

TO CHAIR OF PANEL 1

**STATEMENT BY THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO ON THE PROPOSED ROADMAP
FOR THE PANEL 1 INTERSESSIONAL MEETINGS IN 2021**

As regards document No. PA1-511/2020 on the proposed roadmap for the Panel 1 intersessional meetings in 2021, we would like to make the following comments:

The Kingdom of Morocco recognises the laudable efforts made by all members of Panel 1 to ensure continuity of the work of this subsidiary body through the correspondence communication process, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Document No. PA1-511/2020 proposes that two virtual meetings be held:

- The first in February 2021 to discuss the bigeye tuna TAC for 2022 and beyond as well as the allocation key for TAC distribution;
- The second in April 2021 on limitation of the number of FADs in 2022 and beyond.

The option of engaging in discussions via video conference on two issues of such importance for Panel 1 members i.e. the 2022 bigeye tuna TAC and its allocation key, could prejudice CPCs, in particular developing countries, due to time differences, Internet network and fluctuating speed that causes the power supply to cut off and, consequently, interruptions in the interventions by delegates of these CPCs, making it difficult to follow the discussions and take the relevant decisions.

It should also be recalled that the discussions on TAC were included in the agenda of the 2019 annual meeting of the ICCAT Commission, held in Palma, but that these were postponed, without the Commission having arrived at a conclusion on this point. It is for this reason that Morocco has concerns about the effectiveness of resuming these discussions and about agreement by virtual consensus.

In this regard, the Kingdom of Morocco suggests that the discussions on these two issues be carried over to the in-person intersessional meeting scheduled for June 2021.

As to holding the second meeting in April 2021, the Kingdom of Morocco supports this proposal.

Morocco requests that this statement be circulated to all member CPCs of Panel 1.