

## Oceana's Statement to the Permanent Working Group December 2020

The current Coronavirus crisis has led to a public health emergency with dire consequences on our lives and economies, including also to the fishing sector. Oceana wishes to express its support to all affected and looks forward to gathering all our strength and resilience to manage this crisis collectively.

We remain committed to continuing our engagement with the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) in efforts to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Particularly during this time where new challenges in fisheries monitoring and control are being faced, it is important to stay vigilant against the threat of IUU fishing. This current situation provides opportunities for unscrupulous operators to carry out illicit activities undetected and/or without consequence. For these reasons, we would like to respectfully highlight a policy recommendation that would align ICCAT with global best practices in the fight against IUU fishing.

Specifically, **we are urging ICCAT to amend *Recommendation 06-14*, in order to prevent nationals from deriving benefits from or supporting IUU fishing**. This Recommendation promotes compliance by nationals of ICCAT Contracting Parties with ICCAT conservation and management measures. Currently, its applicability is limited to any natural or legal persons subject to their jurisdiction (nationals) that are found to be *engaging* in IUU fishing activities. Other RFMOs, including CCAMLR, SPRFMO, SIOFA and GFCM have recently adopted measures that explicitly extend the mandate of their CPCs to verify and take appropriate action when nationals are found to be otherwise *benefiting from or supporting* the activities of IUU vessels through, for example, the provision of services.

As RFMO IUU vessel lists are publicly accessible and widely available, avoiding business contracts with IUU vessels and denying them access to services is fully achievable and has the potential to significantly impede the activities of IUU fishing vessel operators. Through taking this approach, ICCAT can help to dismantle the global network of beneficiaries and service providers that support IUU fishing.

Although we understand the limitations of the ICCAT decision making process in 2020, we ask for your support in considering the adoption of this recommendation in future meetings. **We also urge the Chair and the members to the PWG to consider this issue while developing the agenda for intersessional work, including that of the IMM Working Group, in the first quarter of 2021.** For more information on this and other recommendations for future consideration that Oceana is promoting together with The Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF), The Pew Charitable Trusts and WWF ([the EU IUU coalition](#)), please refer to [our joint policy brief, available online](#).