INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS

COMMISSION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA CONSERVATION DES THONIDES DE L'ATLANTIQUE

COMISION INTERNACIONAL PARA LA CONSERVACION DEL ATUN ATLANTICO

ICCAT NEWSLETTER

No. 36, February 2023

Executive Secretary

Dear Readers,

Throughout 2022, the Secretariat of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) has been happy to count on your valuable and appreciated accompaniment. In addition, we are pleased to note that the situation of the Covid-19 pandemic is clearly improving and allowing us to recover a certain normality with the resumption of most of our in person activities.

This resumption allowed us to successfully hold both the *2022 Meeting of the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS)* and the *23rd Special Meeting* in a hybrid format with significant in person participation. Fruit of the synergy of sustained efforts of delegates from CPCs, the Secretariat staff and partners, many important engagements through four full scientific stock assessments and other intersessional works have led to the adoption of 13 new Recommendations and 4 Resolutions, among which there is a novel management procedure for bluefin tuna.

The Secretariat thanks you all and wishes you a prosperous 2023 as we continue to face the challenges together!

We will continue to work on it.

Happy reading of this 36th issue of the ICCAT Newsletter!

Introduction

During the *23rd Special Meeting of the Commission* that was held in Vale do Lobo (Algarve, Portugal), significant progress was made, and a number of relevant decisions were taken, including:

- ✓ ICCAT has for the first time in its history adopted a management procedure for Atlantic bluefin tuna. The TAC set for the period 2023-2025 was set as 2,726 and 40,570 metric tons for western and eastern Atlantic bluefin tuna.
- ✓ ICCAT agreed a measure for South Atlantic shortfin mako starting in 2023, which is similar to that adopted in 2021 for the northern stock, to end overfishing immediately and to gradually achieve biomass levels sufficient to support maximum sustainable yield (MSY) by 2070 with a probability ranging between 60 and 70% at least. The total annual fishing mortality was set to a maximum of 1,295 t until 2024.
- ✓ New management measures were also agreed for both North and South Atlantic swordfish stocks.
- ✓ The Commission adopted a plan for Mediterranean albacore, which implements a 15-year rebuilding plan until 2036, that establishes a TAC of 2,500 t
- ✓ ICCAT adopted catch limits for southern Atlantic albacore for the period 2023 to 2026, that includes a TAC of 28,000 t for the period 2023 to 2026.
- ✓ A simple rollover of the current measures, which implies a Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for bigeye tuna of 62,000 t for 2023 and the 72-day FAD fishing closure.
- ✓ The Compliance Committee this year concentrated on some fundamental issues and adopted a Schedule of Actions for compliance issues in the future and also adopted a Recommendation on the use of the Integrated Online Management System

During the 23rd Special Meeting of the Commission, which was held in hybrid format from 15-23 November 2022, that was attended by over 400 in-person delegates and 250 more online, from 47 Contracting Parties, 5 Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties, 6 intergovernmental organizations, 25 Non-Governmental Organizations and 2 Non-Contracting Parties: ICCAT adopted 13 Recommendation, 4 Resolutions and 2 documents of reference, covering relevant issues on Atlantic tuna and tuna-like species conservation and fisheries management:

Rec. 22-01	*Recommendation by ICCAT replacing Recommendation 21-01 on a multi-annual conservation and management programme for tropical tunas*
Res. 22-02	*Resolution by ICCAT on development of initial conceptual management objectives for western Atlantic skipjack*
Rec. 22-03	*Recommendation by ICCAT replacing supplemental Recommendation 21-02 extending and amending Recommendation 17-02 for the conservation of North Atlantic swordfish*
Rec. 22-04	*Recommendation by ICCAT replacing supplemental Recommendation 21-03 extending and amending Recommendation 17-03 for the conservation of South Atlantic swordfish*
Rec. 22-05	*Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 21-06 to establish a rebuilding plan for Mediterranean albacore*
Rec. 22-06	*Recommendation by ICCAT on the southern Atlantic albacore catch limits for the period 2023 to 2026*
Res. 22-07	*Resolution by ICCAT on a pilot project for the short-term live storage of bluefin tuna*
Rec. 22-08	*Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 21-08 establishing a multi-annual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean*
Rec. 22-09	*Recommendation by ICCAT establishing a management procedure for Atlantic bluefin tuna to be used for both the western Atlantic and eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean management areas*
Rec. 22-10	*Recommendation by ICCAT for a conservation and management plan for western Atlantic bluefin tuna*
Rec. 22-11	*Recommendation by ICCAT on the conservation of the South Atlantic stock of shortfin mako caught in association with ICCAT fisheries*
Rec. 22-12	*Recommendation by ICCAT on the bycatch of sea turtles caught in association with ICCAT fisheries (combine, streamline, and amend Recommendations 10-09 and 13-11)*
Res. 22-13	*Resolution by ICCAT on climate change*
Rec. 22-14	*Recommendation by ICCAT to replace Recommendation 06-14 to promote compliance by nationals of Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities, or Fishing Entities with ICCAT conservation and management measures*
Res. 22-15	*Resolution by ICCAT establishing a pilot project to test the use of stereoscopic cameras during first transfer and the automation of video footage analysis*
Rec. 22-16	*Recommendation by ICCAT amending Recommendation 21-18 on the application of the eBCD System*
Rec. 22-17	*Recommendation by ICCAT on the application of the integrated online management system*
Ref. 22-18	*Schedule of compliance issues and corresponding actions*
Ref. 22-19	*Document number on transhipment declaration*

In addition 2022, the SCRS carried out full scientific stock assessments for four species: **eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna** (*Thunnus thynnus*), **eastern and western skipjack** (*Katsuwonus pelamis*), **Atlantic swordfish** (*Xiphias gladius*) and **North-eastern Atlantic porbeagle shark** (*Lamna nasus*).

RECENT MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE SINCE THE LAST ISSUE

Commission meetings

- Second Intersessional Meeting of Panel 1 (*Online, 13 October 2022*)
- Fourth Intersessional Meeting of Panel 2 on BFT MSE (*Madrid, Spain/hybrid, 14 October 2022*)
- Intersessional Meeting of Panel 4 (*Vale do Lobo, Portugal/hybrid, 13 November 2022*)
- 23rd Special Meeting of the Commission (*Vale do Lobo, Portugal/hybrid, 14-21 November 2022*)
- First Meeting of the eBCD Technical Working Group (eBCD TWG) (*Online, 23-24 January 2023*)
- Meeting of the Online Reporting Technology Working Group (WG-ORT) (*Online, 7-8 February 2023*)
- First Meeting of the Electronic Monitoring Systems (EMS) Working Group (*Online, 15 February 2023*)

SCRS meetings

- First Intersessional Meeting of the North Atlantic Swordfish MSE Technical Sub-group (*Online, 25-26 January 2023*)

Workshops

- GBYP Workshop on larval indices coordination and standardization (*Palermo, Italy, 7-9 February 2023*)
- Workshop on Swordfish, Billfishes and Small Tunas age reading (*Olhão, Portugal, 13-18 Februrary 2023*)

External meetings

Between October 2022 and February 2023, members of the Secretariat staff have participated actively in meetings and activities related to ICCAT, providing both written and/or oral contributions:

- FAO-Regional Coordination Meeting for Africa, Near East and the Mediterranean on the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) (*Online, 3-7 October 2022*)
- Mediterranean Advisory Council, Medac (*Online, 17 October 2022*)

OTHER SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITIES

The ICCAT ***Atlantic-wide Research Programme on Bluefin Tuna (GBYP)*** has continued to carry out all research lines requested by the SCRS for the ongoing Phase 12. In parallel, the proposal for the Phase 13 workplan is being drafted under the supervision of the GBYP Steering Committee and will soon be submitted to the major funder. It is worth mentioning that during this reporting period several research lines supported by GBYP have produced very important results, which have been used for improvements in the management of BFT stocks. Among those we highlight those from the modelling tasks, which have allowed the implementation of an innovative system for the management of the species based on the Management Strategies Evaluation approach (MSE). Therefore, for the first time the Commission, has adopted Management Procedures following this approach. In addition, the GBYP funded studies on growth rates in farms, initiated in 2019, have contributed significantly to the elaboration of the new reference table for maximum growth rates in farms , which was adopted by the Commission in the 2022 Annual meeting. Moreover, during the past few months, GBYP has continued supporting several lines of research crucial for the proper management of BFT stocks, providing base data, biological parameters and abundance indices necessary both for the classic stock assessment models and for the operating models developed within the MSE approach. This research includes:

- further development and updating of relational databases for farming, biological and electronic tagging data;
- implementation of a model-based approach for the analysis of aerial survey data aimed at providing more accurate, fishery independent BFT eastern stock abundance indices;
- electronic tagging campaigns carried out in close collaboration with 9 national teams, which are already providing very useful information about the spatial patterns of BFT stocks;
- biological sampling and genetic, biogeochemical and sclerochronological analyses of these samples, to provide information about stock structure;
- and, finally, activities towards assessing the feasibility of use of Close-Kin Mark-Recapture methods in BFT.

Additional information can be found here.

The ***Atlantic Albacore Tuna Year Programme (ALBYP)*** has prioritized the following research topics: reproductive biology, life-cycle and habitat use, and Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) for the northern stock. In order to better understand the reproductive biology of Albacore, samples from the northern stock were collected by Chinese Taipei, Venezuela and Canada for use in determining age and size at maturity. This program will continue in 2023 with an emphasis on the central area of the North Atlantic. Samples were also collected from the southern stock near Brazil, Uruguay and South Africa, to assist in determining spawning areas, spawning season, age and size at maturity, and fecundity. From these areas, only the Brazilian samples have been analyzed thus far, although historical samples from other sites were analyzed for size data. The maturity data support the hypothesis that there is a spawning area along the Brazilian coast to 20°S. In the North Atlantic, the 2022 tagging surveys deployed 14 pop-up and 42 internal archival tags. Of the tags recovered in 2022, one internal archival tag includes the longest known track of an individual albacore. This tag was deployed for over a year (439 days) and includes data on movement of the fish between the Bay of Biscay and the central and western Atlantic. No fish from the southern stock were tagged in 2022 but miniPAT tags remain available for deployment in the coming year. Finally, work continues on the Albacore MSE, with parameters being defined for the 2023 stock assessment which will form the basis for the second round of the MSE framework. The contractor hired in early 2022 reported on their initial evaluation of the model to be used for the assessment

The ***Small Tunas Year Programme (SMTYP)*** Collection of biological samples from Atlantic bonito, little tunny, wahoo, frigate tuna and bullet tuna for using in estimating growth and maturity parameters continued throughout 2022. Because bullet tuna and frigate tuna are similar in appearance, genetic methods can be useful for determining the species. Genetic analysis carried out in 2022 confirmed the differences between species but also demonstrated that approximately 20% of individuals were misidentified based on appearance. In addition, it was determined that neither species showed evidence of genetic stock structure.

Enhanced Programme for Billfish Research (EPBR) Current objectives of the EPBR include evaluating adult habitat use, studying spawning patterns and collecting samples for population genetic analysis. Local restrictions in response to the Covid-19 pandemic have continued to affect sample collection efforts through 2022. Despite these challenges, 32 samples were collected from artisanal fisheries by Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon, while an additional 25 samples were collected from industrial fleets by EU-Portugal. This included samples from the three major billfish species (blue and white marlin and sailfish). These data will support efforts to improve billfish stock assessment. Preliminary estimates of longevity obtained from otoliths collected prior to 2022 were presented during the Billfish Species Group meeting. Accurate estimates of age and growth are crucial for age-based structured stock assessments. The Species Group also updated the recommended methodology for otolith collection for future sampling efforts. Collection of biological samples will continue in 2023. A study on blue marlin reproduction in the Gulf of Mexico and satellite tagging of blue and white marlin shall start in 2023..

Within the ***Shark Research and Data Collection Programme (SRDCP)*** Age readings of shortfin mako samples collected over prior years began in 2022. There is currently a lack of samples from the largest and smallest ends of the size range and thus growth modelling approaches will be considered to account for this issue. A genetic study of short fin mako was also performed using both mitochondrial and nuclear DNA in order to determine stock structure. The results of this support the establishment of genetically distinct groups (North Atlantic, South Atlantic, Central Atlantic I and Central Atlantic II) that could be defined for management purposes. Genetic analysis of porbeagle was also undertaken using mitochondrial DNA. Thus far, samples from the northeast, northwest and southeast regions have been analysed and demonstrated significant differences between the North and South Atlantic. Tagging programs continue for shortfin mako, porbeagle, silky, oceanic whitetip, smooth hammerhead, and scalloped hammerhead sharks.

Swordfish Year Programme (SWOYP) focuses on four main areas of research: aging and growth, reproductive biology, stock differentiation (through genetics) and habitat use and migrations. In the most recent phase of the project, 498 samples were collected for use in studies addressing the three objectives bringing the total number of samples collected to 4646. Age data is now available for the North Atlantic stock which will contribute to the development of new growth models for stock assessment. A genetic study demonstrated that there is considerable differentiation between the Mediterranean and Atlantic stocks, with a lesser degree of differentiation also observed between the North and the South Atlantic. The analysis also indicated the location of possible zones of mixing between the different stocks. The initial results of the tagging program have been made available, showing that swordfish travel considerable distances in the North and South Atlantic and that they spend most of the day in deeper/colder waters, but rise to the surface during the night. Satellite tagging of both Atlantic and Mediterranean swordfish continues. A Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) process has continued for the North Atlantic stock, which is scheduled to be provided to the Commission by the end of 2023.

Tropical Tunas: The Atlantic Ocean Tropical Tuna Tagging Program was officially closed in 2021. Since that time, research on tropical tunas has continued in four main areas: tag recovery, tag seeding experiments, aging studies, and tagging in the northwestern Atlantic. As of September 2022 a total of 211 tags have been deployed along the eastern coast of the United States on bigeye tuna (21), yellowfin tuna (180) and skipjack (109), which corresponds of about 15% of the overall target (1,400). Two short-term contracts were issued to Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire for tag seeding experiments, awareness raising activities, and processing tag recaptures. These contracts have recovered a total of 25 tags over the past year. Their efforts also resulted in collection and analysis of a number of otoliths and spines for aging studies.

PUBLICATIONS

Volume 2 of the Report for the biennial period 2022-23, Part I (2022), corresponding to the 2022 SCRS report have been published. Please access the report here.

Volume 79 of the *ICCAT Collective Volume of Scientific Papers*, containing 6 issues, includes 140 scientific papers and reports presented to the SCRS during 2022, have been published here.

2023 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The following events are scheduled to be held in 2023:

Commission meetings

March

- First Intersessional Meeting of Panel 4 on North Atlantic Swordfish MSE (*Online, 6 March 2023*)
- Intersessional Meeting of Panel 2 (*Hybrid, Madrid (Spain), 7-10 March 2023*)
- First Intersessional meeting of Panel 1 (*Hybrid, Lisboa (Portugal), 27-31 March 2023*)

May

- Intersessional meeting of Panel 1 on Western Skipjack MSE (*Online, 5 May 2023*)
- Meeting of the Port Inspection Expert Group for Capacity Building and Assistance (PIEG) (*Online, 30 May 2023*)
- Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Labor Standards (LSWG) (*Online, 31 May 2023*)

June

- Second Intersessional meeting of Panel 4 on North Atlantic Swordfish MSE (*Online, 1 June 2023*)
- Second Meeting of the eBCD Technical Working Group (eBCD TWG) (*Hybrid, Osaka (Japan), 5 June 2023*)
- Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS) (*Hybrid, Osaka (Japan), 6 June 2023*)
- 16th Meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Monitoring Measures (IMM) (*Hybrid, Osaka (Japan), 7-9 June 2023*)
- Second Intersessional Meeting of Panel 1 (*Hybrid, TBD, 19-23 June 2023*)

July

- Climate Change Expert meeting (*Online, TBC 11-12 July 2023*)

September

- Second Meeting of the Electronic Monitoring Systems (EMS) Working Group (*Online, 7 September 2023*)

October

- Third Intersessional meeting of Panel 4 on North Atlantic Swordfish MSE (*Online, 10-11 October 2023*)

November

- Meeting of the Compliance Committee (*Hybrid, TBD (Egypt)*, *11-12 November 2023*)
- 28th Regular Meeting of the Commission (*Hybrid, TBD (Egypt)*, *13-20 November 2023*)
- Meeting of the Virtual Working Group on Sustainable Finances (*Online, TBD*)

SCRS meetings

March

- Intersessional Meeting of the Tropical Tunas Species Group (including MSE) (*Hybrid, Madrid (Spain), 27 February-3 March 2023*)
- First Intersessional Meeting of Panel 4 on North Atlantic Swordfish MSE (*Online*, *6 March 2023*)
- North Atlantic Albacore Data Preparatory Meeting Hybrid, San Sebastian/Pasaia (Spain) *(20-23 March 2023)*

April

- Blue Shark Data Preparatory Meeting (*Hybrid, Olhão (Portugal)*, *17-21 April 2023*)

May

- Intersessional meeting of Panel 1 on Western Skipjack MSE (*Online*, *5 May 2023*)
- Intersessional Meeting of the Subcommittee on Ecosystems and Bycatch (*Hybrid, Madrid (Spain)*, *8-12 May 2023*)
- Intersessional Meeting of the Small Tunas Species Group (*Hybrid, Madrid (Spain)*, *15-18 May 2023*)
- Meeting of the Working Group on Stock Assessment Methods (WGSAM) (*Hybrid, Madrid (Spain*), *15-18 May 2023*)
- Intersessional Meeting of the Swordfish Species Group (including MSE) (*Hybrid, Saint Andrews, New Brunswick (Canada)*, *22-26 May 2023*)

June

- Second Intersessional meeting of Panel 4 on North Atlantic Swordfish MSE *Online*, *1 June 2023)*
- Sailfish Data Preparatory and Stock Assessment Meeting (*Hybrid, Dakar (Senegal)*, *5-10 June 2023*)
- Atlantic Albacore Stock Assessment meeting (*Hybrid, Madrid (Spain)*, *26-29 June 2023*)

July

- Blue Shark Stock Assessment meeting (*Hybrid, Madrid (Spain)*, *17-21 July 2023*)

September

- Second Intersessional Meeting of the North Atlantic Swordfish MSE Technical Sub-group (*Online*, *4-5 September 2023*)
- SCRS Species Group meetings (*Hybrid, Madrid (Spain)*, *18-23 September 2023*)
- Meeting of the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) (*Hybrid, Madrid (Spain)*, *25-29 September 2023*)

October

- Third Intersessional meeting of Panel 4 on North Atlantic Swordfish MSE (*Online*, *10-11 October 2023*)

Additional information on these meetings is available on the ICCAT website.

Other activities

ICCAT/Japan Capacity-Building Assistance Project (JCAP) - Phase 2: JCAP-2 began in 2019 with the major objective of assisting developing Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities (CPCs) to improve their capacities in data collection, reporting and effective implementation of ICCAT measures. Two new projects were funded by JCAP-2 in 2022:

1. A pilot study on the implementation of an automatic fish count and length/weight estimation system at the Moroccan Bluefin tuna (BFT) farm "Bluefarm". The goal of this project was to determine if the use of a stereoscopic (3D) camera could reduce biases in measurements from human processing. The results of the pilot study indicate that there are significant differences between the automatic and manual systems but that more work must be undertaken to understand the extent of the bias and the accuracy of the automatic system.
2. A project to develop improved data collection methods for sport and recreational fisheries in Belize. The project encompassed 4 areas: data collection from fishing tournaments; capacity development; tools and equipment; and development of reporting software. Important steps were made in each of these areas, including the development of a mobile app that anglers will be able to use to report catches. Further goals in each of the 4 areas has been identified going forward.

Since September 2022 the Secretariat has received the following **voluntary contributions**:

- In January 2023, Chinese Taipei made a voluntary financial contribution to ICCAT for fiscal year 2023. This voluntary contribution amount to €111,000 in total, with €100,000 for the Commission, €3,000 for IOMS, €3,000 for GBYP and €3,000 for SRDCP and €2,000 for EBRP.

Due to the impact of the pandemic on the ICCAT activities over the past years, the following contracts with the European Union were extended throughout 2023:

- In January 2023, a 9-month extension until 17 December 2023 was agreed to the EU grant agreement EMFAF-2021-VC-ICCAT5-IBA-02 *Strengthening the scientific basis on tuna and tuna-like species for decision-making in ICCAT*. This voluntary contribution from the European Union amounts to €450,000 (contract amount: €701,385).
- In February 2023, a 4-month extension until 30 July 2023 was requested to the EU grant agreement EMFAF-2021-VC-ICCAT5-IBA*ICCAT- Atlantic-Wide Research Programme for the Bluefin Tuna Phase 12*. The voluntary contribution from the European Union amounts to €1,200,000, whereas the remaining €300,000 are provided voluntarily by other ICCAT Contracting Parties which have a bluefin tuna quota.

Finally, the Secretariat is currently working with the EU aiming at 3 new grant agreement proposals for 2023. These will ensure the following additional voluntary contributions by the European Union:

- *Strengthening the scientific basis on tuna and tuna-like species for decision-making in ICCAT* (including GBYP phase 13)- up to €1,600,000;
- *Capacity Development Fund in ICCAT* - €300,000;
- *ICCAT - Contribution to the organization of meetings* – amount to be decided.

OTHER NEWS

23RD SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) met in Vale do Lobo (Algarve, Portugal) at the 23rd Special Meeting of the Commission to take important decisions on the regulation of ICCAT fisheries, including a novel management procedure for bluefin tuna - the first adopted harvest strategy in ICCAT history for this species, and a new conservation measure for South Atlantic shortfin mako shark.

During the 23rd Special Meeting of the Commission, it was agreed that the ***28th Regular Meeting of the Commission*** will be held in Egypt between 11 and 20 November 2023. The Commission also agreed that in 2024 the meeting could be held in EU-Cyprus and in 2025 in Côte d'Ivoire.

The ICCAT Secretariat would like to express its sincerest gratitude to all CPCs and its partners for their valuable contributions to the success of the meeting.

During the 2022 SCRS Meeting, ICCAT expressed its gratitude to Dr. Gary Melvin (Canada), the former SCRS Chairman, for his many years of contribution to ICCAT's scientific work, and specifically as Chair of the SCRS for the past four years. CPCs highlighted Dr. Melvin's role as Rapporteur for the Western Bluefin Tuna Species Group. For a long time, the ICCAT community has benefited from his guidance on the work of the SCRS and his communication of SCRS advice to stakeholders and decision makers. The Executive Secretary, sincerely thanked and congratulated Dr. Melvin on his remarkable coordination.

Appreciation was also shown towards Dr. Haritz Arrizabalaga (Spain) for his remarkable coordination as SCRS Vice-Chair.

ICCAT also welcomed Dr. Craig Brown (United States) who was elected to the post of SCRS Chair. The ICCAT Secretariat would like to welcome the incoming SCRS Chair, and wish him all the success in his new role.

The images below were taken during the *SCRS Meeting* held in October 2022 in Madrid, Spain.

Dr. Gary Melvin (former SCRS Chairman).

Dr. Gary Melvin's farewell.

Dr. Craig Brown, new elected SCRS Chair.

Farewell of the former SCRS Vice-Chair, Dr. Haritz Arrizabalaga.

Farewell of Dr. Daniel Gaertner who retired as marine biologist from the Intitute of Research for Development (IRD).

Farewell of Dr. Enric Cortés who retired as research fishery biologist from NOAA's Southeast Fisheries Science Center.

The ICCAT Secretariat would like to thank you all for all your hard work and contribution to ICCAT.

An emotional farewell for ICCAT Secretariat staff member, Mr. Cristobal García, during the 23rd Special Meeting of the Commission (Vale do Lobo, Algarve, Portugal). The Executive Secretary bid farewell to Mr. García who is retiring after 42 years of service at the Secretariat. Through this Newsletter, his colleagues from the ICCAT Secretariat wish him every success in this new stage of his life.

Dr. Erin McClelland joined the Department of ICCAT Atlantic wide Research Programme for Bluefin Tuna (ICCAT GBYP) in January 2023, as Administration and Communication Assistant. The Secretariat would like to wish Dr. McClelland a warm welcome and great success in her new career as staff member of ICCAT.

For further news on ICCAT activities, please visit our website: ICCAT·CICTA·CICAA

Should you detect any errors or wish to provide any suggestions for improvement in this Newsletter, please inform us by e-mail.