

Original: English

**LETTER FROM THE COMMISSION CHAIR ON PROGRESS ON
ESSENTIAL COMMISSION BUSINESS TO BE DISCUSSED VIA CORRESPONDENCE
(ROUND #3 - PART II)**

21 December 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Since my last letter, we have made good progress, with three subsidiary bodies having their reports adopted and most of the remaining subsidiary bodies being able to close their discussions. I should like to briefly update you on the progress we have made to date and propose a way forward to conclude the 2020 Commission decision process.

As you may recall, in order to be able to ensure the effectiveness of our measures in 2021, I proposed in my previous letter to divide the adoption process into two, or if necessary three, "blocks". I am pleased to inform you that Block 1, which comprised the reports from Panel 3, Panel 4 and STACFAD, is now considered adopted, together with the documents cited in those reports. One minor change to the southern albacore carry-over for South Africa has been incorporated into the Panel 3 report, which has been posted as PA3-750A.

I am now providing you with Block 2 that comprises the reports from Panel 1, Panel 2 and PWG, which I now submit for formal adoption by the Commission, together with the documents cited in those reports. Sincerely, I hope that under the circumstances all decisions adopted by the subsidiary bodies can be endorsed by the Commission without further debate. In order to ensure continued management regimes for our more vulnerable stocks, I would urge all CPCs to refrain from re-opening any issues already agreed until 2021.

Any comments on these should be sent by **11 January 2021 (18:00 Madrid time)**, after which they will be considered to be formally adopted.

I hope that the last report from the Compliance Committee, which has required more time for finalisation, will be available in the very near future once the deadline for comments on the suggested decisions has passed and can be adopted before the end of January 2021.

In addition to the issues being discussed in the Panels and other subsidiary bodies, please see below a brief update on the progress of Plenary issues for the different agenda items:

4. Review and endorsement, if appropriate, of proposals put forward by the Panels 1 and 2

The Chairs of Panels 1 and 2 have made available the attached reports, listing the decisions requiring endorsement and adoption by the Commission. Comments on these are invited by **11 January 2021**. Note that full consensus has not been reached in Panel 1; therefore, any outstanding business must be finalised through this session of the Plenary. I would therefore urge all CPCs to try to reach consensus on PA1-503A before the 11 January 2021. I am available for any assistance that may be required. Failure to reach agreement will risk the absence of some measures in 2021 for tropical tunas, but it should be further noted that those provisions of Rec. 19-02, which are not limited in time will remain in force in 2021.

5. Review and endorsement, if appropriate, of the decisions taken by the Conservation and Management Measures Compliance Committee (COC)

Given the more specific needs of this subsidiary body, a deadline for comments was set to **23 December 2020**. I believe that the report of the Chair of the Compliance Committee will be provided as soon as possible after that, to be formally adopted in January 2021, but I will liaise with the COC Chair and keep you abreast of developments.

6. Review and endorsement, if appropriate, of the decisions taken by Permanent Working Group for the Improvement of ICCAT Statistics and Conservation Measures (PWG)

The Chair of PWG has provided a revised agenda for the IMM meeting ([PWG-422-App-1A already posted](#)) and written the report listing the decisions requiring endorsement and adoption by the Commission, attached to this letter. Note that not all the attachments are being circulated at this time but are available on the document web site and will be included in the final publication.

7. Intersessional meetings in 2021

With my last letter I circulated a second draft ICCAT calendar for 2021 ([posted as document PLE-106A](#)) and requested comments on this. I, and my fellow Chairs, have already received several comments which are contained in the related attached Excel file. From these comments, I believe that some modification to the tentative schedule is required and I am attaching a new revised proposal to this letter which will be posted as PLE-106B, which contains changes and/or removal of the scheduled Panel 1, IMM and Billfishes Species Group meetings, and a new meeting of the Online Reporting Technology Working Group. I trust this is acceptable to everyone and will be forwarding this revised version to plenary in my report for formal approval.

I should also like to remind you of my request that any CPC which believes that it may be in a position to host any of the in-person intersessional meetings scheduled to be held in 2021 inform the Secretariat and myself as soon as possible. I do understand the difficulties in making any firm commitment at this stage, but expressions of interest would be welcomed.

8. Other matters

As mentioned in my previous letter, after consultation with the members of the *Virtual Working Group on the Review of the Rules of Procedure* (VWG-RRP), I will convene an intersessional meeting of the VWG-RRP during the first trimester of 2021, in order to proceed and conclude the works aiming the approval of a new version of the *Rules of Procedure* prior to the 2021 Commission meeting.

9. Date and place of the next meeting of the Commission

Since I have not received additional comments, the 27th Regular Meeting of the Commission will be held between 15 and 22 November 2021, on the assumption that an in-person meeting can be held.

Since at this stage the Secretariat has not received any expression of interest to host our 2021 annual meeting, I reiterate my request that any CPC who believes they may be in a position to host the meeting to inform the Secretariat and myself as soon as possible, and preferably before **31 January 2021**. I do understand the difficulties in making any firm commitment at this stage, but expressions of interest would be welcomed so that these can be followed up as early in the year as possible, depending on the evolution of the pandemic.

10. Adoption of the report containing the decisions of the Commission

As the correspondence period has already closed for PWG and Panels 1 and 2, I am now seeking formal adoption of the attached reports by **11 January 2021 (18:00 Madrid time)**. Accordingly, as per ICCAT Circular #7324/20, all CPCs and Observer delegations may make statements in writing to the Plenary. Please note that Statements should be brief position statements and should be clearly headed as a STATEMENT. Only statements of **not more than 450 words will be translated** and attached to the final report. **Comments** other than in the form of statements may also be provided but **will not be translated** to avoid delays on the decision-making process.

At the end of the decision-making process, Observers may also provide the Secretariat with one consolidated Statement to each subsidiary body and the Plenary, which will be translated and included in the 2020 Commission proceedings, but not posted in the document's webpage. However, consolidated Statements that exceed the limit of 450 words will not be published, unless provided in the three official languages of the Commissions.

Finally, I should like to thank you all for the excellent progress to date and look forward to concluding this process in the most efficient manner possible.

Wishing you Season's greetings,

Commission Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Raul Delgado', written in a cursive style.

Raul Delgado