



MESSAGE FROM THE ICCAT EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

The ICCAT Secretariat has the pleasure to present its readers with **ICCAT Newsletter No. 18**, informing of the latest events and activities of our Organization.

We trust you enjoy reading this Newsletter and the Secretariat will be pleased to receive any suggestions aimed at improving this publication.

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RECENT MEETINGS

2013 has been a year of a lot of work for ICCAT. Since the previous Newsletter, four intersessional meetings of the Commission, ten SCRS meetings, and a meeting of the eBCD Technical Working Group have been held.

INTERSESSIONAL COMMISSION MEETINGS

Intersessional meeting of the Compliance Committee/Panel 2



The meeting that was held in Seville, Spain, 18-20 February, 2013. The Group approved the East Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna fishing, inspection and capacity control plans.

Meeting of the Working Group of Fisheries Managers and Scientists in support of the western Atlantic bluefin tuna stock assessment.



The meeting was held in Montreal, Canada, 25-28 June, 2013. The objective of this joint meeting of managers and scientists was to review different aspects (recruitment, stock structure and mixing rate, etc.) related to science and management of this stock.

🐟 **8th meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Monitoring Measures (IMM)**



The meeting was held in Sapporo, Japan, 7-9 July, 2013. The objective of this meeting was to continue with the work on integrating monitoring measures in an extensive management framework. Coinciding with this meeting, the eBCD Technical Working Group held a meeting to monitor the system functional in its pilot phase since May.

🐟 **1st meeting of the Working Group on Convention Amendment**



The meeting was held in Sapporo, Japan, 10-12 July, 2013. The objective of this meeting was to identify those measures that require a revision of the Convention and establish a work plan to carry this out.

SCRS INTERSESSIONAL MEETINGS

🐟 **Meeting of the ICCAT Working Group on Stock Assessment Methods.** The meeting was held in Madrid, Spain, 11-15 March 2013. The objective of this meeting was to develop representation models to establish assessment model diagnostics, the definition of limit reference points and management strategy evaluation and the revision of TORs for Peer review, which includes identification and selection of invited experts.

🐟 **Interseasonal Meeting of the Tropical Tuna Species Group**



The meeting was held in Tenerife, Spain, 18-21 March 2013. The objective of this meeting was to establish the TORs to design the Atlantic Ocean Tropical Tagging Program (AOTTP).

🐟 **Interseasonal Meeting of the Sharks Species Group**



The meeting was held in Mindelo, Cape Verde, 8-12 April, 2013. The objective of the meeting was to develop the Special Research Programme on Sharks framed within the SCRS Science Strategic Plan foreseen for the period 2015-2020.

🐟 **ICCAT Albacore Data Preparatory Meeting.** The meeting was held in Madrid, Spain, 22-26 April 2013. The objective of the meeting was to review and prepare the data required to carry out stock assessments on North and South Atlantic stocks.

Bluefin Meeting on Biological Parameters Review



The meeting was held in Tenerife, Spain, 7-13 May 2013. The Group assessed the results of research on biology and other stock parameters carried out within the framework of the GBYP.

ICCAT Atlantic Swordfish Data Preparatory Meeting

The meeting was held in Madrid, Spain, 3-10 June 2013. The objective of the meeting was to review and prepare the necessary data to carry out North and South Atlantic swordfish stock assessments.

Atlantic Albacore Stock Assessment Session



The meeting was held in Sukarrieta, Spain, 17-24 June 2013. During the meeting the North and South Atlantic albacore stocks were assessed. Likewise, a provisional reference value range for establishing HCR, which the Commission is carrying out, was established.

Intersessional Meeting of the Subcommittee on Ecosystems

The meeting was held in Madrid, Spain, 1-5 July 2013. The main objective of the meeting was to advance in the assessment of the impact of tuna fisheries on sea turtle populations.

Bluefin Stock Assessment Methods Meeting



The meeting was held in Gloucester, USA, 20-22 July 2013. The objective of this meeting was to review GBYP contributions towards understanding of bluefin tuna stocks in its different aspects (biology, stock structure, etc.) and establish a detailed multi-annual work plan to carry out stock assessments required by the Commission and assess management procedures based on an operating model developed for Atlantic bluefin tuna.

Atlantic Swordfish Stock Assessment Session

The meeting was held in Olhão, Portugal, 2-10 September 2013. The objective of the meeting was to carry out stock assessments of the North and South Atlantic swordfish stocks.

Detailed Reports of the Intersessional meetings of ICCAT are available, in their provisional version, on the ICCAT Web site (www.iccat.int). Further to the final approval by the SCRS and the Commission, the reports are published in the Collective Volume of Scientific Papers or in the ICCAT Biennial Reports.

CALENDER OF EVENTS

September

- *Meeting of the Technical Working Group on eBCD.* 23-24 September, Madrid, Spain. During the meeting, response will be given to technical issues raised during the pilot testing phase of the system and the issues to be posed to the Commission will be identified.

- *Species Group meetings.* 23-27 September, Madrid, Spain. These meetings will be held to update the biological information and the available statistics on all the species under ICCAT mandate.

The Sub-Committee on Statistics will hold a meeting that same week to review data submissions, as well as the progress made in the development of the Secretariat's databases.

October

- *Standing Committee on Research and Statistics*. 30 September - 4 October 2013, Madrid, Spain
The SCRS will meet to review the status of all stocks and prepare responses to the Commission concerning scientific issues.

Scientists who wish to present documents to the SCRS meeting should contact the Secretariat.

November

23rd Regular Meeting of the Commission 18-25 November, Cape Town, South Africa
The Commission will review the results obtained from numerous stock assessments carried out during 2013 to adopt the recommendations and resolutions for the management of these resources.

For further information, Agendas, etc. for these meetings, please see our Web site, and for hotel reservations in Cape Town.

SECRETARIAT ACTIVITIES

The Secretariat has continued to support the activities of the SCRS and the Commission.

During 2013, the Secretariat has continued to implement:

- Bluefin tuna Regional Observer Programme (ROP-BFT) on vessels and in fattening farms during the 2013 fishing campaign.

- Regional Observer Programme on Transshipment, and has continued the process for the implementation of the Regional Observers Programme for BET/YFT in January 2014.

Likewise, it has continued coordinating and technically supporting the implementation of the eBCD system which since May 16 is operative in its pilot phase. In this phase, the Secretariat is developing extra work of support towards the implementation of the system to those Contracting

Parties with difficulties to participate directly in the test phase.

Tasks related to the entry into force of the Recommendations adopted in 2012 have also been undertaken. In order to try to consolidate the various lists of vessels now required in a manner compatible with other tuna RFMOs for the Consolidated List of Vessels required through the KOBE Process, the Secretariat has redesigned the vessel data base.

Atlantic-wide research programme (GBYP)

GBYP Phase 4 started in May 2013, including a limited data recovery activity, an extended tagging programme in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, the biological and genetic sampling and analyses activities, an extended aerial survey on spawning aggregations and further modeling approaches. More than 30 institutions from various ICCAT CPCs are conducting these activities.

The ICCAT-GBYP web-pages have been recently fully revised and updated and all reports and documents produced by GBYP can be found on <http://www.iccat.int/GBYP/en/>.

The tag recovery and awareness campaign (<http://iccat.int/GBYP/en/AwCamp.asp>), initiated in 2011, is regularly continuing in 2013.

Since the last edition of the Newsletter, published in February 2012, members of the Secretariat staff have assisted meetings and activities and outside activities related to ICCAT:

→ *16th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) (Bangkok, 3-14 March 2013).*

→ *Second Joint Meeting of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism -CRFM- / the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem -CLME- case studies Steering Committee (Roseau 11-13 March 2013).*

→ *1st Workshop on the Preparation of a Billfish Management and Conservation plan for the Western Central Atlantic (Florida 19-20 March 2013).*

→ 37th Meeting of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) (Split, 3-17 May, 2013).

→ The World Conference on Stock Assessment Methods for Sustainable Fisheries (Boston, 15-19 July, 2013).

ICCAT played an active role in the various meetings with written and/or oral contributions.

Apart from the activities mentioned above, the Secretariat is responsible for the maintenance of the joint web page of tuna RFMOs (<http://www.tuna-org.org/>).

ASSISTANCE FUNDS FOR DEVELOPING STATES

ICCAT has established funds to encourage the improvement of statistics of species under ICCAT mandate. Currently, there is a budget on special funds for data improvement established by *Resolution by ICCAT on Improvements in Data Collection and Quality Assurance* [Res. 03-21].

These funds are supplied by voluntary contributions made by some Contracting Parties.

As well as these funds, during 2013, the capacity building funds have been made available, initiated in 2008 by the United States aimed at supporting training on collection, data analysis, stock assessment methods and the ICCAT-Japan Data and Management Improvement Project (JDMIP) initiated in 2004.

In 2011, the Commission adopted the *Recommendation by ICCAT on the Establishment of a Meeting Participation Fund for Developing ICCAT Contracting Parties* [Rec. 11-26] which establishes a special Meeting Participation Fund (MPF) of representatives from ICCAT Contracting Parties which are developing States.

Since the last Newsletter, these funds have financed the activities for statistical improvement and the participation of many of scientists to different SCRS and Commission meetings.

PUBLICATIONS

The following publications were issued in 2013:



Report for Biennial Period, 2012-2013, Part I (2012) Volumes 1 and 2, corresponding to the 2012 Commission Proceedings and 2012 SCRS Report. Since 2008, Volume 3 is exclusively published in electronic format and only the summaries of the reports

are translated into ICCAT's official languages. The Volume is published on the ICCAT web site. In 2013, a fourth volume including the Secretariat reports on statistics and coordination of research and the Administrative and Financial reports, as well as the report to the Secretariat of the Compliance Committee of the Conservation and Management measures of ICCAT (COC) and the Permanent Working Group (PWG) for the improvement of statistics and ICCAT conservation measures, have been published for the third time. This Volume is published only in electronic format like Volume 3.

Five (5) issues of the Collective Volume of Scientific Papers, Volume 69.

Statistical Bulletin # 42, which includes catch series by species and country since 1950. As of this year, the publication on paper will be biennial, carrying out annual updates which will be available, in electronic format, in the Web and on CD.



During this period the Secretariat has continued to collaborate with the

Aquatic Living Resources Journal.

OTHER NEWS

All recent ICCAT publications can be downloaded from <http://www.iccat.int>

To obtain copies of older publications please contact INFO@ICCAT.INT