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**ICCAT LETTER ON JOINT tRFMO FAD WORKING GROUP MEETING**

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE  
CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS



COMISION INTERNACIONAL PARA LA  
CONSERVACION DEL ATUN ATLANTICO

COMMISSION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA  
CONSERVATION DES THONIDES DE L'ATLANTIQUE



26 October 2016

**SUBJECT: JOINT tRFMO FAD WORKING GROUP MEETING**

Dear Colleagues,

FAD management is an issue of common interest to tuna fisheries and is becoming increasingly important for the tropical tuna fisheries in general. As a response, several tuna RFMOs have created specific FAD Working Groups, which are promoting to address issues related to tuna FAD fishing. As a consequence, the Chair of the Kobe process Steering Committee (SC) recently noted that a decision had been made to create a FAD Working Group and discussions are being held between the Executive Secretaries/Directors. During the last meeting of the SC, it was also noted that the European Union offered to finance a joint meeting in 2016 and that some additional funding could be obtained from the FAO ABNJ Tuna Project. The ICCAT Executive Secretary offered to coordinate the meeting and to circulate a letter in October regarding the Working Group (WG) meeting. This will be an open joint tuna RFMO WG meeting. This initiative was endorsed by the SC and the participants agreed that the process for the FAD meeting could proceed.

Accordingly, we would like to reopen the discussion on the possibility of holding a joint tuna RFMO meeting on FADs sometime in 2017. It was suggested that the meeting take place in conjunction with the IOTC meeting, but we believe it would be more appropriate to discuss the meeting date and venue more broadly to ensure a wider participation of all interested Parties and relevant stakeholders from all t-RFMOs.

As the meeting would aim at encouraging to conduct a cross-cutting exercise between tuna RFMOs, we need to discuss in advance and in an open manner the structure of the meeting, as well as the different issues to be presented and discussed, aiming at making it attractive to participants and efficient as regards the outputs.

Please find below, for your consideration, a list of potential issues that from an ICCAT point of view might be worth considering. Please note, however, that the agenda is completely open, since it would be very important to cover a wide range of topics and specificities FAD management might have on the different t-RFMOs:

1. Review of the information available (or provided by CPCs) on the FAD fisheries
2. Assessment of the use of FADs in tuna fisheries in all three Oceans and relative contribution of FADs to overall fishing mortality in tropical tuna fisheries
3. Review and assessment of developments in FAD related technology
4. Consideration of possible common (and/or additional) actions relating to FAD management and recovery
5. Review of data collection systems of relevant information on FAD fishing
6. Review of current research plans on FAD related issues

Your thoughts on these issues would be greatly appreciated at your earliest convenience. I take the opportunity to inform you that I have appointed Dr. Miguel Neves dos Santos (ICCAT Scientific Coordinator) to coordinate this initiative. I would appreciate that you inform us of the person who will act as focal point at your Secretariat and that all related information be sent to Dr. Neves dos Santos ([miguel.santos@iccat.int](mailto:miguel.santos@iccat.int)).

Best regards,

  
Driss Meski  
Executive Secretary

**Distribution:** IATTC, IOTC, WCPFC, CSSBT (for information purposes)