

Original: English / Spanish**Explanatory note on the eBCD system budget for the financial year 2025 (revised)**

In accordance with the provisions contained in Article X.1 and X.3 of the ICCAT Convention and in Regulation 2 of the Financial Regulations, the ICCAT Secretariat must submit the revised 2025 budget proposal to the Commission for its consideration and adoption. At its 28th regular meeting (hybrid format, 13-20 November 2023), the Commission adopted the budget for 2024 and 2025.

The purpose of this note is to outline the changes contained in the revised 2025 budget with respect to that initially approved by the Commission, since the structure and the elements of the different sections have not changed.

The items with changes and clarifications are detailed below:

*“Support and maintenance of the electronic bluefin tuna catch document (eBCD)”:*

The implementation of the eBCD is carried out by the consortium formed by Empresa de Transformación Agraria (Tragsa, S.A.) and The Server Labs, S.L. Each of the specific and operational responsibilities for the support and development of the eBCD system are described below:

The Server Labs (hardware infrastructure)

- Provision and maintenance of servers: Manages and maintains the server infrastructure that hosts and publishes the eBCD system, including its production and testing environments, as well as the associated software and databases.
- Backup management: Maintains and provides backups of the databases corresponding to the various environments.
- SSL certificates: Supplies the necessary SSL (secure sockets layer) certificates for the creation and management of digital certificates for CPC validators.
- AWS cloud services: Provides Amazon Web Services cloud services that enable automated email delivery from the eBCD system.
- Communications and firewalls: Implements security layers and firewall protection for the eBCD system, as well as the necessary access for data synchronization with the Secretariat's databases.

Tragsa (software development and maintenance)

- Development and implementation: Develops and implements proposals approved by the Working Group within the eBCD system.
- eBCD system maintenance: Performs updates and testing of new versions across different environments (production, CPC, SEC), as well as functional adjustments, bug fixes, mass email management, and the creation of operational manuals and guides.
- User support: Provides assistance to eBCD system users, including advanced users (administrators/CPC validators), offering help with system functionality and resolving incidents and issues that may arise during use.
- Functional advisory: Offers guidance to the Secretariat and the Working Group on functional aspects and operational alternatives for the eBCD system.
- Intermediation and contract management: Acts as a liaison with The Server Labs to handle requests from the Secretariat, such as backup requests and necessary communication configurations, and collaborates on the annual preparation of contracts that link both parties of the Consortium.

The renewal of the 2024 contract to provide these services was for €315,571.87.

The evolution of the expenses of these activities over the past 5 years are shown below:

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b><u>Infrastructure activities:</u></b>					
1. Infrastructure + security	€63,560.00	€78,990.82	€89,719.00	€112,433.85	€109,631.25
2. Renewal of SSL certificate for PROD, CPC, and SEC	€945.00	€945.00	€945.00	€1,050.00	€1,155.00
3. Administration and AWS 24x7 infrastructure support	€24,375.00	€24,600.00	€25,800.00	€28,380.00	€57,780.00
4. AWS Business Support	€4,797.00	€5,962.20	€6,550.20	€11,243.40	€10,936.00
<b><u>Subtotal</u></b>	<b>€93,677.00</b>	<b>€110,498.02</b>	<b>€123,014.20</b>	<b>€153,107.25</b>	<b>€179,502.25</b>
<b><u>Support, management maintenance and project analysis:</u></b>					
1. User support and maintenance of the web application	€120,446.05	€110,502.39	€110,502.40	€112,689.00	€122,842.65
2. Project management and analysis of new requests	€17,822.46	€11,901.75	€11,901.75	€12,134.89	€13,226.97
<b><u>Subtotal</u></b>	<b>€138,268.51</b>	<b>€122,404.14</b>	<b>€122,404.15</b>	<b>€124,823.89</b>	<b>€136,069.62</b>
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b>€231,945.51</b>	<b>€232,902.16</b>	<b>€245,418.35</b>	<b>€277,931.14</b>	<b>€315,571.87</b>

It is informed that the Secretariat will re-sign the contract with the company Tragsa S.A. in 2025.

At present, the costs associated with the supplier providing the hardware infrastructure represent a substantial part of the annual budget allocated to the eBCD system.

Therefore, in order to prevent this situation from undermining the future of the system, the Secretariat has decided to explore alternative providers capable of delivering services of equal or higher quality at a cost that guarantees the economic viability. The costs associated with the testing of new suppliers will be covered by the balance of the eBCD Working Capital Fund. The first phase of testing is estimated at around €8,107.00, and the second phase at around €39,500.00.

The new contract to be signed would also be amended to include any requirements that may be requested by the Commission.

*"Salaries":*

The Secretariat submits for approval a 9.66% increase with respect to the budget approved for 2025 in 2023, to adjust this item to the expenses that will be foreseeably incurred. The provision includes the increase in the general services salary scale, the increase in the Social Security costs, as well as the taxes according to what is contained in Article 10 of the ICCAT Staff Regulations and Rules.

"Developments in the web application ("Flexible" allotment): Development activities requested by the Working Group (WG)":

In addition to the activities related to infrastructure and support, management maintenance, and project analysis, the consortium provides other optional goods and services for web application developments.

These services have been requested by the eBCD Technical Working Group, which was replaced from 2023 by the Standing Catch Document Scheme Working Group.

The functionalities requested under this budgetary chapter have been covered by the balance carried over from the Electronic Bluefin Tuna Catch Document (eBCD) System Fund. Therefore, since the adoption of the amendment to Regulation 4 of the Financial Regulations, no amount has been requested in this regard within the eBCD budget.

The evolution of the balance of eBCD operations over the last five years is detailed below:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>11 October 2024</u>
<u>eBCD available balance at opening of the financial year</u>	<u>€341,574.62</u>	<u>€279,305.22</u>	<u>€420,266.19</u>	<u>€437,326.10</u>	<u>€403,528.65</u>
<u>eBCD budgetary revenue</u>	<u>€294,755.07</u>	<u>€501,184.42</u>	<u>€371,137.43</u>	<u>€388,908.94</u>	<u>€410,565.19</u>
<u>Support, maintenance, and development of the eBCD system functionality</u>	<u>-€231,945.51</u>	<u>-€232,902.18</u>	<u>-€245,418.35</u>	<u>-€277,931.14</u>	<u>-€202,279.10</u>
<u>Salaries and remuneration</u>	<u>-€38,171.26</u>	<u>-€77,733.69</u>	<u>-€84,953.19</u>	<u>-€93,887.21</u>	<u>-€72,793.74</u>
<u>Web application developments</u>	<u>-€89,719.45</u>	<u>-€45,724.62</u>	<u>-€23,669.78</u>	<u>-€30,908.31</u>	<u>-€39,431.07</u>
<u>Bank charges</u>	<u>-€65.00</u>	<u>-€60.14</u>	<u>-€36.20</u>	<u>-€35.00</u>	<u>-€116.09</u>
<u>Meeting of the eBCD Technical Working Group</u>		<u>-€12,911.10</u>		<u>-€19,944.73</u>	<u>€1,432.20</u>
<u>Revenue paid to previous financial years</u>	<u>€2,876.75</u>	<u>€9,108.28</u>			<u>€824.88</u>
<u>Available balance</u>	<u>€279,305.22</u>	<u>€420,266.19</u>	<u>€437,326.10</u>	<u>€403,528.65</u>	<u>€501,730.92</u>

Taking into account the estimated expenses until 31 December 2024, at year-end 2024, the eBCD Working Capital Fund will stand at €293,190.13.

<u>Available balance at 11 October 2024</u>	<u>€501,730.92</u>
<u>Estimated expenses until 31 December 2024:</u>	
<u>Support, maintenance, and development of the eBCD system functionality</u>	<u>-€113,292.77</u>
<u>Salaries and remuneration</u>	<u>-€18,198.44</u>
<u>Web application developments requested in 2023 pending invoicing</u>	<u>-€49,782.19</u>
<u>Web application developments requested in 2024 pending invoicing</u>	<u>-€27,267.40</u>
<u>Estimated balance at 31 December 2024</u>	<u>€293,190.13</u>

This balance will be reduced by the cost associated with the overlap between the two service providers (a total of €47,607.00) if the results of the first phase are considered satisfactory. In this case, the available balance of the Working Capital Fund for 2025 will be €245,583.13.

With respect to the 2025 revenue budget, the only change set forth is the United Nations exchange rate for the month of September.

Taking into account what has been described above, the following tables are attached:

- **Table 1 – 2025 eBCD system draft budget.**
- **Table 2 – Basic information to calculate the 2025 contributions to the eBCD system for members of the Commission that catch and/or trade Atlantic bluefin tuna.**
- **Table 3 – 2025 contributions to the eBCD system for members of the Commission that catch and/or trade Atlantic bluefin tuna.**
- **Table 4 – 2025 contributions to the eBCD system by Group for members of the Commission that catch and/or trade Atlantic bluefin tuna, which reflect the percentage of the budget financed by each member of each group as per the Madrid Protocol.**
- **Table 5 – Eastern and western bluefin tuna catch figures (in t) of the members of the Commission that catch and/or trade Atlantic bluefin tuna for 2019-2021.**
- **Annex 1 – Table legends.**

The contributions of the Contracting Parties will be revised for the calculation to incorporate the update for the month of November 2024 of the United Nations exchange rate.