

**STATEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TO STACFAD  
ROUND 2**

**SCRS research activities requiring funding for 2021  
(Document STF-209A/20)**

The European Union welcomes the prioritisation of the SCRS work undertaken for 2021 and the resulting amendments proposed to the SCRS budget. We would like to reiterate our views that a more sustainable approach is required for funding the SCRS activities so as not to over-rely on voluntary contributions from the CPCs in the future.

**Report on Virtual Working Group for Sustainable Financing (VWG-SF)  
(Document STF-205A/20)**

The European Union reiterates its supports for the work of the ICCAT Virtual Working Group on Sustainable Finances regarding the Meeting Participation Fund (MPF) and shares the view that the fund should be managed in such a way to ensure a wider participation by the developing States, in particular those that are most in need.

Regarding the draft rules of procedure for the administration of the Meeting Participation Fund, and their inclusion in the draft recommendation on the establishment of a MPF, the European Union would have the following comments on the criteria applicable for the use of the MPF:

- The European Union understands the necessity, in the case of the annual meetings of the Commission, to facilitate the participation of a delegation larger than four delegates but this has to be considered in the context of the limited resources available under the fund and the objective of maximising participation by CPCs. We therefore welcome the proposal from the Chair to have a maximum of six delegates per CPCs whose participation would be eligible under the MPF;
- The European Union recalls, as it has done on numerous occasions, that the minimum criteria established in the draft proposal for a recommendation [Appendix 2(A) to STF -205] and the draft rules of procedure for the administration of the MPF [Appendix 3 to STF-205] will need to be adhered to for the EU's voluntary contributions to be made available. For this purpose, all the applicants will need to provide the necessary level of information to facilitate the transfer of the funds from the EU to ICCAT to cover the expenses associated with their participation. As it stands in the current draft, those criteria should be met to the greatest extent possible but are not mandatory to benefit from the MPF under ICCAT rules, but these criteria will be binding in order to benefit from the EU voluntary contribution to the MPF. Therefore, the MPF will have to be managed under two different sets of rules;
- The European Union can agree with the proposal to change the deadline for application to 75 days to take into account long process to arrange travel visas.