

Original: English

**REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ICCAT REGIONAL
OBSERVER PROGRAMME FOR EAST ATLANTIC AND MEDITERRANEAN BLUEFIN TUNA**

ICCAT Secretariat

The Regional Observer Programme for eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna (ROP-BFT) is carried out under the provisions of the *Recommendation by ICCAT Establishing a Multi-annual Management Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea* [Rec. 18-02], as amended by *Recommendation by ICCAT Amending the Recommendation 18-02 Establishing a Multi-annual Management Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea* [Rec. 19-04]. The provisions of this Recommendation stipulate that observers are to be placed by the Secretariat to ensure observer coverage of 100% of purse seine vessels during all the annual fishing season. In this respect, an observer shall be present during the fishing operation; and during all transfer of bluefin tuna to the cages and all harvest of fish from the cage; and during all transfers of bluefin tuna from traps to transport cages.

Implementation in 2020

Given the difficulties posed to international travel arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, some special procedures were proposed by the Commission Chair and agreed by the participants. These can be found in ICCAT Circular 2282/20.

The global pandemic has made 2020 a particularly challenging year for the implementation of the programme. In addition to the usual difficulties, i.e. the increasing number of participating vessels and the very short amount of time between the submission of information and embarkation of observers which causes difficulties both for the Secretariat and for the Consortium, further impediments were encountered in the distribution of equipment.

The Secretariat is pleased to report that ICCAT Regional Observers have been embarked on 187 of the 196 vessels for which requests for observer deployment were received. The only exceptions were:

- 1) One Maltese vessel; the observer assigned to this vessel withdrew from the deployment due to sickness but could not be replaced given the difficulties in mobilising observers from outside Malta and the scarcity of Maltese observers. The Maltese authorities assigned a national inspector to the vessel, and this inspector was assigned a temporary ROP number and provided all the necessary information at the end of the deployment.
- 2) Eight Norwegian vessels, as following a risk assessment carried out by the Norwegian authorities, it was determined that the risk of deploying external observers was too great. The alternative measures implemented by Norway are contained in **COC-307/2020**.
- 3) There were some unfortunate delays at customs of the equipment destined for the Tunisian and Libyan vessels which prevented the embarkation of the observers. These delays were beyond the control of the consortium, the Secretariat, and the Tunisian fisheries authorities. Following many attempts to unblock the situation, 39 Tunisian vessels were authorised by Tunisia to leave port to fish. On returning due to bad weather, all vessels were able to collect their observers with the equipment which had meanwhile been released. The report on the measures taken by Tunisia during this period is contained in **COC-307/2020**.

The Secretariat's interim reports circulated during the season are contained in Appendix 1 to **COC-307/2020**

The list of vessels flagged to the ten CPCs participating in the programme is attached as **Table 1**.

Since 2009, 586¹ farm deployments and 21 trap deployments have been requested, as shown in **Table 2**. The list of farms participating in the programme is attached as **Table 3**, and a list of traps which were observed by regional observers contained in **Table 4**.

All observer reports have been made available to CPCs as Annex 1 and 2 to **COC_305/20**. The submissions from the CPCs involved in relation to any issues of non-compliance are contained in **COC_305/20**.

The Consortium MRAG/COFREPECH continues to implement the Programme. The Report of this Consortium, available as **Annex 1** (Executive Summary attached as **Appendix 1**), contains more details on the implementation of the programme.

Failure to follow the procedures for requesting deployments on farms and extensions to approved deployments continues to cause difficulties in the implementation, e.g. requests after 96 hours – in some cases one day before or even the same day; or requests for observers are not accompanied by proof of payment. It should be noted that the Secretariat cannot process any requests for which payment has not been made. As travel becomes increasingly difficult, and the pandemic has resulted in many observers requiring testing before deployment, the amount of time between receipt of the request and the requested start date is clearly insufficient.

With regard to the international aspect of the programme, non-nationals were deployed as far as possible, but under the current circumstances, in most cases same-nationality observers were deployed.

The lists of potential non-compliance issues detected by observers on vessels, farms and traps are contained in the appendices to **COC-305/2020**.

Future implementation

At present, no significant change is envisaged in the implementation of the ROP-BFT, unless required by any new measures adopted by the Commission. In the short term, early requests for deployment will facilitate timely deployment. The consortium will continue to test observers for COVID-19 before deployment.

¹ At 1 October 2020.

Table 1. List of the 196 purse seiner vessels which operated in 2020.

CPC	VESSEL NAME	ICCAT NUMBER
Albania	Rozafa 15	AT000ALB00010
Albania	Rozafa 23	AT000ALB00011
Algerie	NEPTUNE V	AT000DZA00005
Algerie	YOUNES I	AT000DZA00007
Algerie	CHAHID HASNI SAIDI	AT000DZA00009
Algerie	BENI LOUMA	AT000DZA00015
Algerie	ECHAHID MUSTAPHA BENBOULAID	AT000DZA00017
Algerie	HABIB ALLAH I	AT000DZA00818
Algerie	FEL ABDELKADER	AT000DZA00819
Algerie	EL CHOUROUK	AT000DZA00820
Algerie	SID - AHMED	AT000DZA00549
Algerie	NEPTUNE VI	AT000DZA00006
Algerie	LALLA MANOUN	AT000DZA00817
Algerie	Belkis Dounia	AT000DZA00011
Algerie	EL DJAZAIR	AT000DZA00013
Algerie	SIDI MAAMAR	AT000DZA00018
Algerie	HADJ SAID	AT000DZA00978
Algerie	BRAHAM	AT000DZA00014
Algerie	EL MAJD (former NOUHA)	AT000DZA00332
Algerie	SIDI SLIMANE	AT000DZA00001
Algerie	AHMED ROBAINÉ	AT000DZA00816
Algerie	Sidi Slimane II	AT000DZA00792
Algerie	Ahmed Robaine II	AT000DZA00976
Algerie	BORHANE I	AT000DZA00384
Algerie	SERAJ	AT000DZA00977
Egypt	Safinat Nooh	AT000EGY00010
EU-Croatia	SARDINA I	ATEU0HRV00133
EU-Croatia	SARDINA II	ATEU0HRV00161
EU-Croatia	PREKO	ATEU0HRV00021
EU-Croatia	HRVATSKI USPJEH	ATEU0HRV00007
EU-Croatia	NEPTUN I	ATEU0HRV00134
EU-Croatia	OSLJAK DVA	ATEU0HRV00020
EU-Croatia	CICILO	ATEU0HRV00081
EU-Croatia	PONOS	ATEU0HRV00058
EU-Croatia	KALI	ATEU0HRV00037
EU-Croatia	EVA	ATEU0HRV00049
EU-Croatia	TULJAN DVA	ATEU0HRV00155
EU-Croatia	MARLIN	ATEU0HRV00156
EU-Croatia	PELAGOS II	ATEU0HRV00017
EU-Croatia	KORNAT	ATEU0HRV00153
EU-Croatia	CARICA	ATEU0HRV00163
EU-Croatia	TACOMA	ATEU0HRV00164
EU-Croatia	NEPTUN II	ATEU0HRV00140
EU-Cyprus	ALKYA	ATEU0CYP00103
EU-España	NUEVO ELORZ	ATEU0ESP00250
EU-España	NUEVO PANCHILLETÁ	ATEU0ESP00276
EU-España	LEONARDO BRULL SEGON	ATEU0ESP00173
EU-España	GEPUS	ATEU0ESP00119
EU-España	LA FRAU DOS	ATEU0ESP00172
EU-España	TIO GEL SEGON	ATEU0ESP00394
EU-France	ANNE ANTOINE 2	ATEU0FRA00003
EU-France	CHRISDERIC II	ATEU0FRA00019
EU-France	CHRISDERIC V	ATEU0FRA14500
EU-France	CISBERLANDE 5	ATEU0FRA00021
EU-France	ERIC MARIN	ATEU0FRA00087
EU-France	GERALD JEAN III	ATEU0FRA00026
EU-France	GERALD JEAN IV	ATEU0FRA00093

CPC	VESSEL NAME	ICCAT NUMBER
EU-France	GERARD LUC IV	ATEU0FRA00028
EU-France	JANVIER GIORDANO	ATEU0FRA00037
EU-France	JANVIER LOUIS RAPHAEL	ATEU0FRA00083
EU-France	JEAN LOUIS RAPHAEL 2	ATEU0FRA00038
EU-France	JEAN MARIE CHRISTIAN 4	ATEU0FRA00041
EU-France	JEAN MARIE CHRISTIAN 6	ATEU0FRA00043
EU-France	JEAN MARIE CHRISTIAN 7	ATEU0FRA00078
EU-France	JEANMARIE CHRISTIAN 3	ATEU0FRA00040
EU-France	ORION SEA STAR	ATEU0FRA00027
EU-France	PIERRE JOSEPH SALVADOR	ATEU0FRA00088
EU-France	SAINT SOPHIE FRANCOIS 2	ATEU0FRA00064
EU-France	SAINT SOPHIE FRANCOIS 3	ATEU0FRA00065
EU-France	VENT DU NORD II	ATEU0FRA00090
EU-France	VILLE D'AGDE IV	ATEU0FRA00089
EU-France	VILLE D'ARZEW 2	ATEU0FRA00077
EU-Italy	ATLANTE	ATEU0ITA00065
EU-Italy	ALTO MARE PRIMO	ATEU0ITA00631
EU-Italy	GAETANO PADRE	ATEU0ITA00693
EU-Italy	MICHELANGELO	ATEU0ITA00671
EU-Italy	ANGELO CATANIA	ATEU0ITA00636
EU-Italy	GIUSEPPE FAUCI	ATEU0ITA10134
EU-Italy	GENEVIEVE PRIMA	ATEU0ITA00654
EU-Italy	MARIA ANTONIETTA	ATEU0ITA00368
EU-Italy	PADRE PIO P	ATEU0ITA00470
EU-Italy	SPARVIERO UNO	ATEU0ITA00565
EU-Italy	VERGINE DE ROSARIO	ATEU0ITA00617
EU-Italy	ANGELA MADRE	ATEU0ITA00635
EU-Italy	ENZA MADRE	ATEU0ITA00188
EU-Italy	GIUSEPPE PADRE SECONDO	ATEU0ITA00289
EU-Italy	LUCIA MADRE	ATEU0ITA00664
EU-Italy	MADONNA DI FATIMA	ATEU0ITA00348
EU-Italy	MARIA GRAZIA	ATEU0ITA00694
EU-Italy	VICENZO FERRIGNO	ATEU0ITA00623
EU-Italy	FUTURA PRIMA	ATEU0ITA00651
EU-Malta	TA MATTEW*	ATEU0MLT00001
Libya	AL-MUSTAKBEL	AT000LBY00085
Libya	ALAMWAJE ALHADERE	AT000LBY00078
Libya	ALBAHR ELHADER	AT000LBY00077
Libya	HANIBAL	AT000LBY00047
Libya	KHANDEEL 2	AT000LBY00038
Libya	ELHARES 2	AT000LBY00074
Libya	CYRENE	AT000LBY00010
Libya	MORINA	AT000LBY00028
Libya	NAWASI AL KIR 1	AT000LBY00015
Libya	RAS ETIN	AT000LBY00022
Libya	OEA	AT000LBY00026
Libya	AL MADINA	AT000LBY00027
Libya	ALRWASI 1	AT000LBY00046
Libya	OZU II	AT000LBY00009
Libya	ESSARIR	AT000LBY00062
Maroc	AZROU 1	AT000MAR00081
Maroc	MEDIOUNA	AT000MAR01418
Norway	BRENNHOLM*	AT000NOR00013
Norway	ORFJORD*	AT000NOR00012
Norway	M/S SJARMØR*	AT000NOR00019
Norway	M/S BLUEFIN *	AT000NOR00004
Norway	HILLERSØY*	AT000NOR00001
Norway	SPJÆRINGEN*	AT000NOR00018

CPC	VESSEL NAME	ICCAT NUMBER
Norway	ALBACORE*	AT000NOR00016
Norway	VESTBRIS*	AT000NOR00017
Syria	JAWHARAT ALMUHITAT	AT000SYR00024
Syria	FESAL	AT000SYR00019
Tunisia	HAJ HEDI	AT000TUN00007
Tunisia	HASSEN	AT000TUN00008
Tunisia	IMEN	AT000TUN00010
Tunisia	JAMEL	AT000TUN00011
Tunisia	MABROUK	AT000TUN00015
Tunisia	TAPSUS	AT000TUN00024
Tunisia	HADJ MOKHTAR	AT000TUN00025
Tunisia	TIJANI	AT000TUN00026
Tunisia	GHEDIR EL GHOLLA	AT000TUN00030
Tunisia	GHALI	AT000TUN00036
Tunisia	YOSRI	AT000TUN00040
Tunisia	SAYFALLAH	AT000TUN00043
Tunisia	JAWHAR	AT000TUN00046
Tunisia	ABDERRAHMEN	AT000TUN00047
Tunisia	EL HOUSSAINE	AT000TUN00049
Tunisia	MOHAMED SADOK	AT000TUN00051
Tunisia	FUTURO 1	AT000TUN00065
Tunisia	DENPHIR 1	AT000TUN00479
Tunisia	AMIR	AT000TUN00506
Tunisia	MOHAMED ALI	AT000TUN00973
Tunisia	DOU ALLAH	AT000TUN00976
Tunisia	OUUELED HAMMALI	AT000TUN00979
Tunisia	MABROUKA	AT000TUN00980
Tunisia	YOSRI II	AT000TUN00981
Tunisia	EL BEJI	AT000TUN00984
Tunisia	EL BEHI	AT000TUN00985
Tunisia	EL HAJ SALEM	AT000TUN01051
Tunisia	ASSIL	AT000TUN01048
Tunisia	HADJ SADOK	AT000TUN01049
Tunisia	WASSIM	AT000TUN01050
Tunisia	HADJ AHMED	AT000TUN00070
Tunisia	AWLED SAHBI (former AOUELED ESSAHBI)	AT000TUN00977
Tunisia	EL KODS	AT000TUN00978
Tunisia	MOHAMED YASSINE	AT000TUN00045
Tunisia	SALLEM	AT000TUN00023
Tunisia	IBN RACHIQ	AT000TUN00037
Tunisia	RIADH	AT000TUN00495
Tunisia	ABOU CHAMMA	AT000TUN00002
Tunisia	MONTAÇAR	AT000TUN00974
Tunisia	FAKHREDDINE RRAZI II	AT000TUN00975
Tunisia	MOHAMED SALIM II	AT000TUN00983
Tunisia	MOHAMED ZIED II	AT000TUN00986
Tunisia	HAJ ISSAOUI	AT000TUN00987
Tunisia	HADJ ALI III	AT000TUN00988
Tunisia	MOHAMED ADEM	AT000TUN00012
Tunisia	EL HORCHANI	AT000TUN00009
Tunisia	EL KHALIJ	AT000TUN00014
Tunisia	JANNET 2	AT000TUN00044
Tunisia	ESSAIDA JANNET	AT000TUN00050
Turkey	AZİZLER - II	AT000TUR00004
Turkey	FAT BALIKCILIK	AT000TUR00020
Turkey	FATOGLU KARDESLER 2	AT000TUR00021
Turkey	HACI MUSTAFA KULOGLU	AT000TUR00024
Turkey	MAMATILER	AT000TUR00031

CPC	VESSEL NAME	ICCAT NUMBER
Turkey	RAFET REIS 3	AT000TUR00041
Turkey	MAVİ AY BALIKÇILIK-1	AT000TUR00050
Turkey	MUZAFFER KARDEŞLER 3	AT000TUR00062
Turkey	BURHAN REİS-5	AT000TUR00155
Turkey	ISIKLAR 4	AT000TUR00159
Turkey	ARICIOGULLARI 1	AT000TUR00160
Turkey	AĞAOĞULLARI-5	AT000TUR00182
Turkey	GÜLER KARDEŞLER- 3	AT000TUR00223
Turkey	MEHMET KAPTAN BALIKÇILIK	AT000TUR00247
Turkey	ZUTUK REIS 2	AT000TUR00262
Turkey	EMINOĞULLARI 4	AT000TUR00283
Turkey	ARICIOGULLARI 2	AT000TUR00372
Turkey	AVCI BABA	AT000TUR00375
Turkey	GÖRENLER 3	AT000TUR00393
Turkey	MAMULI BALIKÇILIK	AT000TUR00406
Turkey	MUSTAFA REİS BALIKÇILIK	AT000TUR00451
Turkey	BOZOĞLU KARDESLER	AT000TUR00498
Turkey	GÖRENLER 4	AT000TUR00506
Turkey	İLHAN YILMAZ -1	AT000TUR00524
Turkey	TUNCAY SAGUN-7	AT000TUR07658
Turkey	KORKMAZLAR BALIKÇILIK	AT000TUR07905
Turkey	KASIRGA 2	AT000TUR07906

*Observers could not be deployed, but alternative measures were taken, and data was made available to the consortium

Table 2. Number of farm/trap deployments by year*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of farm deployments</i>	<i>Number of trap deployments</i>
2009	10	
2010	52	
2011	54	
2012	50	
2013	47	2
2014	44	3
2015	56	3
2016	44	2
2017	51	2
2018	57	4
2019	71	4
2020	50	3

* At 1st October 2020.

Table 3. Farming facilities on which ICCAT Regional Observers were deployed in 2019/2020.

<i>CPC</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00006	ATEU1HRV00006
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00008	ATEU1HRV00008
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00011	ATEU1HRV00011
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00012	ATEU1HRV00012
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00015	
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00016	
EU-Malta	ATEU1MLT00001	ATEU1MLT00001
EU-Malta	ATEU1MLT00002	ATEU1MLT00002
EU-Malta	ATEU1MLT00003	ATEU1MLT00003
EU-Malta	ATEU1MLT00004	ATEU1MLT00004
EU-Malta	ATEU1MLT00007	ATEU1MLT00007
EU-Malta	ATEU1MLT00008	ATEU1MLT00008
EU-Portugal	ATEU1PRT00002	ATEU1PRT00002
EU-Spain	ATEU1ESP00001	ATEU1ESP00001
EU-Spain	ATEU1ESP00003	ATEU1ESP00003
EU-Spain	ATEU1ESP00004	ATEU1ESP00004
EU-Spain	ATEU1ESP00005	ATEU1ESP00005
Morocco	AT001MAR00002	AT001MAR00002
Tunisia		AT001TUN00001
Tunisia	AT001TUN00002	AT001TUN00002
Tunisia	AT001TUN00004	AT001TUN00004
Turkey	AT001TUR00004	AT001TUR00004
Turkey	AT001TUR00005	AT001TUR00005
Turkey	AT001TUR00010	AT001TUR00010
Turkey	AT001TUR00011	AT001TUR00011
Turkey	AT001TUR00013	AT001TUR00013
Turkey	AT001TUR00014	AT001TUR00014

Table 4. Traps observed under the ICCAT Regional Observers Programme in 2019/20.

<i>CPC</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>
EU-Italy	ATEU2ITA00003	ATEU2ITA00003
EU-Italy	ATEU2ITA00009	ATEU2ITA00009
Morocco	AT002MAR00002	AT002MAR00002
Morocco	AT002MAR00003	AT002MAR00003
Morocco	AT002MAR00004	AT002MAR00004
Morocco	AT002MAR00005	AT002MAR00005
Morocco	AT002MAR00006	AT002MAR00006
		AT002MAR00007
Morocco	AT002MAR00009	AT002MAR00009
Morocco	AT002MAR00010	AT002MAR00010
Morocco	AT002MAR00011	AT002MAR00011
Morocco	AT002MAR00012	AT002MAR00012
Morocco	AT002MAR00013	AT002MAR00013
Morocco	AT002MAR00014	AT002MAR00014
Morocco	AT002MAR00015	AT002MAR00015
Morocco	AT002MAR00016	AT002MAR00016
Morocco	AT002MAR00017	AT002MAR00017
Morocco	AT002MAR00018	AT002MAR00018

Consortium's report on the implementation of the ROP-BFT

Executive Summary

The service provider for implementing year eleven (April 2020 / March 2021) of the ICCAT ROP-BFT (hereafter the Programme) comprises of a consortium led by MRAG based in London and COFREPECHE in Paris, assisted by regional partners located around the Mediterranean. This is the eleventh year that the Consortium has been awarded the contract to implement the Programme and experience gained in previous years has been used to enhance the systems in place for recruitment, training and deployment of observers and overall performance of the Programme.

The Programme allows the Commission to assess compliance with the regulatory framework. This report summarises the 186 deployments on authorised purse seiners during the 2020 fishing season, as well as the 35 farm deployments and 5 trap deployments completed to date since the start of the current contract. In addition, 50 farm deployments are included from the previous season.

One hundred percent observer coverage has been achieved on authorised purse seiners, farms and traps within the remit of the programme, which included monitoring all fishing, transfer, caging and harvesting activities with the exception of one observer who fell ill and was unable to be replaced, and the Norwegian fleet which has not had the deployment of ROP observers permitted by the Norwegian Authorities.

This report describes the key issues and developments in implementing the Programme in year eleven in line with the requirements. These are divided into operational and technical categories and provide perspective on issues that affected the observer role during deployments. The ability of observers to estimate numbers of tuna and comparisons with official estimates during transfer and caging operations are reviewed. Potential non-compliance events recorded by observers are summarised, including both those reported for transfer and caging operations as well as for general events.

This year was heavily impacted the COVID-19 pandemic, and the effect on the programme and measures taken by the consortium in cooperation with the Secretariat and respective CPCs are reviewed.

Furthermore, the Recommendation 19-10 was introduced in 2020 and placed specific safety requirement on the mobilisation of observers. This report provides details on how the consortium implemented these requirements.