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COLLABORATION WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

ICCAT Secretariat

CITES

In 2015 ICCAT and CITES have agreed to collaborate in order to conduct two training courses for government staff (CITES Scientific Authorities and fisheries agencies) and other relevant stakeholders in the West Africa region (one in English and one in French). There are several countries in this region that were identified as priority countries for assistance under the EU-CITES project with regard to implementing the new CITES listings for sharks and rays. These workshops were originally planned to be conducted in 2015, but due to delays in the approval of the budget at CITES, they have been delayed until early 2016. Training will include issues such as Species identification, including the provision of ID cards, biological and fisheries sampling techniques, data reporting requirements and implementation of CITES shark listings on Appendix II. In addition, a budget has been made available by CITES for the collection of catch and biological data. The data will significantly increase the member states capacity to make NDFs as this is not currently possible with the information available. It will also improve the data available to ICCAT for the assessment and management of shark stocks in the region through analysis of the data by the ICCAT Shark Species Group.

ICES

Considering the fruitful experience ICCAT and ICES have had in recent years with regard to scientific collaboration, there is the willingness of both organisations to strengthen this cooperation and explore new initiatives and discussions have commenced between the Secretariats. It has been agreed therefore that it is appropriate and desirable to improve collaboration between ICCAT SCRS-ICES particularly in the areas of by-catch and sharks issues, through our Sub-committee on ecosystems and by-catch and the shark species group. Specifically it would be convenient to keep the participation of ICES scientific experts in ICCAT shark stock assessments and vice versa. In addition, discussions have taken place with ICES in 2015 regarding the continuation of the development of stock assessment methods, following on from the highly successful Strategic Initiative on Stock Assessment Methods (SISAM), by potentially holding joint intra-regional stock assessment methods Working Groups from 2016 onwards. Lastly, it was proposed that following the joint ICCAT/ICES training courses that have been held in the past, ICCAT could continue to work with ICES on areas of capacity building.

GEF- Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project

In 2015, requested funding for the extension, technical support and dissemination activities relating to the electronic Bluefin Catch Document scheme did not receive ABNJ Tuna Project support. Despite this, ICCAT is willing to cooperate through the sharing of the final system for adaptation and extension to other oceans/species once completed.

Continued participation in the GEF programme will need to be determined by the Commission. The Secretariat has identified with the ABNJ project coordinator certain areas for possible future cooperation.

The main activities with ICCAT involvement foreseen are:

- The organisation of the tRFMO-MSE Working Group and follow up activities
- Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries

Some funding may be available for port inspection training activities, if the Commission considers that this should be requested.

OSPAR

The Secretariats of OSPAR and ICCAT have discussed and developed guidelines for potential cooperation and collaboration, in line with the guidelines already agreed between ICCAT and CITES.

These draft guidelines are attached for the consideration of the Commission.

[Draft] GUIDELINES FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) AND THE OSPAR COMMISSION (established by THE CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT OF THE NORTH-EAST ATLANTIC)

RECOGNISING that ICCAT and the OSPAR Commission have complementary competences, for Tuna and Tuna-like species fisheries management and environmental protection respectively in the North-East Atlantic, including areas beyond national jurisdiction.;

RECOGNISING that both ICCAT and the OSPAR Commission are intergovernmental organisations which ensure the observance of the normal standards of public bodies in their work;

ICCAT and the OSPAR Commission both have an interest in conserving the living resources of the seas, including those located in areas beyond national jurisdiction. The Contracting Parties to OSPAR and the Contracting Parties to ICCAT therefore endorse the following Guidelines for cooperation:

To promote mutual cooperation towards the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity including protection of marine ecosystems in the North-East Atlantic [of relevance to tuna and tuna-like species], through cooperation in the following areas:

- a) The ICCAT Secretariat is encouraged to provide the OSPAR Secretariat with information to give OSPAR Parties a better understanding of ICCAT's role in the conservation and management of species under its competence.
- b) The OSPAR Secretariat is encouraged to provide the ICCAT Secretariat with information to give its Contracting Parties (CPCs) a better understanding of the goals of OSPAR and the implementation of its decisions.
- c) The Secretariats of ICCAT and OSPAR are encouraged to facilitate communication, collaboration, and information exchange among CPCs to ICCAT and national OSPAR Authorities as feasible and appropriate.
- d) ICCAT will provide the OSPAR Commission with reports of meetings of ICCAT or its subsidiary bodies that are relevant to the OSPAR Commission's work;
- e) The OSPAR Commission will provide ICCAT with reports of its meetings or meetings of its subsidiary bodies relevant to ICCAT's work.
- f) ICCAT and the OSPAR Commission will ensure that there is a free flow of mutually useful information (including official data) between the two organisations.
- g) The OSPAR Commission will draw to the attention of ICCAT any concerns that are raised during the course of its work concerning the need for protection of relevant marine ecosystems in the North-East Atlantic relevant to tuna and tuna-like species. ICCAT and the OSPAR Commission will discuss jointly their respective concerns over the management of relevant human activities that impact on the marine environment and the living marine resources in the North-East Atlantic including in areas beyond national jurisdiction and possible actions and measures to address them;
- h) ICCAT and the OSPAR Commission will encourage the funding and conduct of marine science in the sea areas of the North-East Atlantic, including in areas beyond national jurisdiction that will contribute towards the enhancement of knowledge on:
 - i. the status of populations of marine species relevant to both organisations;
 - ii. the effectiveness of measures aimed at the conservation of marine biological diversity relevant to both organisations in the North-East Atlantic, including in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

Specific areas to explore for cooperation:

- a) to work together to develop a common understanding of the application of the precautionary approach/principle and ecosystem based approach;
- b) understanding of environmental status of habitats and food webs essential to the life cycles of tuna and tuna-like species and healthy populations;
- c) the potential role of marine protected areas/networks in the North East Atlantic for the protection and recovery of tuna and tuna-like species populations;

Practical Arrangements for cooperation:

The Secretariats of ICCAT and OSPAR are encouraged to invite each other to participate as observers in meetings of common interest that they each may organize.

The Secretariats of both organizations will report on any actions taken pursuant to these Guidelines to their respective organizations. Working relations between ICCAT and the OSPAR Commission will be maintained at an appropriate level, complemented by review meetings between the Executive Secretary of ICCAT and the Executive Secretary of the OSPAR Commission, at a frequency established by them.

These Guidelines will become operative on the date that they have been adopted by both the ICCAT and the OSPAR Commission. They will remain operative unless discontinued at any time by written notice served by one upon the other, or replaced by another arrangement. The Guidelines may be modified by written mutual consent, subject to approval by the ICCAT and the OSPAR