

REPORT OF THE VIRTUAL WORKING GROUP ON REVIEW OF RULES OF PROCEDURE*Online meeting 8 July 2020***1. Opening of the meeting**

The Commission Chair, Raul Delgado, opened the meeting and welcomed all the participants. He recalled that during the 26th Regular Meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) held in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, from 18 to 25 November 2019, the Commission approved the establishment of a Virtual Working Group on the review of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission (VWG-RRP). It was agreed at that time that the working group would be chaired by the Commission Chair.

2. Introduction of participants

The Chair listed those who had joined the meeting. The list of participants is attached as **Appendix 1**. The Secretariat served as rapporteur.

3. Brief introduction by the Secretariat on Teams meeting procedures

The Assistant Executive Secretary gave a brief introduction on the Teams meeting procedures to be used and instructions for requesting the floor and intervening.

It was noted that no interpretation was available, which put non-English speaking delegates at a serious disadvantage. It was agreed that the Secretariat should explore possibilities for on-line interpretation for any future meetings of the VWG-RRP, noting that some interpretation platforms, like Zoom, have some restrictions in some CPCs.

4. Review of mandate /TORs/ expected life-span of the WG

It was noted that various documents were on the meeting cloud site, including input from some CPCs concerning the mandate of the Working Group.

Many delegations were of the view that the VWG-RRP should focus its efforts first on the two major topics which had been raised at the 2019 Commission meeting, but this would not preclude discussion on other issues once work on these was concluded, such as those developed in the proposals made by El Salvador, Senegal and Chinese Taipei available on this Working Group's website. With respect to issues other than the two priority matters, one CPC recalled its earlier written comments that the working group's first step should be scoping and framing any other issues of procedure that may be in need of clarification, which would then be shared with Commission for input before delegations begin the substantive work of developing proposals. This will allow the VWG-RRP to focus its efforts more effectively in order to provide clear advice to the Commission on which issues need to be addressed and how.

There was general agreement that the work of the VWG-RRP should be completed before the end of 2021; the need for its continued life beyond that time should be considered at the 2021 annual meeting.

There was some discussion on whether or not it was appropriate to continue the virtual meeting given the lack of interpretation. It was agreed that some issues, primarily the election of officers, should be resolved before the next annual meeting if at all possible given that 2021 was an election year. It was further agreed that the VWG-RRP should have a first exchange of views via correspondence. Once more concrete proposals were available in writing, the VWG-RRP could meet again virtually to discuss them and determine next steps.

5. Identification of key issues and priorities

The working group agreed that the two key issues for considerations would be: 1) the process for the election of Commission officers, and 2) the process for submitting proposals and the progress of these following submission. One CPC noted that the first matter is extremely important and needs to be resolved before the Commission meeting next year, otherwise the Commission may face difficulties to proceed with the election process of Commission officers with the current rules, which, in the view of some, caused serious confusion at the annual meeting last year. With regard to the second item, the Working Group noted that the Virtual Working Group on Sustainable Financing (VWG-SF) was also considering ways to improve proposal submissions and care should be taken to avoid overlap on this and potentially other issues.

6. Identification of issues which may need consideration; bearing in mind work ongoing in other virtual WGs.

The need to consider the process of decision making through correspondence and virtual means was proposed for possible future consideration. A submission by a CPC on this point was available on the meeting cloud site.

Regarding possible areas of overlap between the VWG-RRP and VWG-SF, the STACFAD Chair proposed that the two WGs coordinate to avoid duplication of effort and determine the topics to be discussed within each.

7. Plan for first phase of intersessional work and assignment of tasks

It was agreed that the Chair would work with the Secretariat to request inputs from working group members on the two priority issues and determine the procedure for advancing these. Once work on these was concluded, discussion could continue on other matters, as appropriate.

8. Other Matters

The issue of acquiring the services of a legal advisor for Commission matters was raised by Gabon The Executive Secretary clarified that what the Secretariat had requested from the Commission, and obtained its agreement last year, was the need to have external legal support for internal issues only at the Secretariat level such as contracts and other issues. He stressed that this aspect of legal support should not be confused with the idea of hiring a legal advisor within the Secretariat to interpret the Convention or Commission decisions, such as Recommendations and Resolutions.

9. Date of next meeting of the WG

The Chair indicated that the timing of the next meeting would be determined, and members duly informed, following progress on the initial work done by correspondence on the topics noted in Item 5 above. Meeting logistics would also be affected by the ability to identify an appropriate platform accessible to all and that would support simultaneous interpretation. The working group members supported the Chair's proposal.

10. Conclusions and closure

The participants thanked the Chair and Secretariat for their efforts in facilitating the work of the Working Group. The meeting was adjourned, on the understanding that information on next steps would be sent to all participants as soon as possible.

The report of the meeting was agreed by correspondence.

Appendix 1

List of participants¹

Contracting Party	Member's name
Algeria	Omar Kaddour
	Sarah Cheniti
	Nadia Aklil Guerni
Brazil	Fabio Hazin
Canada	Justin Turple
	Dale Marsden
	Robynn-Bella Smith-Laplante
El Salvador	Ana Marlene Galdámez de Arévalo
	Doris Beatriz Coto Herrera
	Bernal Alberto Chavarría Valverde
European Union	Arnaud Peyronnet
	Fiona Harford
Gabon	Georges Henri Mba Asseko
	Davy Angueko
Ghana	Michael Arthur-Dadzie
Iceland	Stefan Asmundsson
Japan	Takeshi Miwa
Morocco	Bouchta Aichane
	Fatima Zohra Hassouni
	Yassine El Aroussi
	Hicham Grichat
Nicaragua	Roberto Chacon Rivas
	Julio Guevara
	Julio Cesar Saborío
Norway	Sigrun M. Holst
	Maja K. Rodriguez Brix
	Elisabeth Sjørdahl
Panama	Flor Torrijos
Senegal	Marième Diagne Talla
	Mamadou Seye
Tunisia	Hamadi Mejri
Turkey	Burcu Bilgin Topçu
United States	Deirdre Warner-Kramer
	Kimberly Blankenkoker
	Derek Campbell
Collaborators	Member's name
Chinese-Taipei	Yen-Ching CHAO
	Yen-Kai CHEN
	Shih-Ming KAO
Colombia	Nicolás del Castillo
	Carlos Augusto Borda Rodriguez
	Sara Liliana Zafra

¹ Green shading indicates those who participated in this meeting. Nonetheless, the Secretariat could not track all participants and would appreciate if all those who attended the VWG-RRP meeting could check that their name has been correctly highlighted.

In addition, the Chair of the Commission, Mr. [Raúl Delgado](mailto:rdelgado@arap.gob.pa) (rdelgado@arap.gob.pa), the Chair of STACFAD, Mr. [Hasan Alper Elekon](mailto:hasanalper.elekon@tarimorman.gov.tr) (hasanalper.elekon@tarimorman.gov.tr) and the following Secretariat staff will also be engaged in the work of the VWG-RRP:

Position	Member's name
Executive Secretary	Camille Jean Pierre Manel
Assist. Exec. Secretary	Miguel Neves dos Santos
Head Adm. Finan. Dpt.	Juan Antonio Moreno
Head Compliance Dpt.	Jenny Cheatle
Head Research and Statistics	Mauricio Ortíz