

REPORT OF THE 1979 SCRS OFFICERS MEETING

(Las Palmas, July 26-28, 1979)

I. Opening and selection of rapporteurs

The 1979 SCRS Officers Meeting was held at the "Centro de Tecnología Pesquera, Excmo. Cabildo Insular de Gran Canaria" (Canary Islands, Spain), on July 26-28, 1979, under the chairmanship of Mr. A. Fonteneau. This meeting was suggested by the SCRS at its 1978 session and was held during the same week as the meeting of the Sub-Committee on Skipjack. The following officers attended the meeting:

A. Fonteneau	-	SCRS Chairman (France)
S. Kume	-	Sub-Committee on Statistics, Convener (Japan)
G. Sakaçawa	-	Sub-Committee on Skipjack, Convener (U.S.A.)
R. H. Pianet	-	Working Group on Data Management, Convener (Senegal)
O. Rodríguez-Martín	-	Executive Secretary
P. M. Miyake	-	Assistant Executive Secretary

The Tentative Agenda was adopted and is herewith attached as Appendix 1. Dr. P. M. Miyake was selected rapporteur.

II. International Skipjack Year Program

The group reviewed the progress made by the Sub-Committee and the Activity Teams up to the present time, as well as the outcome of the Sub-Committee on Skipjack meeting held in conjunction with the Officers Meeting. It was felt that progress has been satisfactory. The group suggested that the Sub-Committee meet again for a short period during the November SCRS session (Madrid, November 1979), in order to give the countries who were not represented at the July meeting a chance to update their status on contributions, etc. Then the Sub-Committee can forward its final report to the SCRS for review and adoption. It is expected that another Sub-Committee on Skipjack meeting will be held sometime in mid-1980. The officers suggested that the Secretariat include the cost for holding such a meeting in the Regular Commission Budget for 1980-1981, which will be considered by the Commissioners.

III. Juvenile Tropical Tunas

The officers reviewed plans for the proposed Working Group meeting to be held jointly with CECAF. This meeting was proposed by CECAF and is to be held in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, on September 17-21, 1979, and ICCAT tentatively agreed to organize it jointly. However, it was noted that the preparations do not seem to be too well advanced yet. In fact, ICCAT has not been informed of any developments made in the meeting preparations. Also, clearance from the Convener of the Working Group, Mr. M. A. Mansah (Ghana) for holding such a meeting is not completely settled. The officers recommended that the Secretariat immediately

able Mr. Mansah and ask his view regarding holding the Juvenile Tropical Tunas meeting as well as that the Secretariat establish contact with the CECAF Secretariat to clarify the organization plans for the meeting.

The Agenda proposed by CECAF was then reviewed carefully. The group considered that it would be premature to analyze the data and consider optional conservation measures for juvenile tunas at the September meeting. Instead, it recognized the value of getting agreements on the data base and format in which data can be collected in the immediate future. Therefore, it was proposed that at the September meeting discussion should be limited only to the data problem and that ICCAT would hold another meeting some time during the first half of 1980, when more analytical aspects as well as optimal regulation schemes can be discussed. Consequently, the Secretariat was asked (after receiving agreement from Mansah) to contact CECAF and propose the above modification to the meeting Agenda and the terms of reference of the meeting.

Then, the Secretariat should send out a formal invitation to the members of the Working Group on Juvenile Tropical Tunas. The Secretariat was also requested to include in its 1980-81 Regular Commission Budget the estimated cost for holding another meeting in 1980 on juvenile tropical tunas.

IV. Bluefin Workshop

The SCRS officers reviewed the progress made to date on the preparations for the Bluefin Workshop. It seems that the preparations are a little behind schedule due to the lack of adequate communication between participants. On the other hand, the officers noted that the Agenda prepared for the Workshop covers all the objectives of the meeting.

The officers noted the accumulated work load of the Secretariat and suggested that only summaries of the fishery descriptions be translated, and the main text of each description be retained in its original language. The officers also noted that although the meeting will be conducted mainly in English, the Secretariat intends to provide some translation assistance at the meeting for the French and Spanish-speaking scientists.

V. StatisticsF. Working Group on Data Management

Mr. R.H. Pianet, Convener of the Working Group on Data Management, reported on the results of the Group's studies carried out together with the Secretariat. He commented that the first task to be done by the Group was to identify the need and objectives of keeping the data bank at the Secretariat.

The officers concurred with his views. Besides, the policy or guideline for usage of the data base should be developed. The officers recognized four different categories of data:

Category	Processing	Publication	Remarks
1	Regular	Yes	Stat. Bulletin
2	Regular	No	Task II statistics
3	Irregular	Yes	Stat. Series
4	Irregular	No	

Categories 1 and 2 involve processing by the Secretariat on a regular basis and all the costs of processing should be assumed by the Commission's Regular Budget. The Working Group should identify very precisely what processing is required and in what format the output should be prepared. Also, what tables should be printed in which publication and what should not be published, but should be made available, etc., etc.

Category 3 data can be processed at the Commission's expense, but it should be made clear as to who decides and authorizes such processing. Data such as those for the Spanish tropical fleet and Ghanaian sampling data may belong in this category.

Category 4 data are difficult to handle. The request for such can be made by a Working Group, etc., or by national personnel. In either case, some clear guidelines should be prepared as to who assumes the cost and what priority should be given. It was suggested just as a possibility that Category 4 work can be done by outside contract in order to avoid an extra burden to the Secretariat and also to have clearer accounting.

The data processing required for the International Skipjack Year Program seems to be settled by the Sub-Committee on Skipjack.

The officers, therefore, suggested that the Working Group study and propose on the following:

1. What are the objectives of the common data base?
2. What data should be input and in what format?
3. What level of processing is required in what format?
 - i) On a regular basis
 - ii) On an irregular basis
4. What output is required in what format?
 - i) On a regular basis
 - ii) On an irregular basis
5. How should the output be made available?
6. What statistical publication should be maintained and in what format table, which data should be published?
7. What is the guideline for doing the job on ICCAT funding?
8. What are the arrangements to be made for other jobs which are not in the category described above?

The officers recommended that as soon as the Group has completed its studies the Secretariat should start a cost-effective study on various systems. This study can be done by the Secretariat staff or by contract with an outside analyst.

2. National statistics

The officers learned that many scientists are concerned about the slow improvement being made in collecting adequate statistics from some of the major fleets (e.g. the Spanish tropical fleet). The officers requested that the Sub-Committee on Statistics include in its Agenda a section under which data inadequacy, which has been a continuous problem in the past, can be reviewed in depth and reported, with clear identification of fleets.

VI. SCRS Meeting organization

1. Organization of the meeting

The officers recognized that the SCRS requested the officers to consider the organization of the meeting, including the system used by ICES-NEAFC. It is the officers opinion that the ICES-NEAFC system is only successful as 1) the countries involved are not as dispersed geographically as ICCAT countries, so that the two meetings can be held separately at no increase in cost; 2) no extensive reporting of results are required, while very extensive reporting of the results of scientific studies is requested at the Commission meeting; and 3) instant communication between commissioners and scientists are not required for policy decisions.

For the time being, the officers could not find any better alternative system for meeting organization and decided that the same system as was adopted for the 1978 meeting should be adopted for 1979. Probably at the 1979 SCRS session a small group can be established to study several alternatives of meeting formulas. Dr. G. Sakagawa (USA) was asked to make some preliminary survey on various meeting organizations adopted by some international agencies, so that if such a group is formed, they can use the results of such a survey in their work.

2. Rapporteurs

The following rapporteurs were nominated by the SCRS Chairman for each section of the SCRS Report:

a) Yellowfin	G. Sakagawa*, R. H. Pianet, A. L. Coan, A. Fernández
b) Skipjack	R. H. Pianet*, G. Sakagawa, A. L. Coan, A. Fernández
c) Bluefin	M. L. Parrack*, Z. Suzuki, H. Farrugio, J. L. Cort, T. D. Iles
d) Albacore	F. X. Bard*, N. Bartoo, A. González-Garcés
e) Bigeye	S. Kume*, Al. Santos Guerra, one U.S. scientist (to be named later)
f) Billfish	R. Conser*, Z. Suzuki
g) Southern Bluefin & small tunas	C. Shinzu*, P. M. Miyake
General Rapporteur	J. A. Gulland
Sub-Committee on Statistics	P. M. Miyake*

* Chief Rapporteur.

Appendix 1

AGENDA FOR THE 1979 SCRS OFFICERS MEETING

- I. Opening and selection of Rapporteurs
- II. International Skipjack Year Program
 1. Report by the Convener of the Sub-Committee on Skipjack
 2. Review of Activity Team Plans
 3. Review of work by Skipjack Coordinator
 4. Review of matching national contributions
 5. Review of outside contributions
 6. Review of skipjack budget
 7. Immediate and long-term working schedule
- III. Working Group on Juvenile Tropical Tunas
 1. Review of terms of reference
 2. Review of preparation of September meeting
 3. Review of progress made on assignments for the September meeting
 4. Additional assignments or preparations for the September meeting
 5. Short- and long-term plans
- IV. Bluefin Workshop
 1. Review of terms of reference
 2. Review of preparations for September meeting and attendants
 3. Review of progress made in preparations
 - a) Description of fisheries
 - b) Data bases
 - c) Collection of new data
 - d) Tagging files
- V. Statistics
 1. Review of results of the Working Group on Data Management
 2. Review of expected input to the ICCAT data base