

Information paper:
Translation of Integrated Online Management System (IOMS) data and documents
*(submitted by the Online Reporting Technology Working Group (WG-ORT) Chair,
in consultation with the ICCAT Secretariat)*

Background

The Online Reporting Technology Working Group (WG-ORT) met intersessionally in February 2024 to discuss the development of the Integrated Online Management System (IOMS), in addition to other topics relevant to the group's workplan. The WG-ORT discussed an important aspect related to transparency, which is the availability of some pieces of the information managed by the IOMS in the three official languages of ICCAT, such as the Annual Reports. This matter was raised by the Compliance Chair at the 24th Special Meeting of the Commission in 2024, to which he recommended to STACFAD and the WG-ORT to explore with the ICCAT Secretariat the feasibility of progressively translating sections of the Annual Report that appear in the IOMS. The ICCAT Secretariat confirmed that the current IOMS budget does not account for the externalization of these translation tasks and that it does not have resources to carry out this task internally. The Executive Secretary noted that additional costs which are not already foreseen in the IOMS budget such as this one, must pass through STACFAD. The ICCAT Secretariat recommended that this proposal be presented to the Compliance Committee by way of a document, and if endorsed by Compliance Committee it can be referred to STACFAD to consider and develop a recommendation to the Commission. The WG-ORT agreed to present the proposal as a Compliance Committee document at the 2024 Annual Meeting of the Commission.

Regarding the information from the Annual Reports, IOMS currently stores data corresponding to Section 3. The stored information for each requirement includes whether the CPC considers it to be applicable (and the corresponding reason if not), the submission dates, and the response related to the requirement. It is reasonable to expect that the information and text stored in the IOMS to increase in the future, namely if new information requirements arise or if current requisites are modified. In fact, currently the IOMS does not store detailed information from Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Reports, which could become a medium-term goal for the WG-ORT. Since IOMS is intended to be the interface for all ICCAT reporting obligations in the long-term, a substantial increase of data and text to be translated is expected to occur in the future, for which the ICCAT Secretariat will require additional support for external translation services.

Additional Background: Excerpt from 2023 Compliance Committee Proceedings (Report of Biennial period 2022-23, Part II (2023) – Vol. 1 - Annex 9, item 4)

The Compliance Committee Chair recommended that the ICCAT Secretariat and Commission explore the feasibility of progressively translating Annual Report questionnaire sections, which are currently published in the original language only. The Chair noted that in many and possibly most cases, CPCs completing an Annual Report via IOMS will simply confirm the continued validity of the previous year's reporting information for a particular reporting field. As such, ICCAT could consider translating different sections of submitted Annual Reports each year, until all sections have been subject to initial translation, and then at that point turn to translating only the form fields that are updated. Clearly this comes at a cost, but one that could be spread out and that could decrease over time. The Chair recommended that this idea be taken into consideration by the WG-ORT in cooperation with the ICCAT Secretariat.

Recommendation

Given the financial implications associated with translating IOMS data and documents into the three official ICCAT languages, the ICCAT Secretariat should work throughout the 2025 intersessional period in consultation with the IOMS development team and the Chairs of STACFAD, Compliance Committee, and WG-ORT to determine the costs associated with the proposed translation. The ICCAT Secretariat suggests that any costs or workload associated with translating sections of the Annual Report entered into the IOMS shall be estimated in advance of requirements related to translation. In addition, the financial impact of any additional translation work shall be regularly reviewed and updated. The analysis should include considerations of the scope of information to be translated and associated workload, since it will require external contracts to be issued to fulfil the work. A report should be presented to STACFAD at the 29th

Regular Meeting of the Commission for consideration in the 2026-27 biennial budget. In addition, the WG-ORT Chair will also present an update to the Compliance Committee at the 29th Regular Meeting of the Commission in 2025.