



ICCAT Newsletter No.13

New Issue

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MESSAGE FROM THE ICCAT EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

The ICCAT Secretariat has the pleasure to present its readers with **ICCAT Newsletter No. 13**, informing of the latest events and activities of our organization.

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The SCRS held a meeting on October 4-8, 2010 in Madrid, Spain. The Report of the meeting was included in the ICCAT Biennial Reports and will be published in February 2011. The electronic version is available from the ICCAT web site.


The SCRS carried out stock assessments in 2010 on Atlantic bigeye, Mediterranean swordfish and bluefin tuna in the East and West Atlantic and Mediterranean.

The Sub-Committee on Ecosystems estimated the minimum coverage of observers required to obtain reliable by-catch estimates and reviewed the work carried out within the framework of the temporary contract on by-catch, the Assessment Group on Methods made progress as regards the definition of criteria which would allow the incorporation of a precautionary approach to the objectives of the ICCAT Convention and the blue marlin and white marlin Species Groups reviewed the data required for Atlantic blue marlin and Mediterranean albacore stock assessments.

The mandate of the SCRS Chairman, Mr. Gerald Scott ended in 2010. During the period of five years as head of the SCRS, Mr. Scott has provided significant changes in the presentation of the state of the stocks and the definition of management strategies.

The Committee expressed its recognition towards the work carried out by Gerry.

RECENT MEETINGS

 **2010 Meeting of the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS).**





During the meeting, Mr. Josu Santiago was elected SCRS Chairman for a two year mandate. Mr. Santiago has a lot of experience in stock assessment and management.

17th Special Meeting of the Commission

The 17th Special Meeting of the Commission was held in Paris (France) from November 17 to 27, 2010. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Fabio Hazin. The support of the European Union and the excellent work as regards the organization of the meeting guaranteed its success.

Eleven Recommendations were adopted by the Commission at its 17th Special Meeting:

Recommendation by ICCAT to Amend the Recommendation by ICCAT on a Multi-Year Conservation and Management Program for Bigeye Tuna [Rec. 10-01].

Recommendation by ICCAT for the Conservation of North Atlantic Swordfish [Rec. 10-02].

Supplemental Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning the Western Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Rebuilding Program [Rec. 10-03]

Recommendation Amending the Recommendation by ICCAT to Establish a Multi-Annual Recovery Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean [Rec. 10-04].

Recommendation by ICCAT on the Plan to Rebuild Blue Marlin and White Marlin Populations [Rec. 10-05]

Recommendation by ICCAT on Atlantic Shortfin Mako Sharks Caught in Association with ICCAT Fisheries [Rec. 10-06].

Recommendation by ICCAT on the Conservation of Oceanic Whitetip Sharks in Association with Fisheries in the ICCAT Convention Area [Rec. 10-07].

Recommendation by ICCAT on Hammerhead Sharks (family Sphyrnidae) Caught in Association with Fisheries Managed by ICCAT [Rec. 10-08].

Recommendation by ICCAT on the By-catch of Sea Turtles in ICCAT Fisheries [Rec. 10-09].

Recommendation by ICCAT to Establish Minimum Standards for Fishing Vessel Scientific Observer Programs [Rec. 10-10]

Recommendation by ICCAT on an Electronic Bluefin Tuna Catch Document Programme (eBCD) [Rec. 10-11].

The Recommendations will enter into force on June 14, 2011, unless CPCs object.

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

During the Commission meeting, Ms. Rebecca Lent, was elected Chair of the Permanent Working Group for the Improvement of ICCAT Statistics and Conservation Measures (PWG) replacing Mr. A. Share.

CALENDER OF EVENTS – 2011

Fifteen SCRS meetings and four Commission meetings are scheduled for 2011.

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.

January

- *Technical Working Group on electronic BCDs, January 27-28, Madrid, Spain.* The Group discussed on the future development of an electronic system for the bluefin tuna catch document (eBCDs).

February

- *Workshop on the use of R tools in the data preparatory work ICCAT-SCRS, February 7-11, Madrid, Spain.* Training sessions on the use of R tools applied to the management and analysis of data.

- *GBYP Working Group on the aerial surveys analysis, conventional tagging and biological sampling, February 14-18, Madrid, Spain.* Included within the framework of the GBYP this meeting aims at defining the progress of the project throughout different aspects considered.

- *Inter-sessional meeting of the Compliance Committee, February 21-25, Barcelona, Spain.* The main objective of this meeting is to assess compliance, by CPCs, of their obligations as members to ICCAT. The bluefin tuna fishing plans for 2011 were endorsed during this meeting.

March

- *Working Group on the Organization of the SCRS, March 2-4, Madrid, Spain.* The objective of this Group will be to analyze the current work of the SCRS and develop working proposals that will allow to cover

current requirements and, in the medium term, those of the Committee.

April

- *2011 Blue marlin stock assessment session and white marlin data preparatory meeting*, April 25-29, Madrid, Spain. During the meeting the Atlantic blue marlin stock assessment will be carried out and the data required for the Atlantic white marlin stock assessment will be prepared.

May

- *Inter-sessional Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Ecosystems*, May 9-13, Miami, United States. The objective of this meeting is to progress in the development of ecosystem models for the Atlantic and in the definition of ecosystem indicators.

- *Second meeting of the Working Group on the Future of ICCAT*, May 16-20, Madrid, Spain. The objective of this meeting is to start the process to review the Convention adapting it to the new existing realities concerning management of marine resources.

- *Symposium on G-BFT Trap Fishing and related data sets*, May 23-25, Morocco. The objective of the meeting will be to analyze and standardize the historical data series of this fishing gear.

- *Tropical tuna Species Group Intersessional Meeting on the Ghanaian Statistics Analysis (Phase I)*, May 30 to June 3, Madrid, Spain. The objective of the meeting will be to analyze the historical series of Ghanaian data and develop a system for the collection of information and sampling complying with ICCAT requirements concerning statistics for Ghanaian fleets.

June

- *Sharks Data Preparatory Meeting*, June 20-24, Madrid, Spain. The objective of the meeting is to prepare the data required to apply ecological risk analysis of the shark species caught as by-catch in tuna fisheries.

- *Joint Meeting of the ICCAT Working Group on Stock Assessment Methods and the Bluefin Tuna Species Group*, June 28 to July 1, Madrid, Spain. Assessment methods developed within the framework of the GBYP and electronic tagging will be assessed during this meeting.

July

- *South Atlantic Albacore and Mediterranean Albacore Assessment Sessions*, July 25-29, Madrid, Spain. South Atlantic albacore and Mediterranean albacore will be assessed during this meeting.

September

- *Atlantic Yellowfin Stock Assessment Session*, September 5-12, Madrid, Spain. The Atlantic yellowfin stock will be assessed during this meeting.

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

Scientists who wish to present documents to the SCRS meetings can download the Guidelines for authors from the ICCAT Web site (http://www.iccat.int/es/pubs_guidelines.htm).

Other events

The Third Joint Tuna RFMOs meeting is also foreseen for 2011 which will be held in La Jolla, California, United States, from July 11 to July 15.

SECRETARIAT ACTIVITIES

The Secretariat has continued to support the activities of the SCRS and the Commission. In particular, during the second half of 2010, the Secretariat focused on the preparation of the SCRS and Commission meetings. As part of this work, the Secretariat prepared a series of documents that were presented to these meetings. As well as the traditional documents (reports related to research and statistics, financial report, compliance report, etc.), the Secretariat prepared working documents to support the discussion groups. All the reports prepared by the Secretariat will be published, for the first time in 2011, in the Report for Biennial Period, 2010-2011, in an independent volume (Vol. 4).

Since September, the first phase of the ICCAT-GBYP (Atlantic-wide Research Programme for the Bluefin Tuna) focused on a data recovery plan, the aerial survey on bluefin spawning aggregations and the tagging design, was completed.

Phase two activities in 2011 concern a second step of the data recovery plan, an improved aerial survey on spawning aggregations, a wide-spread biological and genetic sampling program (including analysis), an extensive conventional tagging and a first step to develop modelling approaches. Several meetings,

workshops and a Tuna Trap Symposium are also included in this Phase.

The GBYP at the ICCAT Secretariat is now comprised of a Coordinator and an Assistant and all the activities and reports are fully available on <http://www.iccat.int/GBYP/en/index.htm>

Furthermore, since the previous Newsletter, the ICCAT Secretariat has been represented in external meetings related to ICCAT's activities:

- *COFI Meeting*, January 31 to February 4, 2011, Rome, Italy.

- *Meeting to Exchange Information and Maintenance of the Consolidated List of Authorized Vessels of Tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organizations, T-RFMO CLAV*, February 7-9, 2011, Rome, Italy.

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 17th Special Meeting the Commission. The Secretariat's work is required for the implementation of different provisions included in these decisions. During 2010, ICCAT has increased monitoring and control measures included in Rec. 10-04, in particular.

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 have contributed (European Union, Japan and United States).

During the second half of 2010, scientists of coastal developing States were funded by these programs to participate in the SCRS meetings.

OBSERVER PROGRAMME

During the second half of 2010, the Secretariat has continued coordinating the implementation of the ICCAT Regional Observer Programme concerning transshipments and the Regional Observer

Programme for bluefin tuna. In 2010, five CPCs participated in the ROP transshipments and seven CPCs in the ROP-BFT, with 23 observers onboard cargo vessels, 94 on fishing vessels and 48 deployments on farms.

Following a Call for Tenders and review of bids received, a consortium was chosen for the implementation of the Program for the April 2011 – April 2012 period.

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 4, 2010 during the sessions of the SCRS. The reward for each lottery is \$500 and corresponds to the following:

- Tropical tunas (2010): The winning tag (HCT-016872) was recovered by EU-Spain on a mackerel (*Scomber japonicas*/MAS), 29 days after tagging which had been carried out in the Spain fishing campaigns.

- Temperate tunas (2010): The winning tag (HHM-064227) was recovered by EU-Spain on a bluefin tuna (*Thunnus t. thynnus*/BFT), 1414 days after tagging.

- Billfish (2010). The winning tag (HHM-083810) was recovered by EU-Spain on a swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*/SWO), 308 days after tagging which had been carried out in the United States fishing campaigns.

- Sharks (2010): The winning tag (HCR009043) was recovered by EU-Spain on a shortfin mako (*Isurus oxyrinchus*/SMA), 656 days after tagging which had been carried out in the Spain fishing campaigns.

Furthermore, the lottery for the tropical category was repeated for the tags recovered in 2009. The winning tag (HHM077888) was recovered by United States on a yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacores*/YFT), 260 days after tagging which was carried out in the United States fishing campaigns.

OTHER NEWS

Changes to the Secretariat staff

In January 2011, Pilar Pallarés, Head of the Translation and Publications department was appointed Assistant Executive Secretary. This position was vacant since March 2010.

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

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