

**REPORT ON ESSENTIAL BUSINESS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND  
ADMINISTRATION (STACFAD)**

(All the documents referred to in this report are available on the [2020 Commission documents webpage](#))

**1. Reports from the Secretariat**

**1.1 2020 Administrative Report**

No comments were received on Document STF-201, which has been endorsed by STACFAD.

**1.2 2020 Financial Report**

No comments were received on Document STF-202, which has been endorsed by STACFAD.

**1.3 Review of progress of the payment of arrears and voting rights**

No comments were received on Document STF-204A, which has been endorsed by STACFAD.

All these reports are being put forward for endorsement by the Commission.

**2. Assistance to developing CPCs and identification of mechanism to finance the Meeting Participation Fund and other capacity building activities**

This issue was discussed under Item 6 below.

**3. Consideration of financial implications of ICCAT conservation and management measures proposed**

Given that the measures currently under discussion are mainly a continuation of those previously adopted, it is not foreseen that there will be any additional resource implications, other than those contained in the previous measures. This issue remains to be reviewed in 2021.

**4. Consideration of financial implications of SCRS requests**

The European Union welcomed the prioritisation of the SCRS work undertaken for 2021 and the resulting amendments proposed to the SCRS budget. The EU reiterated their views that a more sustainable approach was required for funding the SCRS activities so as not to over-rely on voluntary contributions from the CPCs in the future.

Following on discussions at last year's STACFAD meeting, Canada echoed the EU's request that the SCRS Chair ensure the SCRS's work items be prioritized before requests for funding are submitted in 2021. With respect to specific SCRS activities, Canada reiterated their concerns about dedicating funds to a tropical tunas MSE. While developing such an MSE is an important long-term goal, Canada suggested that the focus of the SCRS's TRO time, effort, and monies should be on conducting a stock assessment for skipjack, while the Commission should focus on the implementation of science advice for bigeye and yellowfin. Thus, this MSE does not seem to be the best possible place to allocate these resources at this time. If, despite the above concerns, the TRO MSE is to be provided funding in 2021, then the Commission should provide guidance on how Panel 1 would like to manage the three species to avoid funding process with no agreed terms of reference which could lead to a disconnect between what the Commission wants and what the SCRS produces. The statements by Canada (STF\_215) and the EU (STF\_218) are attached as XXX.

Taking into account the concerns expressed, as well as the requests by some delegations to classify the tropical tunas MSE process as priority, since the Commission agreed to fund up to €50,000 for the tropical tunas MSE in 2019, the Chair suggested keeping the funding for tropical tunas MSE by reducing the proposed budget accordingly (i.e. €50,000). This would allow the SCRS to proceed with the work as per the ICCAT MSE roadmap adopted in 2019.

It was agreed that the Commission should review the progress of works and the feedback from the SCRS on the tropical tunas MSE roadmap at the 2021 Commission meeting and take any further decisions to avoid a disconnect between what the Commission wants and what the SCRS produces.

A new version of SCRS Research Activities Requiring Funding for 2021 was agreed and STF\_209B/2020 is being forwarded to the Commission for adoption.

#### **5. Consideration of other programs/activities which may require additional or extra-budgetary funding**

No specific discussions took place to identify any resource needs, other than those previously agreed. This issue remains to be reviewed in 2021.

#### **6. Review of progress of the VWG-SF**

The report of the Working Group is available as STF\_205 and was approved by STACFAD. This document contained two appendices for approval by STACFAD.

The template provided in Appendix 1 (Letter on arrears) has not required a decision to be discussed via correspondence by STACFAD since it was developed by the VWG-SF in line with the decision taken by the Commission in 2019 and already started to be used as the second reminder letters to the CPCs that had two years or more of arrears in the payment of contributions.

As to Appendix 2 (Draft Recommendation on the MPF) and Appendix 3 (Draft Rules of Procedure on the MPF), the work of the ICCAT Virtual Working Group on Sustainable Finances (VWG-SF) regarding the Meeting Participation Fund (MPF) were broadly supported by CPCs to ensure that the fund be managed in a way to allow a wider participation by the developing States, in particular those that are most in need. In this context, the proposed threshold for application based on number of official delegates attending the meeting through utilization of other funds/resources, as well as the deadline for applications to take into account long processes to arrange travel visas, were discussed further. Parties welcomed the new proposals by the Chair to set a longer deadline for applications and a higher threshold limit for official delegations in cases of special and regular Commission meetings.

Following some edits based on comments from Algeria, Canada, European Union, Morocco and Senegal, Appendix 2 of this document was approved as STF\_205\_Appendix\_2B. Algeria reiterated its concerns with respect to the proposed application procedure stipulated under paragraph 3 of point 5 of STF\_205\_Appendix\_3B. It was recalled that the deadline for applications was changed to 75 days under point 2 and 60 days under point 4 to further extend the period for visa procedures. The final editorial proposals made by Canada (STF-217) were incorporated and new version was posted as STF\_205\_Appendix\_3C.

Both these appendices are being put forward to the Commission for adoption.

It was also agreed that the work of this virtual working group should continue in 2021.

The Statements from Canada (STF\_211 and STF-217), European Union (STF\_210, STF\_214 and STF\_218) and Senegal (STF\_212) are attached as Appendices to the report.

**7. Review of Budget and Contracting Party contributions for the period 2021**

A revised budget for 2021 was circulated by the Secretariat on **26 August 2020**, and a modified version taking into account the comments received was provided on **1 October 2020**. Following some adjustments based on comments from Canada on STF-203, there have been no objections to this budget contained in STF-203A which is now adopted by the STACFAD and being put forward to the Plenary.

The eBCD budget was also approved as contained in document STF-207.

Both these documents are being put forward to the Commission for adoption

**8. Recommendations to the Commission based on findings of above**

I recommend to the Commission that documents STF\_201, STF\_202, STF\_203A, STF\_204A, STF\_205 Appendix 2B and STF\_205 Appendix 3C, STF\_207 and STF\_209B, adopted by STACFAD, be endorsed and adopted by the Commission.