

**Report of the 17th Meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Monitoring Measures (IMM)***(hybrid/Porto, Portugal, 12-14 June 2024)***1. Opening of the meeting and meeting arrangements**

The IMM Chair, Mr Neil Ansell (EU), opened the meeting and welcomed the delegates to the 17th Intersessional Meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Monitoring Measures (IMM). The ICCAT Executive Secretary also welcomed participants and introduced the twenty-five registered delegations: Algeria (online), Belize (online), Brazil (online), Canada, Egypt, El Salvador, European Union, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea (Rep.), Japan, Korea (Rep.) (online), Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Norway (online), Panama, Philippines, Sao Tomé and Príncipe (online), Senegal, Türkiye, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

The Executive Secretary also introduced two Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties, Entities, and Fishing Entities: Bolivia (online) and Chinese Taipei, in addition to four non-governmental observers: Asociación Nacional de Acuicultura del Atún Rojo (ATUN), Associação de Ciências Marinhas e Cooperação (SCIAENA), Global Fishing Watch (GFW), and Pew Charitable Trusts (PEW).

**2. Nomination of Rapporteur**

Ms. Stephanie Murphy (United States) was appointed to serve as Rapporteur.

**3. Adoption of agenda**

The IMM Chair summarized the Agenda, noting the meeting will begin with agenda Item 6 to provide CPCs the opportunity to present proposals and have a first round of discussions. The Chair stated that following the introduction of proposals, the agenda will be followed in order. The agenda was adopted with no additional changes and is attached as **Appendix 1**. The list of participants is attached as **Appendix 2**.

**4. Review of Statistical and Catch Documentation Schemes (SDP/CDSs)****4.1 Consideration of outputs from the Standing Catch Document Scheme Working Group (CDS WG) meetings**

The IMM Chair recalled that the Catch Documentation Scheme Working Group (CDS WG) has been made a Standing Working Group by way of *Recommendation by ICCAT on Establishment of a Standing Catch Documentation Scheme Working Group (CDS WG) (Res. 23-22)*, and now incorporates the work of the previous eBCD Technical Working Group.

The IMM Chair recalled that the Second Meeting of the Standing Catch Document Scheme Working Group (CDS WG) (hybrid, Porto, Portugal, 11 June 2024). He summarized the main discussion points of the meeting, the overall work of the Working Group and the eBCD system.

As discussed at the *First Meeting of the Standing Catch Document Scheme Working Group (CDS WG)* (hybrid, Madrid, Spain, 4 March 2024), a number of eBCD technical developments are ongoing.

At the June 2024 CDS WG, CPCs continued the discussion on the need and approach to expand CDS in ICCAT. Japan presented “Draft workplan of the Standing Catch Documentation Scheme Working Group (CDS WG)” (**Appendix 3**), which building on the criteria discussed in the past and notably in *Recommendation by ICCAT on a process towards the establishment of a catch certification scheme for tuna and tuna-like species (Rec. 12-09)* provides criteria to assist in identifying candidate specie(s) for CDS. CPCs discussed these criteria and other technical considerations. CPCs also discussed the benefits of trade-based CDS versus catch-based CDS, with CPCs generally leaning towards catch-based. There was general agreement that an electronic system is favored as opposed to a paper-based system. Many CPCs emphasized the need for interoperability with

existing systems, including the EU Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) catch certificate. Efforts to mitigate the potential burdens of CDS were discussed, including considerations for developing CPCs and small-scale fishers.

Following further discussions, the group focused on potential priority species for CDS. Bigeye tuna and swordfish were identified as the clearest priority candidates moving forward. The ICCAT Secretariat could also assist on the potential costs of CDS and their experiences in this regard with eBCD. CPCs determined that the draft workplan (IMM\_15/i2024) is considered agreeable, though it should continue to be monitored and updated when needed.

## **5. Consideration of measures relating to monitoring and inspection and flag State responsibilities:**

### ***5.1 Consideration of outputs of the Electronic Monitoring Systems Working Group (EMS WG)***

The IMM Chair summarized the Meeting of the Electronic Monitoring Systems Working Group (EMS WG) (hybrid, Porto, Portugal, 10 June 2024). He recalled [Recommendation by ICCAT to Establish Minimum Standards and Programme Requirements for the Use of Electronic Monitoring Systems \(EMS\) in ICCAT Fisheries \(Rec. 23-18\)](#) and noted that the EMS WG would need to focus on the tasks for the WG required by that Recommendation.

The EMS WG meeting, received updates regarding ongoing EMS studies and trials. SatLink, the company implementing the Pilot Project on reefer vessels, gave an overview of the results. Current trials were also reported on in EU-Cyprus and Brazil, UK and informed they will report on their trials soon. Based on the proven positive outcomes of the project the EU noted the value of the application of EMS in processing vessels in ICCAT fisheries.

The IMM Chair noted the availability of a file system for EMS-related documents applicable to ICCAT and other organizations. There was discussion about [Rec. 23-18](#), paragraphs 15-18 concerning the assessment of domestic programs that would be submitted by CPCs. The IMM Chair noted that no assessments have been submitted yet, which was to be expected with the recent entry into force of the Recommendation. The IMM Chair also informed on relevant aspects of the Global Environment Facility (GEF)/FAO Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) Tuna Project initiative which was presented by a representative from International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF) and seeks to harmonize EMS standards across regional fishery management organisations (RFMO).

CPCs discussed timeframes for considering minimum standards and emphasized the importance of continuing the consultation with the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS). CPCs acknowledged the importance of maintaining and harmonizing minimum standards.

CPCs discussed potential improvements to the activities of the EMS WG. The EU recalled that ICCAT may wish to consider an amendment to paragraph 15 of [Rec. 23-18](#) to ensure clarity in the procedures that any national program implemented would be reviewed by the EMS WG as required by the Recommendation. IMM agreed that the workplan be circulated for comments by the ICCAT Secretariat on the basis of which a revised draft may be presented to PWG upon further reflection by CPCs.

The Pew Charitable Trusts noted the importance and its availability to assist in the development of SCRS data collection forms.

The IMM Chair noted that the EMS WG will update its workplan intersessionally or at the PWG taking into account [Rec. 23-18](#) and the points made by CPCs.

## **5.2 Review of issues arising from Rec. 22-08**

5.2.1 Percentage of margin of error in (paragraphs 205 and 213)

5.2.2 Procedures for fresh harvests without ROP (paragraph 102)

The IMM Chair recalled *Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 21-08 establishing a Multi-annual Management Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean (Rec. 22-08)* and the derogations and tolerances with respect to the margin of error and quantities that may be harvested from farms without Regional Observer Programs (ROPs).

CPCs discussed potential text edits related to paragraphs 102, 205, and 213. One CPC noted that it would be difficult to perform analysis related to eBCD until functionality has been tested. Following discussions on each item it was agreed to extend the derogations to 2027 and hence “2027” was included in the text for all three paragraphs.

### **5.2.3 Issues deferred from Panel 2 (Artificially hatched fries and draft amendment of Rec. 22-08)**

The IMM Chair recalled [Rec. 22-08](#) and discussions in Panel 2 and noted that any agreements relating to the specific areas being referred to IMM would need to be packaged and referred back to Panel 2.

The Panel 2 Chair summarized the relevant points in the “Draft Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 22-08 establishing a Multi-annual Management Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean” which seeks to amend [Rec. 22-08](#) noting that some elements had already been agreed at the [Intersessional meeting of Panel 2 \(Hybrid, Madrid, Spain, 5-8 March 2024\)](#).

CPCs discussed farming of bluefin tuna that originates from artificially hatched fries and the merits of developing a separate recommendation specifically to address this new activity. It was agreed that artificially hatched fry farming activity should not be fully exempted from [Rec. 22-08](#) until the Commission has further time to address this issue and developed a separate recommendation to regulate such activities. In the meantime, it was noted that such provisions in [Rec. 22-08](#) related to artificially hatched fries would cover both Western and Eastern Atlantic Bluefin tuna. The Chair informed that Cabo Verde had notified that their project was still in its pilot phase hence considered it premature to report on its results at this stage, this however would be done at the appropriate time.

Some CPCs expressed support for the amendments made under paragraph 25, related to eBCD developments needed to automatically monitor growth rates and the cost associated with that development. The Chair of Panel 2 noted that further discussion is needed on paragraph 8, related to transfer rules, but that this topic would be best discussed by Panel 2, rather than IMM. The Panel 2 Chair noted that further discussion was also needed on paragraph 83 to define a fishing season (i.e. the dates of authorization or the dates when fishing operations begin). As regards to Annex 4, the Panel 2 Chair clarified that the first transfer is sometimes divided into several and that this requires further discussion.

Japan presented “Draft amendment of [Rec. 22-08](#) for growth rate monitoring”. It was clarified that the intent of the proposal is to not stop trade in bluefin tuna, but rather to improve growth rate monitoring of those fish harvested from farms. Japan explained that the 95% confidence interval of the SCRS growth rate tables is not suitable for growth rate monitoring using eBCDs, and proposed that the SCRS average growth rate value be used as a benchmark for monitoring. The SCRS Chair clarified the meaning of the 95% confidence interval. Japan also mentioned that the SCRS growth rate tables do not correspond to the growth rate observed in eBCDs as presented by Japan at the Panel 2 intersessional meeting, to which the SCRS Chair encouraged Japan to bring the analysis to the SCRS. The SCRS Chair cautioned against using the “expected” value as a benchmark. The EU proposed that further discussion bilaterally with Japan and consultation with the SCRS was needed. After the discussion, it agreed that the draft amendment be incorporated into the Draft Recommendation with brackets.

The EU presented “Proposal to IMM to amend *Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 21-08 establishing a Multi-annual Management Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean (Rec. 22-08)*”. The document proposes to change the format of data submitted to the Joint Fishing Operations (JFOs) in Annex 5 and to require the submission of inspections under the Joint Inspection Scheme through a summary table in Annex 7. CPCs discussed clarifying the meaning of “apparent

infringement” in the text of Annex 7. The ICCAT Secretariat clarified the need for two forms related to Annex 5 regarding Joint Fishing Operations Data. Following such clarifications it was agreed to be incorporated with the agreed changes from the Draft Recommendation into a revised Recommendation to be forwarded to Panel 2.

Egypt presented “Proposal for inclusion of measures pertaining to Artificial Hatchery Farming in the Draft *Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 21-08 establishing a Multi-annual Management Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean (Rec. 22-08)*”. The document includes proposals that each CPC shall provide several categories of information related to artificially hatched bluefin tuna in its farms, that each CPC shall establish a tracing system, and that measures should be taken to prevent caged fish from escaping. Several CPCs expressed general support for the proposal and noted areas for continued discussion and more detailed requirements that could be built into the proposal, including buildout of eBCD references and clarifying the requirements of a potential tracing system. Egypt thanked CPCs for their contributions and responses and will continue discussing with CPCs in the intersession with a view of presenting an amended document in PWG in the 24th Special Meeting of the Commission in November 2024.

After further discussion on paragraph 83, related to prior notification of landings, CPCs also agreed to text edits reflected in **Appendix 4**, with one CPC noting the importance of retaining clarity that the text in paragraph 83 is a derogation. The IMM Chair noted that the document would be forwarded to Panel 2 for further discussion.

## 6. Observer programmes

The United States presented “Draft Recommendation by ICCAT on Protecting the Health and Safety of Observers in National Observer Programs”. The United States expressed deep concern about the deaths of observers in recent years. Observers collect essential data for the Commission, and the health and safety of these observers is critical for their ability to perform. The proposal also aims to help CPCs build best practices to protect observers as part of ICCAT obligations and draws on *Recommendation by ICCAT on Protecting the Health and Safety of Observers in ICCAT’s Regional Observer Programs (Rec. 19-10)*. The United States expressed openness to collaboration with other CPCs on this work.

Several CPCs supported the proposal and noted the concerns about observer safety. One CPC expressed concern that paragraph 1 prohibiting threats or intimidation is not practical as such conducts are subjective to individuals. The United States clarified that the intent is for these terms to be defined domestically by each CPC in line with their own national laws.

Some CPCs recognized that though the proposal is similar to *Recommendation by ICCAT on protecting the health and safety of observers in ICCAT’S Regional Observer Programs (Rec. 19-10)*, other ICCAT measures address national observer programs. One CPC suggested a stronger commitment to address crew rights was needed in ICCAT, particularly because labor rights are not covered in many relevant international instruments.

After incorporating feedback from CPCs, the United States presented an updated proposal, which reflected two changes: 1) A new preambular paragraph in the chapeau on labor standards referencing *Recommendation by ICCAT for a pilot project for farming bluefin tuna (Thunnus thynnus) in the Cantabrian Sea (Rec. 23-08)*; and 2) An amendment on paragraph 4 providing an exception for smaller vessels when an observer is provided a personal locator beacon.

Several CPCs thanked the United States and requested more time to review the proposal language. One CPC noted concern that the vessel safety requirements detailed in paragraph 4 were too detailed. In response the US noted that the text is meant to outline minimum standards and is drafted to be flexible to the needs of various vessels and fisheries. Some CPCs also requested further discussion on proposal terminology, including the prohibition of threatening and intimidating conduct and requirements for “unlimited communication.” CPCs agreed to continue working intersessionally and revisit these discussions at the 2024 Commission Meeting.

Moving to another point, the IMM Chair recalled that recent discussions at the [Second Intersessional Meeting of Panel 1 \(Hybrid, Natal, Brazil, 22-24 May 2024\)](#) included an agreement to refer matters related to a possible Regional Observer Program in the tropics (ROP-TROP) to IMM. The IMM Chair invited the Panel 1 Chair to summarize relevant discussions and present “Notes on ongoing discussions of Panel 1 regarding a Regional Observer Program for tropical tunas fisheries (ROP-TROP)”, which outlines the current state of play and the request to IMM.

The Panel 1 Chair recalled that the possible benefits of a ROP-TROP were discussed at the Second Intersessional Meeting of Panel 1. Due to complexity and associated costs, it was agreed that a feasibility study should be conducted to inform discussions and potentially adoption by the ICCAT Commission. The Chair of Panel 1 reiterated the request to IMM to assist in the preparation of a feasibility study for consideration by Panel 1 in 2025. Following some questions, the IMM Chair clarified that the request does not require IMM to determine coverage levels of a potential ROP or fleets that would be bound by the programme which would remain the responsibility of PA1.

CPCs agreed that there are many elements to consider in such a feasibility study, including associated costs and what types of vessels would be covered and the deployment procedures for observers. It was also clarified that IMM is not the right body to conduct the feasibility study itself, but it is able to advise on the next steps and the elements that the study should cover. The ICCAT Secretariat confirmed that there was no such previous study conducted by ICCAT and recalled the brief implementation of a previous scheme in 2013/2014. The IMM Chair added that a future feasibility study should take into account previous experiences.

The EU presented “Elements required in feasibility study for a potential ROP-TROP in ICCAT tropical tuna Fisheries”, prepared in consultation with the IMM Chair and the ICCAT Secretariat. The document outlined important variables and elements to be included in a feasibility study, the terms of reference of which were to be prepared, by the ICCAT Secretariat, alongside potential funding options for such a study for presentation and discussion, by the PWG at the 2024 Commission Meeting. IMM agreed with this approach and the elements contained in the revised document, **Appendix 5**. It was also noted the need to bring this matter to the attention of STACFAD to consider funding needs for such a study.

CPCs turned to discussion of “A Summary of the ICCAT Regional Observer Programme (ROP) 2023 Report”. Several positive improvements documented in the contractor’s ROP report summary were noted, particularly the improvement in logbook entry quality, the decrease in observed instances of noncompliance issues and the commencement of full boardings of large scale pelagic longline vessels since COVID. Some CPCs also expressed significant concern about the reported incident of a crew member that attempted to escape and reported abuse on board and recalled [Resolution by ICCAT on Core Principles on Labour Standards in ICCAT Fisheries \(Res. 23-20\)](#). CPCs requested more information from the flag-CPC concerned. The ICCAT Secretariat noted that it had been alerted to these instances and had contacted the flag-CPC involved. The flag-CPC determined that the crew member had tried to escape due to homesickness. The ICCAT Secretariat reported that upon following up on this matter the crew member was reported to be well.

Pew Charitable Trusts drew attention to [Recommendation by ICCAT to Establish Minimum Standards for Fishing Vessel Scientific Observer Programs \(Rec. 16-14\)](#) and encouraged IMM to amend the text to reflect a requirement for 10% observer coverage followed by 20% coverage by 2026 in line with SCRS recommendations.

## **7. At-sea and in-port transshipment requirements**

### **7.1 Review of [Rec. 21-15 \(paragraph 33\)](#)**

The United States presented the proposal “A new proposal amending the existing [Recommendation by ICCAT on Transshipment \(Rec. 21-15\)](#)”, to bring ICCAT transshipment requirements in line with the 2022 FAO Voluntary Guidelines on Transshipment.

Some CPCs noted concerns that paragraph 8 of the proposal would make it impossible for non-CPCs to operate carrier vessels in the ICCAT area, pointing to carrier vessels registered by the Bahamas and Singapore (non-CPCs). One CPC noted that ICCAT has not seen any problems with having carrier vessels from non-CPCs. It was also noted that excessive documentation requirements - including for logbooks - are unnecessary and problematic for confidential information, and that the transshipment declaration should be sufficient.

CPCs discussed several clarifying edits, including stating which RFMO IUU lists are being referred to in the proposal, and the United States submitted an updated version of the proposal (**Appendix 6**). It was also agreed that CPCs would continue refining the definition of “landing” to be in line with current practices. CPCs agreed that more discussion was needed at the ICCAT Annual Meeting on the proposal. In parallel it was also agreed that the ICCAT Secretariat would be requested to reach out to non-CPCs with vessels involved in transshipment in ICCAT to encourage membership.

## **7.2 Review of clarifications relating to transshipment documentation requirements**

The ICCAT Secretariat presented relevant requests from document “Clarifications requested on PWG matters and responses from CPCs”. IMM agreed that only at-sea transshipment declarations should be sent to the ICCAT Secretariat. The ICCAT Secretariat also confirmed that supply declarations are required for all supply activities involving carrier vessels on the ICCAT record of vessels unless they take place in association with a transshipment monitored by an ICCAT regional observer. The United States noted that they will also look at clarifying edits that may be incorporated into its proposal. It was further agreed that the findings of the IMM on these questions would be forwarded to the Commission at its next Annual meeting for review by PWG and endorsement by the Commission.

## **8. Rules for chartering and other fishing arrangements**

### **8.1 Review of clarifications relating to access agreements**

The ICCAT Secretariat presented “Clarifications requested on PWG matters and responses from CPCs”, noting several instructions to CPCs when providing data for the ICCAT Secretariat in relation to access agreements.

The IMM Chair recalled that in 2021, IMM agreed that catches would be assigned according to the flag CPC. Specifically, when a vessel fishes in a coastal nation, the catch counts towards the flag CPC unless the vessel is an authorized chartered vessel. A CPC pointed out that the question being asked in document is whether the quota reported to ICCAT is the quota given to a CPC by ICCAT, rather than the quota given to the CPC under an access agreement and noted that the former should be reported. CPCs agreed to clarify the text to reflect this understanding, which can be found in the revised document “Clarifications requested on PWG matters and responses from CPCs” (**Appendix 7**).

## **9. Vessel sighting and inspection programmes:**

### **9.1 Review of pilot program established under [Res. 19-17](#)**

The IMM Chair recalled that pilot program review is a recurring item in IMM by request of some CPCs to inform the group of activities being conducted under [Resolution by ICCAT Amending the Resolution 18-11 by ICCAT Establishing a Pilot Program for the Voluntary Exchange of Inspection Personnel in Fisheries Managed by ICCAT \(Res. 19-17\)](#).

The United States presented a summary of their participation in the Voluntary Exchange of Inspection Personnel program, emphasizing its role in capacity-building and partnership development. This program has enabled partnering nations to better understand each other's capabilities and explore further cooperation, resulting in numerous vessel sightings and boardings. Notable 2024 events included the UK and Bermuda facilitating a fisheries patrol with intelligence support to United States Coast Guard cutters in the mid-Atlantic Ocean, and port visits by a United States Coast Guard cutter to Brazil and Uruguay to discuss maritime law enforcement challenges.

The United States expressed appreciation for the CPCs involved in these collaborations and noted the ongoing evolution of joint, voluntary partnering opportunities with ICCAT partners. These partnerships may include agreements related to shiprider provisions, shoreside inspection information sharing, foreign military sales, international training, and capacity-building visits. Currently, only Canada, the EU, Senegal, and the United States have shown contacts listed for such exchanges through the ICCAT MCS portal, and the United States encouraged other CPCs to submit their contact information to the ICCAT Secretariat.

The United States also recalled *Recommendation by ICCAT on Vessel Sightings (Rec. 19-09)*. The ICCAT Secretariat maintains a Points of Contact list for facilitating cooperation, which includes fewer than a dozen CPCs. IMM agreed to request that the ICCAT Secretariat send a circular reminding CPCs to submit their contact information as per [Res. 19-17](#) and [Rec. 19-09](#).

The EU extended an invitation to strengthen cooperation and share best practices related to farms and traps in accordance with [Res 19-17](#). They welcomed interested CPCs to contact the EU in order to discuss further.

## **9.2 High Seas Boarding and Inspection Schemes (HSBI)**

Canada introduced its document "The future of high seas boarding and inspection scheme (HSBI) at ICCAT" (**Appendix 8**). Canada noted that in 2023, it was clear that further discussion on the topic was needed. The document aims to address concerns and lays the foundation for future HSBI. The informational document includes a list of questions to facilitate discussion about a potential scheme. CPCs were invited to share their perspectives, including how HSBI could be made more inclusive and how CPCs might participate beyond providing vessels and inspectors. Canada informed that the goal is to develop a foundation that CPCs can support.

Several CPCs thanked Canada and expressed support for continuing to discuss the concept. It was agreed that any scheme should be implemented in an equitable manner. One CPC agreed with the potential for HSBI in ICCAT while requesting conditions for fulfillment, such as: 1) HSBI should be conducted through a centralized ICCAT program; 2) all countries should participate under the same conditions, including developing countries that may lack at sea inspection assets; and 3) IUU fishing should be properly prioritized and addressed. Some CPCs agreed that these conditions should be fleshed out in an ad-hoc workshop. Another CPC proposed accreditation of monitors, training, handbooks/guides for onboard inspectors, and other documents needed for HSBI. It was suggested that a working group (not a workshop) should address the legal, operational and implementation aspects.

One CPC expressed concerns that measures meant to prevent IUU-caught products from entering markets are not currently effective, noting that the problem is generated by market states that demand large amounts of fish, and that a workshop may or may not be the correct tool to progress this discussion. The CPC expressed that the proposal doesn't fully capture the various positions of CPCs, and that more discussion is needed before a new group is developed. Several CPCs noted that HSBI should be used as a complement to existing monitoring, control, and enforcement tools, including existing market controls.

Some CPCs emphasized that HSBI is an important tool. Several CPCs highlighted the importance of data access. It was noted that Norway has made several technologies – including Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) and Automatic Identification System (AIS) – available to all 25 Contracting Parties to assist with fisheries surveillance under the Blue Justice initiative.

Canada thanked CPCs for their contributions and reiterated that the document attempts to outline what HSBI would look like and does not aim to establish HSBI itself. It was noted that any HSBI scheme will require coordination between CPCs, including related to risk assessments, intelligence sharing, and capacity building. Canada welcomed further bilateral conversations as well as the suggestion for a working group to move forward. Regarding other ICCAT measures to combat IUU fishing (e.g., port inspections), Canada expressed interest in identifying where gaps lie to understand where HSBI can complement those efforts.

The EU noted that there is considerable work being done to improve other elements of control. They have recently shared improvements in the EU catch certification system, and development is underway for an IT system to allow developing countries to cross-check their data. The EMS Working Group has also worked towards establishing EMS standards in ICCAT.

CPCs agreed that the discussion should continue, particularly on the substantive elements of a potential scheme. This may be conducted either through written comments or through continued dialogue. The IMM Chair summarized that there was willingness to continue working towards a roadmap for HSBI in the context of other tools ICCAT is working on, while recognizing progress on those points.

## **10. Port inspection schemes and port State measures**

No matters were raised under item 10.

## **11. Vessel listing requirements:**

### ***11.1 Presentation of IOMS vessels manager module and consideration of possible improvements***

The Executive Secretary demonstrated the functionality of the new Integrated Online Management System (IOMS) vessels manager module (the module), which allows information to be managed in an integrated fashion and more efficiently. The module shows authorized vessels in a concise form, and data can be visualized in a variety of ways. The Executive Secretary noted that all of the data in the module is provided by CPCs to the ICCAT Secretariat. Final tweaks to the module will be made in 2025. The ICCAT Secretariat invited CPCs to test the development of the vessel module in the test environment and provide any comments or feedback on issues or difficulties they may encounter. The Executive Secretary noted several trainings on the module would be held. The EU expressed support for the tool and noted its dedication to providing resources where possible.

The Chair of Online Reporting Technical Working Group (WG-ORT) Dr. Bryan Keller (USA) recalled that as a follow-up to the [Meeting of the Online Reporting Technology Working Group \(WG-ORT\) \(online, 7-8 February 2024\)](#), “Draft IOMS, Glossary of Terms and Definitions” was developed. The document provides a glossary of IOMS terms and definitions to facilitate consistent use of the module and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of each group. The Chair of the WG-ORT invited the IMM to offer questions and comments. CPCs agreed to and endorsed the document but made suggestions to clarify a number of terms and to include the vessel type list (found in paragraph 49 of [Rec. 22-08](#)) to the Glossary of Terms and Definitions. The updated document incorporated these changes (**Appendix 9**). It was also agreed that the Glossary does not create new obligations but aims only to clarify and instruct on the use of IOMS. The ICCAT Secretariat indicated that they would raise this issue with the Tuna Compliance Network to see if any standardization across tuna RFMOs could be achieved.

### ***11.2 Possible sharing of publicly available vessels data / other data with FAO through the Global Record of Vessels***

The ICCAT Secretariat clarified that the agenda item was meant to examine the possibility of sharing vessels data with FAO through the Global Record of Vessels (the original agenda had stated “GIES”).



The ICCAT Secretariat proposed that ICCAT share publicly available data with FAO through an API but the European Union noted that it was already making its data available to FAO, and as such EU data should not be shared through this channel to avoid duplication. The ICCAT Secretariat noted that the Tuna Compliance Network was working on a consolidated list of vessels with the assistance of the International Control and Surveillance Network which would provide a platform to make non-confidential data publicly available; it was expected that the first version of this would be available soon.

### ***11.3 Clarification of vessel listing requirements for vessels taking ICCAT species as bycatch***

The United States presented “Discussion Paper: Exceptions to ICCAT’s authorized vessel listing requirements for vessels taking ICCAT species as bycatch”, noting that it builds off of a similar document discussed by IMM in 2023. The document suggests potential improvements to the authorized vessel list to make it a better tool for monitoring, control, and surveillance of ICCAT fisheries. It was noted that the United States does not seek to prohibit vessels from landing bycatch of ICCAT species, but rather seeks to expand the universe of authorized vessels that are included on the list. The United States suggested that each Panel consider these provisions during the negotiation of new management measures as they are considered at the 24th Special Meeting of the Commission in 2024 and future meetings, and that the Committee on Compliance review CPC compliance with the relevant reporting requirements.

Several CPCs expressed general support for the proposal, and discussed narrowing the scope of vessels that would require listing to avoid administrative burden. One CPC suggested developing an exception for smaller vessels, and it was agreed that certain exemptions may make sense in some fisheries or in the context of certain ICCAT Panels. CPCs agreed that vessel listing criteria should be objective, clear, and enforceable. The IMM Chair noted that these ideas would be reported to the Panels. The paper is attached, for reference purposes, as **Appendix 10**.

### ***11.4 Another Clarification on “Clarifications requested on PWG matters and responses from CPCs”***

The ICCAT Secretariat recalled the ongoing challenges that arise from cross-listing of IUU vessels. Sometimes, one RFMO has made a change to vessel information, but the original RFMO has not. The ICCAT Secretariat noted it’s preferable to wait for the original RFMO to make the change. The ICCAT Secretariat is currently trying to set up an automatic alert process in the Tuna Compliance Network.

CPCs were encouraged by the work of the ICCAT Secretariat and the initiatives of the Tuna Compliance Network to facilitate cross-collaboration between RFMOs. It was agreed that the purpose of the IUU vessel list is to inform CPCs and competent authorities of the most up to date information on the list. The ability to add notes/details could be helpful for confirming vessel identity. The ICCAT Secretariat committed to reviewing the structure of the list and potentially propose additions, though currently additional details can be added to the “notes” field. CPCs and the ICCAT Secretariat agreed to continue collaborating in the lead up to the 2024 PWG.

## **12. Vessel Monitoring System requirements**

No matters regarding VMS requirements were raised.

## **13. Other matters**

The IMM Chair opened the floor to CPCs to raise other matters. No other matters were raised.

## **14. Adoption of report and closure**

The CPCs agreed that the report would be adopted by correspondence.

The IMM Chair thanked everyone present for their contributions and noted particular appreciation to the EU for hosting the meeting, and the efforts by the ICCAT Secretariat and the interpreters to ensure a successful meeting. The IMM Chair closed the meeting.

**Tentative agenda**

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3. Adoption of agenda
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5. Consideration of measures relating to monitoring and inspection and flag State responsibilities:
  - 5.1 Consideration of outputs of the Electronic Monitoring Systems Working Group (EMS WG)
  - 5.2 Review of issues arising from Rec. 22-08:
    - 5.2.1 Percentage of margin of error in (paragraphs 205 and 213)
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6. Observer programmes
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12. Vessel Monitoring System requirements
13. Other matters
14. Adoption of report and closure

## List of Participants

### CONTRACTING PARTIES

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**Draft workplan of the Standing Catch Documentation Scheme Working Group (CDS WG)  
(Agenda item 4.1)**

*(Presented by Japan)*

With a view to provide a clear path of the CDS WG, Japan would like to suggest the following workplan for the next three years to reach a recommendation on any expanded CDS, for the approval by the CDS WG.

**Draft Workplan to reach a recommendation on any expanded CDS**

**2024**

IMM WG (June)

- Review the outputs from the CDS WG
- Further consider which species and the product types should be covered by any CDS

PWG/COM (November)

- Review the progress of the CDS WG and IMM WG
- Present Working Group progress to relevant species Panels and STACFAD
- Provide input on potential species covered by any future CDS

**2025**

CDS WG (TBD, at least once a year, possibly in conjunction with the IMM Meeting)

- Identify species and the product types covered by any new CDS
- Discuss details of the operational and technical aspects of the CDS, including the elements listed in paragraph 5. a)-e) of [Recommendation by ICCAT on establishment of a Standing Catch Document Scheme Working Group \(CDS WG\) \(Rec. 23-22\)](#)
- Review any input from the Secretariat regarding budget and resource capabilities to support any expanded CDS
- If possible, begin developing a draft recommendation on any expanded CDS

IMM WG (TBD)

- Review the outputs of the CDS WG, including related to the species/product types covered
- Further consider details of the operational and technical aspects of the CDS

PWG/COM (TBD)

- Review the progress of the CDS WG and IMM WG, including related to the species/product types covered
- Further consider details of the operational and technical aspects of the CDS

**2026**

CDS WG (TBD, at least once a year, possibly in conjunction with the IMM Meeting)

- Develop and submit a draft Recommendation on any expanded CDS, or propose a new workplan to the Commission

IMM WG (TBD)

- Refine and endorse a draft Recommendation on any expanded CDS or new workplan

PWG/COM (TBD)

- Decision on a draft Recommendation on any expanded CDS or on new workplan

**Draft Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 22-08 establishing a Multi-annual Management Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean**

*(Presented by the Chair of Panel 2)*

*ACKNOWLEDGING* the advice from the SCRS to consider moving from the current recovery plan to a management plan and that the current status of the stock no longer appears to require the emergency measures introduced under the Recovery Plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean (Recommendation 17-07 by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 14-04);

*CONSIDERING* that the SCRS has completed a management strategy evaluation (MSE) to establish a management procedure (MP), which includes harvest control rules (HCR), and the Commission has decided on the MP at its 2022 Annual Meeting to establish TACs for 2023 and thereafter;

*FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING* the impacts of the Recovery plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean on the small-scale fleets, in particular with regards to the reduction of fishing capacity;

*CONSIDERING* the capability of the stock to respond to several consecutive years of low recruitment, it will be paramount to ensure that fishing capacity remains within sustainable limits and that the control of capacity remains effective;

*TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION* the importance of maintaining the scope and integrity of the control measures, and reinforcing traceability of the catches, in particular with regards to the transport of live fish and farming activities;

*CONSIDERING* that various provisions in Recommendation 22-08 were identified that would benefit from being clarified or otherwise improved and reinforced;

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION  
OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) RECOMMENDS THAT:

**Part I:  
General Provisions and Objectives**

1. The Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities hereinafter referred to as CPCs, whose vessels have been fishing actively for bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean shall implement a management plan for bluefin tuna in that geographic area starting in 2023 based on the Management Procedure (MP) as in *Recommendation by ICCAT establishing a management procedure for Atlantic bluefin tuna to be used for both the western Atlantic and eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean management areas* (Rec. 22-09). Relevant provisions of t~~This Recommendation shall not apply to farming activities using artificially hatched fries of bluefin tuna unless or until. Management of such farming activities shall be addressed stipulated~~ by a separate recommendation. ~~Any marketing of Atlantic bluefin tuna (both East and West) farmed using artificially hatched fries shall be prohibited until such recommendation is agreed by the Commission.~~

**Definitions**

2. For purposes of this Recommendation:
  - a) "fishing vessel" means any powered vessel used for the purposes of the commercial exploitation of bluefin tuna resources, including catching vessels, fish processing vessels, support vessels, towing vessels, vessels engaged in transshipment, and transport vessels equipped for the transportation of tuna products and auxiliary vessels, except container vessels;

- b) “catching vessel” means a vessel used for the purposes of the commercial capture of bluefin tuna resources;
- c) “processing vessel” means a vessel on board of which fisheries products are subject to one or more of the following operations, prior to their packaging: filleting or slicing, freezing and/or processing;
- d) “auxiliary vessel” means any vessel used to transport dead bluefin tuna (not processed) from a transport/farm cage, a purse seine vessel or a trap to a designated port and/or to a processing vessel;
- e) “towing vessel” means any vessel used for towing live bluefin tuna cages;
- f) “support vessel” means any other vessel authorised to operate in the bluefin tuna fishery to perform support tasks, which does not fall into any of the other categories mentioned in paragraph a) above. Support vessels may not retain on board or transport bluefin tuna;
- g) “fishing actively” means, for any catching vessel, the fact that it targets bluefin tuna during a given fishing season;
- h) “joint fishing operation” (hereinafter referred to in the text as JFO) means any operation between two or more bluefin tuna purse seine vessels where the catch of one bluefin tuna purse seine vessel is attributed to one or more other bluefin tuna purse seine vessels in accordance with a previously agreed allocation key. The JFO may or may not involve the active participation in bluefin tuna catching of all the purse seiners that make up the JFO;
- i) “transfer operations” means:
- any transfer of live bluefin tuna from the catching vessel's net to the transport cage;
  - any transfer of live bluefin tuna from the trap to the transport cage, independent of the presence of a towing vessel;
  - any transfer of live bluefin tuna from the transport cage to another transport cage;
  - any transfer of a cage containing live bluefin tuna from a towing vessel to another towing vessel;
  - any transfer of live bluefin tuna between different cages in the same farm (intra-farm transfer);
  - any transfer of live bluefin tuna from a farm cage to a transport cage.
- j) “inter farm transfer” means relocation of live bluefin tuna from one farm to another farm composed of two phases, a transfer from the donor farm cage to a transport cage and a caging from the transport cage to the receiving farm cage;
- k) “first transfer” means a transfer of live bluefin tuna from a purse seine net or a trap to a transport cage;
- l) “further transfer” means any transfer operation that is conducted after the first transfer and before caging at the destination farm, such as splitting or merging of the contents of two transport cages but that does not include voluntary or control transfers;
- m) “donor operator” means the master of the catching or the towing vessel or its representative, or the representative of a farm or a trap, from which a transfer operation originates (except for voluntary and control transfers);
- n) “CPC of the donor operator” means the CPC that exercises its jurisdiction on the donor operator;
- o) “voluntary transfer” means the repetition of any transfer being voluntarily implemented by the donor operator, for the purpose of satisfying the requirements of **Annex 8**;

- p) “control transfer” means the repetition of any transfer being implemented at the request of control authorities;
- q) “control caging” means a repetition of the caging operation being implemented at the request of the control authorities, for the purpose of verifying the number and or the average weight of fish being caged;
- r) “trap” means fixed gear anchored to the bottom, usually containing a guide net that leads bluefin tuna into an enclosure or series of enclosures where it is kept prior to harvesting or farming;
- s) “caging” means the relocation of live bluefin tuna from the transport cage or trap to the farming or fattening cages;
- t) “fattening” or “farming” means caging of bluefin tuna in farms and subsequent feeding aiming to fatten and increase their total biomass;
- u) “farm” means a marine site clearly defined by geographical coordinates, used for the fattening or farming of bluefin caught by traps and/or purse seine vessels. A farm could have several farming locations, all of them defined by geographical coordinates (with a clear definition of longitude and latitude for each one of the points of the polygon);
- v) “harvesting” means the killing of bluefin tuna in farms or traps;
- w) “transshipment” means the unloading of all or any of the fish on board a fishing vessel to another fishing vessel. However, unloading of dead bluefin tuna from the purse seine, the trap or the towing vessel to an auxiliary vessel shall not be considered as transshipment;
- x) “sport fishery” means non-commercial fisheries whose members adhere to a national sport organization or are issued with a national sport license;
- y) “recreational fishery” means non-commercial fisheries whose members do not adhere to a national sport organization or are not issued with a national sport license;
- z) “stereoscopic camera” means a camera with two or more lenses, with a separate image sensor or film frame for each lens, enabling the taking of three-dimensional images for the purpose of measuring the length of the fish and assisting in refining the number and weight of bluefin tuna;
- aa) “control camera” means a stereoscopic camera and/or conventional video camera for the purpose of the controls foreseen in this Recommendation;
- bb) “BCD or electronic BCD (eBCD)” means a bluefin catch document;
- cc) “lengths of vessels” means overall lengths;
- dd) “small-scale coastal vessel” is a catching vessel with at least three of the five following characteristics: (a) length overall <12 m; (b) the vessel is fishing exclusively inside the territorial waters of the flag CPC; (c) fishing trips have a duration of less than 24 hours; (d) the maximum crew number is established at four persons; or (e) the vessel is fishing using techniques which are selective and have a reduced environmental impact;
- ee) “farm CPC” means the CPC under whose jurisdiction the bluefin tuna farm is located;
- ff) “flag CPC” means the CPC where the fishing vessel is flagged;
- gg) “trap CPC” means the CPC under whose jurisdiction the trap is located;
- hh) “input farming capacity” means the maximum amount of wild bluefin tuna in tons that a farm is allowed to cage during a fishing season.



**Part II:  
Management measures**

**TAC and quotas and conditions associated with the allocation of quotas to CPCs**

3. Each CPC shall take the necessary measures to ensure that the fishing effort of its catching vessels and its traps are commensurate with the bluefin tuna fishing opportunities available to that CPC in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean, including by establishing individual quotas for its catching vessels over 24 m included in the list referred to in paragraph 46 a) of this Recommendation.
4. The total allowable catches (TACs), inclusive of dead discards, for 2023 to 2025 shall be set at 40,570 t, in accordance with the MP. The TACs for 2026 and thereafter shall be decided at the 2025 Commission Annual Meeting in accordance with the MP.

40,570 t shall be allocated in 2023 to 2025 in accordance with the following scheme:

<i>CPC</i>	<i>Annual Quota in 2023-2025 (t)</i>
Albania	264
Algeria	2,023
China	112
Egypt	513
European Union	21,503
Iceland	224
Japan	3,114
Korea	221
Libya	2,548
Morocco	3,700
Namibia	50
Norway	368
Syria	129
Tunisia	3,000
Türkiye	2,600
United Kingdom	63
Chinese Taipei	101
Subtotal	40,533
Unallocated Reserves	37
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40,570</b>

This table shall not be interpreted to have changed the allocation keys shown in Recommendation 14-04. The new keys shall be established in the future for consideration by the Commission.

Mauritania may catch up to 5 t for research in each year, if they respect the rules of reporting of catches defined in this Recommendation. The catch shall be deducted from the unallocated reserve.

Senegal may catch up to 5 t for research in each year, if they respect the rules of reporting of catches defined in this Recommendation. The catch shall be deducted from the unallocated reserve.

Depending on availability, Chinese Taipei may transfer up to 50 t of its quota to Korea in 2023 to 2025.

5. The flag CPC may require a catching vessel to proceed immediately to a port designated by it when the individual quota of the vessel is deemed to be exhausted.
6. Automatic carry-over of any unused quota is not authorized. A CPC may request to transfer a maximum of 5% of its annual quota from one year to the following year. The CPC shall include this request in its annual fishing/capacity plans for endorsement by the Commission.

7. No chartering operation for the bluefin tuna fishery is permitted.
8. Notwithstanding the provision of Recommendation 01-12, all CPCs specifically referred to in the table in paragraph 4, may transfer a portion [which must not exceed X%] of their quota to another [or other] CPC[s] subject to [both][the] CPCs agreeing and providing [justified] prior notification to the ICCAT Secretariat in terms of the quantity to be transferred. The Secretariat shall disseminate this notification to all CPCs.
9. If the catch of a CPC in any given year exceeds its allocation, the CPC shall payback in the next subsequent management period in accordance with the provisions in paragraphs 2 and 3 of ICCAT Recommendation 96-14.

**Submission of annual fishing plans, fishing and farming capacity management and inspection plans and farming management plans**

10. By 15 February each year, each CPC with an allocated eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna quota shall submit to the ICCAT Secretariat:
  - a) An annual fishing plan for the catching vessels and traps fishing bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean drawn up in accordance with paragraphs 12 - 13.
  - b) An annual fishing capacity management plan ensuring that the CPC authorized fishing capacity is commensurate with the allocated quota drawn up to include the information set forth in paragraphs 14 - 19.
  - c) Monitoring, control and inspection plan with a view to ensuring compliance with the provisions of this Recommendation. This plan shall also designate the CPC control competent authority and the list of contact points nominated as responsible for the implementation of this monitoring, control and inspection plan.
  - d) An annual farming management plan as appropriate, that is in line with the requirements set out in paragraphs 20 and 21, including the authorized maximum input per farm and the maximum capacity per farm and the total amount of fish by farm carried over from the previous year, in accordance with paragraphs 198 - 204.
11. Prior to 31 March each year and in line with paragraph 232 of this Recommendation, unless otherwise decided by the Commission, the Commission shall convene an intersessional meeting of Panel 2 to analyze and, as appropriate, endorse the plans referred to under paragraph 10. This obligation may be done by electronic means if the Commission so decides. If the Commission finds a serious fault in the plans submitted and cannot endorse these plans, the Commission shall decide on the suspension of bluefin tuna fishing in that year by that CPC. Non-submission of the plan referred to above shall automatically lead to suspension of bluefin tuna fishing in that year.

**Annual fishing plans**

12. The annual fishing plan shall identify, *inter alia*, the quotas allocated to each gear group, when applicable, the method used to allocate and manage quotas as well as the measures to ensure the respect of the individual quotas, the open fishing seasons for each gear category and the rules on by-catch.
13. Any subsequent modification to the annual fishing plan shall be transmitted to the ICCAT Secretariat at least one working day before the exercise of the activity corresponding to that modification. Notwithstanding this provision, quota transfers between different gear groups and transfers between by-catch quota and directed quotas from the same CPC shall be allowed, provided that information on the transfers is transmitted to the ICCAT Secretariat at the latest when the transfer enters into force.

## **Capacity management measures**

### **Fishing capacity**

#### **Adjustment of fishing capacity**

14. Each CPC shall adjust its fishing capacity to ensure that it is commensurate with its allocated quota by using relevant yearly catch rates by fleet segment and gear proposed by the SCRS and adopted by the Commission in 2009. Those parameters should be reviewed and each time that a stock assessment for eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna is performed, including specific rates for gear type and fishing area.
15. The annual fishing capacity management plan as referred to in paragraph 10 b) shall adjust the number of catching vessels to demonstrate that the fishing capacity is commensurate with the fishing opportunities allocated to the catching vessels for the same quota period. Regarding small-scale coastal vessels, the minimum quota requirement of 5 t (catch rate defined by the SCRS in 2009) shall no longer be applicable and sectorial quotas may alternatively be applied to those vessels as follows:
  - a) If a CPC has small-scale coastal vessels authorized to fish for bluefin tuna, it shall allocate a specific sectorial quota for those vessels and indicate in its fishing, and monitoring, control and inspection plans which additional measures it will put in place to closely monitor the quota consumption of this fleet segment.
  - b) For the vessels from the archipelagos of Azores, Canary Islands and Madeira, a sectorial quota may be established for baitboats. Such sectorial quota and the additional conditions to monitor it shall be clearly defined in the fishing plan submitted pursuant to paragraph 10 above.
16. The adjustment of fishing capacity for purse-seine vessels shall be limited to a maximum variation of 20% compared to the baseline fishing capacity of 2018. When calculating the number of vessels using 20%, CPCs can eventually round up the figure to the next whole number.
17. CPCs may authorize the number of their traps engaged in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna fishery which allows the full exploitation of their fishing opportunities.
18. The requirements for adjustments and for the number of traps defined in paragraphs 15, 16 and 17 shall not apply:
  - a) if developing CPCs can demonstrate that they need to develop their fishing capacity so as to fully use their quota, by using relevant yearly catch rates by fleet segment and gear proposed by the SCRS, and if such adjustments are included in their annual fishing plan in accordance to paragraph 10;
  - b) in the Northeast Atlantic, to those CPCs that are fishing mainly in their own economic zones (the Norwegian Economic Zone and the Icelandic Economic Zone).
19. Any calculation to establish adjustments of fishing capacity shall be made in accordance with the methodology approved at the 2009 Annual Meeting and with the conditions set in paragraphs 15 and 17, except when the CPCs concerned fish mainly in the Exclusive Economic Zones of Norway or Iceland.

### **Farming capacity**

20. Each farm CPC shall establish an annual farming management plan. Such plan shall demonstrate that the total input capacity and the total farming capacity is commensurate with the estimated amount of bluefin tuna available for farming including the information referred to in paragraph 21. Revised farming management plans, if appropriate, shall be submitted to the Secretariat by 1 June each year. The Commission shall ensure that the total farming and input capacity in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean is commensurate with the total amount of bluefin tuna available for farming in the area.

21. Each CPC shall establish an annual maximum input of wild caught bluefin tuna into its farms at the level of the input quantities registered with ICCAT by its farms in 2005, 2006, 2007 or 2008. If a CPC needs to increase the maximum input of wild caught tuna in one or several of its tuna farms, that increase shall be commensurate with the fishing opportunities allocated to that CPC, including live bluefin tuna imports.
22. The ICCAT Secretariat shall compile statistics on the annual amount of caging (input of wild caught fish), harvesting, and export, by farm CPC, using the data in the eBCD system. The Standing Catch Document Scheme Working Group (CDS WG) shall consider the development of such a data extraction functionality, and until such functionality becomes available each farm CPC shall report these statistics to the ICCAT Secretariat. These statistics shall be made available on the ICCAT website subject to confidentiality requirements.

### **Growth rates**

23. Based on new available scientific information, including where relevant the result of the trials on Artificial Intelligence referred to in paragraph 164, the SCRS should consider reviewing and updating the growth table published in 2022, as soon as possible and present those results at the latest to the 2024 Annual Meeting of the Commission.
24. Farm CPCs shall endeavor to ensure that the growth rates derived from the eBCDs are coherent with the growth rates published by the SCRS in 2022. If significant discrepancies are found between the 2022 SCRS tables and growth rates observed, that information should be sent to the SCRS for analysis. Import CPCs and farm CPCs shall be encouraged to cooperate in monitoring the growth rates in a comprehensive manner through exchange of relevant data, without prejudice to applicable rules on the protection of personal data, and to report the result of the monitoring to Panel 2, as appropriate. [For the purpose of the growth rate monitoring under this paragraph, the average weight in the 2022 SCRS tables shall be used as an interim benchmark of expected weights of farmed bluefin tuna, until the SCRS updates the 2022 SCRS tables in accordance with paragraph 23.]
25. A functionality within the eBCD system to automatically monitor growth rates shall be considered by the Standing Catch Document Scheme Working Group (CDS WG) in 2025. The CDS WG deliberation, among other considerations, should take into account the development and maintenance costs of the proposed functionality.

## **Part III: Technical measures**

### **Open seasons**

26. Purse seine fishing for bluefin tuna shall be permitted in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean during the period from 26 May to 1 July.  
  
By way of derogation, the season in the eastern Mediterranean Sea (FAO fishing areas 37.3.1 Aegean; 37.3.2 Levant), may be open 15 May if a CPC requests it in its fishing plan.  
  
By way of derogation, the season in the Adriatic Sea (FAO fishing area 37.2.1) may be open from 26 May until 15 July, for fish farmed in the Adriatic Sea.  
  
By way of derogation the purse seine fishing season in the Norwegian Economic Zone and in the Icelandic Economic Zone shall be from 25 June to 15 November.  
  
By way of derogation, the purse seine fishing season in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean fishing zones limited to the waters under the sovereignty or jurisdiction of the Kingdom of Morocco may be open from 1 May to 15 June if a CPC requests it in its fishing plan.
27. If weather conditions prevent fishing operations, CPCs may decide that the fishing seasons referred under paragraph 26 be expanded by an equivalent number of lost days up to 10 days.

28. The catching of bluefin tuna shall be permitted in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean by large-scale pelagic longlines catching vessels over 24 m during the period from 1 January to 31 May with the exception of the area delimited by West of 10°W and North of 42°N, as well as in the Norwegian Economic Zone, where such fishing shall be permitted from 1 August to 31 January.
29. CPCs shall establish open fishing seasons for their fleets other than purse seine vessels and vessels referred to in paragraph 28, and shall provide this information in their fishing plan defined in paragraph 12 to be analysed and, as appropriate, endorsed by Panel 2 intersessionally.
30. Not later than 2022, the Commission shall decide to what extent the fishing seasons for different gear types and/or fishing areas might be extended and/or modified based on the SCRS advice without negatively influencing the stock development and by ensuring the stock is managed sustainably.

#### **Minimum size**

31. The minimum size for bluefin tuna caught in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean shall be 30 kg or 115 cm fork length. Therefore, CPCs shall take the necessary measures to prohibit catching, retaining on board, transshipping, transferring, landing, transporting, storing, selling, displaying or offering for sale bluefin tuna weighing less than 30 kg or with fork length of less than 115 cm.
32. By derogation from paragraph 31, a minimum size for bluefin tuna of 8 kg or 75 cm fork length shall apply to the following situations (see **Annex 1**):
  - a) Bluefin tuna caught in the eastern Atlantic by baitboats and trolling boats;
  - b) Bluefin tuna caught in the Mediterranean by the small-scale coastal fleet fishery for fresh fish by baitboats, longliners and handliners;
  - c) Bluefin tuna caught in the Adriatic Sea for farming purposes.

Notwithstanding the above, for bluefin tuna caught in the Adriatic Sea by Croatian flag vessels for the purpose of farming, the relevant CPC may grant tolerances to capture bluefin tuna having a minimum weight of 6.4 kg or, in the alternative, having a minimum fork length of 66 cm, provided they limit the take of these fish to a maximum of 7% by weight of the total quantities of bluefin tuna caught by those Croatian vessels. In addition, for bluefin tuna caught by French baitboat vessels with an overall length of less than 17 m operating in the Bay of Biscay, CPCs may grant tolerances to capture up to a maximum of 100 t of bluefin tuna having a minimum weight of 6.4 kg or, in the alternative, having a minimum fork length of 70 cm.

33. CPCs concerned shall issue specific authorizations to vessels fishing under the derogations referred to in paragraph 32. In addition, fish below these minimum sizes that are discarded dead shall be counted against the CPC quota.

#### **Incidental catches of fish below minimum size**

34. For catching vessels fishing actively for bluefin tuna and tuna traps, CPCs may authorize an incidental catch of no more than 5% by number of bluefin tuna weighing between 8 kg and 30 kg or, in the alternative, with fork length between 75 and 115 cm.

This percentage shall be calculated in relation to the total catches in number of bluefin tuna retained on board a vessel at any time after each fishing operation in the above-mentioned weight or length categories.

#### **General rules on by-catches**

35. All CPCs shall allocate a specific quota for by-catch of bluefin tuna. The levels of authorized by-catches as well as the methodology to calculate those by-catches in relation with the total catches on board (in weight or number of specimens) shall be clearly defined in the annual fishing plans submitted to the ICCAT Secretariat under paragraph 10 of this Recommendation and shall never exceed 20% of

the total catches on board at the end of each fishing trip. Calculation in number of pieces shall only apply to tuna and tuna-like species managed by ICCAT. For the small-scale coastal vessel fleet the amount of by-catch can be calculated on an annual basis.

All by-catches of dead bluefin tuna, whether retained or discarded, shall be deducted from the quota of the flag CPC and reported to ICCAT. If by-catch of bluefin tuna occurs in waters under the fishery jurisdiction of CPCs whose current domestic legislation requires that all dead or dying fish must be landed, this landing obligation shall be complied with also by vessels flying foreign flags.

If no quota has been allocated to the CPC of the catching vessel or trap concerned or if it has already been consumed, the catching of bluefin tuna as by-catch is not permitted and CPCs shall take the necessary measures to ensure their release. If, however, such bluefin tuna is dead it shall be landed, and the appropriate follow-up action taken in accordance with the national law. CPCs shall report information on such quantities on an annual basis to the ICCAT Secretariat who shall make it available to the SCRS.

The procedures referred to in paragraphs 87 to 92 and 226 shall apply to by-catch.

For vessels not actively fishing for bluefin tuna, any quantity of bluefin tuna kept on board shall be clearly separated from other fish species to allow control authorities to monitor the respect of this rule. The procedures for non-authorized vessels with regard to the eBCD shall follow as laid down in the relevant provision of *Recommendation by ICCAT amending Recommendation 21-18 on the application of the eBCD System* (Rec. 22-16).

### **Recreational fisheries and sport fisheries**

36. When CPCs allocate, where appropriate, a specific quota to sport and recreational fisheries; that allocated quota should be set even if catch and release is compulsory for bluefin tuna caught in sport and recreational fisheries to account for possible dead fish. Each CPC shall regulate recreational and sport fisheries by issuing fishing authorizations to vessels for the purpose of sport and recreational fishing.

37. CPCs shall take the necessary measures to prohibit the catch and retention on board, transshipment or landing of more than one bluefin tuna per vessel per day for recreational fisheries.

This prohibition does not apply to CPCs whose domestic legislation requires that all dead fish, including those caught by sport and recreational, shall be landed.

38. The marketing of bluefin tuna caught in recreational and sport fishing shall be prohibited.

39. Each CPC shall take measures to record catch data including weight of each bluefin tuna caught during sport and recreational fishing and communicate to the ICCAT Secretariat the data for the preceding year by 31 July each year.

40. Dead catches from sport and recreational fisheries shall be counted against the quota allocated to the CPC in accordance with paragraph 4.

41. Each CPC shall take the necessary measures to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, the release of bluefin tuna, especially juveniles, caught alive, in the framework of recreational and sport fishing. Any bluefin tuna landed shall be whole, gilled and/or gutted.

42. Any CPC wishing to conduct a sport catch-and-release fishery in the Northeast Atlantic may allow a limited number of sport vessels to target bluefin tuna with the purpose of "tag and release" without the need to allocate them a specific quota. This applies to those vessels operating in the context of a scientific project of a research institute integrated in a scientific research program results of which shall be communicated to the SCRS. In this context the CPC shall have the obligation to: (a) submit the description and associated measures applicable to this fishery as integral part of their fishing and control plans as referred under paragraph 10 of this Recommendation; (b) closely monitor the activities of the vessels concerned to ensure their compliance with the existing provisions of this

Recommendation; (c) ensure that the tagging and releasing operations are performed by trained personnel to ensure high survival of the specimens; and (d) annually submit a report on the scientific activities conducted, at least 60 days before the SCRS meeting of the following year. Any bluefin tuna that die during tag and release activities shall be reported and deducted from the CPC's quota.

43. CPCs shall make available upon request from ICCAT the list of sport and recreational vessels which have received an authorization.
44. The format for such list referred to in paragraph 43 shall include the following information:
  - a) Name of vessel, register number;
  - b) ICCAT Record Number (if any);
  - c) Previous name (if any);
  - d) Name and address of owner(s) and operator(s).

#### **Use of aerial means**

45. The use of any aerial means, including aircraft, helicopters or any types of unmanned aerial vehicles to search for bluefin tuna shall be prohibited.

### **Part IV: Control measures**

#### **Section A – Records of vessels, traps and farms**

##### **ICCAT Record of fishing vessels**

46. CPCs shall establish and maintain an ICCAT record of all fishing vessels as defined in paragraph 2 a). That record shall consist of the following lists:
  - a) catching vessels fishing actively for bluefin tuna, as per paragraph 2 g) of this Recommendation; and
  - b) other vessels engaged in bluefin tuna related activities, other than catching vessels.
47. Each list shall include the following information:
  - a) name and registry number of the vessel;
  - b) specification of the type of vessel differentiating at least between: catching vessels, towing vessels, auxiliary vessels, support vessels, processing vessels;
  - c) length and gross registered tonnage (GRT) or, where possible, Gross Tonnage (GT);
  - d) IMO number (if any);
  - e) gear used (if any);
  - f) previous flag (if any);
  - g) previous name (if any);
  - h) previous details of deletion for other registers (if any);
  - i) international radio call sign (if any);

- j) name and address of owner(s) and operator(s); and
  - k) time period authorized for fishing, operating and/or transporting bluefin tuna for farming.
48. For vessels over 24 metres (independently of the gear used, excluding for bottom trawlers,) and for all purse seine vessels, CPCs shall indicate the number of vessels to the ICCAT Secretariat as part of their fishing plan defined in paragraph 10 of this Recommendation.
49. The ICCAT Executive Secretary shall establish and maintain the ICCAT Record of all catching vessels fishing actively for bluefin tuna and all other vessels authorized to operate for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean and take any measure to ensure availability of the record through electronic means, including by placing it on the ICCAT website in a manner consistent with confidentiality requirements noted by CPCs.
50. Each flag CPC shall submit electronically each year to the ICCAT Secretariat: (i) at the latest 15 days before the beginning of the fishing activity the list of its catching vessels referred to in paragraph 46 a); and (ii) at the latest 15 days before the start of their operation the list of other fishing vessels referred to in paragraph 46 b). Submissions shall be undertaken in accordance with the format set out in the *Guidelines for submitting data and information required by ICCAT*.
51. No retroactive submissions shall be accepted. Subsequent changes shall only be accepted if the notified fishing vessel is prevented from participation due to legitimate operational reasons or *force majeure*. In such circumstances, the CPC concerned shall immediately inform the ICCAT Secretariat, providing:
- a) full details of the fishing vessel(s) intended to replace a vessel or vessels, included on the record referred to in paragraph 46; CPCs with less than 5 vessels on either list referred to in paragraph 46, may replace a vessel with another vessel not previously included on the record, provided that the CPC concerned submitted to the ICCAT Secretariat a request for an ICCAT number to be given to the vessel, and the requested number has been provided;
  - b) a comprehensive account of the reasons justifying the replacement and any relevant supporting evidence or references.

The ICCAT Secretariat will circulate such cases among CPCs. If any CPC notifies that the case is not sufficiently justified or incomplete, it shall be brought to the Compliance Committee for further review and the case shall remain pending approval of the Compliance Committee.

52. Without prejudice to paragraph 35 for the purposes of this Recommendation, fishing vessels not entered into one of the ICCAT records referred to in paragraph 46 a) and b) are deemed not to be authorized to fish for, retain on board, tranship, transport, transfer, process or land eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna. The prohibition against retention on board does not apply to CPCs whose domestic legislation requires that all dead fish must be landed, providing that the value of the catch is subject to confiscation.
53. Conditions and procedures referred in the *Recommendation by ICCAT amending Recommendation 13-13 concerning the establishment of an ICCAT Record of vessels 20 metres in length overall or greater authorized to operate in the Convention area* (Rec. 21-14) (except paragraph 3) shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

#### **Fishing authorizations for vessels and traps authorized to fish for bluefin tuna**

54. CPCs shall issue special authorizations and/or national fishing licenses to vessels and traps included in one of the lists described in paragraphs 43, 46 and 56. Fishing authorizations shall contain as a minimum the information set out in **Annex 13**. The Flag CPC shall ensure that the information contained in the fishing authorization is accurate and consistent with the rules of ICCAT. The Flag CPC shall take the necessary enforcement measures in accordance with their legislation and may require the vessel to proceed immediately to a designated port when the individual quota is deemed to be exhausted.



**ICCAT record of tuna traps authorized to fish for bluefin tuna**

55. The Commission shall establish and maintain an ICCAT Record of all tuna traps authorized to fish for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean. For the purposes of this Recommendation, tuna traps not entered into the record are deemed not to be authorized to be used to fish for, retain, and participate in any operation to catch, transfer, harvest or land bluefin tuna.
56. Each CPC shall submit electronically to the ICCAT Secretariat, as part of their fishing plan defined in paragraphs 12 to 13, the list (including the name of the traps, register number and geographical coordinates of the trap polygon) of its authorized tuna traps referred to in paragraph 54.
57. Each CPC shall notify the ICCAT Secretariat, after the establishment of the ICCAT record of traps, of any addition to, any deletion from and/or any modification of the ICCAT record of traps at any time such changes occur.
58. The ICCAT Secretariat shall take any measure to ensure availability of the record through electronic means, including placing it on the ICCAT website, in a manner consistent with confidentiality requirements noted by CPCs.

**ICCAT Record of farms authorized to operate for bluefin tuna**

59. The ICCAT Secretariat shall maintain an ICCAT Record of all tuna farms authorized to operate for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean. For the purposes of this Recommendation, tuna farms not entered into the Record are deemed not to be authorized to operate for bluefin tuna.
60. Each farm CPC shall submit electronically to the ICCAT Secretariat, as part of their farming plan defined in paragraph 10 d), the list of its authorized bluefin tuna farms, including:
  - i. the name of the farm;
  - ii. register number;
  - iii. names and addresses of owner(s) and operator(s);
  - iv. the input and total farming capacity allocated to each farm;
  - v. the geographical coordinates of the areas authorized for farming activities; and
  - vi. the status of the farm (active or inactive).
61. No farming activities, including feeding for fattening purposes or harvesting of bluefin tuna, shall be authorized outside of the geographical coordinates approved for farming activities.
62. Each CPC shall notify the ICCAT Secretariat of any addition to, any deletion from and/or any modification of the ICCAT Record of farms at any time such changes occur.
63. The ICCAT Secretariat shall take any measure to ensure availability of the record through electronic means, including placing it on the ICCAT website, in a manner consistent with confidentiality requirements noted by CPCs.
64. Each CPC shall take the necessary measures to ensure that no bluefin tuna is placed into a farm not authorized by the CPC or listed in the ICCAT Record and that the farms do not receive bluefin tuna from vessels that are not included in the ICCAT Record of vessels referred to in paragraph 46. Each CPC shall take the necessary measures, under their applicable legislation, to prohibit any operation on farms not registered in the ICCAT Record of farms.

### Information on fishing activities

65. By 31 July each year, or within 7 months of the completion of the fishing season for those CPCs that end their fishing campaign in July, each CPC shall notify the ICCAT Secretariat detailed information on bluefin tuna catches in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean in the preceding quota allocation period. This information should include:
- a) the name and ICCAT number of each catching vessel;
  - b) the period of authorization(s) for each catching vessel;
  - c) the total catches of each catching vessel including nil returns throughout the period of authorization(s);
  - d) the total number of days each catching vessel fished in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean throughout the period of authorization(s); and
  - e) the total catch outside their period of authorization (by-catch).
66. For all vessels that were not authorized to fish actively for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean but that caught bluefin tuna as by-catch, the following information shall be provided to the ICCAT Secretariat:
- a) the name and ICCAT number or national registry number of the vessel, if not registered with ICCAT;
  - b) the total catches of bluefin tuna.
67. Each CPC shall notify the ICCAT Secretariat of any information concerning vessels not covered in paragraphs 65 and 66 but known or presumed to have fished for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean. The ICCAT Secretariat shall forward such information without delay to the flag CPC for appropriate action, with a copy to other CPCs for information.

### Joint fishing operations

68. Any joint fishing operation for bluefin tuna shall only be authorized with the express written consent of the CPCs concerned. To be authorized, each purse seine vessel shall be equipped to fish for bluefin tuna, to have a specific individual quota allocation, and to operate in accordance with the requirements defined in paragraphs 69 and 71. The quota allocated to a given JFO, shall be equal to the total of all the quotas allocated to purse seine vessels participating in the concerned JFO. Furthermore, the duration of the JFO shall not be longer than the duration of the fishing season for purse seine vessels, as referred to under paragraph 26 of this Recommendation.
69. At the moment of the application for the authorization, following the format set in **Annex 5, and via the form developed by the Secretariat**, each CPC shall take the necessary measures to obtain from its purse seine vessel(s) participating in the joint fishing operation the following information:
- the period of authorization of the JFO;
  - the identity of the operators involved;
  - the individual vessels' quotas;
  - the allocation key between the vessels for the catches involved; and
  - information on the farms of destination.

Each CPC shall transmit all the information referred above to the ICCAT Secretariat at least five working days before the start of the purse seine vessels fishing season as defined in paragraph 26.

In the case of *force majeure*, the deadline set out in this paragraph shall not apply regarding the information on the farms of destination. In such cases, CPCs shall provide the ICCAT Secretariat with an update of that information as soon as possible, together with a description of the events constituting *force majeure*. The ICCAT Secretariat shall compile the information referred under this paragraph provided by CPCs for the review by the Compliance Committee.

70. The Commission shall establish and maintain an ICCAT record of all joint fishing operations authorized by the CPCs in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean.
71. No JFOs between purse seine vessels from different CPCs shall be permitted. However, a CPC with less than five authorized purse seine vessels may authorize joint fishing operations with any other CPC. Each CPC conducting a JFO shall be responsible and accountable for the catches made under this JFO.

#### **Part IV: Control measures**

##### **Section B - Catches and transhipments**

###### **Recording requirements**

72. The masters of catching vessels shall maintain a bound or electronic fishing logbook of their operations in accordance with the requirements set out in Section A of **Annex 2**.
73. The masters of towing vessels, auxiliary vessels and processing vessels shall record their activities in accordance with the requirements set out in Sections B, C and D of **Annex 2**.

###### **Catch reports sent by masters and trap operators**

74. Each CPC shall ensure that its catching vessels fishing actively for bluefin tuna shall communicate to their authorities during the whole period in which they are authorized to fish bluefin tuna by electronic or any other effective means daily information from logbooks, including the date, time, location (latitude and longitude), the weight and number of bluefin tuna caught in the area covered by this plan, including releases and discards of dead fish under the minimum size referred to in paragraph 31. Masters shall send that information in the format set out in **Annex 2** or through the CPCs reporting requirement.
75. Masters of purse seine vessels shall produce reports referred to in paragraph 74 on a fishing operation by fishing operation basis, including operations where the catch was zero. The reports shall be transmitted by the operator to its flag CPC authorities by 9.00 GMT for the preceding day.
76. Trap operators or their authorized representatives fishing actively for bluefin tuna shall send electronically a daily catch report, including the ICCAT register number, date, time, catches (weight and number of fish), including zero catches. They shall send that information within 48 hours electronically in the format set out in **Annex 2** to their flag CPC authorities during the whole period they are authorized to fish bluefin tuna.
77. For catching vessels other than purse seine vessels and traps, masters shall transmit to their control authorities, reports referred to in paragraph 74 by the latest Tuesday noon for the preceding week ending Sunday.

###### **Designated ports**

78. Each CPC who has been allocated a bluefin tuna quota shall designate ports where landing or transhipping operations of bluefin tuna are authorized. This list shall be communicated each year to the ICCAT Secretariat as part of the annual fishing plan communicated by each CPC. Any amendment shall be communicated to the ICCAT Secretariat. Other CPCs may designate ports in which landing or transhipping operations of bluefin tuna is authorized and communicate a list of these ports to the ICCAT Secretariat.

79. For a port to be determined as a designated port, the port State shall ensure that the following conditions are met:
- a) established landing and transshipment times;
  - b) established landing and transshipment places; and
  - c) established inspection and surveillance procedures ensuring inspection coverage during all landing and transshipment times and at all landing and transshipment places in accordance with paragraph 83.
80. It shall be prohibited to land or tranship from catching vessels as well as processing vessels and auxiliary vessels any quantity of bluefin tuna fished in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean at any place other than ports designated by CPCs in accordance with paragraphs 78 and 79. However, exceptionally, the transport of dead bluefin tuna, harvested from a trap/cage, to a processing vessel using an auxiliary vessel, is not prohibited.
81. On the basis of the information received by CPCs under paragraph 78 the ICCAT Secretariat shall maintain a list of designated ports on the ICCAT website.
82. The provisions of this Recommendation shall not affect the entry of a CPC fishing vessel to port, in accordance with international law, for reasons of *force majeure* or distress.

#### **Prior notification of landings**

83. Prior to entry into any port, masters of catching vessels as well as processing vessels and auxiliary vessels or their representative shall provide the relevant authorities of the port, at least 4 hours before the estimated time of arrival, with the following:
- a) the external identification number and the name of the fishing vessel;
  - b) the date and estimated time of arrival at port;
  - c) the port of destination and the purposes of the call, such as landing, transshipment or access to services;
  - d) estimate of quantity of bluefin tuna retained on board;
  - e) the information on the geographic area where the catch was taken.

The CPC where the landing takes place may set a shorter period for the prior notification, considering the distance between the area of activity and the port or landing site, and provided that such shorter period of prior notification does not impair the ability of that CPC to carry out inspections.

Where catches are taken between the time of the prior notification and arrival at port, the estimated quantities of bluefin tuna retained on board may be modified at any time prior to arrival.

CPCs may decide to apply these provisions only to catches equal to or greater than three fish or one ton provided that they include- this information in their monitoring, control and inspection plan referred to in paragraph 10. - CPCs that decide, pursuant to this paragraph, to set a shorter period for prior notification or to apply these provisions only to catches equal to or greater than three fish or one ton shall provide this information, including detail of the possible shortened period [and the reasons therefore] and the rest of the conditions set for the prior notification, [prior to implementation] in their monitoring, control, and inspection plan referred to in paragraph 10. Any subsequent changes shall be notified to the ICCAT Secretariat at least 14 days before the change takes effect.

Port State authorities shall keep a record of all prior notices for a period of one year from the date of Port entry.

All landings shall be controlled by the relevant control authorities and a percentage shall be inspected based on a risk assessment system involving quota, fleet size and fishing effort. Full details of this control system adopted by each CPC including the target percentage of landings to be inspected shall be detailed in their annual inspection plan referred to in paragraph 10 of this Recommendation.

After each trip, Masters of catching vessels shall submit within 48 hours a landing declaration to the competent authorities of the CPC where the landing takes place and to its flag CPC. The master of the authorized catching vessel shall be responsible and certify its completeness and accuracy of the declaration, which shall indicate, as a minimum requirement, the quantities of bluefin tuna landed and the area where they were caught. All landed catches shall be weighed and not only estimated. The relevant authority shall send a record of the landing to the flag CPC authority of the catching vessel, within 48 hours after the landing has ended.

### **Reporting of catches from CPCs to the ICCAT Secretariat**

84. CPCs shall send bi-weekly catch reports by gear, covering the two weeks' activity, and through the relevant activity periods, without delay, to the ICCAT Secretariat, to ensure the data publication deadline specified below can be met. In the case of purse seine vessels and traps, the reports shall be as defined in paragraphs 74 to 76. Total reported catches will be published by the ICCAT Secretariat on a password protected area of the ICCAT web site during the second week of each month. If there are no catches over the reporting period, and for purse seiners and traps only, the bi-weekly catch report should include a notification of nil catches.
85. CPCs shall report to the ICCAT Secretariat the dates when their entire quota of bluefin tuna has been utilized. The ICCAT Secretariat shall promptly circulate this information to all CPCs.

### **Cross check**

86. CPCs shall verify inspection reports and observer reports, VMS data, and where appropriate eBCDs, as well as the timely submission of logbooks and required information recorded in the logbooks of their fishing vessels, in the transfer/transshipment document and in the catch documents.

The competent authorities shall carry out cross checks by species on all landings, transshipment, transfers and caging between the quantities recorded in the fishing vessel logbook or in the transshipment declaration and the quantities recorded in the landing declaration or caging declaration, and any other relevant documentation, such as invoice and/or sales notes.

### **Transshipment**

87. Transshipment operations of bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean shall be allowed only at designated ports defined and conditioned in paragraphs 78 to 82.
88. Prior to entry into any port, the receiving fishing vessel, or its representative, shall provide the relevant authorities of the port State at least 72 hours before the estimated time of arrival, with the information listed in **Annex 3**, according to the port State's domestic law. Any transshipment requires the prior authorization from the flag CPC of the transshipping fishing vessel concerned. Furthermore, the master of the transshipping fishing vessel shall, at the time of the transshipment, inform its flag CPC of the data required in **Annex 3**.
89. The relevant authority of the port State shall inspect the receiving vessel on arrival and check the cargo and documentation related to the transshipment operation.
90. The masters of fishing vessels shall complete and transmit to their flag CPC the ICCAT transshipment declaration no later than 5 working days after the transshipment in port as per Recommendation 21-15. The masters of the transshipping fishing vessels shall complete the ICCAT transshipment declaration in accordance with the format set out in **Annex 3**. The transshipment declaration shall be linked with the eBCD to facilitate cross-checking of data contained thereof.

91. The relevant authority of the port State shall send a record of the transshipment to the flag CPC authority of the transshipping fishing vessel, within 5 days after the transshipment has ended.
92. All transshipments shall be inspected by the relevant authorities of the designated port CPC authorities.

**Part IV:  
Control measures**

**Section C - Observer Programmes**

**CPC Observer Programme**

93. Each CPC shall ensure that CPC observers, issued with an official identification document, are deployed on vessels flying its flag and on traps under its jurisdiction that are active in the bluefin tuna fishery, to achieve at least the following coverage rates:
  - 20% of its active pelagic trawlers (over 15 m);
  - 20% of its active longline vessels (over 15 m);
  - 20% of its active baitboats (over 15 m);
  - 100% of its towing vessels;
  - 100% of harvesting operations from its traps.
94. CPCs with less than five catching vessels of the first three segments defined above shall ensure coverage by observers 20% of the time the vessels are active in the bluefin tuna fishery.
95. In implementing this CPC observer programme, CPCs shall ensure that:
  - a) temporal and spatial coverage is representative to ensure that the Commission receives adequate and appropriate data and information on bluefin tuna catch, effort, and other related scientific and management aspects, taking into account characteristics of the fleets and fisheries;
  - b) robust data collection protocols are implemented;
  - c) the CPC observer is provided, before the start of his/her deployment, with a list of contacts within the CPC competent authority where to report observations;
  - d) each CPC observer is properly trained and qualified before deployment;
  - e) to the extent practicable, the operations of vessels and traps concerned suffer minimal disruption;
  - f) the master of the fishing vessel or the trap operator allows the CPC observer access to the electronic means of communication on board the fishing vessel or on the trap.
96. Data and information collected under each CPC's observer programme shall be provided to the SCRS and the Commission, as appropriate, in accordance with requirements and procedures to be developed by the Commission by 2023 taking into account CPC confidentiality requirements.
97. For the scientific aspects of the programme, the SCRS shall report on the coverage level achieved by each CPC, and provide a summary of the data collected and any relevant findings associated with that data. The SCRS shall also provide any recommendations to improve the effectiveness of CPC's observer programmes.
98. The obligations, responsibilities and tasks applicable to the CPC observers are detailed in **Annex 6**.

### ICCAT Regional Observer Programme (ROP)

99. The ICCAT Regional Observer Programme referred to in **Annex 6** shall be implemented to ensure 100% observer coverage as follows:

- on all purse seine vessels authorized to fish for bluefin tuna;
- during all transfers of bluefin tuna from purse seine vessels to transport cages;
- during all transfers of bluefin tuna from traps to transport cages;
- during all transfers from one farm cage to transport cages, which then are towed to another farm;
- during all cagings of bluefin tuna in farms;
- during all harvesting of bluefin tuna from farms; and
- during the release of bluefin tuna from farms.

Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 93, for releases of tuna from farms, only the regional observer, and not the national observer, shall be present on the towing vessel.

Notwithstanding the above, when, for reasons of *force majeure* (e.g., pandemic) duly notified to ICCAT, the deployment of a regional observer is not possible, the vessel, trap or farm may operate without the observer. In such cases, CPCs shall prioritize such vessels, farms, and traps for control and inspection.

In addition, CPCs shall implement a set of appropriate alternative measures aimed at achieving the objectives of the regional observer programme, including, where possible, deploying either a national inspector or a national observer to act in locum of the regional observer. The CPC concerned shall send all details of the alternative measures to the Secretariat. The Secretariat shall compile and circulate all the information received on the implementation of these procedures to the Commission. Such alternative measures and the actions taken will be examined by the Compliance Committee during each annual meeting.

100. By way of derogation from paragraph 99, harvesting from farms up to 1000 kg per day and up to a maximum of 50 tons per farm per year to supply the fresh bluefin tuna market may be authorized by the relevant CPC provided that an authorized inspector from the farm CPC is onsite for 100% of such harvests, and controls the entire operation. The authorized inspector shall also validate the harvested quantities in the eBCD system. In this case, the regional observer's signature should not be required in the harvest section of the eBCD. This derogation shall be reviewed, as appropriate, by the PWG, possibly through its IMM Working Group, by [2023] [2027] at the latest.

101. Purse seine vessels without an ICCAT regional observer on board shall not be authorized to fish or to operate in the bluefin tuna fishery.

102. One ICCAT regional observer shall be assigned to each farm for the entirety of caging and harvesting operations. In cases of *force majeure* that have been confirmed by the farm CPC authority, or in cases where neighboring farms, as authorized and controlled by the farm CPC, operate jointly as one unit, an ICCAT regional observer may be shared by more than one farm to guarantee the continuity of farming operations if so authorized by the farm CPC competent authority.

103. By way of derogation from paragraph 102, in case of transfer between two different farms under the competence of the same national authority, a single regional observer can be assigned to cover the entire process including the transfer of fish to a towing transport cage, the towing of the fish from the donor farm to the recipient farm and the caging of fish on the recipient farm. In this case, a regional observer should be deployed by the donor farm and the cost shall be shared by both the donor and receiving farms, unless otherwise determined by the farming companies.

104. As a matter of priority, the ICCAT regional observers should not be of the same nationality as the catching vessel, towing vessel, trap or farm, for which their services are required and, to the extent possible, the ICCAT Secretariat and the provider responsible for the ROP shall ensure the observer has a satisfactory knowledge of the language of the flag, fishing vessel and farm or trap CPC. The requirements that the regional observer not be of the same nationality as the observed vessel, farm or trap will only take priority in cases where the ICCAT regional observers deployed have a satisfactory knowledge of the language of the flag, fishing vessel, farm or trap CPC. If it is not possible to find foreign observers with proper language skills or in case of *force majeure*, the deployment of ICCAT regional observers of the same nationality may be allowed, provided that prior notification to the ICCAT Secretariat is made by the provider responsible for the ROP.
105. The obligations, responsibilities and tasks applicable to the ICCAT Regional Observer and the flag, trap, and farm CPCs are detailed in **Annex 6**.

**Part IV:  
Control measures**

**Section D – Transfers of live fish**

**General provision**

106. This section applies to all transfers as defined in paragraph 2 i) of this Recommendation.
107. In accordance with paragraph 10 c) of this Recommendation, each CPC shall nominate a single competent authority, hereafter referred to as the “CPC competent authority”, that shall be responsible for coordinating the collection and verification of information for the control of transfers and related transports of bluefin tuna conducted under its jurisdiction, and for reporting to and cooperating with the CPCs whose farms will cage the fish.
108. Masters of catching and towing vessels carrying out transfer operations shall report their transfer activities in accordance with the requirements set out in **Annex 2** (logbook).

**Unique number assigned to cages**

109. All cages used in transfer operations and associated transports shall be numbered in accordance with the unique numbering system referred to in paragraphs 145 to 148.

**Prior Transfer Notification**

110. Before the start of a transfer operation, including voluntary transfers, the master of the catching or towing vessel or its representative, or the representative of the farm or trap, where the transfer in question originates shall send to its CPC competent authority a prior transfer notification indicating, where applicable:
- the number and the estimated weight of bluefin tuna to be transferred;
  - the name of the catching vessel, towing vessel(s), farm or trap, with their respective ICCAT number record;
  - the date and the location of the catch;
  - the date and estimated time of transfer;
  - the estimated position (latitude/longitude) where the transfer will take place and the donor and receiving cage numbers;
  - farm of destination;
  - the name and ICCAT number of the donor farm, in the case of a transfer from the farm cage to a transport cage;
  - the numbers of the two farm cages and any transport cages involved, in the case of intra-farm transfers.



### **Transfer authorization**

111. Within 48 hours following the submission of the prior transfer notification, the CPC competent authority of the donor operator shall assign and communicate to the donor operator concerned a transfer authorization number for each transfer operation. The transfer authorization number shall include the three CPC letters code, four numbers for the year and three letters to indicate either positive (AUT) or negative (NEG) authorization, followed by sequential numbers.
112. The transfer operation concerned shall not start before its specific transfer authorization number has been assigned and communicated to the donor operator.
113. The transfer authorization does not prejudice the confirmation of any subsequent transfer or caging operation.
114. Voluntary and control transfers shall not be subject to a new transfer authorization.

### **Refusal of a transfer operation and consequent release of bluefin tuna**

115. A transfer operation shall not be authorized by the CPC competent authority of the donor operator if, on receipt of the prior transfer notification, it considers that:
- a) the catching vessel or the trap declared to have caught the fish does not have a valid authorization to fish for bluefin tuna, issued in accordance with paragraph 54 of this Recommendation;
  - b) the number and weight of fish subject to the transfer has not been duly reported by the catching vessel or the trap;
  - c) the catching vessel or the trap that has caught the fish does not have sufficient quota;
  - d) the towing vessel declared to transfer and/or transport the fish is not registered in the ICCAT Record of all other fishing vessels referred to in paragraph 46 b), or is not equipped with a fully functioning Vessel Monitoring System (VMS);
  - e) the farm of destination is not reported as active in the ICCAT Record of farms referred to in paragraph 61 of this Recommendation.
116. In case of refusal, the CPC competent authority of the donor operator shall:
- a) immediately inform the donor operator of the refusal, as well as the catch, the trap or farm CPC competent authority, if different;
  - b) where applicable, issue an order to release the fish concerned into the sea, in accordance with **Annex 10**.

### **Monitoring of transfers operations by video camera**

117. Except for transfers of cages between two towing vessels, which do not involve the movement of live tuna between those cages, the donor operator shall ensure that the transfer operation is monitored by video camera in the water, in accordance with the minimum standards and procedures referred to in **Annex 8**, to determine the number of individuals of bluefin tuna being transferred.
118. Each donor operator CPC shall take the necessary measures to ensure that identical copies of the relevant video records are provided without delay by the donor operator:
- a) for the first transfer operation and the eventual voluntary or control transfer, to the ICCAT regional observer and to the receiving towing vessel and, at the end of the fishing trip, to the flag or trap CPC competent authority of the donor operator;

- b) for further transfers, to the CPC observer on board the donor towing vessel, to the master of the receiving towing vessel and, at the end of the towing trip, to the flag CPC competent authority of the donor towing vessel;
  - c) for transfers between two different farms, to the ICCAT regional observer, to the receiving towing vessel and to donor farm CPC competent authority; and
  - d) if a national or ICCAT inspection authority is present during the transfer operation, the inspector(s) shall also receive a copy of the relevant video record.
119. The video footage concerned shall accompany the fish up to the destination farm. A copy shall be kept onboard the donor vessel(s), by the trap(s) or by the farm(s), and remain accessible for control purposes at any time during the fishing campaign.
120. Copies of the video records shall be provided by the CPC competent authority of the donor operator to the SCRS upon request. The SCRS shall keep confidentiality of commercial activities.
121. The CPC competent authority of the donor operator and the donor operator shall retain the video footages related to transfers for at least 3 years, and keep them as long as necessary for control and enforcement purposes.

### **Voluntary and control transfers**

122. If the video footage does not meet the minimum standards referred to in **Annex 8**, and in particular if its quality and clarity are not sufficient to determine the number of fish being transferred, the donor operator may conduct voluntary transfer(s).
123. If no voluntary transfer(s) has been carried out, or if the voluntary transfer(s) still does not permit a determination of the number of fish being transferred, the CPC competent authority of the donor operator shall order a control transfer, which shall be repeated until the quality of the video record allows the estimation of the number of bluefin tuna being transferred.
124. The voluntary and/or control transfer(s) shall be carried out into another cage which must be empty. The number of fish obtained from the valid voluntary or control transfer shall be used to complete the logbook, the ICCAT Transfer Declaration (ITD) and the relevant sections of the eBCD.
125. The separation of the transport cage from a purse seine, a trap, or a farm cage shall not occur before the ICCAT regional observer on board the purse seiner, or present on the farm or trap, has carried out its tasks.
126. However, if after the voluntary transfer(s) the quality of the video still does not allow determination of the number of individuals being transferred, the CPC competent authority of the donor operator may allow the separation of the donor purse seine vessel, trap or farm from the transport cage(s). In such a case, the CPC competent authority of the donor operator shall order the door(s) of the transport cage(s) concerned, to be sealed in accordance with the procedure set out in **Annex 14**, and require a control transfer(s) to be carried out at a determined time and place, in the presence of the flag, trap or farm competent authority.
127. In the event that the flag, trap or farm competent authorities cannot be present at the control transfer, the control transfer shall take place in the presence of an ICCAT regional observer. In this case, the responsibility for the regional observer deployment shall lie with the farm operator owning the bluefin tuna transported, who shall ensure that the regional observer is deployed to verify the control transfer.

### **ICCAT Transfer Declaration (ITD)**

128. At the end of a transfer operation, the donor operator shall complete an ITD in accordance with the format set out in **Annex 4**. The donor operator shall transmit or make available, without delay, the ITD to its CPC competent authority, to the ICCAT regional observer where its presence is mandatory and, where applicable, to the master of the towing vessel or the farm receiving the fish.
129. The CPC competent authority of the donor operator shall ensure that the ITD form is numbered, using the three letters CPC code, followed by the four numbers showing the year and three sequential numbers, followed by the three letters ITD (CPC- 20\*\*/xxx/ITD).
130. The original of the ITD shall accompany the fish transferred up to the destination farm(s) where the fish will be caged:
- a) at first transfer, the original of the ITD shall be duplicated by the donor operator when a single catch is transferred from the purse seine net or the trap to more than one transport cage;
  - b) in the case of a further transfer, the master of the donor towing vessel shall update the ITD by completing part 3 (further transfers), and provide the updated ITD to the receiving towing vessel(s). The ITD shall be duplicated by the master of the donor towing vessel if the fish subject to further transfer is divided into more than one transport cage.
131. A copy of the ITD shall be kept onboard the donor catching or towing vessel(s), or by the donor trap or the donor farm, and be accessible at any time for control purposes during the duration of the fishing campaign.

### **Investigation by the CPC competent authority of the donor operator**

132. The CPC competent authority of the donor operator shall investigate all cases where:
- a) there is more than 10% difference between the number of fish reported in the ITD by the donor operator and the number of fish estimated by the ICCAT regional observer, or by the CPC national observer, as appropriate; or
  - b) when the ICCAT regional observer has not signed the ITD.

The margin of error of 10% referred above shall be expressed as a percentage of the donor operator's figures.

133. Where applicable, the investigation shall include the analysis of all the relevant video footages. Except in cases of *force majeure*, the investigation shall be concluded within 96 hours of its initiation, and in any case prior to the arrival of the transport cage to the destination farm.
134. At the initiation of an investigation, the CPC competent authority of the donor operator shall inform the flag CPC competent authority of the towing vessel(s) concerned about the investigation, and ensure that, until the investigation is concluded, no transfer is permitted from or to the transport cage in question.
135. For all transfer operations where a video is required, a difference greater than 10%, between the number of bluefin tuna reported by the donor operator in the ITD and the number determined by the CPC competent authority of the donor operator following an investigation, shall constitute a Potential Non-Compliance (PNC) of the fishing vessel, trap or farm concerned.

### **Amendments to ITDs and eBCDs following inspections at sea or investigations**

136. If following an inspection at sea or an investigation, the number of fish is found to be more than 10% different to that declared in the ITD and eBCD, the eBCD shall be amended by the CPC competent authority of the donor operator to reflect the result of the investigation.

## **Fish that die during transfer operations and associated transport**

137. The number of fish that die during a transfer operation, or during the transport of the fish to the destination farm, shall be reported by the donor operator in accordance with the procedures and template set out in **Annex 11**.

### **Part IV: Control measures**

#### **Section E - Caging**

##### **General provisions**

138. Each farm CPC shall nominate a single competent authority, hereafter referred to as the “farm CPC competent authority”. That authority shall be responsible for coordinating the collection and verification of information on national caging activities, for the control of farm activities conducted under its jurisdiction, and for reporting to and cooperating with the CPC competent authorities whose flag vessels or trap caught the caged tuna.

139. Where the farms are located beyond waters under the jurisdiction of a CPC, the provisions of this section shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the CPCs where the natural or legal persons responsible for the farm are located.

140. All farm activities shall be subject to the control described in the monitoring, control and inspection plan submitted under paragraph 10 of this Recommendation.

141. All CPCs involved in caging related activities shall exchange information and cooperate to ensure that the number and weight of bluefin tuna intended for caging are accurate, consistent with the catch amounts reported by the purse seine vessel or trap, and declared in the relevant sections of the eBCD.

142. Farm CPCs are encouraged to exchange experience and best practices on control and inspection related to farming activities using the pilot program for the voluntary exchange of inspection personnel established by the ICCAT Res. 19-17.

143. The farm CPC competent authority shall ensure that farm operators maintain at all times an accurate schematic plan of their farms, indicating the unique number of all cages and their individual position on the farm. The plan shall be made available at all times to the farm CPC competent authority for control purposes. Any modification to the schematic plan is subject to prior notification to the farm CPC competent authority. The schematic farming plan shall be adapted any time the number and/or distribution of farm cages is modified.

144. The farm CPC competent authority and the farm operator shall retain all the information, documentation and material related to caging activities conducted in farms under its jurisdiction for at least 3 years, and keep the information as long as necessary for enforcement purposes.

##### **Unique number assigned to cages**

145. Before the start of the bluefin tuna fishing campaign, the farm CPC competent authority shall assign a unique and identifiable number to each cage associated to farms under its jurisdiction, including those cages used to transport the fish to the farm.

146. Each cage shall be identified with a unique numbering system that includes at least the three letters CPC code, followed by three numbers. The unique cage numbers shall be stamped or painted on two opposite sides of the ring of the cage and above the water line, in a color contrasting with the background on which they are painted or stamped, and must be visible and legible at any time for control purposes.

147. The height of the letters and numbers shall be at least 20 centimeters with a line thickness of at least 4 centimeters.

148. Alternative methods to mark the unique number on the cage are allowed, providing they offer the same guarantee of visibility, legibility and inviolability.

### **Caging authorization**

149. Each caging operation is subject to a caging authorization issued by the farm CPC competent authority. The following procedure shall apply:

- a) the farm operator requests a caging authorization to the farm CPC competent authority, specifying in particular the number and weight (as referred to in the ITD) of fish to be caged. This request shall be accompanied by:
  - i. the relevant ITDs;
  - ii. the eBCD(s) reference concerned, as confirmed and validated by the catching flag or trap CPC competent authority;
  - iii. all the reports of fish that die during transport, duly recorded in accordance with **Annex 11**.
- b) the farm CPC competent authority notifies the information under subparagraph a) to the relevant catching flag or trap CPC(s) competent authority(ies), and asks for confirmation that the caging operation can be authorized;
- c) within 3 working days, the catching flag or trap CPC(s) competent authority(ies) notifies the farm CPC competent authority that the caging operation concerned can be authorized or must be refused. In the case of refusal, the flag or trap CPC competent authority shall specify the reason(s) for the refusal, and the refusal shall include the consequent release order;
- d) the farm CPC competent authority issues the caging authorization immediately after receipt of the confirmation by the catching flag or trap CPC competent authority concerned. The caging operation shall not be authorized by the farm CPC competent authority in the absence of this confirmation.

150. No caging shall be authorized if the complete set of documentation required under paragraph 149 a) does not accompany the fish subject to the caging authorization.

151. Pending the results of the investigation referred to in paragraphs 132 to 135 conducted by the catching flag or trap CPC competent authority, the caging operation shall not be authorized and the relevant catch and live trade sections of the eBCD shall not be validated.

152. If the caging authorization has not been issued by the farm CPC competent authority within 1 month after the request for a caging authorization by the farm operator, the farm CPC competent authority shall order and proceed to release all the fish contained in the transport cage concerned, in accordance with **Annex 10**. The farm CPC competent authority shall accordingly inform without delay the catching flag or trap CPC competent authority concerned, and the ICCAT Secretariat of the release.

### **Refusal of a caging authorization by the flag or trap CPC**

153. If, on receipt of the information referred to in paragraph 149 a) the catching flag or trap CPC competent authority considers that:

- a) the catching vessel or trap declared to have caught the fish had insufficient quota to cover the bluefin tuna to be caged;
- b) the fish to be caged has not been duly reported by the catching vessel or trap, and has not been taken into account for the calculation of any quota uptake that may be applicable;

- c) the catching vessel or trap declared to have caught the fish does not have a valid authorization to fish for bluefin tuna, issued in accordance with paragraph 54 of this Recommendation;

it shall determine the number of fish for which caging is refused and request without delay the farm CPC competent authority to proceed to seize the fish concerned and immediately release them into the sea, in accordance with **Annex 10**.

### **Caging operations**

154. At arrival of the towing vessel in the vicinity of the farm, the farm CPC competent authority shall ensure that:

- a) the towing vessel concerned is maintained at a distance of minimum 1 nautical mile from any facility of the farm until the farm CPC competent authority is physically present; and
- b) the position and activity of the relevant towing vessels is monitored at all times.

155. No caging operation shall start:

- a) before it has been duly authorized by the farm CPC competent authority;
- b) without the presence of the farm CPC competent authority and the ICCAT regional observer;
- c) before the catch and live trade sections of the eBCD have been completed and validated by the catching flag or trap CPC competent authority(ies).

156. The anchoring of transport cages as farm cages, without movement of fish to allow stereoscopic camera recording is prohibited.

157. After transfer of the bluefin tuna from the towing cage to the farm cage, the farm CPC control authority shall ensure that farm cages containing bluefin tuna are sealed at all times. Unsealing will only be possible in the presence of the farm CPC competent authority and following its authorization. The farm CPC control authority shall establish protocols for the sealing of farm cages, ensuring the use of official seals and that these seals are placed in such a way that they prevent the opening of doors without the seals being broken.

158. Farm CPCs shall ensure that the bluefin tuna catches are placed in separate cages, or series of cages, and partitioned on the basis of flag CPC of origin and catch year. By derogation, if the bluefin tuna has been caught in the context of a JFO, the catches concerned shall be placed in separate cages or series of cages and partitioned on the basis of the JFOs and catch year.

159. All the caging operations shall be completed before 22 August of each year, unless the farm CPC receiving the fish provides valid reasons, including *force majeure*. Those reasons shall be documented and reported in the caging report referred to in paragraph 184. In any case, no bluefin tuna shall be caged after 7 September. The above deadlines do not apply in case of inter-farm transfers.

### **Recording of the caging operation by control cameras**

160. The farm CPC competent authority shall ensure that each bluefin tuna caging operation in its farms is recorded by the farm operator using both conventional and stereoscopic cameras. All video footages shall comply with the minimum standards set out in **Annex 8**, except point 1d for stereoscopic camera footages.

161. If the quality of the control camera video footage used to determine the number and/or weight of the bluefin tuna caged does not comply with the minimum standards of **Annex 8**, the farm CPC competent authority shall order a control caging until the determination of the number and/or weight is possible. The repetition of the caging operation shall not be subject to a new caging authorization.

162. In the case of control caging, the farm CPC competent authority shall ensure that the donor farm cage is sealed and that the cage cannot be manipulated prior to the new caging operation. The receiving farm cage(s) used in the control caging shall be empty.

163. At the completion of the caging operation, the farm CPC competent authority shall ensure that the ICCAT regional observer has immediate access to all stereoscopic and conventional camera video footage(s), and is allowed to make a copy if it intends to complete its task of analysing the footage at another time or place.

164. CPCs with active bluefin tuna farms and the SCRS are encouraged to participate in trials using Artificial Intelligence (AI), including under the framework established by Resolution 22-07, for the analysis of stereoscopic camera footages, with a view to automating the determination of the number and/or weight of caged tuna, in order to reduce workloads and avoid possible human bias.

#### **Fish that die during a caging operation**

165. All bluefin tuna that die during a caging operation shall be reported by the farm operator, in accordance with the procedures set out in **Annex 11**.

#### **Caging declaration**

166. Each farm CPC competent authority shall ensure that, for each caging operation, the farm operator submits a caging declaration within 1 week after the actual caging operation has taken place, using the form set out in **Annex 12**.

#### **Analysis of the stereoscopic video footage by the farm CPC competent authority**

167. The farm CPC competent authority shall determine the number and weight of bluefin tuna being caged, by analyzing the video footage of each caging operation provided by the farm operator. To carry out this analysis, the authorities shall follow the procedures set out in point 1 of **Annex 9**.

168. When there is a difference of more than 10% between the number and/or the weight determined by the farm CPC competent authority and the corresponding figures reported in the caging declaration, the farm CPC competent authority shall launch an investigation to identify the reasons for the discrepancy, and make the eventual adjustment to the number and/or weight of fish that has been caged.

169. The margin of error of 10% referred to above shall be expressed as a percentage of the farm operator's figures.

#### **Communication of caging results to the catching flag or trap CPC**

170. After the completion of a caging operation or, in the case of a JFO or traps of a same CPC/EU Member State, of the last caging operation associated to that JFO or those traps, the farm CPC competent authority shall send to the catching flag or trap CPC competent authority the results of the caging operations referred to in **Annex 9**, point 2 under a and b.

171. Each farm CPC competent authority shall submit the procedures and results related to the stereoscopic camera programme (or alternative methods) to the SCRS by 31 October annually. The SCRS should evaluate such procedures and results and report to the Commission at the next Annual Meeting.

### **Investigation conducted by the catching flag or trap CPC competent authority**

172. When, for a single catching operation, the number of bluefin tuna being caged as communicated by the farm CPC competent authority in accordance with paragraph 170, differs by more than 10% from those reported in the ITD or eBCD as caught and/or transferred, the catching flag or trap CPC competent authority shall initiate an investigation to determine the accurate catch weight that shall be deducted from the national bluefin tuna quota, in accordance with paragraphs 178 to 180 (quota uptake).
173. In support of this investigation, the catching flag or trap CPC competent authority shall request all the complementary information and the results of the relevant video footage analysis conducted in accordance with this Recommendation by the flag and farm CPCs competent authority(ies) that have been involved in the transport and the caging operation concerned.
174. All CPCs competent authorities, including those whose vessels have been involved in the transport of the fish, shall cooperate actively, including through the exchange of all information and documentation at their disposal.
175. The catching flag or trap CPC competent authority shall conclude the investigation within 1 month from the communication of the caging results by the competent authority of the farm CPC.
176. A difference greater than 10% between the number of bluefin tuna reported caught by the vessel or trap concerned and the number determined by the catching flag or trap CPC competent authority as result of the investigation shall constitute a Potential Non-Compliance (PNC) of the vessel or trap concerned.
177. The margin of error of 10% referred to above shall be expressed as a percentage of the figures reported by the fishing vessel master or trap representative and shall be applicable at the level of individual caging operation.

### **Quota uptake**

178. The catching flag or trap CPC competent authority shall determine the weight of bluefin tuna to be deducted from its national quota taking into account the quantities caged, calculated in accordance with the provisions of **Annex 9**, which ensures that weight at caging is calculated based on the length-weight relationship for wild fish, and the reported mortalities, in accordance with the provisions of **Annex 11**.
179. However, for those cases where the investigation referred to in paragraph 172 concludes that bluefin tuna individuals were missing within the meaning of paragraph 2 of **Annex 11**, the weight of the missing fish shall be deducted from the national quota in accordance with **Annex 11**, by applying the average individual weight at caging communicated by the farm CPC competent authority, to the number of bluefin tuna in the catch as determined by the flag or trap CPC competent authority resulting from its analysis of the first transfer video footage in the context of the investigation.
180. Notwithstanding paragraph 179, after the consultation of the CPC competent authority(ies) involved in the transport of fish up to the destination farm, the flag or trap CPC competent authorities may decide not to deduct from the national quota the fish determined in the investigation as having been lost, when the losses have been duly documented as “*force majeure*” by the operator (i.e., pictures of the damaged cage, meteorological reports), the relevant information has been communicated to its CPC competent authority immediately after the event and the losses did not result in known mortalities.

### **Releases associated to caging operations**

181. The determination of the fish to be released shall be done in accordance with the provisions of **Annex 9** paragraph 4.



182. If the weight of bluefin tuna being caged is in excess of what had been declared as caught and/or transferred, the catching flag or trap CPC competent authority shall issue a release order and communicate it without delay to the farm CPC competent authority concerned. The release order shall follow the provisions of **Annex 9** paragraph 4, taking into account the possible compensation at the JFO or trap level, in accordance with **Annex 9** paragraph 5.

183. The release operation shall be conducted in accordance with the protocol set out in **Annex 10**.

### **Caging report**

184. Within 15 days after the completion of the release orders, the farm CPC competent authority shall issue a caging report for each single caging operation, or in the case of a JFO or traps of the same CPC/EU Member State, for the complete set of caging operations related to that JFO or those traps. The caging report shall include the information referred to in **Annex 9** paragraph 3, and be communicated to the catching flag or trap CPC competent authority and to the ICCAT Secretariat.

## **Part IV: Control measures**

### **Section F. Harvesting**

185. Processing vessels intending to operate in farms or traps shall send a prior notification to the farm or trap CPC competent authorities at least 48 hours before arrival of the vessel to the farm/trap area. The prior notification shall at least include the date and estimated time of arrival and information as to whether the processing vessel already has bluefin tuna on board, and, if so, provide details on the cargo, including quantities in processed weight and live weight and details of the origin of the bluefin tuna on board (farm/trap and CPC).

186. Any harvesting operation in farms or traps shall be subject to an authorisation by the farm or trap CPC competent authority. To this end, the farm or trap operator intending to harvest bluefin tuna shall submit to its CPC competent authority a request, which shall include at least the following information:

- date or period of harvesting;
- estimated quantities to be harvested in number of individuals and kg;
- eBCD number associated with the bluefin tuna to be harvested;
- details of auxiliary vessels involved in the operation;
- destination of harvested tuna (processing vessel, export, local market, etc.).

187. Except for individuals of bluefin tuna which are close to dying, no harvesting operation shall be authorized before the results of the quota uptake in accordance with paragraphs 178 to 180 has been determined, and the associated releases have been conducted.

188. Harvesting operations shall not take place without the presence of a CPC observer in the case of traps, or an ICCAT regional observer in the case of harvesting on farms. For fish delivered to a processing vessel, the CPC or ICCAT regional observer may conduct its relevant tasks from the processing vessel.

189. Farm or trap CPC control authorities shall verify and cross-check the results of all harvesting operations taking place in farms and traps under its authority, using all relevant information in its possession. Farm or trap CPC control authorities shall inspect all harvesting operations of bluefin tuna destined for processing vessels and a percentage of the rest of harvesting operations based on risk analysis.

190. When the destination of the bluefin tuna is a processing vessel, the master or representative of the processing vessel shall complete a processing declaration. When the harvested bluefin tuna is to be landed directly into port, the farm or trap operator shall complete a harvesting declaration. The processing and harvesting declarations shall be validated by the ICCAT regional or CPC observer present at the harvesting operation.

191. The processing declaration and harvesting declaration shall contain at least the following information using **Annex 15**:

- date of harvesting;
- farm or trap;
- cage(s) number(s);
- number of individuals harvested;
- live weight and processed weight in Kg of the harvested bluefin tuna;
- eBCD number(s) associated with the bluefin tuna harvested;
- details of auxiliary vessels involved in the operation;
- destination of the harvested tuna (i.e., export, local market, or other);
- validation by the ICCAT regional observer or CPC observer, as appropriate.

192. The processing and harvesting declarations shall be sent by e-mail to the farm CPC competent authorities within 48 hours of the harvesting operation.

193. The Commission shall consider reflecting "Processing on board" in the eBCD at its 2023 Annual Meeting. To this end, IMM WG and then eBCD TWG shall discuss the technical, administrative and control requirements and report the results to the Commission.

#### **Part IV:**

#### **Control measures**

#### **Section F – Control activities in farms after caging**

##### **Intra-farm transfers**

194. Intra-farm transfer shall not take place without the authorization and the presence of the farm CPC competent authority. Each transfer shall be recorded by control cameras to confirm the number of bluefin tuna individuals transferred. The video footage shall comply with the minimum standards as laid down in **Annex 8**. The farm CPC competent authority shall monitor and control those transfers, including ensuring that each intra-farm transfer is recorded in the eBCD system.

195. Notwithstanding the definition of caging in paragraph 2 s), the relocation of bluefin tuna between two different locations on the same farm (intra-farm transfer) using a transport cage, shall not be considered caging for the purposes of the requirements set out in Section E.

196. During intra-farm transfers, regrouping fish of the same flag origin and the same JFO, may be authorised by the farm CPC competent authority, providing that traceability, as established in paragraph 5 of Recommendation 18-13, and the applicability of SCRS's growth rates, are maintained.

197. The farm CPC competent authority and the farm operator shall retain the video footages from intra-farm transfers undertaken in farms under their jurisdiction for a minimum of 3 years and keep the information as long as necessary for enforcement purposes.

##### **Carry-over**

198. Prior to the beginning of the next purse seiner and trap fishing seasons, the farm CPCs competent authority shall thoroughly assess the live bluefin tuna carried-over in the farms under their jurisdiction. To this end, the live bluefin tuna concerned shall be transferred to an empty cage and monitored using control camera(s), to determine the number and the weight of fish transferred.

199. By way of derogation, the carry-over of bluefin tuna from years and cages where no harvest occurred shall be controlled annually by applying the random control procedure referred to in paragraphs 206 to 213.

200. The live bluefin tuna carried-over shall be placed in separate cages or series of cages in the farm, on the basis of the catch year and JFO/same CPC trap of origin.

201. The farm CPC competent authority shall ensure that the control camera video footage from the carry-over assessment transfers comply with the relevant requirements of **Annex 8**, and the determination of the number and weight of carried-over fish is in accordance with **Annex 9** point 1 of this Recommendation.
202. Until the SCRS develops an algorithm to convert length into weight for fattened and/or farmed fish, the determination of the weight of the carried-over fish shall be estimated using the most updated growth rates tables produced by the SCRS.
203. A difference by number of bluefin tuna individuals between the number resulting from the carry-over assessment and the expected number after harvest shall be duly investigated by the farm CPC competent authority and recorded in the eBCD system. In the case of excess number, the farm CPC competent authority shall order the release of the corresponding number of fish. The release operation shall be conducted in accordance with **Annex 10**. Compensation for differences between different cages on the farm shall not be allowed. A margin of error of up to 5% between the number of individuals resulting from the carry-over assessment and the expected number in the cage, may be allowed by the CPC competent authority. This percentage shall be reviewed, as appropriate, by the IMM by ~~[2023]~~ [2027] at the latest. The Commission shall consider revising the percentage based on the recommendation from the IMM.
204. The farm CPC competent authority shall retain the video footage and all the relevant documentation from carry-over assessments undertaken in farms under their jurisdiction for a minimum of 3 years, and keep this information as long as necessary for enforcement purposes.

#### **Carry-over declaration**

205. Farm CPCs shall complete and transmit, as an annex to the revised farming management plan, an annual carry-over declaration to the ICCAT Secretariat within 15 days after the end of the assessment operation. Such declaration shall include:
- a) Flag CPC;
  - b) Name and ICCAT number of the farm;
  - c) Year of catch;
  - d) References of the eBCD corresponding to the catches carried over;
  - e) Cage numbers;
  - f) Quantities (expressed in kg) and number of fish carried over;
  - g) Average weight;
  - h) Information of each of the carry-over assessment operations: date and cage numbers;
  - i) Information on previous intra-farm transfers, when applicable.

The stereoscopic camera report, when applicable, shall be attached to the carry-over declaration.

#### **Random controls**

206. The farm CPC competent authority shall carry out random controls in farms under their jurisdiction. The minimum random controls referred to in paragraph 207 shall take place in farms between the time of completion of the caging operations and the first caging of the following year. Such controls shall involve the compulsory transfers of all fish from farm cage(s) to other farm cage(s) in order that the number of bluefin tuna individuals can be counted by way of control video record(s).
207. Each farm CPC shall set a minimum number of random controls to be performed on each farm under its sovereignty. The number of random controls shall cover at least 10% of the number of cages in each farm after completion of caging operations, always involving at least one control per farm and rounded up where needed. The selection of cages to be controlled shall be based on risk analysis. The planning for random controls to be carried out shall be reflected in the CPC control plan referred to under paragraph 10 of this Recommendation.

208. Although not required, the farm(s) concerned may be informed by the farm CPC competent authority with a maximum prior notice of two calendar days that random control(s) shall take place. The selected cage(s) shall only be communicated by the farm CPC competent authority to the farm operator upon arrival at the farm concerned.
209. Where prior notice is given, farm operators shall ensure that all means are in place in order that random controls can be carried out by the farm CPC competent authority at any time, and in any cage on the farm. If prior notice is not provided, farm operators must still take all appropriate steps to facilitate the random control operations.
210. The farm CPC competent authority shall strive to reduce the timeframe between the ordering of the random controls and when the control operations is carried out. The farm CPC competent authority shall ensure that all necessary measures are taken to ensure that the operator does not have the possibility to manipulate the cages concerned until the random control takes place.
211. Following the random control, any difference between the number of bluefin tuna determined by the random controls and the number expected to be present in the cage shall be duly investigated and recorded in the eBCD system. In the case of excess number, the farm CPC competent authority shall order the release of the corresponding number(s). The release operation shall be conducted in accordance with **Annex 10**. Compensation for differences between different cages on the farm shall not be allowed. A margin of error of 5% between the number of individuals resulting from the control transfer and the expected number in the cage, may be allowed by the CPC competent authority. This percentage shall be reviewed, as appropriate, by the IMM at the latest by ~~[2023]~~ [2027]. The Commission shall consider revising the percentage based on the recommendation from the IMM.
212. The farm CPC competent authority shall retain all video footage from random controls undertaken in farms under their jurisdiction for a minimum of 3 years, and keep this information as long as necessary for enforcement purposes.
213. The results of the random controls shall be communicated to the ICCAT Secretariat before the start of the new purse seine fishing season applicable to each CPC in accordance with paragraph 26, for transmission to the Compliance Committee.

#### **Inter-farm transfers**

214. The transfer of live bluefin between two different farms shall not take place without the prior written authorisation by the CPC competent authorities of both farms.
215. The transfer from the donor farm cage to the transport cage shall comply with the requirements of Section D (Transfers of live fish), of this Recommendation, including a video record to confirm the number of bluefin tuna individuals transferred, the completion of an ITD and the verification of the operation by an ICCAT Regional Observer. Notwithstanding the above, in cases where the entire farm cage is to be moved to the receiving farm, it shall not be necessary to video record the operation and the cage shall be transported sealed to the destination farm.
216. The caging of the bluefin tuna at the farm of destination shall be subject to the requirements for caging operations laid down in paragraphs 154 to 169, including a video record to confirm the number and weight of the bluefin tuna caged and the verification of the operation by an ICCAT Regional Observer. The determination of the weight for caged fish from another farm, shall not apply until the SCRS has developed an algorithm to convert length into weight for fattened and/or farmed fish.

**Part IV:  
Control measures**

**Section G – Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)**

217. CPCs shall implement a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) for their fishing vessels with a length equal to or greater than 15 m referred to in paragraph 2 a) of this Recommendation, in accordance with the *Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning Minimum Standards for Vessel Monitoring Systems in the ICCAT Convention Area* (Rec. 18-10), including the obligation to transmit at least once every hour for purse seine vessels and at least once every two hours for all other fishing vessels.
218. Notwithstanding the above, all towing vessels used to transport live bluefin tuna shall, irrespective of their length, install and operate a VMS, in accordance with Rec. 18-10, and transmit messages at least once every hour.
219. The transmission of VMS data to the ICCAT Secretariat by each authorized fishing vessel subject to VMS under this Recommendation shall:
- a) start at least 5 days before and continue at least 5 days after their period of authorization, unless the vessel is removed from the lists of authorized vessels by the flag CPC competent authority; and
  - b) not be interrupted when the vessel is in port, for control purposes, unless there is a system of hailing in and out of port.
220. The ICCAT Secretariat shall immediately inform the flag CPC of any delays or non-receipt of VMS transmissions, and distribute monthly reports to all CPCs with specific information on the nature and the scope of these delays. Such reports shall be sent weekly during the period 1 May to 30 July.
221. Referring to towing vessels during the transport of bluefin tuna to a farm, in the event of a technical failure of its VMS, the towing vessel concerned shall be replaced by another towing vessel with a fully functioning VMS. If no other towing vessel is available, a new operative VMS system shall be installed on board or used if already installed, as soon as feasible and not later than 72 hours, except in case of *force majeure*, that should be communicated to the ICCAT Secretariat. In the meantime, the master or his representative shall, starting from the time that the event was detected and/or informed, communicate to the control authorities of the flag CPC every 1 hour the up-to-date geographical coordinates of the towing vessel by appropriate telecommunication means.

**Use of VMS data for control and inspection purposes**

222. The ICCAT Secretariat shall make available without delay the information received under this section G to CPCs with an active inspection presence in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean and to the SCRS, at its request.
223. On request from CPCs engaged in inspection at sea operations in the Convention area in accordance with the ICCAT Scheme of Joint International Inspection referred to in paragraphs 227 to 230 of this Recommendation, the ICCAT Secretariat shall make available the messages received from all fishing vessels under paragraph 3 of *Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 07-08 concerning data exchange format and protocol in relation to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) for the bluefin tuna fishery in the ICCAT Convention area* (Rec. 21-16).

**Part IV:  
Control measures**

**Section H - Enforcement**

**Enforcement**

224. CPCs shall take appropriate enforcement measures with respect to a fishing vessel, where it has been established, in accordance with its law that the fishing vessel flying its flag does not comply with the provisions of this Recommendation.

The measures shall be commensurate with the gravity of the offence and in accordance with the pertinent provisions of national law in such a way as to make sure that they effectively deprive those responsible of the economic benefit derived from their infringement without prejudice to the exercise of their profession. Those sanctions shall also be capable of producing results proportionate to the seriousness of such infringement, thereby effectively discouraging further offences of the same kind.

225. The farm CPC shall take appropriate enforcement measures with respect to a farm, where it has been established, in accordance with its law, that the farm does not comply with the provisions of this Recommendation.

Depending on the gravity of the offence and in accordance with the pertinent provisions of national law such measures may include, in particular, suspension of the authorization or withdrawal from the ICCAT Record of Bluefin Tuna Farming Facilities established in accordance with paragraph 59 and/or fines.

**Part IV:  
Control measures**

**Section I - Market measures**

**Market measures**

226. Consistent with their rights and obligations under international law, exporting and importing CPCs shall take the necessary measures:

- to prohibit domestic trade, landing, imports, exports, placing in cages for farming, re-exports and transshipments of eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna that are not accompanied by accurate, complete, and validated documentation required by this Recommendation, the *Recommendation by ICCAT amending Recommendation 18-13 replacing Recommendation 11-20 on an ICCAT bluefin tuna catch documentation program* (Rec. 21-19) and the *Recommendation by ICCAT amending Recommendation 21-18 on the application of the eBCD System* (Rec. 22-16) on the Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation Programme.
- to prohibit domestic trade, imports, landings, placing in cages for farming, processing, exports, re-exports and the transshipment within their jurisdiction, of eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna caught by fishing vessels or traps whose CPC does not have a quota or catch limit for that species, under the terms of ICCAT management and conservation measures, or when the CPC's fishing possibilities are exhausted, or when the individual quotas of catching vessels referred to in paragraph 3 are exhausted.
- to prohibit domestic trade, imports, landings, processing, and exports of eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna from farms that do not comply with the provisions related to farming specified in this Recommendation.

**Part V:  
ICCAT Scheme of Joint International Inspection**

227. In the framework of the Multi-annual Management Plan for Bluefin Tuna, each Contracting Party agrees, in accordance with Article IX, paragraph 3, of the ICCAT Convention, to apply the ICCAT Scheme of Joint International Inspection adopted during its 4th Regular Meeting, held in November 1975 in Madrid, as modified in **Annex 7**.
228. The Scheme referred to in paragraph 227 shall apply until ICCAT adopts a monitoring, control and surveillance scheme which will include an ICCAT scheme for joint international inspection, based on the results of the Integrated Monitoring Measures Working Group, established by the *Resolution by ICCAT for Integrated Monitoring Measures* (Res. 00-20).
229. When at any time, more than 15 fishing vessels of any one Contracting Party are engaged in eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna fishing activities in the Convention area, the Contracting Party shall, on the basis of risk assessment have an inspection vessel in the Convention area, or shall cooperate with another Contracting Party to jointly operate an inspection vessel. If a Contracting Party does not deploy its inspection vessel or conducting joint operations, the Contracting Party shall report the result of the risk assessment and its alternative measures in its inspection plan referred to in paragraph 10.
230. In cases where enforcement measures need to be taken as a result of an inspection, the enforcement powers of the flag Contracting Party inspectors of the fishing vessel, farm or trap subject to inspection shall always prevail in their territory, in their jurisdictional waters and on board their inspection platform.

**Part VI:  
Final provisions**

**Availability of data to the SCRS**

231. The ICCAT Secretariat shall make available to the SCRS all data received in accordance with this Recommendation. All data shall be treated in a confidential manner.

**Review clause**

232. In accordance with paragraph 11, ICCAT will hold an intersessional meeting of Panel 2 each year in March in order to:
- a) review, and if appropriate, endorse the annual fishing, capacity management, farming and inspection plans sent to ICCAT under paragraph 10 of this Recommendation;
  - b) discuss any possible doubts about the interpretation of this Recommendation and, as appropriate, propose draft amendments to it for consideration at the Annual Meeting.

**Evaluation**

233. All CPCs shall submit at the request of the ICCAT Secretariat regulations and other related documents adopted by them to implement this Recommendation. In order to have greater transparency in implementing this Recommendation, the ICCAT Secretariat shall elaborate biennially a report on the implementation of this Recommendation.

### **Exemptions for CPCs with a landing obligation for bluefin tuna**

234. The provisions in this Recommendation prohibiting retention on board, transshipping, transferring, landing, transporting, storing, selling, displaying or offering for sale of bluefin tuna do not apply to CPCs with a domestic legislation introduced before 2013 requiring that all dead or dying fish be landed, provided that the value of such fish is confiscated in order to prevent the fishermen from drawing any commercial profit from such fish. The CPCs concerned shall take necessary measures to prevent the confiscated fish from being exported to other CPCs. The quantities of bluefin tuna in excess of the quota allocated to the CPC, in accordance with this derogation shall be deducted the following year from the CPC quota in accordance with paragraph 9.

### **Transitional period for the implementation of sealing of bluefin tuna cages**

235. For the implementation of the measures related to the sealing of bluefin tuna cages set out in paragraphs 126, 157, 162, 215, **Annex 4**, **Annex 6** and **Annex 14**, a transitional period until 2023 may be granted to those CPCs that indicate in their fishing plans such need to ensure proper implementation of the measures. An assessment of the implementation of this measure during the 2022 fishing season will be carried out by the affected CPCs, with a view to discuss their implementation and possible revision or update, at the March 2023 Intersessional Meeting of Panel 2 and, if agreed by the Commission, the 16th Meeting of the IMM Working Group in 2023.

### **Repeals**

236. This Recommendation repeals and replaces *Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 21-08 establishing a Multi-annual Management Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean* (Rec. 22-08).



**Annex 1**

**Specific conditions applying to the catching vessels fishing under paragraph 32**

1. CPCs shall limit:

- The maximum number of its baitboats and trolling boats authorized to fish actively for bluefin tuna to the number of the vessels participating in directed fishery for bluefin tuna in 2006;
- The maximum number of its small-scale coastal vessels authorized to fish actively bluefin tuna in the Mediterranean to the number of its vessels participating in the fishery for bluefin tuna in 2008;
- The maximum number of its catching vessels authorized to fish actively for bluefin tuna in the Adriatic to the number of the vessels participating in the fishery for bluefin tuna in 2008. Each CPC shall allocate individual quotas to the concerned vessels.

CPCs shall issue specific authorizations to the vessels referred to in paragraph 1 of this **Annex**. Such vessels shall be indicated in the list of catching vessels referred to in paragraph 46 a) of this Recommendation, where the conditions for changes shall also apply.

2. Each CPC may allocate no more than 7% of its quota for bluefin tuna among its baitboats and trolling boats.
3. Each CPC may allocate no more than 2% of its quota for bluefin tuna among its small-scale coastal vessels for fresh fish in the Mediterranean.

Each CPC may allocate no more than 90% of its quota for bluefin tuna among its catching vessels in the Adriatic for farming purposes.

4. CPCs whose baitboats, longliners, handliners and trolling boats are authorized to fish for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean shall institute tail tag requirements as follows:
  - a) tail tags must be affixed on each bluefin tuna immediately upon offloading;
  - b) each tail tag shall have a unique identification number, which shall be included on bluefin tuna catch documents and written legibly and indelibly on the outside of any package containing tuna.

## Logbook requirements

### A - Catching vessels

#### Minimum specification for fishing logbooks:

1. The logbook must be numbered by sheets.
2. The logbook must be filled in every day (by midnight) or before port arrival.
3. The logbook must be completed in case of at sea inspections.
4. One copy of the sheets must remain attached to the logbook.
5. Logbooks must be kept on board to cover a period of one-year operation.

#### Minimum standard information for fishing logbooks:

1. Master name and address
2. Dates and ports of departure, dates and ports of arrival
3. Vessel name, register number, ICCAT number, international radio call sign and IMO number (if available)
4. Fishing gear:
  - a) Type by FAO code
  - b) Dimension (length, number of hooks...)
5. Operations at sea with one line (minimum) per day of trip, providing:
  - a) Activity (fishing, steaming)
  - b) Position: Exact daily positions (in degree and minutes), recorded for each fishing operation or at noon when no fishing has been conducted during this day
  - c) Record of catches including:
    - i. FAO code
    - ii. round (RWT) weight in kg per day
    - iii. number of pieces per day

For purse seine vessels this should be recorded by fishing operation including nil returns.
6. Master signature
7. Means of weight measure: estimation, weighing on board and counting
8. The logbook is kept in equivalent live weight of fish and mentions the conversion factors used in the evaluation

**Minimum information for fishing logbooks in case of landing or transshipment:**

1. Dates and port of landing/transshipment
2. Products
  - a) species and presentation by FAO code
  - b) number of fish or boxes and quantity in kg
3. Signature of the Master or Vessel Agent
4. In case of transshipment: receiving vessel name, its flag and ICCAT number

**Minimum information for fishing logbooks in case of transfer into cages:**

1. Date, time and position (latitude/longitude) of transfer
2. Products:
  - a) Species identification by FAO code
  - b) Number of fish and quantity in kg transferred into cages
3. Name of towing vessel, its flag and ICCAT number
4. Name of the farm of destination and its ICCAT number
5. In case of joint fishing operation, in complement of information laid down in points 1 to 4, the masters shall record in their logbook:
  - a) as regards the catching vessel transferring the fish into cages:
    - amount of catches taken on board
    - amount of catches counted against its individual quota
    - the names of the other vessels involved in the JFO
  - b) as regards the other catching vessels not involved in the transfer of the fish:
    - the name of the other vessels involved in the JFO, their international radio call signs and ICCAT numbers
    - that no catches have been taken on board or transferred into cages
    - amount of catches counted against their individual quotas
    - the name and the ICCAT number of the catching vessel referred to in a)

**B - Towing vessels**

1. Masters of towing vessels shall record on their daily logbook, the date, time and position of transfer, the quantities transferred (number of fish and quantity in kg), the cage number, as well as the catching vessel name, flag and ICCAT number, the name of the other vessel(s) involved and their ICCAT number, the farm of destination and its ICCAT number, and the ICCAT transfer declaration number.
2. Further transfers to auxiliary vessels or to other towing vessels shall be reported including the same information as in point 1 as well as the auxiliary or towing vessel name, flag and ICCAT number and the ICCAT transfer declaration number.
3. The daily logbook shall contain the details of all transfers carried out during the fishing season. The daily logbook shall be kept on board and be accessible at any time for control purposes.

**C - Auxiliary vessels**

1. Masters of auxiliary vessels shall record their activities daily in their logbook including the date, time and positions, the quantities of bluefin tuna taken onboard, and the fishing vessel, farm or trap name they are operating in association with.
2. The daily logbook shall contain the details of all activities carried out during the fishing season. The daily logbook shall be kept on board and be accessible at any time for control purposes.

**D - Processing vessels**

1. Masters of processing vessels shall report on their daily logbook, the date, time and position of the activities and the quantities transhipped and the number and weight of bluefin tuna received from farms, traps or catching vessel where applicable. They should also report the names and ICCAT numbers of those farms, traps or catching vessel.
2. Masters of processing vessels shall maintain a daily processing logbook specifying the round weight and number of fish transferred or transhipped, the conversion factor used, the weights and quantities by product presentation.
3. Masters of processing vessels shall maintain a stowage plan that shows the location and the quantities of each species and presentation.
4. The daily logbook shall contain the details of all transhipments carried out during the fishing season. The daily logbook, processing logbook, stowage plan, original of ICCAT transhipment declarations shall be kept on board and be accessible at any time for control purposes.

**No. Document**

**ICCAT Transshipment Declaration**

<b>Carrier vessel</b>		<b>Fishing vessel</b>		<b>Final destination:</b>	
Name of vessel and radio call sign:		Name of the vessel and radio call sign:		Port:	
Flag:		Flag:		Country:	
Flag CPC authorization No.		Flag CPC authorization No.		State:	
National Register No.		National Register No.			
ICCAT Register No.		ICCAT Register No.			
IMO No.		External identification: Fishing logbook sheet No.			

	Day	Month	Hour	Year	2_ 0_	F.V. Master's name:	Carrier vessel Master's name:
Departure					From:		
Return					To:	Signature:	Signature:
Tranship.							

For transshipment, indicate the weight in kg or the unit used (e.g. box, basket) and the landed weight in kilograms of this unit | | Kg.

LOCATION OF TRANSHIPMENT

<i>Port</i>	<i>Sea Lat.</i>	<i>Sea Long.</i>	<i>Species</i>	<i>Number of unit of fishes</i>	<i>Type of product live</i>	<i>Type of product whole</i>	<i>Type of product gutted</i>	<i>Type of product head off</i>	<i>Type of product filleted</i>	<i>Type of product</i>	Further transshipments
											Date: _____ Place/Position: _____ Authorization CPC No. _____ Transfer vessel Master signature: _____
											Name of receiver vessel: _____ Flag _____ ICCAT Register No. _____ IMO No. _____ Master's signature _____
											Date: _____ Place/Position: _____ Authorization CPC No. _____ Transfer vessel Master's signature: _____
											Name of receiver vessel: _____ Flag _____ ICCAT Register No. _____ IMO No. _____ Master's signature _____

Obligations in case of transhipment:

1. The original of the transhipment declaration must be provided to the recipient vessel (processing/transport).
2. The copy of the transhipment declaration must be kept by the correspondent catching vessel or trap.
3. Further transshipping operations shall be authorized by the relevant CPC which authorized the vessel to operate.
4. The original of the transhipment declaration has to be kept by the recipient vessel which holds the fish, up to the landing place.
5. The transshipping operation shall be recorded in the logbook of any vessel involved in the operation.

## ICCAT Transfer Declaration

Document No.		ICCAT Transfer Declaration		
<b>1 - TRANSFER OF LIVE BFT DESTINATED FOR FARMING</b>				
Fishing vessel name:  Call sign: Flag: ICCAT Register No.: External identification: Transfer authorization No.: Fishing logbook No.: JFO No.: eBCD No.:	Trap name:	1st towing vessel name: Flag: ICCAT Register No.: External identification: Transport cage number:	Name destination farm:  ICCAT Register No:	
	ICCAT Register No.:	2nd towing vessel name (2): Flag: ICCAT Register No.: External identification: Transport cage number:	Name destination farm (3):  ICCAT Register No:	
	Donor farm name (1):  ICCAT Register No.:	3rd towing vessel name (2): Flag: ICCAT Register No.: External identification: Transport cage number:	Name destination farm (3):  ICCAT Register No:	
<b>2 - FIRST TRANSFER INFORMATION</b>				
Date: __/__/----		Place or position:	Port:	Lat:            Long:
First transfer No.1 No. individuals and estimated weight (kg) in first cage (4): First transfer: Voluntary transfer: Control transfer: BFT dead during the transfer (5):	First transfer No.2 No. individuals and estimated weight (kg) in second cage: First transfer: Voluntary transfer: Control transfer: BFT dead during the transfer (5):	First transfer No.3 No. individuals and estimated weight (kg) in third cage: First transfer: Voluntary transfer: Control transfer: BFT dead during the transfer (5):		
Master of fishing vessel / trap operator / farm operator name and signature:	Master of receiving vessel name and signature: 1st receiving vessel:	Observer Name, ICCAT No. and signature:		

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		2nd receiving vessel:			
		3rd receiving vessel:			
Presence of Observer: (Y/N)		Reasons for disagreement:		Rules or procedure not respected:	
Estimated No. of individuals Regional Obs:					
Seals Numbers (6):					
<b>3 - FURTHER TRANSFERS (7)(8)</b>					
<b>First transfer number:</b>					
<b>FURTHER TRANSFER 1</b>					
Date: __/__/----			Place or position: Port:                      Lat:                      Long:		
ITD number:					
Donor towing vessel name:	Call sign:	Flag:	ICCAT Register No.:	Name destination farm:	
Receiving towing vessel name:	Call sign:	Flag:	ICCAT Register No.:	ICCAT Register No.:	
Transfer authorization No.:		External identification:	Donor Cage No.:	Master of donor vessel name and signature:	
			Receiving Cage No.:	Master of receiving vessel name and signature:	
No. individuals transferred and estimated weight (kg)(4):			Number of BFT that died during transfer:		
Further transfer:					
Voluntary transfer:					
Control transfer:					
In case of voluntary or control transfer:					
i. Information on the receiving towing vessel:					
Name:					
Flag:					
ICCAT Register No.:					
External identification:					
ii. Transport cage number:					
<b>FURTHER TRANSFER 2</b>					
Date: __/__/----			Place or position: Port:                      Lat:                      Long:		
ITD number					



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Donor towing vessel name:	Call sign:	Flag:	ICCAT Register No.	Name destination farm:
Receiving towing vessel name:	Call sign:	Flag:	ICCAT Register No.:	ICCAT Register No:
Transfer authorization no:		External identification:	Donor Cage No.:	Master of donor vessel name and signature:
			Receiving Cage No.:	Master of receiving vessel name and signature:
N° individuals transferred and estimated weight (kg)(4) Further transfer: Voluntary transfer: Control transfer: In case of voluntary or control transfer i. Information on the receiving towing vessel: Name: Flag: ICCAT Register No.: External identification: ii. Transport cage number:			Number of BFT that died during transfer:	
<b>FURTHER TRANSFER 3</b>				
Date: __/__/____ ITD number			Place or position: Port:	Lat:            Long:
Donor towing vessel name:	Call sign:	Flag:	ICCAT Register No.:	Name destination farm:
Receiving towing vessel name:	Call sign:	Flag:	ICCAT Register No.:	ICCAT Register No:
Transfer authorization No.:		External identification:	Donor Cage No.:	Master of donor vessel name and signature:
			Receiving Cage No.:	Master of receiving vessel name and signature:
No. individuals transferred and estimated weight (kg)(4) Further transfer: Voluntary transfer: Control transfer: In case of voluntary or control transfer i. Information on the receiving towing vessel: Name:			Number of BFT that died during transfer:	

Flag: ICCAT Register No.: External identification: ii. Transport cage number:	
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- (1) To be completed in case of transfers between two different farms.
- (2) To be completed if the catch is transferred to more than one transport cage.
- (3) To be completed in case the transport cages are destined for more than one farm.
- (4) Number of individuals and weight estimated by the donor operator for the transfer considered valid. In case the operation has to be repeated, indicate as N/A in the relevant row (e.g. in case the first transfer and voluntary transfer did not provide an adequate video: First transfer: N/A, voluntary transfer: N/A, control transfer: 1030 pieces, 123,600 kg).
- (5) Number of individuals that died and estimated weight.
- (6) To be completed by the ICCAT Regional Observer in case the transport cage is to be sealed in accordance with paragraph 126 and **Annex 14**.
- (7) To be completed by the master of the donor towing vessel for each of the transfers between towing vessels, which take place after the first transfer.
- (8) This section shall be completed for each first transfer. If more than one first transfers are divided into multiple transport cages, the master of the donor towing vessel shall duplicate the original ITD so that one copy of the ITD will accompany the cage(s) for the same destination farm.



## Observer Programmes

### CPC Observer Programme

### CPC Observer Programme

1. The CPC observer tasks shall be, in general, to monitor the compliance of fishing vessels and traps with this Recommendation;
2. When deployed on board a catching vessel, the CPC observer shall record and report upon the fishing activity, which shall include, *inter alia*, the following:
  - i. their own estimation of the number and weight of bluefin tuna catches (including by-catch);
  - ii. disposition of the catch, such as retained on board, discarded dead or released alive;
  - iii. area of catch by latitude and longitude;
  - iv. measure of effort (e.g., number of sets, number of hooks, etc.), as defined in the ICCAT Manual for different gears;
  - v. date of catch;
  - vi. verify consistency of entries made in the logbook with its own catch estimation.
3. When deployed on a towing vessel:
  - a) in the event of a further transfer involving movement of fish between two transport cages:
    - i. without delay, analyze the video footage of the further transfer concerned, to estimate the number of individuals that have been transferred;
    - ii. communicate immediately to the flag CPC competent authority of the donor towing vessel his/her observations, including the number of individuals estimated by the CPC observer and the corresponding number reported on the ITD by the master of the donor towing vessel; and
    - iii. include the results of its analysis in its observer report to the flag CPC competent authority of the donor towing vessel.
  - b) record and report in its observer report all bluefin tuna observed dead during the transport trip;
  - c) sight and record vessels that may be fishing contrary to ICCAT conservation measures; and
  - d) communicate the observer report to the flag CPC competent authority of the donor towing vessel without delay at the end of the towing trip.
4. When deployed on a bluefin tuna trap:
  - a) verify the harvesting authorisation issued by the trap CPC competent authority;
  - b) validate the information in the processing and/or harvesting declarations made by the master or representative of the processing vessel or the trap operator.
5. In addition, the CPC observer shall carry out scientific work, such as collecting all the necessary data required by the Commission, based on recommendations of the SCRS.

### **ICCAT Regional Observer Programme**

- Each CPC shall require its farms, traps and purse seine vessels to deploy an ICCAT regional observer, as referred to in paragraph 99.
- The ICCAT Secretariat shall appoint the ICCAT regional observers before 1 April or as soon as practical each year, and shall place them on farms, traps and on board the purse seine vessels flying the flag of CPCs that implement the ICCAT Regional Observer Programme. An ICCAT regional observer card shall be issued for each observer.
- The ICCAT Secretariat shall issue a contract listing the rights and duties of the ICCAT regional observer and the master of the vessel, farm, or trap operator. This contract shall be signed by both parties involved.
- The ICCAT Secretariat shall establish an ICCAT Observer Programme Manual.

### **Qualification of the ICCAT regional observers**

- The ICCAT regional observers shall have the following qualifications to accomplish their tasks:
  - sufficient experience to identify species and fishing gear;
  - satisfactory knowledge of the ICCAT conservation and management measures and based on ICCAT training guidelines;
  - the ability to observe and record accurately;
  - the ability to analyze video record footage;
  - to the extent possible, a satisfactory knowledge of the language of the flag, the vessel, the farm or the trap observed.

### **Obligations of the ICCAT regional observers**

- The ICCAT regional observers shall:
  - a) have completed the technical training required by the guidelines established by ICCAT;
  - b) be nationals of one of the CPCs and, to the extent possible, not of the farm CPC, trap CPC or flag CPC of the purse seine vessel;
  - c) be capable of performing the duties set forth in point 7 below;
  - d) be included in the list of observers maintained by the ICCAT Secretariat;
  - e) not have current financial or beneficial interests in the bluefin tuna fishery.
- The ICCAT regional observers shall treat as confidential all information with respect to the fishing and transfer operations conducted by the purse seine vessels, the farms and the traps, and accept this requirement in writing as a condition to be appointed as an ICCAT regional observer.
- The ICCAT regional observers shall comply with requirements established in the laws and regulations of the flag or farm CPC which exercises jurisdiction over the vessel, farm or trap to which the ICCAT regional observer is assigned.

- The ICCAT regional observers shall respect the hierarchy and general rules of behavior which apply to all vessel, farm and trap personnel, provided such rules do not interfere with the duties of the ICCAT regional observer under this program, and with the obligations of vessel, farm and trap personnel set forth in this **Annex**.

#### **Tasks of the ICCAT regional observer**

- The ICCAT regional observer tasks shall be, in particular, to:

#### ***General tasks***

- i. observe and monitor compliance of the bluefin tuna fishing and farming operations with the relevant ICCAT conservation and management measures;
- ii. carry out such scientific work, such as collecting samples or Task 2 data, as required by the Commission, based on the recommendations of the SCRS;
- iii. sight and record vessels which may be fishing in contravention to ICCAT conservation and management measures;
- iv. verify and record the name of the fishing vessel concerned and its ICCAT number;
- v. exercise any other functions as defined by the Commission;

#### ***As regards purse seine vessels or trap catching activity***

- vi. observe and report upon the fishing activities carried out;
- vii. observe and estimate catches and verify entries made in the logbook;

#### ***As regards first transfers from a purse seine vessel or trap to transport cage(s)***

- viii. record and report upon the transfer activities carried out;
- ix. verify the position of the vessel when engaged in a transfer;
- x. review and analyze all the video footages related to the transfer operation concerned, where applicable;
- xi. estimate the number of fish transferred and record the result in the ITD;
- xii. issue a daily report of the transfer activities of purse seine vessels;
- xiii. record and report upon the result of such analysis;
- xiv. verify entries made in the prior transfer authorization referred to in paragraph 110, in the ITD referred to in paragraphs 128 to 131, and in the eBCD;
- xv. verify that the ITD referred to in paragraphs 128 to 131 is transmitted to the master of the towing vessel or to the representative of the farm or trap;
- xvi. in relation to control transfers, verify the seals identification number and ensure that the seals are placed in such a way to prevent the opening of the doors without the seals being broken;

#### ***As regards caging operations***

- xvii. Review the camera video footages at caging to estimate the number of fish caged, in due time to allow the farm operator to complete the related caging declaration;

***As regards verification of data***

- xviii. verify and certify the data contained in the ITDs, the caging declarations and the eBCD, including through the analysis of video records;
- xix. issue a daily report of the purse seine vessels', farms' and traps' transfer activities;
- xx. sign the ITDs, the caging declarations and the eBCD, with clearly written name and ICCAT number, when the relevant operation is in accordance with the ICCAT conservation and management measures and the information contained within these documents is consistent with his/her observations. In case of disagreement, the ICCAT regional observer shall indicate his/her presence on the relevant ITD and caging declarations and/or the eBCD concerned, and the reasons of disagreement, quoting specifically the rule(s) or procedure(s) that in his/her view has(ve) not been respected;

***As regards releases***

- xxi. as regards releases before caging, observe and report on the release operation from the purse seine net or the transport cage, in accordance with the release protocol in **Annex 10**;
- xxii. as regards releases after caging, observe and report on the prior segregation of fish and the subsequent release operation, in accordance with the release protocol in **Annex 10**, including verifying that the quality of the video footage of the prior segregation satisfies the minimum standards of **Annex 8** and estimating the number of fish released;
- xxiii. in both cases, verify the release order issued by the competent authority and validate the information in the release declaration made by the donor or farm operator;

***As regards harvesting operation in farms***

- xxiv. verify the harvesting authorisation issued by the farm CPC competent authority;
- xxv. validate the information in the processing and harvesting declarations made by master or representative of the processing vessel or by the farm operator;

***As regards reporting***

- xxvi. register and verify the presence of any type of tag, including natural marks, and notify any sign of recent tag removals. For all individuals tagged with electronic tags, conduct full biological sampling (otoliths, spine and genetic sample) following guidelines by the SCRS;
- xxvii. establish general reports compiling the information collected in accordance with this paragraph and provide the master and farm operator the opportunity to include therein any relevant information;
- xxviii. submit the aforementioned general report to the provider responsible for the ROP, for subsequent transmission to the ICCAT Secretariat within 20 days from the end of the period of observation;
- xxix. in cases where the ICCAT regional observer observes a potential non-compliance with an ICCAT Recommendation, he/she shall submit this information without delay to the provider responsible for the ROP who shall forward it without delay to the flag, trap or farm CPC competent authority concerned, and to the ICCAT Secretariat. For this purpose, the provider responsible for the ROP shall set up a system through which this information can be securely communicated;
- xxx. obtain, as far as possible, evidence (i.e. photos, videos) of potential non-compliance detected and attach them to his/her report.

### **Obligations of the flag, trap and farm CPCs**

- The flag, farm and trap CPCs shall ensure that, notably, the ICCAT regional observer:
  - a) is allowed access to the purse seine vessel, farm and trap personnel and to the gear, cages equipment, and stereoscopic camera and conventional video camera footage;
  - b) upon request and in order to carry out their duties set forth in this Programme, is allowed access to the following equipment, if present on the vessels to which they are assigned:
    - i. Satellite navigation equipment;
    - ii. Radar display screens when in use;
    - iii. Electronic means of communication.
  - c) is provided accommodations, including lodging, food and adequate sanitary facilities, equal to those of officers;
  - d) is provided with adequate space on the bridge or pilot house for clerical work, as well as space on deck adequate for carrying out observer duties; and
- The flag, trap and farm CPCs shall ensure that masters, crew, farm, trap and vessel owners do not obstruct, intimidate, interfere with, influence, bribe or attempt to bribe an ICCAT regional observer in the performance of his/her duties.
- The ICCAT Secretariat, in a manner consistent with any applicable confidentiality requirements, is requested to provide to the flag, trap or farm CPC, copies of all raw data, summaries, and reports pertaining to the trip. The ICCAT Secretariat shall submit the ICCAT regional observer reports to the Compliance Committee and to the SCRS.
- The flag, farm or trap CPC competent authority where the ICCAT regional observer is providing his/her services, may request that the observer be replaced if they have evidence that the ICCAT regional observer does not meet its obligations or adequately carry out the tasks set out in this Recommendation. Any such cases shall be reported to Panel 2.

### **Fees and organization**

- The costs of implementing this program shall be financed by the farm and trap operators and the purse seine vessel owners. The fee shall be calculated on the basis of the total costs of the program, and paid into a special account of the ICCAT Secretariat. The ICCAT Secretariat shall manage the account for implementing the program;

No ICCAT regional observer shall be assigned to a vessel, trap or farm for which the fees, as required under this **Annex**, have not been paid.



### ICCAT Scheme of Joint International Inspection

Pursuant to paragraph 3 of Article IX of the Convention, the Commission recommends the establishment of the following arrangements for international control outside the waters under national jurisdiction for the purpose of ensuring the application of the Convention and the measures in force thereunder:

#### I. Serious violations

1. For the purposes of these procedures, a serious violation means the following violations of the provisions of the ICCAT conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission:
  - a) fishing without a license, permit or authorization issued by the flag CPC;
  - b) failure to maintain sufficient records of catch and catch-related data in accordance with the Commission's reporting requirements or significant misreporting of such catch and/or catch-related data;
  - c) fishing in a closed area;
  - d) fishing during a closed season;
  - e) intentional taking or retention of species in contravention of any applicable conservation and management measure adopted by the ICCAT;
  - f) significant violation of catch limits or quotas in force pursuant to the ICCAT rules;
  - g) using prohibited fishing gear;
  - h) falsifying or intentionally concealing the markings, identity or registration of a fishing vessel;
  - i) concealing, tampering with or disposing of evidence relating to investigation of a violation;
  - j) multiple violations which taken together constitute a serious disregard of measures in force pursuant to the ICCAT;
  - k) assault, resist, intimidate, sexually harass, interfere with, or unduly obstruct or delay an authorized inspector or observer;
  - l) intentionally tampering with or disabling the vessel monitoring system;
  - m) such other violations as may be determined by the ICCAT, once these are included and circulated in a revised version of these procedures;
  - n) fishing with the assistance of spotter planes;
  - o) interference with the satellite monitoring system and/or operation of a vessel without a VMS system;
  - p) transfer activity without transfer declaration;
  - q) transshipment at sea;
  - r) not providing to ICCAT inspectors a boarding ladder meeting the requirements of IMO Resolution A.889(21) to facilitate safe access to any fishing vessel which requires a climb of 1.5 metres or more.

2. In the case of any boarding and inspection of a fishing vessel during which the authorized inspectors observe an activity or condition that would constitute a serious violation, as defined in paragraph 1 of this **Annex**, the authorities of the flag CPC of the inspection vessel shall immediately notify the flag CPC of the fishing vessel, directly as well as through the ICCAT Secretariat. In such situations, the inspector should also inform any inspection ship of the flag CPC of the fishing vessel known to be in the vicinity.
3. ICCAT inspectors should register the inspections undertaken and the infringements detected (if any) in the fishing vessel logbook.
4. The flag CPC shall ensure that, following the inspection referred to in paragraph 2 of this **Annex**, the fishing vessel concerned ceases all fishing activities. The flag CPC shall require the fishing vessel to proceed within 72 hours to a port designated by it, where an investigation shall be initiated.
5. In the case where an inspection has detected an activity or condition that would constitute a serious violation, the vessel should be reviewed under the procedures described in the *Recommendation by ICCAT on Establishing a List of Vessels Presumed to Have Carried Out Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing Activities* (Rec. 18-08\*), taking into account any response actions and other follow up.

## II. Conduct of inspections

6. Inspections shall be carried out by inspectors designated by the Contracting Governments. The names of the authorized government agencies and individual inspectors designated for that purpose by their respective governments shall be notified to the Commission.
7. Ships carrying out international boarding and inspection duties in accordance with this **Annex** shall fly a special flag or pennant approved by the Commission and issued by the ICCAT Secretariat. The names of the ships so used shall be notified to the ICCAT Secretariat as soon as practical in advance of the commencement of inspection activities. The Secretariat shall make information regarding designated inspection vessels available to all CPCs, including by posting on its password-protected website.
8. Inspectors shall carry appropriate identity documentation issued by the authorities of the flag CPC, which shall be in the form shown in paragraph 20 of this **Annex**.
9. Subject to the arrangements agreed under paragraph 15 of this **Annex**, a vessel flagged to a Contracting Government and fishing for tuna or tuna-like fishes in the Convention area outside waters under national jurisdiction shall stop when given the appropriate signal in the International Code of Signals by a ship flying the ICCAT pennant described in paragraph 7 of the **Annex** and carrying an inspector unless the vessel is actually carrying out fishing operations, in which case it shall stop immediately once it has finished such operations. The master\*\* of the vessel shall permit the inspection party, as specified in paragraph 10 of this **Annex**, to board it and must provide a boarding ladder meeting the requirements of IMO Resolution A.889(21), to facilitate safe and convenient access to any vessel which requires a climb of 1.5 metres or more. For compliance with the requirements of boarding ladders, a transitional period is allowed for vessels operating in the Atlantic, until January 2024.  
  
The master shall enable the inspection party to make such examination of equipment, catch or gear and any relevant documents as an inspector deems necessary to verify compliance with the ICCAT Commission's Recommendations in force in relation to the flag CPC of the vessel being inspected. Further, an inspector may ask for any explanations that he or she deems necessary.
10. The size of the inspection party shall be determined by the commanding officer of the inspection vessel taking into account relevant circumstances. The inspection party should be as small as possible to accomplish the duties set out in this **Annex** safely and securely.
11. Upon boarding the vessel, inspectors shall produce the identity documentation described in paragraph 8 of this **Annex**. Inspectors shall observe generally accepted international regulations, procedures and practices relating to the safety of the vessel being inspected and its crew, and shall

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\* Replaced by Rec. 21-13.

\*\* Master refers to the individual in charge of the vessel.

minimize interference with fishing activities or stowage of product and, to the extent practicable, avoid action which would adversely affect the quality of the catch on board. Inspectors shall limit their enquiries to the ascertainment of the observance of the Commission's Recommendations in force in relation to the flag CPC of the vessel concerned. In making the inspection, inspectors may ask the master of the fishing vessel for any assistance he/she may require. Inspectors shall draw up a report of the inspection in a form approved by the Commission. Inspectors shall sign the report in the presence of the master of the vessel who shall be entitled to add or have added to the report any observations which he or she may think suitable and must sign such observations.



12. Copies of the report shall be given to the master of the vessel and to the government of the inspection party, which shall transmit copies inspection reports with apparent infringements to the appropriate authorities of the flag CPC of the inspected vessel and to the ICCAT Commission. Where any infringement of ICCAT Recommendations is discovered, the inspector should, where possible, also inform any inspection ship of the flag CPC of the fishing vessel known to be in the vicinity.

12bis. CPCs deploying inspection vessels under this scheme shall submit each year by [15 September in relation to activity occurring between 1 January and 31 December of the previous year] a list of the inspections carried out in the form to be provided by the Secretariat.

13. Resistance to inspectors or failure to comply with their directions shall be treated by the flag CPC of the inspected vessel in a manner similar to such conduct committed with respect to a national inspector.
14. Inspectors shall carry out their duties under these arrangements in accordance with the rules set out in this Recommendation, but they shall remain under the operational control of their national authorities and shall be responsible to them.
15. Contracting Governments shall consider and act on inspection reports, sighting information sheets as per Rec. 19-09 and statements resulting from documentary inspections of foreign inspectors under these arrangements on a similar basis in accordance with their national legislation to the reports of national inspectors. The provisions of this paragraph shall not impose any obligation on a Contracting Government to give the report of a foreign inspector a higher evidential value than it would possess in the inspector's own country. Contracting Governments shall collaborate in order to facilitate judicial or other proceedings arising from a report of an inspector under these arrangements.
  - a) Contracting Governments shall inform the Commission by 15 February each year of their provisional plans for conducting inspection activities under this Recommendation in that calendar year and the Commission may make suggestions to Contracting Governments for the coordination of national operations in this field including the number of inspectors and ships carrying inspectors;
  - b) the arrangements set out in this Recommendation and the plans for participation shall apply between Contracting Governments unless otherwise agreed between them, and such agreement shall be notified to the ICCAT Commission. Provided, however, that implementation of the scheme shall be suspended between any two Contracting Governments if either of them has notified the ICCAT Commission to that effect, pending completion of such an agreement.
16.
  - a) the fishing gear shall be inspected in accordance with the regulations in force for the subarea for which the inspection takes place. Inspectors will state the subarea for which the inspection took place, and a description of any violations found, in the inspection report;
  - b) inspectors shall have the authority to inspect all fishing gear in use or on board.
17. Inspectors shall affix an identification mark approved by the ICCAT Commission to any fishing gear inspected which appears to be in contravention of the ICCAT Commission's Recommendations in force in relation to the flag CPC of the vessel concerned and shall record this fact in his/her report.

18. The inspector may photograph the gears, equipment, documentation and any other element he/she considers necessary in such a way as to reveal those features which in their opinion are not in conformity with the regulation in force, in which case the subjects photographed should be listed in the report and copies of the photographs should be attached to the copy of the report to the flag CPC.
19. Inspectors shall, as necessary, inspect all catch on board to determine compliance with ICCAT Recommendations.
20. The model Identity Card for inspectors is as follows:

*Dimensions: Width 10.4cm, Height 7cm*

<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div style="text-align: center;"> <p><b>INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS</b></p> <p><b>ICCAT</b></p> <p><b>INSPECTOR IDENTITY CARD</b></p> </div> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 100%; margin-top: 10px; position: relative;"> <div style="position: absolute; top: 5px; left: 5px; width: 90%; height: 90%;"></div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <p><b>Contracting Party:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Inspector Name:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Card No.:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Issue Date:</b> _____      <b>Validity five years</b></p> </div>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: space-between;">  <div style="text-align: center;"> <p><b>ICCAT</b></p> </div> </div> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">The holder of this document is an ICCAT inspector duly appointed under the terms of the ICCAT Scheme of Joint International Inspection and has the authority to act under the provision of the ICCAT Control and Enforcement measures</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="width: 45%; border-top: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">CPC Authority</div> <div style="width: 45%; border-top: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">Inspector</div> </div>
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**Minimum standards for video recording procedures  
applicable to transfer, caging and/or release operations**

1. Each flag, trap and farm CPC concerned shall ensure that the following procedures apply to all video recordings of transfer, caging and/or release operations referred to in this Recommendation:
  - a) At the beginning and/or the end of each video, where requested, the ICCAT transfer or caging authorization number or release order shall be displayed;
  - b) The time and the date of the video shall be continuously displayed throughout each video record;
  - c) The video record shall be continuous without any interruptions and cuts, and cover the entire transfer, caging and/or release operation;
  - d) Before the start of the transfer, caging and/or release operation, the video record shall include the opening and closing of the net/door and, for transfers and caging operations, show whether the receiving and donor cage(s) already contain bluefin tuna;
  - e) The video record shall be of sufficient quality to determine the number and, where appropriate the weight, of bluefin tuna being transferred, caged and/or released;
  - f) A copy of the video record shall be kept on board the donor vessel, or by the farm or trap operator where appropriate, during their entire period of authorization to operate;
  - g) The distribution of copies of the video records shall follow the provisions referred to in paragraphs 118 to 121 of this Recommendation;
  - h) The electronic storage device containing the original video record shall be immediately provided to the ICCAT regional and/or CPC national observer after the end of the transfer, caging and/or release operation. The ICCAT regional observer and/or CPC observer shall immediately initialize it to avoid any further manipulation.
2. Each flag, trap and farm CPC concerned shall establish the necessary measures to avoid any replacement, edition or manipulation of the original video records.

**Insufficient quality of the video record**

3. If the video record is of insufficient quality to determine the number and, where appropriate the weight, of bluefin tuna being transferred, caged and/or released, the operation shall be repeated until the quality of the video is adequate, following the procedures below:
  - a) for a transfer, the transfer operation concerned shall be repeated in accordance with the provisions set out in paragraphs 122 to 127 of this Recommendation (voluntary and control transfers). This voluntary or control transfer shall be carried out into another cage which must be empty.
 

For those transfers where the origin of the fish is a trap, the bluefin tuna already transferred from the trap to the receiving cage could be sent back to the trap and the voluntary transfer is cancelled under the supervision of the ICCAT regional observer;
  - b) for a caging operation, the caging operation concerned shall be repeated in accordance with the provisions set out in paragraphs 161 and 162 of this Recommendation.

The new caging operation must include movement of all the bluefin tuna from the receiving farm cage into another farm cage, which must be empty;

- c) for releases, the segregation of the fish to be released shall be repeated in accordance with the release Protocol set out in **Annex 10** of this Recommendation.

## Standards and procedures for stereoscopic cameras systems in the context of caging operations

### 1. Use of stereoscopic cameras systems

The use of stereoscopic cameras systems in the context of caging operations shall be conducted in accordance with the following provisions:

- i. The sampling intensity of live fish for length measurement shall not be below 20% of the number of fish being caged. When technically possible, the sampling of live fish shall be sequential, by measuring one in every five specimens. Such a sample shall be made up of fish measured at a distance between 2 and 8 meters from the camera.
- ii. The dimensions of the transfer gate connecting the donor cage and the receiving cage shall be set at maximum width of 8 to 10 meters and maximum height of 8 to 10 meters.
- iii. Validation of the stereoscopic individual length measurements shall be undertaken prior to each caging operation using a scale bar at a distance of 2 and 8 m.
- iv. When the length measurements of the fish present a multi-modal distribution (two or more cohorts of distinct sizes), it shall be possible to use more than one conversion algorithm for the same caging operation.
- v. The most up to date algorithm(s) established by SCRS using the length-weight relationship for wild fish shall be used to convert the fork length into weight, according to the size category of the fish measured during the caging operation.
- vi. The margin of error for determining weight, inherent to the technical specifications of the stereoscopic camera system, shall not exceed a range of +/- 5 percent.
- vii. The report on the results of the stereoscopic program should include details on all the technical specifications above, including the sampling intensity, the way of sampling methodology, the distance from the camera, the dimensions of the transfer gate, and the algorithms (length-weight relationship). The SCRS shall review these specifications, and if necessary provide recommendations to modify them.

### 2. Caging results

At the completion of a caging operation, or the complete set of caging operations under a JFO or under the traps of the same CPC/EU Member State, the farm CPC competent authority shall communicate the following information to the catching flag or trap CPC competent authority:

- a) a technical report related to the stereoscopic camera system, which shall contain in particular:
  - general information: species, site, cage, date, algorithm;
  - sizing statistical information: average weight and length, minimum weight and length, maximum weight and length, number of fish sampled, weight distribution, size distribution;
  - the algorithm used to convert length into weight;
  - the margin of error of the stereoscopic camera system used. In the case where the camera software does not have an automatic method to calculate this margin of error, it shall be calculated as detailed in points 1 to 4 of the **Appendix** to this **Annex**.
- b) a factual report related to the caging operation, which shall contain in particular:
  - detailed results of the sampling programme, with the total number and weight of bluefin tuna being caged, and the size and weight of every fish that was sampled;

- the relevant caging declarations;
- indication of cases where discrepancies of more than 10% between the number of individuals being caged and the number reported as caught on the ITD require investigation by the flag or trap CPC competent authority in accordance with paragraph 172, and cases where the caging results indicate that catch is not in line with paragraphs 31 to 33;
- general information on the caging operation: number of the caging operation, name of the farm, cage number, eBCD number, ITD number, name and flag of the catching vessel, name and flag of the towing vessel, date of the stereoscopic camera system operation and footage filename;
- comparison between the amounts declared in the eBCD and the amounts found with the stereoscopic camera system, in number of fish, average weight and total weight (the formula used to calculate the difference shall be:  $(\text{Stereoscopic System} - \text{eBCD}) / \text{Stereoscopic System} * 100$ ).

### 3. Caging Report

The caging report referred to in paragraph 184 of this Recommendation shall include:

- a) the caging results referred to in point 2;
- b) the relevant reports of the release operations, conducted in accordance with **Annex 10**;

### 4. Use of the outcome of the stereoscopic camera systems

By applying the margin of error inherent to the technical specifications of the stereoscopic camera system used, the farm CPC competent authority shall determine the range (lowest and higher value) of the total weight of the bluefin tuna being caged, in accordance with point 5 of the **Appendix** to this **Annex**.

When receiving the results of the analysis of the stereoscopic camera video footage and the range (lower and higher value) of the total weight of the bluefin tuna being caged, communicated by the farm CPC competent authority, the catching flag or trap CPC/EU Member State competent authority shall take the following measures:

- a) apply the following measures as regards releases and adaptation of the eBCD sections for catching vessels operating within the framework of an individual fishing operation (outside a JFO);
  - i. when the total weight declared by the catching vessel in the eBCD is within the range of the stereoscopic camera system results:
    - no release shall be ordered;
    - the eBCD shall be modified both in number (using the number of fish resulting from the use of the stereoscopic camera system) and average weight, while the total weight shall not be modified.
  - ii. when the total weight declared by the catching vessel in the catching section of the eBCD is below the lowest figure of the range of the stereoscopic camera system results:
    - a release shall be ordered using the lowest figure in the range of the stereoscopic camera system results;
    - the release operations shall be carried out in accordance with the procedure laid down in **Annex 10**;



- after the release operations took place, the eBCD shall be modified both in number (using the number of fish resulting from the use of the stereoscopic camera system minus the number of fish released) and average weight, while the total weight shall not be modified.
- iii. when the total weight declared by the catching vessel in the catching section of the eBCD exceeds the highest figure of the range of the stereoscopic camera system results:
- no release shall be ordered;
  - the eBCD shall be modified for the total weight (using the highest figure in the range of the stereoscopic camera system results), for the number of fish (using the results from the stereoscopic camera system), and average weight accordingly.
- b) ensure that for any relevant modification of the eBCD, the values (number and weight) entered in Section 2 shall be consistent with those in Section 6 and the values in Sections 3, 4 and 6, shall not be higher to those in Section 2.

## **5. Provisions applicable to JFO and traps**

1. Decisions consequent to differences between the catch report and the results from the stereoscopic camera system programme shall be taken by the flag or trap CPC competent authority:
  - a) based on comparison between the total of the weights resulting from the stereoscopic camera system programme of all the bluefin tuna caging operations from a JFO / traps, with the total of the weights of catches declared by vessels participating in that JFO or by those traps and, in the case of JFOs and traps involving a single CPC and/or EU Member State;
  - b) at the level of the caging operations for JFOs involving more than one CPC and/or EU Member State, unless otherwise agreed by all the flag CPC/EU Member State competent authorities of the catching vessels involved in the JFO.
2. In case of compensation of differences in weight between what has been determined by the stereoscopic camera and the correspondent catch found in individual caging reports across all cagings from a JFO or traps of a same CPC/EU Member State, whether or not a release operation is required, all relevant eBCD shall be modified on the basis of the lowest range of the stereoscopic camera system results.
3. The eBCD related to the quantities of bluefin tuna released shall also be modified to reflect the weight and the corresponding number of fish released. The eBCD related to bluefin tuna not released but for which the results from the stereoscopic camera systems or alternative techniques differ from those reported caught and transferred shall also be amended to reflect these differences.
4. The eBCD relating to the catches from where the release operation took place shall also be modified to reflect the weight/number released.

## Appendix to Annex 9

**Method for the calculation of a margin of error  
and range of the stereoscopic camera system**

In accordance with what was agreed at the Intersessional Meeting of Panel 2 (March 2020), the following method is applied for the calculation of the margin of error and the range of the stereoscopic camera system:

1. Calculation of the fork length (FLi) range for each sample (i) taking into account the margin of error FL provided by the system (error%):

The length range is identified for each sample (i) by **[FL<sub>min,i</sub> , FL<sub>max,i</sub>]**

**FL<sub>min,i</sub> = FLi - (FLi \* error%)**: is the minimum value for the fork length range for each sample (i)

**FL<sub>max,i</sub> = FLi + (FLi \* error%)**: is the maximum value for the fork length range for each sample (i)

2. Conversion of the length range to a round weight (RTW) range for each sample (i) applying the algorithm used to convert length into weight:

The round weight range is identified for each sample (i) by **[RTW<sub>min,i</sub> , RTW<sub>max,i</sub>]**

**RTW<sub>min,i</sub>**: is the minimum value of the round weight range for each sample (i)

**RTW<sub>max,i</sub>**: is the maximum value of the round weight range for each sample (i)

3. Calculation of the average round weight range:

the average round weight range for «n» samples is identified by

**[RTWaverage<sub>min</sub>, RTWaverage<sub>max</sub>]**

**RTWaverage<sub>min</sub>** =  $\frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n RTW_{min,i}$ , *i*: is the minimum value for the average round weight range

**RTWaverage<sub>max</sub>** =  $\frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n RTW_{max,i}$ , *i*: is the maximum value for the average round weight range

4. Calculation of the margin of error percentage (%) of the system:

$$\frac{(RTWaverage_{max} - RTWaverage_{min})/2}{RTWaverage} * 100$$

**RTWaverage**: is the average weight provided by the stereoscopic camera

5. Deduction of the stereoscopic camera system range:

The range of the stereoscopic camera system is defined by:

**[The lowest figure of the range, The highest figure of the range]**

*Previously, the total weight is calculated by multiplying the average weight provided by the stereoscopic camera by the number of fish resulting from the use of the stereoscopic camera, i.e. **RTWtotal = (RTWaverage \* Number BFT)***

Thus, the range limits are calculated as follows:

**The lowest range figure = RTWtotal - (margin of error system \* RTWtotal / 100)**

**The highest range figure = totalRTW + (margin of error system \* RTW total / 100)**

## Release Protocol

### Issuing of release orders

1. Release orders before caging shall be issued:
  - a) by competent authority of the donor operator when, on the basis of the prior transfer notification, the CPC competent authority of the donor operator refuses the transfer operation as per paragraph 115; or
  - b) by the farm CPC competent authority when, in accordance with paragraph 152, the caging authorization has not been issued by the farm CPC competent authority within 1 month after the request for a caging authorization.
2. Release orders after caging shall be issued:
  - a) by the flag or trap CPC competent authority when, following procedures in paragraph 178 to 180 it is established that the weight caged exceed that reported caught. The release order shall be notified to the farm CPC competent authority, which shall transmit it to the farm operator concerned; or
  - b) by the farm CPC competent authority when, after harvest, the remaining fish is not covered by an eBCD, or when a carry-over assessment or control transfer has identified an excess of fish.

For cases under section 2 a) above, the total weight of bluefin tuna to be released shall be converted into a corresponding number of individuals by applying the average weight resulting from the analysis of the stereoscopic camera video footages related to the relevant caging operation, made by the farm CPC competent authority in accordance with paragraph 167 of the Recommendation.

### Segregation of fish prior to the release operation

3. Prior to the release from a farm cage, the farm CPC competent authority shall ensure that:
  - the fish to be released is segregated and moved to an empty transport cage, and the transfer of the fish to the transport cage is monitored by control camera in the water, in accordance with the minimum standards set out in **Annex 8**;
  - the number of fish segregated for release corresponds to the release order.
4. The prior segregation of the fish shall be conducted in the presence of an ICCAT regional observer.

### Record of the release operation by video camera

5. The release of bluefin tuna from transport or farm cages into the sea shall be recorded by control camera. All release operations into the sea shall be observed by an ICCAT regional observer.

### Reporting

6. For each release operation performed, the donor or farm operator responsible for the release shall complete a release report, using the template attached to this **Annex**.
7. The ICCAT regional observer shall validate the information in the release declaration. The donor or farm operator shall submit the release declaration to its authorities within 48 hours of the release operation taking place for transmission to the ICCAT Secretariat.

### General provisions

8. Release operations from purse seine nets, traps or transport cages must be executed immediately after receipt of the release order.
9. Release operations from farms must be executed within 3 months of the last caging operation of the fish concerned and at a minimum distance of 10 miles from the farm. For releases of less than 5 tonnes of bluefin tuna, the farm CPC competent authority may set a shorter distance, of minimum 5 miles, for the release.
10. The master of the towing vessel or the farm operator shall be responsible for the fish survival until the release operation has taken place.
11. The farm CPC competent authority might implement any additional measures they feel necessary to guarantee that the release operations take place at the most appropriate time and place in order to increase the probability of the fish going back to the stock.
12. The provisions of this **Annex** shall not apply to release of bluefin tuna from traps as a result of lifting of the gear at the end of the activity.
13. By way of derogation from paragraph 3 first bullet, for farms directly connected to traps, the fish to be released shall be segregated and moved to an empty cage or connected trap pool. The transfer of the fish to the empty cage or to the connected trap pool shall be monitored by control camera in the water, in accordance with the minimum standards set out in **Annex 8**.
14. By way of derogation from paragraph 9, the minimum distance measures shall not apply to farms directly connected to traps.

<b>ICCAT Release Report</b>		<b>Document No:</b>
<b>1 - CATCHING/CAGING DETAILS</b>		
Farm/catching vessel/trap/towing vessel carrying out the release:		
ICCAT Register number:		
Release order reference:		
Catching vessel(s)/trap <sup>(1)</sup> :		
JFO number:		
Caging authorisation(s) number <sup>(1)</sup> :		
Release cage(s) number:		
eBCD(s) reference(s):		
Release authorization number:		
<b>2 - DETAILS OF THE RELEASE OPERATION</b>		
Type of release <sup>(3)</sup> :		
Date of the operation:		
Towing vessel name:		
ICCAT Register number:		
Flag:		
Segregation of fish prior to the release operation:		
Verification cage number:		
Release cage number:		
Number of BFT individuals released:		
Weight of BFT released (kg):		
Operator name, date and signature <sup>(2)</sup> :		Observer name, ICCAT No., date and signature:
Presence of Observer (Y/N)	Reasons for disagreement:	Rules or procedure not respected:

(1) Only for releases from farms

(2) Signature of the farm operator for releases from farms, or of the fishing vessel master for releases ordered to catching vessels or towing vessels

(3) Release after completion of caging reports (**Annex 9**, paragraph 3); BFT remaining after harvesting that is not covered by an eBCD; excess of BFT found following a control transfer or carry-over assessment.

### Treatment of dead and/or lost fish

#### Record of dead or lost bluefin tuna

1. The number of bluefin tuna that die during any operation regulated in this Recommendation shall be reported by the donor operator in the case of a transfer operations and associated transport, or the farm operator in the case of a caging operation or farming activities, and deducted from the relevant CPC's quota.
2. For the purposes of this **Annex**, lost fish refers to the missing bluefin tuna individuals that, after the potential differences detected during the investigation referred to in paragraph 172, have not been justified as mortalities.

#### Treatment of fish that die during the catch and first transfer

3. The bluefin tuna that die during the catch and first transfer from a purse seine vessel or trap shall be recorded in the purse seine vessel logbook or the trap daily catch report, and reported on the ICCAT Transfer Declaration (ITD) and on the transfer section of the eBCD.
4. The eBCD shall be provided to the towing vessel(s) with Section 2 (Total Catch), Section 3 (Live fish trade) and Section 4 (Transfer - including "dead" fish) completed.
5. Section 2 shall include all individuals caught. The total quantities reported in Sections 3 (Live fish trade) and 4 (Transfer) of the eBCD (including dead individuals) shall be equal to the quantities reported in Section 2, after deductions of all the mortalities observed between the catch and completion of the transfer.
6. The eBCD shall be accompanied by the ITD in accordance with the provisions of this Recommendation.
7. A split of the eBCD with Section 8 (Trade information) shall be completed and given to the auxiliary vessel which will transport the dead bluefin tuna to shore (or retained on the catching vessel or the trap if landed directly to shore). This dead fish and split eBCD must be accompanied with a copy of the ITD.
8. With regard to eBCD, the dead fish shall be allocated to the catching vessel which made the catch or, in the case of JFOs, either to participating catching vessels or flags.

#### Treatment of fish that die and/or are lost during further transfers and transport operations

9. Towing vessels shall report, using the template attached to this **Annex**, all bluefin tuna dead during transport. Individual lines shall be completed by the master each time the dead or lost event has been detected.
10. In case of further transfers, the master of the donor towing vessel must provide the original of the report to the master of the towing vessel receiving the bluefin tuna, keeping a copy on board for the duration of the campaign.
11. At arrival of a transport cage to the destination farm, the master of the towing vessel shall deliver the complete set of reports of dead fish using the template attached to this **Annex** to the farm CPC competent authority.
12. For a given caging operation, the accumulated mortalities reported by the master of the towing vessels in accordance with points 9 to 11, shall be reported in the caging section of the eBCD by the farm operator.

13. For the purpose of the quota uptake to be determined by the flag or trap CPC, the weight of fish that die or are lost during transport shall be evaluated as follows:
  - a) for dead fish
    - i. in the case of landing, the effective weight at landing shall be applied;
    - ii. in the case that the dead fish is discarded, the average weight established at the time of caging shall be applied to the number of individuals discarded;
  - b) for fish otherwise considered as lost at the moment of the investigation referred to in paragraph 172, the average individual weight established at the time of caging shall be applied to the number of individuals considered as being lost, as determined by the flag or trap CPC competent authority resulting from its analysis of the first transfer video footage in the context of the investigation.

**Treatment of fish that die during caging operations**

14. The fish that die during caging operations shall be reported by the operator on the caging declaration. The farm CPC competent authority shall ensure that the number and weight of the fish that die is reported in the relevant field of Section 6 of the eBCD.

**Treatment of fish that die and/or are lost during farming activities**

15. Dead or lost fish in farms or those that disappear from farms, including allegedly stolen or escaped fish, shall be reported by the farm operator to the farm CPC competent authority immediately after the event has been detected. The farm operator's report shall be accompanied by the necessary supporting evidence (complaint filed about the stolen fish, damage report in case of damage to the cage, etc.). After receipt of such report, the farm CPC competent authority shall apply the necessary changes or cancellation of the eBCD concerned (following the necessary developments in the eBCD system).

<b>Reporting of fish that die during further transfers and towing operations</b>			
Towing vessel	Name		
	ICCAT N° and Flag		
	ITD N° and Cage N°		
	Master's name		
Catching vessel(s)/trap	Name of vessel(s)/trap		
	ICCAT number and JFO N°		
	eBCDs number(s)		
Previous towing vessel (if any)	Name		
	ICCAT N° and Flag		
	ITD N° and Cage N°		
	Total number of BFT reported dead (*)		
Farm of destination	CPC / Name / ICCAT N°		
Date	N° of dead BFT	Destination of dead fish (discarded or landed)	Master's signature
<b>TOTAL</b>			

(\*) In case of further transfers, the Master of the donor towing vessel shall deliver the original of the mortalities report to the Master of the receiving towing vessel.



## ICCAT Caging Declaration

<b>ICCAT Caging Declaration</b>		<b>Document No:</b>
<b>1 - CAGING OF BLUEFIN TUNA</b>		
Farm name:	Towing vessel name:	
ICCAT Register number:	ICCAT Register number:	
Caging authorization number:	Flag:	
Transport cage number:	JFO number:	
Farm cage number:	eBCD number(s):	
Date of caging:	Transfer declaration (ITD) number(s):	
Bluefin tuna that die during transport <sup>(1)</sup> :		
<b>2 - CAGING INFORMATION - FARM OPERATOR AND ICCAT OBSERVER <sup>(2)</sup></b>		
	Farm Operator	ICCAT Observer
Number individuals:		
Quantities in kg:		Not applicable
Number and weight (kg) of BFT dead during caging:		
Farm operator name, date and signature:		Observer Name, ICCAT No, date and signature:
Presence of Observer: (Y/N)	Reasons for disagreement:	Rules or procedure not respected:
<b>3 - CAGING INFORMATION - CPC FARM AUTHORITIES <sup>(3)</sup></b>		
Number individuals:	Quantities in kg:	
CPC authorities officer, date and signature:		

<sup>(1)</sup> Total number and weight (kg) of BFT reported dead by the master(s) of the towing vessel(s) which have transported the caged fish.

<sup>(2)</sup> Quantities determined by the farm operator and ICCAT observer after analysing the stereoscopic camera footage of the caging operation.

<sup>(3)</sup> Quantities established by the CPC farm authorities for the actual caging operation when data are available.

**Minimum Information for Fishing Authorizations**

A. IDENTIFICATION

1. ICCAT registration number
2. Name of fishing vessel
3. External registration number (letters and numbers)
4. IMO number, if any

B. FISHING CONDITIONS

1. Date of issue
2. Period of validity
3. Conditions of fishing authorization, including when appropriate species, zone, fishing gear and any other conditions applicable derived from this Recommendation and/or from national legislation.

	<b>From... to</b>	<b>From... to</b>	<b>From... to</b>	<b>From... to</b>	<b>From... to</b>
<b>Zones</b>					
<b>Species</b>					
<b>Fishing gear</b>					
<b>Other conditions</b>					

### **Procedure for sealing operations of transport cages**

Prior to their deployment on a purse seine vessel, a trap, or a farm, the provider responsible for the ROP shall provide a minimum of 25 ICCAT seals to each ICCAT regional under their responsibility and maintain a record of the seals provided and used.

The donor operator shall be responsible for sealing the cages. For this purpose, a minimum of three seals, placed in such a way that they prevent the opening of doors without breaking the seals, shall be put on each cage door.

The sealing operation shall be video recorded by the donor operator and shall allow the identification of the seals and verification that the seals have been properly placed. The video shall comply with paragraph 1 a), b), c) of **Annex 8**. The video footage concerned shall accompany the fish up to the destination farm. A copy shall be kept onboard the donor vessel(s) or the trap(s) and remain accessible for control purposes at any time during the fishing campaign. A copy of the video footage shall be made available to the ICCAT regional observer on board the purse seine or on the trap, or to the national observer on the receiving towing vessel, for transmission to the CPC competent authority or regional observer present at the subsequent control transfer.

The video footage of the subsequent control transfer shall include the unsealing operation, which shall be undertaken in such a way as to allow the identification of the seals and verification that the seals have not been tampered with.

**Template for a processing declaration and harvesting declaration**

Processing / Harvesting (please circle either)
Date of harvesting(d/m/y):    /    /
Farm / Trap (please circle either)
Cage(s) number(s):
Number of individuals harvested:
Live weight in kg of the harvested bluefin tuna:
Processed weight in kg of the harvested bluefin tuna:
eBCD number(s) associated with the bluefin tuna harvested:
Details of auxiliary vessels involved in the operation: Name: Flag: ICCAT Registration No.:
Destination of the harvested tuna (export, local market, or other) (please circle) In case of other, please specify:
Validation by the ICCAT regional observer or CPC observer, as appropriate: Observer Name: ICCAT No.: Signature:

**Elements required in feasibility study for a potential ROP-TROP in ICCAT tropical tuna Fisheries**

*(submitted by the EU in consultation with the ICCAT Secretariat and the Chair of IMM)*

In light of the request to IMM from Panel 1 regarding the possibility of carrying out a feasibility study for the implementation of a Regional Observer Programme for Tropical Tunas, the following elements are considered by IMM as important for inclusion in the Terms of Reference.

The Secretariat should integrate these elements into the full Terms of Reference and tender for submission to the PWG in the 2024 annual meeting for its consideration.

Of particular importance is the scope of the ROP, hence the study should consider these elements in the context of the following key variables:

***Key variables***

- MCS needs and the role and objective of Regional Observer Programme per fleet/gear type in meeting those needs
- Vessel types/ gears (purse seine, longline, baitboats and others vessels authorised to fish in ICCAT tropical tuna fisheries)
- Number of vessels in each gear group by relevant CPC
- Time scales for observer deployments based on the specificities of each vessel/gear group
- Observer coverage levels (based on 5 - 100%)

***Elements to consider***

- Costs, including but not limited to:
  - Training
  - Deployment (insurance and travel)
  - Reporting and follow-up
  - Other logistical considerations and regulatory requirements (visas, transits...)
  - Equipment
- Ports of embarkation / disembarkation
- Language requirements
- Payment and coordination and management structure (Secretariat or outsourced)
- Role of Secretariat and capacity/resource needs
- Lessons learnt from previous and current tRFMO programmes including ICCAT ROP programmes (ROP-BFT)
- Financial options and potential sources
- Relevant safety requirements
- Selection procedures

**A new proposal amending the existing *Recommendation by ICCAT on Transshipment (Rec. 21-15)***

*(submitted by the United States)*

**Explanatory note**

The United States notes that ICCAT's current transshipment measure Rec. 21-15 contains a clause that directs the Commission in 2024 to review this Recommendation and consider improvements. We also note that the FAO adopted in 2022 new Voluntary Guidelines for Transshipment. In light of this, we considered it timely to review ICCAT Rec. 21-15 and suggest edits that aim to bring the current measure in line with the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for, as well as make some other potential improvements based on ICCAT's experience implementing the current measure over the last three years. We look forward to discussing this new proposal with CPCs at the 16th Meeting of the IMM Working Group.

**Draft Recommendation by ICCAT on Transshipment**  
(A new proposal by the United States amending existing ICCAT Rec. 21-15)

*TAKING ACCOUNT* of the need to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities because they undermine the effectiveness of the conservation and management measures already adopted by ICCAT;

*RECALLING* the Recommendation by ICCAT on Transshipment (Rec. 21-15) and the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Transshipment;

*EXPRESSING GRAVE CONCERN* that organized tuna laundering operations have been conducted and there is a history of a significant amount of catch by IUU fishing vessels being transhipped under the names of duly licensed fishing vessels;

*IN VIEW THEREFORE OF THE NEED* to strengthen the monitoring of transshipment activities involving tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species that were harvested in the ICCAT Convention area, in particular by large-scale pelagic longline vessels (LSPLVs), including the control of their landings;

*TAKING ACCOUNT* of the need to ensure collection of catch data from such LSPLVs to improve the scientific assessments of those stocks;

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION  
OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) RECOMMENDS THAT:

**SECTION 1. GENERAL RULES**

1. All at-sea transshipment operations:
  - a) within the Convention area of tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species, and
  - b) outside the Convention area of tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species that were harvested in the ICCAT Convention area,are prohibited, except that LSPLVs, defined as those greater than 24 meters length overall, may conduct at-sea transshipment under the program established in Section 3 below. All other transshipments must take place in port.
2. Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities (hereafter referred to as CPCs) shall take the necessary measures to ensure that vessels flying their flag comply with the obligations set out in **Appendix 3** when transshipping tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species in port.
- 2.bis CPCs shall prohibit their vessels from taking part in transshipment activities if any of the vessels involved are included in the ICCAT IUU Vessel List including vessels listed by ICCAT on the basis of listings ~~IUU fishing vessel lists established~~ by other relevant Regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements (RFMO/As).
3. This Recommendation does not apply to harpoon vessels engaged in the transshipment of fresh swordfish<sup>2</sup> at sea.
4. This Recommendation does not apply to transshipments outside the Convention area where such transshipment is subject to a comparable monitoring program established by another regional fisheries management organization.

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<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this Recommendation, "fresh swordfish" means swordfish that are alive, whole or gutted / dressed but not further processed or frozen.

5. This Recommendation is without prejudice to additional requirements applicable to transshipment at sea or in port in other ICCAT Recommendations.

## SECTION 2. RECORD OF CARRIER VESSELS AUTHORISED TO RECEIVE TRANSHIPMENTS

6. Transshipment of tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species may only be authorized with regard to carrier vessels authorized in accordance with this Recommendation. Carrier vessels are those vessels used for fish transport. A CPC shall only authorize its carrier vessels to engage in transshipment under this Recommendation if the vessel has an IMO number and the CPC is satisfied with its ability to monitor the vessel's compliance with the requirements of this Recommendation.
7. An ICCAT Record of Carrier Vessels authorized to receive tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species in the Convention area shall be established. For the purposes of this Recommendation, carrier vessels not entered on the record are deemed not to be authorized to receive tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species in transshipment operations.

7 bis. A vessel may not simultaneously be authorized as a carrier vessel and a fishing vessel.

8. In order for its carrier vessels to be included on the ICCAT Record of Carrier Vessels, a flag CPC ~~or flag Non-Contracting Party (NCP)~~ or flag Non-Contracting Party (NCP) shall submit each calendar year, electronically, and in the format specified by the ICCAT Executive Secretary, a list of the carrier vessels flying its flag that are authorized to receive transshipments in the Convention area. As of [January 1, 2026], all vessels included on the ICCAT Record of Carrier Vessels must be flagged to a CPC. A vessel may not simultaneously be authorized as a carrier vessel and a fishing vessel.

The list shall include the following information:

- Name of vessel, register number
  - ICCAT Record Number (if any)
  - IMO number
  - Previous name (if any)
  - Previous flag (if any)
  - Previous details of deletion from other registries (if any)
  - International radio call sign
  - Type of vessels, length, gross registered tonnage (GRT) and carrying capacity
  - Name and address of owner(s) and operator(s)
  - For carrier vessels, type of transshipment authorised (i.e., in port and/or at sea)
  - Time period authorised for transshipping
9. Each CPC shall promptly notify the ICCAT Executive Secretary of any addition to, any deletion from, and/or any modification of the ICCAT Record of Carrier Vessels, at any time such changes occur.
  10. The ICCAT Executive Secretary shall maintain the ICCAT Record and take measures to ensure its publicity through electronic means, including placing it on the ICCAT website, in a manner consistent with domestic confidentiality requirements.
  11. CPCs shall prohibit their LSPLVs from transshipping any tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species with vessels not entered on the ICCAT Record of Carrier Vessels.
  12. ~~Effective January 1, 2022,~~ Vessels without an IMO number shall not be included in the ICCAT Record of Authorized Carrier Vessels and shall be prohibited from engaging in transshipment activities.



### SECTION 3. PROGRAMME TO MONITOR AND CONTROL TRANSHIPMENT ACTIVITIES

#### *Vessel Monitoring Systems*

13. Carrier vessels authorized for transshipment shall be required to install and continuously operate a VMS in accordance with all applicable ICCAT recommendations, including the *Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning Minimum Standards for Vessel Monitoring Systems in the ICCAT Convention Area* (Rec. 18-10), or any successor recommendation related to VMS minimum standards, including any future revisions thereto.

#### *Port Inspection*

14. Consistent with the *Recommendation by ICCAT on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing* (Rec. 18-09), port CPCs should prioritize inspection in port of (a) carrier vessels whose VMS signals disappear under suspicious circumstances and without explanation and/or indicate dubious movements, and (b) carrier vessels not entered into the ICCAT Record of Carrier Vessels to verify ICCAT species are not on board. Inspection of transshipment activities in port should involve the monitoring of the entire transshipment process and include a cross check of transhipped amounts by species as reported in the fishing vessel's logbook and review of the prior authorization to tranship in port issued by the flag CPC to the fishing vessel.

#### *Separation of cargo*

15. Carrier vessels authorized to receive transshipments of ICCAT species shall be required to retain a copy of documentation, required by paragraphs 18, 19 and 20 of this Recommendation from each fishing ~~donor~~ vessel, to separate and stow transhipped fish by fishing vessel, and develop a stowage plan to show the locations in the hold of the quantities by species and vessel. The carrier vessel master shall submit the fishing ~~donor~~ vessel documentation and stowage plan to inspectors, if requested.

#### **Large Scale Pelagic Longline Vessels (LSPLVs) authorized to tranship at sea**

16. At sea transshipment by LSPLVs for tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species may only be authorized in accordance with the provisions set forth in this Section, in Section 4, and **Appendix 1 and 2** below.
17. Each flag CPC that authorizes its LSPLVs to tranship at sea shall submit each calendar year electronically and in the format specified by the Executive Secretary, the list of its LSPLVs that are authorized to tranship at sea.

This list shall include the following information:

- Name of vessel, register number
- ICCAT Record Number
- Time period authorized for transshipping at sea
- Flag(s), name(s), IMO number(s), and register number(s) of the carrier vessel(s) authorized for use by the LSPLVs

Upon receipt of the lists of LSPLVs authorized to tranship at sea, the Executive Secretary shall provide to the flag CPCs of the carrier vessels the list of LSPLVs authorized to operate with its carrier vessels.

#### **Coastal State authorization**

18. Transshipments by LSPLVs in waters under the jurisdiction of a CPC are subject to prior authorization from that CPC. An original or copy of the documentation of coastal State prior authorization must be retained on the vessel and made available to the ICCAT observer when requested. CPCs shall take the necessary measures to ensure that LSPLVs flying their flag comply with the provisions of this Section.

## Flag CPC authorization

19. LSPLVs are not authorized to tranship at sea unless they have obtained prior authorization from their flag CPC. An original or copy of the documentation of prior authorization must be retained on the vessel and made available to the ICCAT observer or inspector<sup>3</sup> when requested.

## Notification obligations

### *Large Scale Pelagic Longline Vessels (LSPLVs)*

20. To receive the prior authorization mentioned in paragraph 18 and 19 above, the master and/or owner of the LSPLV must notify the following information to its flag CPC authorities, and, where applicable, the coastal CPC, at least 24 hours in advance of the intended transhipment:
- the name of the LSPLV and its number in the ICCAT record of fishing vessels,
  - the name of the carrier vessel and its number in the ICCAT Record of Carrier Vessels authorized to receive transshipments, and the product to be transhipped, by species, ~~where known~~, and, if possible, by stock,
  - the quantities of tuna and tuna-like species and, if possible, by stock, to be transhipped,
  - the quantities of other species caught in association with tuna and tuna-like species by species, ~~where known~~, to be transhipped,
  - the date and location (latitude and longitude) of transhipment,
  - the geographic location of the catches by species and, where appropriate, by stock, consistent with ICCAT statistical areas.

The LSPLV concerned shall complete and transmit to its flag CPC, and, where applicable, the coastal CPC, not later than 5 working days after the transhipment, the ICCAT transhipment declaration, along with its number in the ICCAT record of fishing vessels in accordance with the format set out in **Appendix 1**.

### *Carrier vessels*

21. The master of the receiving carrier vessel shall complete and transmit the ICCAT transhipment declaration to ~~the ICCAT Secretariat~~, the flag CPC of the LSPLV, and, where applicable, the coastal CPC, along with its number in the ICCAT record of carrier vessels authorized to receive transhipment, within 24 hours of the completion of the transhipment. [For transshipments that take place at sea, the master of the receiving carrier vessel shall also transmit the transhipment declaration to the ICCAT Secretariat.](#)
22. The master of the receiving carrier vessel shall, 48 hours before the first point of landing, transmit an ICCAT transhipment declaration, along with its number in the ICCAT record of vessels authorized to receive transhipment, to the competent authorities of the State where the landing is to take place. ~~For the purposes of this measure, the term "landing" means all transfers of any quantity of fish on board from a vessel, other than transshipment, including transfers of fish to a port facility, transfers of fish from one vessel to another through a port facility or other means of transportation, and transfers of fish from a vessel to a container, truck, train, aircraft, or another means of transportation.~~
23. Anytime a carrier vessel on the ICCAT Record of Carrier Vessels provides supply services to another vessel in the Convention area, the master of the carrier vessel shall complete a supply declaration and send it by electronic means to its flag CPC and the ICCAT Secretariat 24 hours in advance of the activity. The supply declaration shall include, at a minimum, the following information: Name and ICCAT record number of vessels involved, date and location (latitude and longitude) of the activity, content of the goods supplied, and name and ICCAT vessel record number (if assigned) of the vessel being supplied.

<sup>3</sup> "Inspector" refers to inspectors of a CPC's competent authority authorized to conduct inspections under *Recommendation by ICCAT on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing* (Rec. 18-09), *Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 19-04 Establishing a Multi-Annual Management Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean* (Rec. 21-08), *Recommendation by ICCAT Replacing the Recommendation 13-04 and Establishing a Multi-Annual Recovery Plan for Mediterranean Swordfish* (Rec. 16-05), or any successor recommendations, including any future revisions thereto, as well as any other Recommendation establishing a Joint Scheme of International Inspection that may be established in the future.

A separate supply declaration is not required when the supply activity is conducted in association with transshipment that is monitored by an ICCAT Regional Observer.

23. bis. The carrier vessel shall notify the ROP, when the observer embarks, of the anticipated port where the ICCAT managed species will be offloaded.

### **Availability of Reports**

24. The ICCAT Secretariat shall promptly publish the documents received pursuant to paragraphs 21, and 23 in the secure part of the ICCAT website for the facilitation of implementation of *Recommendation by ICCAT on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing* (Rec. 18-09).

### **ICCAT Regional Observer Program**

25. Each CPC shall ensure that all carrier vessels transshipping at sea have on board an ICCAT observer in accordance with the ICCAT regional observer program specified in **Appendix 2**. The ICCAT observer shall observe the adherence to this Recommendation, and, notably, that the transhipped quantities are consistent with the reported catch in the ICCAT transshipment declaration and, as feasible, as recorded in the fishing vessel logbook.
26. CPCs shall prohibit vessels from commencing or continuing transshipping at sea in the ICCAT Convention area without an ICCAT regional observer on board, except in cases of force majeure duly notified without delay to the ICCAT Secretariat, which shall promptly notify the Commission.

### **SECTION 4. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

27. To ensure the effectiveness of the ICCAT conservation and management measures pertaining to species covered by Catch and Statistical Document Programs:
- a) In validating the Catch or Statistical Documents, flag CPCs of LSPLVs shall ensure that transshipments are consistent with the reported catch amount by each LSPLV.
  - b) The flag CPC of LSPLVs shall validate the Catch or Statistical Documents for the transhipped fish, after confirming that the transshipment was conducted in accordance with this Recommendation. This confirmation shall be based on the information obtained through the ICCAT Observer Program and any other relevant information.
  - c) CPCs shall require that the species covered by the Catch or Statistical Document Programs caught by LSPLVs in the Convention area, when imported into the area or territory of a CPC, be accompanied by catch or statistical documents validated for the vessels on the ICCAT record and a copy of the ICCAT transshipment declaration.
28. The flag CPCs of LSPLVs which have transhipped during the previous year and the flag CPCs of carrier vessels accepting transshipments shall report annually before 15 September to the Executive Secretary:
- The quantities of tuna and tuna-like catches by species (and, if possible, by stock) transhipped during the previous year.
  - The quantities of other species caught in association with tuna and tuna-like species by species, where known, transhipped during the previous year.
  - The list of the LSPLVs and carrier vessels flying its flag which have transhipped during the previous year.
  - A comprehensive report assessing the content and conclusions of the reports of the observers assigned to carrier vessels which have received transshipment from their LSPLVs.

These reports shall be made available to the Commission and relevant subsidiary bodies for review and consideration. The Secretariat shall post these reports to a password protected website.

29. All tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with those species landed in or imported into the area or territory of CPCs, either unprocessed or after having been processed on board and which are transhipped, shall be accompanied by the ICCAT transshipment declaration until the first sale has taken place.
30. The flag CPC of the LSPLV engaged in at-sea transshipments, and the coastal CPC, where applicable, shall review the information received pursuant to the provisions of this Recommendation to determine consistency between the reported catches, transshipments, and landings of each vessel, including in cooperation with the landing State as necessary. This verification shall be carried out so that the vessel suffers the minimum interference and inconvenience and that degradation of the fish is avoided.
31. At its request, and subject to ICCAT confidentiality requirements, the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) shall have access to the data collected under this Recommendation.
32. Each year, the Executive Secretary of ICCAT shall present a report on the implementation of this Recommendation to the annual meeting of the Commission, which shall include any issues of potential non-compliance. The Commission, through the Compliance Committee, shall, *inter alia*, review compliance with this Recommendation. As part of this review, the Commission should also consider any information provided pursuant to Rec. 08-09 or regarding transshipment or supply activities conducted by vessels not on the ICCAT Record of Carrier Vessels.
33. The Commission shall, no later than [2027], review this Recommendation and consider improvements into account, as appropriate, relevant standards, specifications, and requirements that have been or may be adopted by the Commission.
34. This Recommendation repeals and replaces the *Recommendation by ICCAT on Transshipment* (Rec. 21-15).



### ICCAT Regional Observer Programme

1. Each CPC shall require carrier vessels included in the ICCAT record of vessels authorized to receive transshipments in the ICCAT area and which tranship at sea, to carry an ICCAT observer during each transshipment operation in the Convention area.
2. The Secretariat of the Commission shall appoint the observers and shall place them on board the carrier vessels authorized to receive transshipments in the ICCAT area from LSPLVs flying the flag of CPCs that implement the ICCAT observer program.
3. The ICCAT Secretariat shall ensure observers are properly equipped to perform their duties, including with appropriate safety equipment.

#### Designation of the observers

4. The designated observers shall have the following qualifications to accomplish their tasks:
  - demonstrated ability to identify ICCAT species and fishing gear with a strong preference given to those with experience as observers on pelagic longline vessels;
  - satisfactory knowledge of the ICCAT conservation and management measures;
  - the ability to observe and record accurately;
  - a satisfactory knowledge of the language of the flag of the vessel observed.

#### Obligations of the observer

5. Observers shall:
  - a) have completed the technical training required by the guidelines established by ICCAT;
  - b) to the extent possible, not be nationals or citizens of the flag CPC of the receiving carrier vessel;
  - c) be capable of performing the duties set forth in point 6 below;
  - d) be included in the list of observers maintained by the Secretariat of the Commission;
  - e) not be a crew member of the LSPLV or the carrier vessel or an employee of the LSPLV or carrier vessel company.
6. The observer shall monitor the LSPLVs and carrier vessel's adherence to the relevant conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission. The observers' tasks shall be, in particular, to:
  - 6.1 Visit the LSPLV intending to tranship to a carrier vessel, taking into account the safety concerns reflected in point 10 of this Appendix, and before the transshipment takes place, to:
    - a) Check the validity of the fishing vessel's authorization or license to fish for tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with those species in the Convention area;
    - b) Inspect the fishing vessel's prior authorizations to tranship at sea from the flag CPC and, if appropriate, the coastal State;
    - c) Check and record the total quantity of catch on board by species and, if possible, by stock, and the quantities to be transhipped to the carrier vessel;
    - d) Check that the VMS is functioning and examine the logbook and verify entries, if possible;
    - e) Verify whether any of the catch on board resulted from transfers from other vessels, and check the documentation on such transfers, [including the stowage plan](#);
    - f) In the case of indication that there are any violations involving the LSPLV, immediately report the violation(s) to the master of the carrier vessel (taking due regard of any safety considerations) and to the observer program implementing company, who shall promptly forward it to the flag CPC authorities of the LSPLV; and
    - g) Record the results of these duties on the LSPLV in the observer's report.

6.2 Observe the activities of carrier vessel and:

- a) record and report upon the transshipment activities carried out;
- b) verify the position of the vessel when engaged in transshipping;
- c) observe and estimate quantities of tuna and tuna-like species transhipped by species, if known, and, if possible, by stock;
- d) the quantities of other species caught in association with tuna and tuna-like species by species, where known;
- e) verify and record the name of the LSPLV concerned and its ICCAT record number;
- f) verify the data contained in the transshipment declaration, including through comparison with the LSPLV logbook, where possible;
- g) certify the data contained in the transshipment declaration;
- h) countersign the transshipment declaration; and
- i) observe and estimate quantities of product by species when offloaded in the port where the observer is disembarked to verify consistency with quantities received during at sea transshipment operations.

6.3 In addition, the observer shall:

- a) issue a daily report of the carrier vessel's transshipping activities;
- b) establish general reports compiling the information collected in accordance with the observer's duties and provide the captain the opportunity to include therein any relevant information;
- c) submit to the Secretariat the aforementioned general report within 20 days from the end of the period of observation;
- d) exercise any other functions as defined by the Commission.

7. Observers shall treat as confidential all information with respect to the fishing operations of the LSPLV and of the LSPLV owners and accept this requirement in writing as a condition of appointment as an observer.
8. Observers shall comply with requirements established in the laws and regulations of the flag CPC and, where relevant, the coastal State, which exercises jurisdiction over the vessel to which the observer is assigned.
9. Observers shall respect the hierarchy and general rules of behaviour which apply to all vessel personnel, provided such rules do not interfere with the duties of the observer under this program, and with the obligations of vessel personnel set forth in point 11 of this program.

**Responsibilities of the Flag CPC of the LSPLV**

10. When a flag CPC is notified of potential non-compliance by its LSPLV that has engaged in transshipment activities pursuant to this Recommendation, the flag CPC shall investigate, including requesting any relevant port CPC to inspect the carrier vessel upon arrival in port, and take appropriate action.

**Responsibilities of the Flag CPCs of carrier vessels**

11. The conditions associated with implementation of the regional observer program *vis à vis* the flag CPCs of the carrier vessels and their captains include the following, notably:
  - a) Observers shall be allowed access to the vessel personnel, pertinent documentation, and to the gear and equipment;

- b) Upon request, observers shall also be allowed access to the following equipment, if present on the vessels to which they are assigned, in order to facilitate the carrying out of their duties set forth in point 6:
  - i) satellite navigation equipment;
  - ii) radar display viewing screens when in use;
  - iii) VMS
  - iv) electronic means of communication; and
  - v) scale used for weighing transhipped product.
- c) Observers shall be provided accommodations, including lodging, food and adequate sanitary facilities, equal to those of officers;
- d) Observers shall be provided with adequate space on the bridge or pilot house for clerical work, as well as space on deck adequate for carrying out observer duties;
- e) Observers shall be allowed to determine the most advantageous location and method for viewing transhipment operations and estimating species/stocks and quantities transhipped. In this regard, the master of the carrier vessel, giving due regard to safety and practical concerns, shall accommodate the needs of the observer in this regard, including, upon request, temporarily placing product on the carrier vessel deck for inspection by the observer and providing adequate time for the observer to carry out his/her duties. Observations shall be conducted in a manner that minimizes interference and avoids compromising the quality of the products transhipped.
- f) In light of the provisions of point 12, the master of the carrier vessel shall ensure that all necessary assistance is provided to the observer to ensure safe transport between the carrier and fishing vessels should weather and other conditions permit such an exchange; and
- g) The flag CPCs shall ensure that captains, crew and vessel owners do not obstruct, intimidate, interfere with, influence, bribe or attempt to bribe an observer in the performance of his/her duties.

The Secretariat, in a manner consistent with any applicable confidentiality requirements, is requested to provide to the flag CPC of the carrier vessel under whose jurisdiction the vessel transhipped and to the flag CPC of the LSPLV, copies of all raw data, summaries, and reports pertaining to the trip.

The Secretariat shall submit the observer reports (covering the information and activities of both the fishing and carrier vessels) to the Compliance Committee and to the SCRS.

### **Responsibilities of LSPLVs during transhipments**

- 12. Observers shall be allowed to visit the LSPLV, if weather and other conditions permit, and shall be granted access to personnel, all pertinent documentation, VMS and areas of the vessel necessary to carry out their duties set forth in point 6 in this Appendix. The master of the LSPLV shall ensure that all necessary assistance is provided to the observer to ensure safe transport between the carrier and LSPLV. Should conditions present an unacceptable risk to the welfare of the observer such that a visit to the LSPLV is not feasible prior to the start of transhipment operations, such operations may still be carried out.

### **Observer fees**

- 13. The costs of implementing this program shall be financed by the flag CPCs of LSPLVs wishing to engage in transhipment operations. The fee shall be calculated on the basis of the total costs of the program. This fee shall be paid into a special account of the ICCAT Secretariat and the ICCAT Secretariat shall manage the account for implementing the program.
- 14. No LSPLV may participate in the at-sea transhipment program unless the fees, as required under point 13, are paid.



### **Information sharing**

15. To facilitate information sharing and, to the extent possible, harmonization of at sea transshipment programs across relevant regional fisheries management organizations, all training materials, including observer manuals, and data collection forms developed and used to support implementation of ICCAT's at sea transshipment regional observer program shall be posted on the public portion of the ICCAT website.

### **Identification Guides**

16. The SCRS shall work with the ICCAT Secretariat and others as appropriate to develop new or improve existing identification guides for frozen tuna and tuna-like species. The ICCAT Secretariat shall ensure that these identification guides are made broadly available to CPCs and other interested parties, including to ICCAT regional observers prior to deployment and to other regional fisheries management organizations running similar at sea transshipment observer programs.

### In-Port Transshipment

1. In the exercise of their authority over ports located in areas under their jurisdiction, CPCs may adopt more stringent measures, in accordance with domestic and international law.
2. Pursuant to Section 1 of this Recommendation, transshipment in port by any CPC of tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species from or in the Convention area may only be undertaken in accordance with *Recommendation by ICCAT on Port State Measures to Prevent, Eliminate, and Deter Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing* (Rec. 18-09) and the following procedures:

#### Notification obligations

#### 3. *Catching fishing vessel*

- 3.1 At least 48 hours in advance of transshipment operations, the captain of the fishing vessel must notify the Port State authorities of the name of the carrier vessel and date/time of transshipment.
- 3.2 Fishing vessels are not authorized to tranship in port unless they have obtained prior authorization from their flag CPC. An original or copy of the documentation of prior authorization must be retained on the vessel and made available to an inspector<sup>4</sup> or ICCAT observer when requested.

In seeking prior authorization, the captain of a fishing vessel shall inform its flag CPC of the following:

- the quantities of tuna and tuna-like species, if possible, by stock, to be transhipped;
- the quantities of other species caught in association with tuna and tuna-like species by species, where known, to be transhipped;
- the date and place of the transshipment;
- the name, registration number, ICCAT record number, and flag of the receiving carrier vessel; and
- the geographic location of the catches by species and, where appropriate, by stock, consistent with ICCAT statistical areas.

- 3.3 The captain of the fishing vessel concerned shall complete and transmit to its flag CPC the ICCAT transshipment declaration, along with its number in the ICCAT record of fishing vessels, where applicable, in accordance with the format set out in **Appendix 1** not later than 5 working days~~15 days~~ after the transshipment.

#### 4. *Receiving carrier vessel*

- 4.1 Not later than 24 hours before the beginning and at the end of the transshipment, the master of the receiving carrier vessel shall inform the port State authorities of the quantities of catches of tuna and tuna-like species transhipped to his vessel, and complete and transmit the ICCAT transshipment declaration to the competent authorities within 24 hours.
- 4.2 The master of the receiving carrier vessel shall, at least 48 hours before landing, complete and transmit an ICCAT transshipment declaration to the competent authorities of the landing State where the landing takes place.

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<sup>4</sup> "Inspector" refers to inspectors of a CPC's competent authority authorized to conduct inspections under *Recommendation by ICCAT on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing* (Rec. 18-09).

**Port and Landing State Cooperation**

5. The port State and the landing State referred to in the above points shall review the information received pursuant to the provisions of this Appendix, including in cooperation with the flag CPC of the fishing vessel as necessary, to determine consistency between the reported catches, transshipments, and landings of each vessel. This verification shall be carried out so that the vessel suffers the minimum interference and inconvenience and that degradation of the fish is avoided.

**Reporting**

6. Each flag CPC of the fishing vessel shall include in its Annual Report each year to ICCAT the details on the transshipments by its vessels.

## Clarifications requested on PWG matters and responses from CPCs

	<i>Issue</i>	<i>Request</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>Conclusion</i>
<b>1. Access Agreements</b>	<p>1.1 Para 5 of the <a href="#">Recommendation by ICCAT on Access Agreements (Rec. 14-07)</a> stipulates that: <i>Flag CPCs and coastal CPCs involved in the agreements specified in paragraph 1 shall provide a summary of the activities carried out pursuant to each agreement, including all catches made pursuant to these agreements, in their annual report to the Commission.</i></p> <p>A question has been raised regarding the reporting period which the summary should cover; e.g. should those agreements which concluded in 2022 be reported through the Annual Report submitted in 2023, or should partial reporting for 2023 also be included. <b>Given that in most cases the information contained in Annual Reports refers to year previous to the report being submitted, the Secretariat believes</b></p>	The Secretariat requests confirmation that information submitted in 2023 should contain 2022 data, and that partial reporting for the year in course is not required.	The EU confirms that information submitted in 2023 should contain 2022 data, and that partial reporting for the year in course is not required.	Japan shares the same view as the Secretariat.	The Secretariat is correct that a CPC must provide the information for the previous year in their Annual Reports (i.e., for 2024 report, info on 2023 access agreements must be reported). A CPC can also, at its discretion, provide information on the current year (i.e., providing available info on 2024 access agreements in its 2024 Annual Report). Nothing in the rules precludes a CPC from providing the most up to date info available, and the Commission can benefit from information that is as up to date as possible.	Only data for the previous year need be reported, but if CPCs wish to do so, they may <b>also</b> send data for the year in course. [ <b>Note from Secretariat:</b> separate forms for each year would be preferred]

	<i>Issue</i>	<i>Request</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>Conclusion</i>
	<p><b>that the former is correct and that only information on access agreements which concluded the year before would be required. Confirmation of this is requested.</b></p>					
	<p>1.2 Advice regarding the three points detailed below is also requested to establish clear principles to guide report completion.</p> <p>i) In CP39A, the "Number of Vessels - No Vessels" is interpreted as the count of vessels holding licenses to target ICCAT species in a given year. It is worth noting that the EU Sustainable Fisheries Partners Agreement (SFPA) also specifies a maximum number of vessels that can operate within each category/gear. However, this maximum number does not necessarily match the actual number of licensed vessels. <b>Reporting the number of vessels with licenses is more informative than the maximum potential, and thus, reporting the former is recommended.</b></p>	<p>Confirmation that the Commission agrees with the statements in <b>bold</b> is requested.</p>	<p>The EU can confirm the statements in bold.</p>	<p>Japan shares the same view as the Secretariat.</p>	<p>The United States agrees with the Secretariat regarding the importance of reporting the number of vessels actually permitted/licensed to fish under an access agreement in a given year. However, we understand CP39A to be the form through which paragraphs 1 and 3 of <a href="#">Rec. 14-07</a> are fulfilled, regarding information about the agreement itself. As such, the requirement in para 1 refers to the number of vessels authorized by the agreement, rather than the actual number of vessels with such a license in a given year. The number of vessels actually licensed to fish under the agreement in a</p>	<p>The maximum number of vessels may be included at the time of first reporting (prior to beginning fishing activities, para 1 of <a href="#">Rec. 14-07</a>), if this could be greater than licensed vessels but only actually licensed vessels should be reported in the annual summary information in para 5 of <a href="#">Rec. 14-07</a>.</p>

	<i>Issue</i>	<i>Request</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>Conclusion</i>
	<b>Confirmation of this from PWG is requested.</b>				given year is to be reported under form CP39B, which we understand to be the form through which para. 5 of <a href="#">Rec. 14-07</a> is fulfilled.	
	ii) In CP39B, the "Number of Vessels - No Vessels" should include all vessels licensed to target ICCAT species that were active during the given year. The same logic applies to reporting catches; only catches from vessels listed in the "Number of Vessels - No Vessels" column should be reported. <b>This approach excludes bycatches of ICCAT species that may have been caught by vessels licensed for fisheries other than ICCAT species. Confirmation of this from PWG is requested.</b>	Confirmation that the Commission agrees with the statements in <b>bold</b> is requested	The EU can confirm the statements in bold.	Japan shares the same view as the Secretariat.	The United States concurs with the Secretariat that bycatch by vessels not part of the access agreement do not need to be reported pursuant to <a href="#">Rec. 14-07</a> , but they should be reported through other means and counted against the relevant CPC's quota for that species.	By-catch of ICCAT species by vessels not operating under an access agreement specifically involving ICCAT species does not need to be reported through CP39 (but should be included in Task 1 data and compliance tables as appropriate).
	iii) Lastly, in CP39B, it is important to clarify that <b>the quota refers specifically to the CPC quota and not to any other catch limit or catch reference associated with a species in a given agreement.</b>	Confirmation that the Commission agrees with the statements in <b>bold</b> is requested	The EU can confirm the statements in bold.	Japan shares the same view as the Secretariat.	The United States appreciates the Secretariat's efforts to bring light to CP39B. It is important to clarify that the quota refers specifically to the fishing CPC's ICCAT quota and not to any	All catches under an access agreement count toward the quota of the <u>CPC</u> .  [...]

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	<i>Issue</i>	<i>Request</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>Conclusion</i>
					other catch limit or catch reference associated with a species in a given agreement, as catches under an access agreement count toward the quota of the CPC to which the fishing vessels are flagged, not the quota of the coastal CPC that is allowing foreign vessels to fish in its waters.	
<b>2. Transhipment declarations</b>	<p>2.1 The Secretariat would like clarification as to which transhipment declarations should be submitted to the Secretariat in accordance with paragraph 21 of the <a href="#">Recommendation by ICCAT on transhipment (Rec. 21-15)</a>.</p> <p>The Secretariat has understood that this related only to at-sea transhipment declarations, and that in-port transhipment declarations should be sent only to the CPC authorities as indicated in paragraph 3.3 of <a href="#">Appendix 3 of Rec. 21-15</a>. However, one CPC has</p>	Confirmation that the Secretariat's understanding of the statement in <b>bold</b> is requested.	The EU agrees that only at-sea transhipment declarations, (and not in-port transhipment declarations) should be sent to ICCAT.	Japan shares the same view as the Secretariat.	We concur with the Secretariat	Only at-sea transhipment declarations, and NOT in-port transhipment declarations, should be sent to the ICCAT Secretariat.

	<i>Issue</i>	<i>Request</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>Conclusion</i>
	indicated that their understanding of paragraph 21 of <a href="#">Rec. 21-15</a> requires in-port transshipment declarations to be sent also to the Secretariat. Given the quantity of these, and the fact that not all CPCs send in-port transshipment declarations, clarification as to whether or not these should be sent is needed. This interpretation was endorsed by the Working Group on Integrated Monitoring Measures (IMM) and confirmation of PWG is not requested.					
	2.ii) <b>The Secretariat is of the opinion that the declarations referred to in <a href="#">Rec. 21-15</a> are those which relate to ICCAT species or taken in conjunction with ICCAT fisheries.</b> Notwithstanding, the Secretariat continues to receive declarations and associated documentation (e.g., pre-transshipment notification) relating to non-ICCAT species (e.g., squid) from vessels which are not on the ICCAT Record. Confirmation is	Confirmation that the Secretariat's understanding of the statement in <b>bold</b> is requested.	ii) The EU agrees that only declarations related to ICCAT species or species caught in association with these species should be sent to ICCAT.	Japan shares the same view as the Secretariat.	We concur with the Secretariat	Only declarations related to ICCAT species or species caught in association with these species should be sent to ICCAT. Transshipment declarations which do not contain ICCAT species or are not taken by vessels involved in ICCAT fisheries should <b>NOT</b> be sent.



	<i>Issue</i>	<i>Request</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>Conclusion</i>
	sought that these documents are not required and should not be sent to the Secretariat. This interpretation was endorsed by IMM and confirmation of PWG is not requested.					
<b>3. Supply declarations</b>	<p>According to paragraph 23 of Rec. 21-15: A separate supply declaration is not required when the supply activity is conducted in association with transshipment that is monitored by an ICCAT Regional Observer. As ICCAT ROP observers include all supply transshipments which they witness, clarification is sought as to whether supply declarations are required to be submitted to the ICCAT Secretariat if no ICCAT species are being transhipped at the same time, even if an ICCAT observer is on board, or whether the monitoring by an ICCAT observer is sufficient.</p> <p>The Secretariat would also like to note that many CPCs are not using the ICCAT format for supply</p>	The Secretariat believes that the submission of supply declarations from carriers on which a Regional Observer is embarked is not necessary. Confirmation of this understanding is requested.	The EU's reading of paragraph 23 ICCAT <a href="#">Rec. 21-15</a> is that the supply declaration is always necessary unless the supply operation is made in association with a transshipment operation (immediately before or after), and that these operations are monitored by the ICCAT Regional Observer. A supply operation that is not associated with a transshipment operation would therefore require the supply declaration to be sent to ICCAT.	We support the view that a supply declaration is not required for supply activities associated with transshipment of non-ICCAT species, with the presence of an ICCAT observer. In accordance with paragraph 23 of <a href="#">Rec. 21-15</a> , in the case of supply activities not involving transshipment, a supply declaration is required even if an ICCAT observer is on board. Our understanding is as follows.  (Condition) A supply activity happens:	The United States interprets <a href="#">Rec. 21-15</a> as not requiring a separate supply declaration if recorded by an ICCAT observer when ICCAT species are being transhipped. However, para. 23 requires that a supply declaration from the Master is required in other circumstances, including when an ICCAT observer is onboard the vessel but the supply transshipment does not take place during transshipment of ICCAT species. In other words, the effect of the last sentence of para. 23 is to eliminate the requirement applicable to the master when it is redundant – that is, when the regional observer records the supply transshipment	The Secretariat's original interpretation is not fully correct; an at-sea supply declaration is required if an observer is on board but the supply is not being observed (i.e. -not in association with an ICCAT transshipment). Therefore, supply declarations for all supply activities involving carrier vessels on the ICCAT Record of Vessels are required unless they take place in association with a transshipment monitored by an ICCAT Regional Observer.

	<i>Issue</i>	<i>Request</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>Conclusion</i>
	declarations, which makes it difficult to identify these and to ensure they are correctly processed. The use of the correct format, or the inclusion of M:GEN41 (or CP54) in the title of the email would greatly facilitate this.			with ICCAT observer on-board carrier vessel →No (SD required) →Yes (below) in association with transshipment →No (SD required) →Yes (below) transshipment of ICCAT species →No (SD not required) →Yes (SD not required)	as part its monitoring of the transshipment of ICCAT species.	
<b>4. IUU Cross Listing</b>	When there is discrepancy between the information from two different Regional Fishery Management Organisations (RFMOs) which cross list with ICCAT, the Secretariat seeks confirmation as to whether the information provided by the RFMO which originally listed the vessel should be taken as valid, even if the second RFMO provides additional information? Or should such additional information be included on the ICCAT Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) list even when provided by an RFMO	The Secretariat believes that information provided by the RFMO which originally listed the vessel should be taken as valid, even if the second RFMO provides additional information. Confirmation of this understanding is requested.	The EU would urge the ICCAT Secretariat that when receiving an update from a RFMO which is not the original one or upon noticing discrepancies between two lists, it forwards the update to the original RFMO and request that the Secretariat concerned check the additional information. If found to be valid, the information	Such additional information should be included on the ICCAT Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) list even when provided by an RFMO which was not the original lister of the vessel" because more information on IUU vessels is useful for monitoring and inspection purposes. Information provided by an RFMO that is not the original lister can be included in ICCAT's IUU list as	The United States believes that all available, relevant information should help inform ICCAT's listing and delisting decisions; so we interpret <a href="#">Rec. 21-13</a> to support use of both RFMO's data to inform ICCAT's listing decisions. Where ICCAT cross-lists a vessel but the information differs across two RFMO IUU vessel lists, the information from the original listing RFMO should control, but the information from the other RFMO might be highly relevant as well.	From the responses, it seems that there is a general preference for the additional information to be included, even when coming from a different source than the original and this resulting in discrepancies among lists. <b>[Note from Secretariat:</b> the IUU vessel list has been constructed as a data base, and hence the option suggested by USA is not really feasible without restructuring, and may lead to confusion. Further discussion/guidance would be required to

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	<i>Issue</i>	<i>Request</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>Conclusion</i>
	which was not the original lister of the vessel.		should be included.	"additional information" or "notes".	For example, one RFMO might have more timely updated a change of Flag than the other one. The United States suggests the Secretariat include both pieces of conflicting information but notes in parentheses from which RFMO the information originates.	consider this option. The Secretariat would also like to urge the Commission to support any cross-organizational initiatives which aim to unify and centralise the information in the IUU list, as all RFMO Secretariats have noted the increasing burden and difficulties in maintaining coherence under the current system].

**The future of high seas boarding and inspection scheme (HSBI) at ICCAT***(document submitted by Canada)***Introduction**

In each of the last three years, Canada has tabled a proposal to establish a high seas boarding and inspection (HSBI) scheme over the entire ICCAT Convention area in areas beyond national jurisdiction. While significant progress has been made, at the 2023 Annual Meeting it became apparent that further and deeper discussions are required on what a high seas boarding and inspection scheme could achieve and how it could work before all CPs will be able to agree to such a scheme. This paper aims to orient these discussions so that they can provide a shared understanding of fundamental points, which in turn can be a platform for agreement on an HSBI scheme that includes the principles of participation, cooperation, transparency, and non-discrimination.

HSBI schemes are a tool that have been adopted by numerous Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), including ICCAT, to safeguard their sustainable management regime by ensuring that conservation and management measures are fully implemented and effectively enforced. HSBI schemes are also a prime tool to detect IUU fishing activities in the high seas. Of the world's sixteen RFMOs, eight currently implement HSBI schemes, with other similar bilateral schemes being in force. However, out of the five tuna RFMOs, only one—the Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission—has an HSBI scheme covering all species over the convention areas beyond national jurisdictions.

A joint HSBI scheme would allow a more efficient use of limited inspection resources across the organization by enabling inspectors to conduct more inspections on a single trip in the high seas of the Convention area, rather than being limited to inspect vessels flying the same flag. Through an HSBI scheme, CPs without an enforcement presence on the Atlantic high seas would be able to receive detailed information about their vessels' activities at sea, which would complement other monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) and enforcement tools.

All CPs stand to benefit from HSBI, and there are various ways to participate in HSBI schemes, beyond deploying vessels and inspectors. Mindful of the different capacities of CPs, we nonetheless believe that all can participate in the various components of an HSBI scheme in a way that is participative and equitable. With this paper we hope to have thorough discussions to find common grounds on key elements that should constitute a future HSBI scheme at ICCAT. Below are the questions that we deem essential to agree on a way forward:

- Many CPs participate in the two schemes currently implemented at ICCAT, or are party to other RFMOs where HSBI schemes are implemented. In a future ICCAT scheme, what elements from these other schemes should be considered to build an efficient, fair and equitable scheme for ICCAT to apply throughout the Convention area?
- What are CPs' main concerns regarding the inspection of their fishing vessels by inspectors from other CPs?
- Would any CPs share their experience in an HSBI scheme as:
  1. inspecting States with vessels;
  2. inspecting States with inspectors in a multilateral shiprider agreement, or;
  3. inspected States.
- Are there any capacity or operational gaps that CPs face when it comes to risk-assessment and intelligence-sharing?
- Are there any mechanisms or platforms already in place at ICCAT that CPs deem conducive to the coordination of risk-assessment, information-sharing, and capacity-building activities? If not, which measures should be taken to enable such mechanisms?
- How can ICCAT conduct proper needs-assessment and capacity-building to bolster CPs capacities to participate in an HSBI scheme?

## **MCS and HSBI at ICCAT**

HSBI can fill a geographical gap in MCS efforts and identify non-compliance not detected by other MCS measures. Observer coverage increases the level of compliance of fishing vessels at sea when observers are present on board, but only covers a limited portion of all fishing trips. Furthermore, the captain and crew of fishing vessels might change their behaviour in the presence of an observer. Alternatively, they might pressure the observer through various ways to overlook instances of non-compliance. Electronic monitoring systems may reduce this risk by recording activities without human intervention, but the establishment of these systems is still at early stages for most CPs. Port inspections and port State measures more generally reduce incentives to engage in IUU fishing by making it more difficult to land illicit harvests. While these measures are valuable, they are conducted once fishing activities have concluded and cannot therefore detect all potential issues of non-compliance committed at sea (e.g., illegal transshipment, safe handling and live-release procedures, etc.). Moreover, HSBI could provide an additional data source, both to inform risk assessment (the decision of whether to conduct a port inspection) and to provide relevant information to port inspectors. Similarly, vessel sightings are an effective way to gather evidence on vessels suspected of conducting IUU activities, however, the absence of authority to board and inspect can potentially limit the amount and strength of the evidence collected. Therefore, an HSBI scheme would allow us to go a step further in the quality of the evidence necessary to enforce ICCAT measures.

HSBI will add to improved ICCAT data collection and monitoring whereby inspectors can collect accurate data on catches, bycatch, and fishing practices, which is essential for assessing the health of ICCAT stocks and the effectiveness of management measures. By enforcing sustainable fishing practices, HSBI contributes to the long-term viability of the fishing industry and the people which depend on it. Furthermore, regular boarding and inspection of fishing vessels on the high seas will deter IUU fishing activities, as the risk of being caught and penalized increases. While HSBI would allow for the direct verification of compliance with ICCAT regulations and conservation measures, by ensuring that vessels adhere to agreed-upon standards; boarding and inspections would also provide real-time insights into fishing activities, enabling timely intervention and adaptive management.

To fill these gaps and reinforce its MCS regime, ICCAT has already established schemes of joint international inspections. The ICCAT Convention allows for it, and calls on all CPs to establish HSBI schemes. On this basis, ICCAT adopted the *ICCAT Scheme of Joint International Inspection* (Ref. 75-02), a blueprint for the adoption of HSBI schemes at ICCAT. Such schemes were adopted for swordfish in the Mediterranean in 2016 and bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean in 2017.

## **The different components of HSBI**

### ***Capacity building and training***

CPs can participate in joint training programs whereby the conduct of joint training sessions for at-sea enforcement officers enhances interoperability and standardizes procedures of HSBI by providing a comprehensive overview of the intricate workings of fisheries inspection and compliance monitoring. Regular workshops and seminars on the latest surveillance technologies and techniques can help maintain a high level of expertise and ensure that each party has the operational working knowledge to effectively carry out and support robust and fulsome at-sea inspections. Countries with more advanced surveillance capabilities can assist those with limited resources, as such enhancing overall capacity to enforce regulations on the high seas. High seas boarding and inspections can also serve as educational opportunities for fishing masters and crews. By combining inspections with training, outreach, and collaboration, authorities can enhance captains' understanding of regulations, safety, and sustainable fishing practices and provides inspectors a further opportunity to guide masters on compliance and to avoid any potential non-compliance events.

### ***Surveillance***

Another way to participate in HSBI schemes is to provide information resulting from surveillance activities, either sea, air, land, or satellite based. The authorities from a CP can submit a surveillance report to the Secretariat that details potential infringements to conservation and management measures that have been unveiled through various means of surveillance. Even though no inspectors go on board the fishing vessel

to conduct an inspection or investigations, the information and potential evidence gathered through the various modes of surveillance can feed into intelligence-sharing and risk-assessment activities to enhance analysis and assessment of fishing vessel activity, potentially leading to follow-up inspections if deemed appropriate. The multiple sources of surveillance information will assist with a more balanced strategy, saving on enforcement resources to target inspections. Some of the surveillance information such as aerial, vessel monitoring systems and satellite tracking can cover large areas quickly to provide real time information to enforcement agencies.

### ***Intelligence-sharing***

One of the main interests to establish HSBI schemes is the optimal use of inspection resources in the Convention area. By sharing information amongst them, contracting parties to an RFMO ensure wider, more effective inspection coverage. CPs can participate in an HSBI by sharing information that will support the actions of inspectors at sea. Collaborative platforms for sharing intelligence enhance the ability to detect and respond to illegal fishing activities by developing expertise and resources for monitoring and sharing intelligence. Information-sharing increases transparency, and promotes collaborative arrangements to harmonize enforcement approaches to potential infringements. As such, it also allows for cost savings, avoids duplication of efforts, and strengthens international cooperation.

### ***Risk-assessment***

Another way through which Contracting Parties can participate in the scheme is through risk-assessment activities in collaboration with other Contracting Parties. HSBI schemes often contain provisions that detail which vessels should be prioritized for inspections. Elements such as the absence of an observer on board, the size of the vessel, suspected IUU fishing activities, or a history of violation of conservation and management measures are amongst the criteria frequently included in such provisions. All CPs can participate in risk-assessment to establish a list of inspection priorities.

### ***Deployment of inspectors and vessels***

One of the most obvious ways to participate to an HSBI scheme is to contribute vessels and inspection personnel. In HSBI schemes, a CP that intends to participate in the scheme must submit to the RFMO secretariat, a list of its duly authorized vessels and inspectors before it proceeds to any boarding and inspections. Vessels who conduct inspections as part of the scheme must fly the flag of the RFMO that authorized them at all times. CPs without vessels in the high seas can still participate in at-sea inspections by entering into agreements with other contracting parties who deploy vessels and embark their authorized inspectors on the vessels of that other CPs. The details of the participation of these “shipriders” are to be agreed to by the participating CPs.

**Draft IOMS, Glossary of Terms and Definitions**

**Explanatory Note**

*(Submitted by the WG-ORT Chair, in consultation with the ICCAT Secretariat)*

At the 2024 Meeting of the Online Reporting Technology Working Group (WG-ORT) (7-8 February 2024), the WG-ORT discussed a variety of terms related to the development of the Vessel Manager module. The WG-ORT proposed to develop an “IOMS Glossary of Terms and Definitions” in order to promote consistency in development and use of the module. The WG-ORT further suggested that the Working Group on Integrated Monitoring Measures (IMM) should review the document and endorse it, if appropriate.

**Draft Integrated Online Management System (IOMS)  
Glossary of Terms and Definitions**

*(Submitted by the WG-ORT Chair, in consultation with the ICCAT Secretariat)*

- **ICCAT Record of Vessels:** The ICCAT Record of Vessels comprises the following:
  - 1) The ICCAT Record of Vessels of 20 metres or greater and associated lists
    - 1.1 List of authorised vessels authorised to fish for North Atlantic Swordfish
    - 1.2 List of authorised vessels authorised to fish for South Atlantic Swordfish
    - 1.3 List of authorised vessels authorised to fish for North Atlantic Albacore
    - 1.4 List of authorised vessels authorised to fish for South Atlantic Albacore
  - 2) The ICCAT Record of Tropical Tuna Vessels
  - 3) The ICCAT Record of Carrier Vessels
  - 4) The ICCAT Record of Mediterranean Swordfish Vessels
  - 5) The ICCAT Record of Mediterranean Albacore Vessels
  - 6) The ICCAT Record of Bluefin Tuna Catching Vessels
  - 7) The ICCAT Record of Bluefin Tuna Other Vessels (includes towing vessels, auxiliary vessels, support vessels and processing vessels)
  - 8) List of Chartered Vessels
  - 9) List of Large-Scale Pelagic Longline Vessels (LSPLVs) Authorized to Tranship to Carrier Vessels

The ICCAT Record of Vessels, may in the future, include other Records and Vessel Lists as determined by the Commission.

CPCs report vessels and the ICCAT Secretariat includes them on the [ICCAT Record of Vessels](#). Some of these Vessel Lists may include vessels of less than 20m.

The total Record comprises the above in:

- **Active vessels:** operative vessels, currently registered in at least one of the Lists in the ICCAT Record of Vessels.
  - **Inactive vessels:** operative vessel, temporarily inactive in all of the Lists in the ICCAT Record of Vessels.
  - **Inoperative vessels:** inactive vessels that have a non-operational status (destroyed, scrapped, sunk).
  - **Total ICCAT Record of Vessels:** The sum of active, inactive, and inoperative vessels.
- **Authorized vessels:** vessels listed on the ICCAT Record of Vessels that are authorized by their flag CPC to engage in fishing and fishing related activities, either in general or for certain ICCAT species, as required by specific Recommendations (such as [Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation for the conservation of North Atlantic swordfish, Rec. 16-03 \(Rec. 17-02\)](#)). ICCAT lists these vessels, while the CPCs authorize them. The authorization is a domestic process, generally accomplished through permits or licensing.



- **Permitted/Licensed vessels:** vessels with a fishing permit or license issued by their Flag CPC. Permitting or licensing vessels is a domestic function, usually done by CPC fisheries authorities.
  - “Authorized” is a more general term than “permitted.” Some CPCs may authorize certain sizes/classes of vessels to fish without requiring the vessels to apply for and receive a permit.
- **Registered vessels:** vessels that have received permission to fly the Flag of a CPC. Vessel registration is a domestic function, usually done by a CPC’s maritime authority or similar agency. A vessel being registered does not mean that a CPC has authorized the vessel to fish, only to fly the CPC’s Flag. CPCs may not require all sizes/classes of vessels to be registered (e.g. small vessels like canoes).

A summary of tasks performed by CPCs and the ICCAT Secretariat:

- CPCs authorize vessels and report vessels to the ICCAT Secretariat for inclusion on the ICCAT Records of Vessels (and/or associated vessel lists).
- Based on information provided by CPCs, the ICCAT Secretariat updates the ICCAT Record of Vessels.
- CPCs permit and register vessels, but those terms generally should not be used in reference to the ICCAT Record of Vessels.
- The ICCAT Secretariat does not authorize or permit vessels but maintains the ICCAT Record on the basis of input from CPCs.

**Discussion Paper: Exceptions to ICCAT's authorized vessel listing requirements  
for vessels taking ICCAT species as bycatch**  
*(prepared by the United States)*

A number of ICCAT conservation and management recommendations include vessel listing provisions that supplement the requirements of *Recommendation by ICCAT Amending Recommendation 13-13 Concerning the Establishment of an ICCAT Record of Vessels 20 Meters in Length Overall or Greater Authorized to Operate in the Convention Area (Rec. 21-14)*. The conservation and management recommendations with such provisions include tropical tunas, North Atlantic swordfish, South Atlantic swordfish, Mediterranean swordfish, and North Atlantic albacore. Each of these measures include exceptions from inclusion on authorized vessel lists for vessels that harvest these species as bycatch. See **Table 1** below. At the 2021 and 2022 ICCAT Annual Meetings, the United States expressed concern that these provisions undermine monitoring and control of the relevant fisheries and suggested the Commission consider eliminating them. To facilitate consideration of this issue, we agreed to submit a discussion paper on this matter. A further explanation of our concerns with respect to these provisions follows.

The provisions of the species recommendations allow vessels to be excluded from the relevant species-specific list of authorized vessels if the CPC establishes a maximum onboard bycatch limit for such vessels and the bycatch in question is accounted for within the CPC's quota or catch limit. Each CPC is required to explain how it implements this provision and manages these vessels in its Annual Report. We note that this information is to be compiled by the ICCAT Secretariat and made available to CPCs.

This issue was discussed at the 14th Meeting of Integrated Monitoring Measures (IMM) Working Group in 2021, where it was noted that incomplete species-specific authorized vessel lists mean importers, port inspectors, and others cannot immediately verify whether a vessel is authorized to land certain species. The United States is concerned that these vessel listing derogations can represent a significant loophole with respect to the monitoring and control of ICCAT fisheries. Vessel listing derogations can make it more difficult to verify the legality of catch, hindering trade-tracking and the implementation of other monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) measures. Such has been the case in some recent at-sea sightings of foreign fishing vessels. The United States has sighted vessels catching ICCAT species, but because they were retaining bigeye tuna as bycatch, these vessels were not on the authorized vessel list. To verify that the vessels were harvesting legally required time-consuming outreach to relevant CPCs. In some cases, it has taken weeks and even months to receive a response from the flag CPC. Had these vessels been included on the ICCAT record of authorized vessels for the relevant species, it would have been an easy matter to verify the situation in real-time by reviewing the ICCAT vessel record, which is available online. Improving this aspect of ICCAT's vessel listing requirements is also essential from the standpoint of ICCAT's current and potential future catch documentation schemes (CDS) since effective CDS in ICCAT rely at least in part on robust authorized vessel lists. The bottom line is that addressing the loophole created by these vessel listing derogations will make the ICCAT authorized vessel list a more robust and useful tool to assist in the implementation of MCS measures by ICCAT CPCs and port States globally.

With this discussion, the United States is not seeking to prohibit vessels that very rarely catch a non-target but otherwise legal species from landing or trading that catch. Rather, the United States would like to work with CPCs to strengthen ICCAT rules to ensure that vessels that are known to regularly take these species as bycatch are included on ICCAT's relevant record of authorized vessels. If additional edits are necessary to relevant measures to make this intention clear, they should be considered by the appropriate Panel.

At the 2022 Annual Meeting, PWG referred this issue back to IMM. Notably, Panel 3 considered this issue in 2022 with respect to South Atlantic albacore. Recommendation 22-06 more narrowly tailored the bycatch exception for vessels authorized to catch South Atlantic albacore and included more specific language related to reporting on the use of that exception. The relevant language is included in **Table 1** below.

At the 16th Meeting of the IMM Working Group in 2023, IMM again considered this issue and CPCs had a robust discussion about various approaches that could be taken. As a part of this discussion, several CPCs expressed their shared concern about the potential for these provisions to undermine ICCAT's other MCS measures. IMM discussed the approach recently taken by Panel 3 in 2022 when the southern albacore measure was updated; here, in Rec. 22-06, ICCAT adopted a maximum per trip bycatch limit of 5% of the

total southern albacore catch. CPCs discussed that a similar percentage may also be appropriate for other species, but that it would depend on the fishery and appropriate discussions and decision by the relevant Panel. IMM also discussed the pros and cons of an approach that might significantly expand the length of the ICCAT authorized vessel list; it was noted that this digital list could be easily searchable in an electronic format.

Updated language to address this issue in the tropical tunas measure is also currently under consideration in the ongoing Panel 1 negotiations.

The United States asks that IMM consider recommending to each of the Panels that it reconsider these provisions when relevant management measures are next revised. The United States also suggests that IMM consider recommending that the COC review which CPCs have complied with their reporting requirements relevant to these provisions in their Annual Reports.

**Table 1.** Bycatch exception provisions currently in force.

<i>Rec.</i>	<i>Species</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>
22-01	Tropical tunas	43. A CPC may allow bycatch of tropical tunas by vessels not authorized to fish for tropical tunas pursuant to paragraph 41 and 42, if this CPC establishes a maximum onboard bycatch limit for such vessels and the bycatch in question is accounted for within the CPC's quota or catch limit. Each CPC shall provide in its Annual Report the maximum bycatch limit it allows for such vessels and information about how the CPC ensures compliance with the limit. That information shall be compiled by the ICCAT Secretariat and made available to CPCs.
17-02	North Atlantic Swordfish	14. CPCs may allow bycatch of North Atlantic swordfish by vessels not authorized to fish for North Atlantic swordfish pursuant to paragraph 13, if the CPC establishes a maximum onboard bycatch limit for such vessels and the bycatch in question is accounted for within the CPC's quota or catch limit. Each CPC shall provide in its Annual Report the maximum bycatch limit it allows for such vessels. That information shall be compiled by the ICCAT Secretariat and made available to CPCs.
17-03	South Atlantic Swordfish	9. CPCs may allow bycatch of South Atlantic swordfish by vessels not authorized to fish for South Atlantic swordfish pursuant to paragraph 8, if the CPC establishes a maximum on board bycatch limit for such vessels and that the bycatch in question is accounted for within the CPC's quota or catch limit. Each CPC shall provide in its Annual Report the maximum bycatch limit it allows for such vessels. That information shall be compiled by the ICCAT Secretariat and made available to CPCs.
16-05	Mediterranean swordfish	30. CPCs may allow bycatch of Mediterranean swordfish by vessels not authorised to fish actively Mediterranean swordfish, as referred to under paragraph 27 of this Recommendation, if the CPCs establish a maximum bycatch limit per vessel and per fishing operation and that the bycatch in question are deducted from the CPC's TAC. Each CPC shall provide, in its fishing plan referred to under paragraph 10 of this Recommendation, the maximum bycatch limit it allows for its vessels.
21-04	North Atlantic albacore	13. CPCs may allow bycatch of North Atlantic albacore by vessels not authorized to fish for North Atlantic albacore pursuant to paragraph 12, if the CPC establishes a maximum onboard bycatch limit for such vessels and the bycatch in question is accounted for within the CPC's quota or catch limit. Each CPC shall provide in its Annual Report the maximum bycatch limit it allows for such vessels. That information shall be compiled by the ICCAT Secretariat and made available to CPCs.
22-06	Southern Atlantic albacore	11. CPCs may allow bycatch of southern Atlantic albacore by vessels not authorized to fish southern Atlantic albacore pursuant to paragraph 10 only, if the CPC establishes a maximum per trip onboard bycatch limit of no more than 5% for such vessels and the bycatch is accounted for within the CPC's catch limit. Each CPC shall provide in its Annual Report the maximum per trip bycatch limit it allows for such vessels and the total amount of southern Atlantic albacore harvested as bycatch. That information shall be compiled by the ICCAT Secretariat and made available to CPCs.