



**The Pew Charitable Trusts’
Opening statement to the Conservation and Management Measures Compliance
Committee November 2023**

The Pew Charitable Trusts appreciates and recognizes the work of the ICCAT Compliance Committee, as assessing members’ conformance with good obligations agreed by ICCAT is key to the success of its fisheries governance. We hope the COC maximizes the special two-day session before the Commission meeting, and offer the following points for your consideration.

Last year, ICCAT made substantial progress when adopting the *Schedule of Compliance Issues and Corresponding Actions* or “schedule of actions,” and we are eager to see countries implement it at this meeting to identify compliance priorities and corresponding actions. The schedule of actions provides a clear process for conducting fair and efficient compliance reviews to focus limited resources on tackling the most serious identified infractions. Members have an opportunity to build on last year’s progress by following a process adopted at the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission to periodically examine compliance review processes with a view for continued improvements. To this end, ICCAT should include a standing agenda item to discuss areas where the Commission could improve its compliance review process, including by implementing items from the expert report “Approaches to Evaluate and Strengthen RFMO Compliance Review Processes and Performance – a Toolkit and Recommendations”, available [here, which was presented to the COC last year.](#)

One immediate area that could be reviewed is the capacity building program, making sure that it is well resourced, operational, accountable, and being utilized. Capacity has been identified across many RFMOs as a key inhibitor to effective engagement in the compliance review process, especially for developing States. ICCAT should hold a capacity building workshop to strengthen CPCs’ efforts to submit data by identifying and addressing any specific capacity needs and building the necessary legal domestic framework to ensure that their fleets are following the Commission’s rules.

ICCAT's compliance processes underpins every resolution and recommendation members agree upon. It is therefore important that this committee ensure that these measures are being implemented as intended, to curb IUU fishing, ensure quotas are respected, and improve fisheries data collection for a more informed management process that maintains the long-term sustainability of ICCAT fisheries.