

July

- Atlantic Bigeye Stock Assessment Session, July 5-9, Madrid, Spain. During this session Atlantic bigeye will be assessed.

September

- Bluefin Stock Assessment Session, September 5-12, Madrid, Spain. During this session bluefin stocks will be assessed.

All information on meetings is available from the ICCAT web site.

Scientists who would like to present documents at the SCRS meetings can download the *Guidelines for Authors* from the ICCAT web site: (http://www.iccat.int/en/pubs_guidelines.htm).

Other events

A second meeting of the *Working Group on the Future of ICCAT* is scheduled to be held in Brasilia, Brazil. The dates of this meeting will be determined shortly.

In March 2010, the ICCAT Chairmen, the Chairman of Panel 2 and of the SCRS, as well as the Executive Secretary, shall participate in the CITES Meeting which shall be held in Doha, Qatar. The Agenda of the CITES meeting includes Monaco's proposal on bluefin tuna.

Likewise, the following RFMO Joint Workshops are scheduled:

- Meeting of experts to share best practices on the provision of scientific advice, which will be held in Barcelona, Spain, from May 31 to June 2.
- Workshops on the improvement, harmonization and compatibility of monitoring, control and surveillance measures, which includes the monitoring of catches from the catching vessels to the markets. This meeting will be held from June 3-5 in Barcelona (Spain).
- International Workshop on issues regarding the management of tuna RFMOs relating to by-catch, and to call on RFMOs to avoid duplication of work on this issue. This meeting will be held in Brisbane from June 23-26.
- International Workshop on RFMO management of tuna fisheries, with particular emphasis on the reduction of excess capacity. This meeting will be held in Brisbane from June 29 to July 1.

SECRETARIAT ACTIVITIES

The Secretariat has continued to support the activities of the SCRS and the Commission. In particular, during the second half of 2009, the Secretariat concentrated its efforts on the preparation of SCRS and Commission meetings. Part of the Secretariat's work included the preparation of documents which were presented at these meetings. As well as the traditional documents (reports on research and statistics, financial and compliance reports, etc.), the Secretariat prepared working documents to support the discussions.

Furthermore, in the second half of 2009, the ICCAT Secretariat has been represented in external meetings related to ICCAT's activities:

- *Meeting of CITES Standing Committee Working Group on Introduction from the Sea*, September 14-16, 2009, Geneva, Switzerland.
- *Meeting on the Development Strategy of Sea Fishing*, September 28-30, 2009, Agadir, Morocco.

ICCAT played an active role in the various meetings with written and/or oral contributions.

Apart from the activities mentioned above, the Secretariat is responsible for the maintenance of the joint web page of tuna RFMOs (<http://www.tuna-org.org/>).

A series of decisions were adopted at the 21st Regular Meeting the Commission. The Secretariat's work is required for the implementation of different provisions included in these decisions. During 2009, in particular, ICCAT has increased monitoring and control measures for bluefin tuna and has approved the important research program for the Atlantic, comprised of a budget of 19 million Euros and with a duration of six years.

ASSISTANCE FUNDS

The objective of these funds is to encourage the improvement of statistics of species under ICCAT mandate. Currently, there is a budget on special funds for data improvement established by *Resolution by ICCAT on Improvements in Data Collection and Quality Assurance* [Res. 03-21], including open contributions granted by Contracting Parties. To date, specifically three Parties (European Union, Japan and United States) have contributed.

During the second half of 2009, scientists of coastal developing States were funded by these programs to participate in the SCRS meetings.

OBSERVER PROGRAMME

During the second half of 2009, the Secretariat has continued coordinating the implementation of the ICCAT Regional Observer Programme concerning transshipments.

In September 2009, the first deployments under the ICCAT Regional Observer Programme for bluefin tuna were initiated. Two Contracting Parties, Croatia and Turkey, are currently participating in the ICCAT ROP-BFT, with 16 requests for deployment having been received by mid-February 2010. Following a Call for Tenders and review of bids received, the contract for the period April 2010 – April 2011 has been awarded.

TAGGING LOTTERY

Established to promote the recovery of tags placed by various laboratories belonging to ICCAT Contracting Parties, the annual tagging lottery was held on October 5, 2009 during the sessions of the SCRS. The reward for each lottery is 500\$:

- Tropical tunas (2009): The winning tag (HBF-431988) was recovered by United States on a slender tuna (*Allothunnus fallai*/SLT), 5 days after tagging which had been carried out in the United States fishing campaigns.
- Temperate tunas (2009): The winning tag (HCT-016600) was recovered by EC-Spain on a bluefin tuna (*Thunnus t. thynnus*/BFT), 326 days after tagging which had been carried out in the Spanish fishing campaigns.
- Billfish (2009). The winning tag (HBF-428417) was recovered by Venezuela on an Atlantic blue marlin (*Makaira nigricans*/BUM). No tagging information is available.
- Sharks (2009): The winning tag (H!!315271) (the code H!! indicates that the tag does not include an alphanumeric part) was recovered by Portugal on a blue shark (*Prionace glauca*/BSH). No tagging information is available.

OTHER NEWS

Retirements

At the end of 2009, Mr. Papa Kebe, Head of the Statistics Department at ICCAT for the past 25 years, retired. During the annual meetings, the SCRS and the Commission expressed their appreciation throughout various warmhearted tributes for the work carried out by Mr. Kebe throughout these years.



The SCRS also said goodbye to Dr. Alain Fonteneau, former SCRS Chairman and one of the scientists that has been most active within the SCRS from the time of its establishment.



Dr. Fonteneau will retire in 2010.

Changes in the Secretariat staff

As well as the retirement of Mr. Papa Kebe, the Database Programmer, Ms. Penelope Cabello, left the Secretariat towards the end of 2009.

During this period, two staff members have joined the Secretariat, Ms. Gisela Porto, as Administrative Assistant to the Executive Secretary and Ms. Aldana Vieito for data entry.

All recent ICCAT publications can be downloaded from <http://www.iccat.int>

To obtain copies of older publications please contact INFO@ICCAT.INT