

2024 Administrative Report¹

1. Introduction

In accordance with Article VII of the Convention, this report is presented by the Secretariat to the Commission to outline its activities during financial year 2024.

2. Contracting Parties and Cooperators to the Convention

2.1 Contracting Parties

In 2024, the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) informed the Secretariat that, on 7 June 2024, the Government of Costa Rica had deposited the instrument of accession to the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas. In accordance with Article XIV, paragraph 3 of the Convention, Costa Rica is already a full member of the Commission.

At 11 October 2024, the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) comprises the following 53 Contracting Parties: Albania, Algeria, Angola, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Canada, Cabo Verde, China, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Curaçao, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, European Union, France (St Pierre & Miquelon), Gabon, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea (Rep.), Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Iceland, Japan, Korea (Rep.), Liberia, Libya, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Philippines, Russia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, São Tomé e Príncipe, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Syrian Arab Republic, The Gambia, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

2.2 Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities

In addition to the Contracting Parties, the Commission can also grant the status of cooperator following the procedure described in the [Recommendation by ICCAT to replace Recommendation 03-20 on Criteria for Attaining the Status of Cooperating Non-Contracting Party, Entity or Fishing Entity in ICCAT \(Rec. 21-24\)](#). The following States currently hold this status: Bolivia, Guyana, Chinese Taipei and Suriname.

3. Approval, ratification or acceptance of the Palma de Mallorca Protocol

At the 26th Regular meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, held in November 2019 in Palma de Mallorca (Spain), the Contracting Parties of the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas approved a Protocol to amend this Convention. On 5 December 2019, the Executive Secretary of the Commission deposited the Protocol with the Depository of the Convention, the Director General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

In accordance with its Article 13, the new Protocol adopted in Palma de Mallorca (Spain) "shall enter into force for each Contracting Party to the Convention accepting it on the ninetieth day after the deposit with the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations of an instrument of approval, ratification, or acceptance by three-fourths of the Contracting Parties to the Convention, and thereafter for each remaining Contracting Party to the Convention upon approval, ratification, or acceptance by it. A government which becomes a Contracting Party to the Convention after this Protocol has been opened for signature pursuant to Article 12 above shall be considered as having accepted this Protocol".

The European Union deposited an instrument of approval of the above-mentioned Protocol on 11 September 2020, Norway on 3 November 2020, Canada on 23 June 2021 (acceptance), Japan on 30 July 2021 (acceptance), Belize on 3 February 2022 (ratification), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 12 April 2024 (acceptance) and Costa Rica on 7 June 2024.

¹ Data at 11 October 2024.

4. ICCAT Recommendations and Resolutions

Adoption and entry into force of the Recommendations and Resolutions

On 19 December 2023, the Secretariat officially transmitted the text of the Recommendations and Resolutions adopted during the 28th Regular Meeting of the Commission (hybrid, New Cairo, Egypt, 13-20 November 2023) to the Contracting Parties and non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities bordering the Atlantic Ocean or fishing for tunas in the Convention area and to intergovernmental organizations concerned with fisheries issues, requesting their cooperation in this regard.

The texts of the Recommendations and Resolutions adopted by the Commission in 2023 were published in the *Report for Biennial Period 2022-2023, Part II (2023), Vol. 1*.

After the six-month grace period following the transmission of the Recommendations and Resolutions adopted by the Commission, the Recommendations entered into force on 18 June 2024, with the exception of Rec. 23-12 and Rec. 23-14 which will enter into force no later than 1 January 2025 and 1 July 2025, respectively, if consensus on the interpretation of SCRS advice is reached at the 2024 Annual Meeting of the Commission, in accordance with Article VIII of the ICCAT Convention.

5. Intersessional meetings, Working Groups and ICCAT training courses

In accordance with Commission decisions in this regard, the meetings listed below were held in 2024:

- Meeting of the Online Reporting Technology Working Group (WG-ORT) (*Online, 7-8 February 2024*).
- First Intersessional Meeting of Panel 1 on Western Skipjack MSE (*Online, 20-21 February 2024*).
- Meeting of the Port Inspection Expert Group for Capacity Building and Assistance (PIEG) (*Online, 22 February 2024*).
- First Meeting of the Standing Catch Document Scheme Working Group (CDS WG) (*Hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 4 March 2024*).
- Intersessional Meeting of Panel 2 (*Hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 5-8 March 2024*).
- Blue Marlin Data Preparatory Meeting (*Hybrid/Miami, Florida, United States, 11-15 March 2024*).
- SCRS Workshop (*Hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 18-20 March 2024*).
- Yellowfin Data Preparatory Meeting (*Hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 8-12 April 2024*).
- Intersessional Meeting of the Bluefin Tuna Species Group (*Hybrid/Sliema, Malta, 15-18 April 2024*).
- Intersessional Meeting of the Swordfish Species Group (including MSE) (*Hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 6-9 May 2024*).
- Mediterranean Albacore Data Preparatory and Stock Assessment Meeting (*Hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 13-18 May 2024*).
- Second Intersessional Meeting of Panel 1 (*Hybrid/Natal, Brazil, 22-24 May 2024*).
- Intersessional Meeting of the Subcommittee on Ecosystems and Bycatch (*Hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 27-31 May 2024*).
- Meeting of the Working Group on Stock Assessment Methods (WGSAM) (*Hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 3-6 June 2024*).
- Meeting of the Virtual Working Group on the Review of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission (*Online, 4 June 2024*).
- Meeting of the Electronic Monitoring Systems Working Group (EMS WG) (*Hybrid/Porto, Portugal, 10 June 2024*).
- Second Meeting of the Standing Catch Document Scheme Working Group (CDS WG) (*Hybrid/Porto, Portugal, 11 June 2024*).
- 17th Meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Monitoring Measures (IMM) (*Hybrid/Porto, Portugal, 12-14 June 2024*).
- Blue Marlin Stock Assessment Meeting (*Hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 17-21 June 2024*).
- Meeting of the Virtual Working Group on Sustainable Financial Position for ICCAT (VWG-SF) (*Online, 26 June 2024*).
- First Meeting of the Joint Climate Change Experts Meeting (*Online, 2-3 July 2024*).

- Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Coordination of Tagging Information (*Online, 5 July 2024*).
- Yellowfin Tuna Stock Assessment Meeting (*Hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 8-12 July 2024*).
- SCRS Species Group meetings (*Hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 16-21 September 2024*).
- Meeting of the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) (*Hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 23-27 September 2024*).
- Second Meeting of the Joint Climate Change Experts Meeting (*Online, 3 October 2024*).
- Intersessional Meeting of Panel 4 on North Atlantic Swordfish (MSE) (*Online, 8 October 2024*).

In addition to the meetings referred to above, the following workshops and webinar were held:

- Workshop in the Caribbean (West Atlantic) region for the improvement of statistical data collection and reporting on small scale (artisanal) fisheries (*Panama City, Panama, 19-23 February 2024*).
- Workshop of the Swordfish Year Programme (*Hybrid, Olhão, Portugal, 27-29 February 2024*).
- Workshop on Ecoregions (*Online, 24-26 April 2024*).
- Online Training Workshop Session on using ICCAT's Integrated Online Management System (IOMS) (*Online, 30 April 2024*).
- Online Training Workshop Session on using ICCAT's Integrated Online Management System (IOMS) (*Online, 24 June 2024*).
- ICCAT Workshop on the Use of the Bycatch Estimation Tool (*Hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 15-17 July 2024*).
- Workshop on Data Limited Assessment Methods for Small Tunas (*Madrid, Spain, 10-12 September 2024*).
- ICCAT Workshop to continue the evaluation of impact of ICCAT fisheries on marine turtles in the Mediterranean Sea (*San Pedro del Pinatar, Murcia, Spain, 30 September-4 October 2024*).
- Ambassadors' Webinar on Northern Atlantic Swordfish MSE (*Online, 4 October 2024*).
- Online Training Workshop Session on using ICCAT's Integrated Online Management System (IOMS) (*Online, 7 October 2024*).

6. Meetings at which ICCAT was represented

Within the framework of ICCAT's mandate to inform other international organizations of the measures adopted by the Commission and strengthen cooperation with them, the Secretariat participated in several meetings and technical consultation processes, which included several regional fisheries organizations (see **Annex 1** to this report, which summarizes the main issues discussed at these meetings).

- First Session of the FAO Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management (*Online, 15-18 January 2024*).
- FAO-Workshop on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (*Rome, Italy, 22-24 January 2024*).
- General Fish Commission of the Mediterranean Fish Forum, 2024 (*Antalya, Türkiye, 19-23 February 2024*).
- CITES Workshop on CITES Listing Criteria (*Geneva, Switzerland, 22-23 April 2024*).
- CITES Workshop on CITES Non-Detriment Findings (*Geneva, Switzerland, 24-25 April 2024*).
- Seventeenth Round of Informal Consultations of States Parties to the Fish Stock Agreement (*New York, United States, 15-17 May 2024*).
- MRAG-COFREPÊCHE Observer Training Course (*Hammamet, Tunisia, 20-25 May 2024*).
- Tuna Compliance Network (*Seychelles, 20-23 June 2024*).
- Annual Meeting of the European Union Regional Coordination Group Large Pelagics (EU RCG-LP) (*Olhão, Portugal, 24-26 June 2024*).
- Tenth Meeting of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN-10) (*Rome, Italy, 5, 6 and 12 July 2024*).
- Thirty-sixth Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) (*Rome, Italy, 8-12 July 2024*).
- Second Common Oceans Tuna Project Steering (PSC) Meeting (*Rome, Italy, 16-18 July 2024*).
- Regional Coordination Meeting for Europe on the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (*London, United Kingdom, 23-27 September 2024*).

- African Consultation in Preparation for the Third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC-3) (Tanger, Morocco, 9 October 2024).

7. Tagging lottery

General ICCAT tagging programmes

National bodies give awards or prizes to people who recover tags to encourage the return of tags. In order to support these programmes, ICCAT organizes an annual lottery with prizes of \$500.

In the last ICCAT lottery, which was held on 23 September 2024, prizes were awarded for five tags, one from each of the following categories: small tunas, sharks, billfish, temperate tunas and tropical tunas.

The winning tags were as follows:

- *Small tunas*: The tag RF022920 was recovered from a little tunny (*Euthynnus alletteratus*/ LTA) by a citizen from the United States, 24 days after it was attached. The tagging was carried out during the United States campaigns.
- *Sharks*: The tag 346103 was recovered from a blue shark (*Prionace glauca*/BSH) by a Spanish citizen, 2521 days after it was attached. The tagging was carried out during the United States campaigns.
- *Billfish*: The tag HM105711 was recovered from a sailfish (*Istiophorus albicans*/ SAI) by a citizen from the United States, 750 days after it was attached. The tagging was carried out during the United States campaigns.
- *Temperate tunas*: The tag AAB009101 was recovered from an albacore tuna (*Thunnus alalunga*/ALB) by a Spanish citizen, 368 days after it was attached. The tagging was carried out during the Spanish campaigns.
- *Tropical tunas*: The tag GBS004967 was recovered from a yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*/YFT) by a St Helena citizen, 156 days after it was attached. The tagging was carried out during the St Helena campaigns.

Atlantic-wide Research Programme for Bluefin Tuna (GBYP)

Again this year, an additional draw was held with the support of the ICCAT Atlantic-wide Research Programme on Bluefin Tuna (GBYP). This lottery awards three prizes, the first prize carries €1,000 and second and third prizes carry €500 exclusively for recoveries of bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*/BFT). The winning tags and the awards were as follows:

- €1,000: The tag BF524890 was recovered in waters of Türkiye.
- €500: The tag BYP082533 was recovered in waters of Malta.
- €500: The tag BF597833 was recovered in waters of Türkiye.

8. Letters concerning compliance with budgetary obligations

In early 2024, the Executive Secretary notified all the Contracting Parties of the amount of their contributions to the 2024 budget. In July 2024, a reminder was sent to the Contracting Parties that had not made the corresponding payments. Subsequently, and for those Contracting Parties that had not taken action, a second reminder was sent in October. The following table summarizes the correspondence sent to the Contracting Parties in arrears as regards their ICCAT and eBCD contributions.

	<i>First reminder Letter of 24 July 2024</i>	<i>Second reminder Letter of 7 October 2024</i>	<i>First eBCD reminder Letter of 24 July 2024</i>	<i>Second eBCD reminder Letter of 7 October 2024</i>
Angola	X	X		
Barbados	X			
Brazil	X	X		
Cabo Verde	X	X		
Côte d'Ivoire	X			
Curaçao	X	X		
Gabon	X	X		
The Gambia	X	X		
Ghana	X	X		
Grenada	X	X		
Guinea-Bissau	X	X		
Equatorial Guinea	X	X		
Guinea (Rep.) Of	X	X		
Honduras	X	X		
Liberia	X	X		
Libya	X	X	X	X
Morocco	X	X		
Mauritania	X	X		
Mexico	X	X	X	X
Namibia	X	X		
Nigeria	X	X		
Panama	X	X		
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	X	X		
Russia	X	X		
St Vicent and the Grenadines	X	X		
São Tomé e Príncipe	X	X		
Senegal	X			
Sierra Leone	X	X		
Syria, Arab Rep.	X	X	X	X
South Africa	X	X		
Trinidad and Tobago	X			
Tunisia			X	X
Türkiye			X	
Uruguay	X			
Venezuela	X	X		

9. Publications of the Secretariat - 2024

In 2024, the following publications were issued which are available on the ICCAT website:

- Report for Biennial Period 2022-23, Part II (2023), Vols. 1, 2, 3 and 4: English.
- Report for Biennial Period 2022-23, Part II (2023), Vols. 1, 2, 3 and 4: French.
- Report for Biennial Period 2022-23, Part II (2023), Vols. 1, 2, 3 and 4: Spanish.
- Collective Volume of Scientific Papers, Vol. 81, comprising eight volumes.
- Statistical Bulletin No. 49, which includes the catch series by species and country from 1950 to 2022.
- ICCAT Newsletter (February 2024 and September 2024).

10. Organisation and management of the Secretariat staff

10.1 Organisation

The Secretariat is organised as follows:

Executive Secretary

Mr Camille Jean Pierre Manel. He is responsible for selection and administration of staff of the Commission and oversees execution of the main functions of the Commission, such as:

- Coordination of research programmes
- Preparation of budget estimates for review by the Commission
- Authorising disbursement of funds according to the Commission's budget
- Accounting of the Commission's funds
- Preparation of coordination with sister organisations
- Collecting the necessary fisheries statistics
- Preparation of scientific, administrative and other reports

Assistant Executive Secretary

Dr Miguel Neves dos Santos. Reporting directly to the Executive Secretary, he performs all the tasks delegated to him by the Executive Secretary, which include management of the Secretariat and representation of the ICCAT Secretariat at meetings of a technical and/or administrative nature. In addition, he performs the functions of scientific coordinator, carrying out tasks related to the coordination of research programmes, collection of fisheries statistics, preparation of reports and coordination with closely related organisations. He is in charge of the Department of Translation and Publications and coordination of work between the Department of Science, Statistics and Compliance. He is also responsible for coordination between the Secretariat and the SCRS and preparation of SCRS meetings and management of Commission meeting documents.

Department of Science

By reason of its mandate to manage and conserve tuna fishery resources, ICCAT members carry out a broad range of scientific research and monitoring activities. The Secretariat is directly involved in the coordination of some of these activities, although a large part of the practical work is carried out by the Contracting Parties.

The research and statistics activities, under the supervision of the Scientific Coordinator, are carried out by Dr Mauricio Ortiz, Head of Department and Fisheries Data Analyst, Dr Ai Kimoto, Population Dynamics Expert, and Dr Nathan Taylor, Bycatch Coordinator. The main tasks that they carry out are: data analysis to support and/or facilitate formulation of scientific advice, establishing the meetings and facilitating relevant information and data, facilitating data input for the stock assessment processes and facilitating compilation and storage of all relevant data and preparing reports.

Department of Statistics

The Secretariat maintains a large number of databases that contain information on fishery statistics which are useful for stock assessments and for compliance-related records, which are essentially for scientific advice and decision making on conservation and management of the stocks and ICCAT fisheries. The main tasks that are carried out are data requests, rules for data transmission, development of databases, development of software (user interfaces of the databases and software in general), quality control of data, dissemination of data (structures, mining and publication), tagging inventory, and preparation of reports.

The statistical activities, under the supervision of the Scientific Coordinator, are carried out by Mr Carlos Mayor, Head of Department and Database Programmer, Mr Fabio Fiorellato, Biostatistician, Mr Jesús García, Database Programmer and GIS Expert, Mr Juan Luis Gallego, Programming Technician, and Mr Manuel Maestre, Mr José Sanz, Mr Dashiell Portel and Mr Aitor Elorriaga, Software Developers within the framework

of the Integrated Online Management System (IOMS) project. In January 2024, the voluntary separation from service of Mr Carlos Palma became effective, following 23 years of service with ICCAT.

Department of Compliance

In recent years, the Commission has adopted an increasing number of Recommendations and Resolutions that require CPCs to communicate various types of information largely related to Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) measures; there are currently around 130 reporting requirements of this type. This department compiles and distributes a large volume of information. The Department's main tasks are: preparation of the compliance tables and compliance summaries and management of the associated correspondence; maintenance of the Record of Vessels and other ICCAT records; implementation of the Regional Observer Programmes; VMS management; inventory of vessel chartering and access agreements; port inspection; joint inspection programme; bluefin tuna farming reports; periodic catch reports (weekly, monthly and quarterly), data and validation of the statistical documents and of the ICCAT Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation Programme; eBCD management, preparation of the compendium of the management regulations; determination of reporting requirements, management of requests for cooperator status and requests for observer status; compilation of Annual Reports; responses to compliance related queries; as well as tasks related to general correspondence with CPCs, intergovernmental organisations and others. The department is composed of Mr Alberto Parrilla, Head of Department, Mr M'Hamed Idrissi and Dr Valérie Samedy, as Compliance Officers, Ms. Dawn Baity, as Compliance Technical Officer, and Ms. Aldana Vieito, as Compliance Assistant and Mr Javier Martínez, as Full Stack Developer (eBCD). In September 2024, the separation from service for retirement of Ms Jenny Cheatle became effective, following 30 years of service with ICCAT.

Department of Translation and Publications

The Department of Translation and Publications carries out tasks related to the compilation, adoption, translation and publication, in the three official languages of the Commission, of circulars, reports and scientific documents, ASFA and FIRMS entries, report writing, coordination of peer reviews of scientific documents, and publications in electronic format, communications and design and management of the website. The department is coordinated by Dr Neves dos Santos and is composed of Ms. Marisa de Andrés, Editor, and six translators: Ms. Christine Peyre (French), Ms. María José García-Orad (Spanish), Ms. Rebecca Campoy (English), Ms. Dorothée Pinet (French), Ms. Karen Donovan (English) and Ms. Beatriz Motos (Spanish); and Mr Juan Carlos Muñoz, Webmaster and Database Programmer.

Department of Administration and Finance

This Department carries out all the administrative and financial tasks of the Secretariat. Its main tasks are: preparation and control of the budget, accounting, preparation of the administrative and financial reports, organisation of ICCAT meetings, management of special funds, human resources within the Secretariat, purchases, travel, reception, archives, management of contact information, inventory of the library and publications, photocopying, scanning and mail. The department is composed of eight members: Ms. María Bonacasa, Head of Department, who coordinates all the tasks related to the department, Ms. Africa Martín (Accountant), Ms. Ana Martínez (Accounting Assistant), Mr Juan Angel Moreno (photocopying and mail), Ms. Esther Peña (Administrative Secretary) and Ms. Gisela Porto (Administrative Assistant to the Executive Secretary), Mr Pablo Herranz and Ms. Ingrid Ferrer (Administrative Assistants).

Department of Information Technology (IT)

The main tasks of the department include design, planning, management and ensuring maintenance and protection of the information technology in the Secretariat. Also to manage the security of the information and communication systems, to align information security with ICCAT objectives, to facilitate implementation of ISO 27001 and to provide technical support for adaptation of the data protection policy. The department is composed of Mr Jesús Fiz who, under the direct supervision of the Executive Secretary, is responsible for information technology and security of the information systems of the ICCAT Secretariat and by Mr Álvaro Fúster as IT Specialist Technician.

ICCAT research and data collection programmes

ICCAT has used special research programmes as a mechanism to help focus, coordinate and complement national research activities. The overall objective of the programmes is to improve the scientific basis for formulating management decisions for the different species.

The programmes include a list of actions, to be carried out over several years, such as recovery of basic data collections, improvement of knowledge on key biological and ecological processes, development of new approaches to management and provision of scientific advice.

The Assistant Executive Secretary is the General Coordinator of these programmes, assisted by Ms. Stasa Tensek, Officer.

Atlantic-wide Research Programme for Bluefin Tuna (GBYP)

The overall aim of the programme, which began in January 2010, is to improve the scientific basis for decision making in relation to management of bluefin tuna in the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. The programme includes a list of actions, to be carried out over several years, such as recovery of basic data collections, improvement of knowledge on key biological and ecological processes or improvement of assessment models and provision of scientific advice. The programme is implemented by Dr Francisco Alemany (Coordinator) and Mr Alfonso Pagá (Database Specialist).

10.2 New appointments

In January 2024, Ms. Stasa Tensek was hired as the Officer of the ICCAT research and data collection programmes. Ms. Tensek has been working since 2015, under annual contracts, as the Assistant Coordinator of the Atlantic-wide Research Programme for Bluefin Tuna.

In March 2024, Mr Fabio Fiorellato was hired as the ICCAT Biostatistician, following the voluntary separation from service of Mr Carlos Palma.

Also in March, Mr Aitor Elorriaga was hired as a Software Developer (IOMS) for a nine-month period, to integrate the UN/FLUX system for vessels data exchange, 80% of the development costs of which will be covered by a contract with the European Union. At the end of this period, his contract will be extended to become part of the ICCAT staff.

In May 2024, Mr Álvaro Fúster was hired as an IT Specialist Technician.

In June 2024, Mr Dashiell Portel was hired as Software Developer (IOMS), after completion of the 12-month contract as Software Developer (IOMS), to integrate the vessel management system, financed by the European Union. This appointment was requested by the Online Reporting Technology Working Group.

Following the departure of Ms. Jenny Cheatle, the Department of Compliance has been restructured, with Mr Alberto Parrilla, who until then held the position of Compliance Officer, taking over as Head of Department. This post has been filled by Dr Valérie Samedy, who was working as Technical Officer and VMS Manager, leaving this post vacant. The vacancy announcement was circulated at the end of May. Following the selection of candidates, the contract with Mr Felix Mergarejo Dremova will be formalised, taking effect on 11 November 2024.

In addition, Mr Fabio Fiorellato has informed the Secretariat of his voluntary separation from service, effective on 25 November 2024. Following his notice, the Secretariat has contacted the next candidate from the selection process for Biostatistician, Mr Bruno Deprez, who has accepted the position and will join the Secretariat on 11 November 2024.

11. Other matters

11.1 Management of other programmes

It should be noted that the Financial Report contains detailed information on these programmes and funds.

Since 2005, the United States has contributed to the Special Data Fund established in accordance with the *Resolution by ICCAT on Improvements in Data Collection and Quality Assurance* (Res. 03-21), to assist scientists from developing countries in participating in the meetings and work of the Scientific Committee. The voluntary contributions received in 2024 amounted to €219,736.00.

In April 2021, the contract was extended with the Consortium MRAG/CapFish for the ICCAT Regional Observer Programme for at-sea transshipment, in compliance with *Recommendation by ICCAT on a Programme for Transshipment* (Rec. 12-06). This programme was financed in 2024 by voluntary contributions from China (P.R.), Japan, Korea (Rep.), and Chinese Taipei; the programme continues to be managed by the Secretariat.

To implement the provisions of the *Recommendation by ICCAT Amending the Recommendation by ICCAT to Establish a Multi-Annual Recovery Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean* (Rec. 08-05), in 2009 the Regional Observer Program for bluefin tuna was established. For this purpose, in April 2024, the contract was extended with the Consortium MRAG/COFREPECHE for hiring and deployment of observers. During this period, vessels, farms and traps have participated, and their operators have financed the programme.

Since 2008, the United States delegation has made numerous contributions to the United States Fund for Capacity Building for developing countries. In 2024, funds in the amount of €181,600.00 were received.

At the 16th Special Meeting of the Commission (Marrakesh, Morocco, 17-24 November 2008), the Commission endorsed a coordinated programme of Atlantic-wide bluefin tuna research program (known as GBYP-ICCAT), initially for five years. Currently, the programme is in its fourteenth phase. The European Union is financing 80.00% of this amount, and the remainder is being financed through voluntary contributions from Albania, Algeria, Canada, China (P.R.), Iceland, Japan, Korea (Rep.), Morocco, Türkiye, and Chinese Taipei.

Following the ICCAT-Japan Capacity-building Assistance Project (JCAP), which was implemented from 2014 to 2019, in December 2019, a special new project for capacity-building with a five-year duration began, financed by the Government of Japan, the ICCAT-Japan Capacity-Building Assistance Project - Phase 2 (JCAP2). Its overriding objective is to assist ICCAT developing CPCs in complying with their obligations related to data compilation and reporting, as well as in implementing efficiently ICCAT measures. Japan communicated that in December 2024 it will start a new project for another 5 years, to be called the ICCAT/Japan Capacity-building Assistance Project - Phase 3 (JCAP-3).

Since 2011, China (P.R.) has made numerous contributions for continuation of the activities of the Special Data Fund-People's Republic of China. In 2024, a contribution in the amount of €16,187.50 was received.

Following approval in 2020 of the *Recommendation by ICCAT Amending Recommendation 14-14 on the Establishment of a Meeting Participation Fund for developing ICCAT Contracting Parties* (Rec. 20-09), the Secretariat received in 2024 an allocation of €250,000.00 charged to the Commission's budget.

In 2013, the Morocco Fund to Support National Capacity for Participation at Commission Meetings was established. For this purpose, in June 2024, Morocco made a voluntary contribution in the amount of €19,303.18.

In 2013, the Commission adopted the *Recommendation by ICCAT on the Establishment of a Scientific Capacity Building Fund for Developing States which are ICCAT Contracting Parties* (Rec. 13-19) for the purpose of supporting scientists from ICCAT Contracting Parties that are developing States in their need to acquire knowledge and develop skills on issues related to ICCAT. This special Scientific Capacity Building Fund (SCBF) was allocated €80,000.00 from the Working Capital Fund. In light of the limited activity of this fund, in 2017, the Commission decided to transfer the balance of this fund to the new Strategic Research

Programme. It also decided that this fund should be maintained for future activities, but with no balance. In 2024, a request was received under this programme, which could not be met due to the lack of balance. The Secretariat will therefore request to replenish this fund to cover future requests.

In March 2017, the Tunisia Fund to Support National Capacity for Participation at Commission Meetings was established.

In 2015, the special Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance Fund (MCSF) was established to support and strengthen development and implementation of efficient in port inspection systems by developing CPCs for the purpose of achieving or surpassing the minimum standards established in the [Recommendation by ICCAT to support effective implementation of Recommendation 12-07 by ICCAT for an ICCAT scheme for minimum standards for inspection in port \(Rec. 14-08\)](#).

In 2017, the Commission decided to create the Strategic Research Programme, with the objective of grouping and including gradually in the regular Commission budget all ICCAT scientific activities. In 2024, the Secretariat was allocated €45,000.00 from the Commission's budget. To supplement the financing of the Commission's 2024 scientific activities under the new Strategic Research Programme that are not covered by the budget, a contract was entered into in 2024 with the European Union. The objective is to finance 80% i.e. €800,000.00 of the 2024 and 2025 activities, with a total amount of €1,000,000.00. To date, €560,000.00 has been received.

In July 2022, a contract was signed with the European Union for a term of twenty-four months to continue to build the capacity of developing countries, which includes the activities envisaged in the [Recommendation by ICCAT amending Recommendation 14-14 on the establishment of a Meeting Participation Fund for developing ICCAT Contracting Parties \(Rec. 20-09\)](#). The total amount is €370,000.00 and the European Union will finance 80.00%. A contribution of €210,000.00 has been received.

In 2023, a contract was signed with the European Union to integrate the UN/FLUX system for vessels data exchange, and to maintain and to improve the functionality of the user assistance and help module, and to collaborate in the process to continue development of the IOMS. The contract will cover the hire for twelve months of a software developer and the equipment and programs necessary for this development. The budget of the contract is for €187,501.80, of which the European Union will cover 80%. In parallel, another contract was also signed with the European Union to develop the IOMS Vessel Manager module with the aim of incorporating all the ICCAT notification obligations related to vessels and/or fishing authorisations. The budget of the contract is for €125,022.36, of which the European Union will cover 80%. As with the UN/FLUX contract, it will cover the hire for 12 months of another software developer, as well as the necessary equipment and software.

In September 2021, the United States Fund for Tropicals was established, to support the work to conclude the Atlantic Ocean Tropical Tunas Tagging Programme (AOTTP) and finance a software upgrade to continue development of a tool to support decision making on tropical tunas.

In 2021, the Commission approved the [Resolution by ICCAT Establishing a Pilot Project for the Implementation of Remote Electronic Monitoring \(REM\) on Bluefin Tuna Processing Vessels \(Res. 21-17\)](#). To finance this project, a voluntary contribution in the amount of €50,100.00 was received from the United States and a contract has been entered into with the European Union. The budget of the project is for €209,506.00, 80% of which will be covered by the European Union.

In August 2023, an agreement was signed with FAO "Strengthening compliance in ICCAT members, develop ecosystem indicators, and promoting joint tuna RFMO initiatives on topics of global relevance", with the aim of achieving responsible, efficient and sustainable tuna production and biodiversity conservation in the areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) in a changing environment. The project will have a duration of 4 years and a total budget of €1,416,074.17, €327,467.00 of which has been received.

Also in August 2023, the United States Fund for Caribbean Deepwater Horizon Restoration was established to support activities for Atlantic tuna and tuna-like species: review of available catch data, identification of specific gaps in catch data and infrastructure, analysis of the repercussions of data limitations, and support for priority data collection activities through capacity building, where appropriate.

11.1 Secretariat staff pension plan

The Secretariat is currently seeking information on other staff pension schemes that would improve the current conditions. This issue will be addressed under Item 8 of the Standing Committee on Finance and Administration (STACFAD) agenda.