

Cover sheet to accompany new proposals
(proposal submitted by the European Union)

Title of the Proposed Draft Recommendation/Resolution: *Draft Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 22-08 establishing a multi-annual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean - Electronic Monitoring System (EMS)*

Title of currently in force recommendation(s) or resolution(s) addressing the same or related issues: *Resolution by ICCAT establishing a Pilot Project for the implementation of Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) on bluefin tuna processing vessels (Res. 21-17)*

1. Does it create new **reporting obligation(s)** for CPCs?

Yes No

Brief Description of new reporting obligation(s):

2. Does it require additional input or **work by the SCRS**?

Yes No

Is this work already included in the current SCRS workplan?

Yes No

Brief description of new scientific work required (i.e. stock assessment, analysis, external consultant):

3. Does it involve the creation of a **new working group or intersessional process**?

Yes No

4. Does it require a new **programme or additional activities to be managed by the Secretariat**?

Yes No

Brief description of new Secretariat work required:

No new tasks, however, potential future increase in the number of reports to be managed.

5. What is the proposed timeframe for implementation, and are there different specific timeframes for certain CPCs, fisheries, regions, etc.:

Entry into force 2025.

6. Is there any other relevant information regarding the resource and workload implications of the proposal:

Draft Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 22-08 establishing a multi-annual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean – Electronic Monitoring System (EMS)

(proposal submitted by the European Union)

Explanatory note

The results of the pilot project to test Remote Electronic Monitoring Systems (EMS) on board bluefin tuna (BFT) processing vessels (*Resolution by ICCAT establishing a pilot project for the implementation of Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) on bluefin tuna processing vessels (Res. 21-17)*) were presented at the *Meeting of the Electronic Monitoring Systems Working Group (EMS WG)* on 10 June 2024. The results were positive, in particular in relation to the following points:

- EMS allows for 24/7 monitoring of vessels' activities (covering the main gap identified);
- EMS performed well during the duration of the pilot project (during the months of operation there was only one occasion when the system went down for a few hours);
- Accurate estimation of the number of individuals and their weight;
- Ease of data analysis (weighing is recorded in the system, number of individuals is obtained by visual counting);
- EMS could provide relevant data for science (length of harvested tuna);
- Possible savings in time spent on control, workload and money (comparative data needs to be compiled and analysed);
- Possible application of AI, for the identification and classification of BFT, resulting in a reduction of time and money in the analysis.

Processing vessels are a critical point in the chain from a control point of view since a large majority of the BFT that is caught passes through them. Currently there is a duplication in the control of processing vessels, given that both ICCAT observers and CPC authorities are present during all the processing operations. However, this approach is not effective given that observers and inspectors are only deployed during those scheduled operations (i.e. on demand by the operator), whereas processing vessels remain in the vicinity of the farms/traps for weeks.

The EMS system would cover this gap where observers and inspectors are not present, since it provides the possibility of 24/7 monitoring the vessels' activities. It also has the potential to cut control costs and reduce the workload for the authorities.

We propose a system which would include:

- 24/7 EMS coverage or regional observer required;
- Maintaining the control by authorities during scheduled operations (at least when EMS is used), until it can be determined if EMS provides an effective method of control;
- the costs of this 24/7 processing vessel activity coverage being borne by the vessel operator rather than the farm operator.

Proposed amendment to *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)*

190. 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.~~ Processing vessels shall operate with an ICCAT observer present on board 24/7 while the vessel is active, or with an Electronic Monitoring System (EMS) that complies with the relevant requirements of Recommendation 23-18, including the requirements of paragraphs 14 to 16.