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**U.S. CONCEPT NOTE ON A PILOT PROGRAM FOR THE EXCHANGE  
OF INSPECTORS IN THE CONDUCT OF JOINT INTERNATIONAL INSPECTIONS AT SEA**

*Presented by United States*

For some time, the Commission has been considering modernizing its 1975 Scheme of Joint International Inspection, which was held in abeyance until it was activated for the eastern bluefin tuna fishery in 2006. As part of a revised comprehensive Scheme of Joint International Inspection (Scheme), consideration has been given in recent years to establishing a process for CPCs to exchange inspectors with a view to addressing, in particular, the special requirements of developing States. While discussion of a comprehensive Scheme continues, some CPCs are interested in exploring the establishment of a pilot program for the cooperative exchange of inspectors in the conduct of joint international inspections at sea.

A number of CPCs have had positive experiences with inspector exchanges, both within the context of schemes of joint international inspection implemented by RFMOs, and otherwise. For example, several CPCs have had such experiences in the Atlantic, within the context of the inspection scheme that have been adopted by the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization. [D1] Others have had similar experiences in other tuna RFMOs (e.g., the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission) or through bilateral arrangements. The existing partnerships and lessons learned through these experiences should enhance the collaborative opportunities set out in this pilot program.

A pilot program for the exchange of inspectors would be intended to complement ongoing efforts toward development of a revised Scheme by helping to familiarize inspectors from one CPC with the boarding and inspection processes and procedures of another, thereby enhancing understanding and building knowledge of such activities. Participation in the program would also help build capacity by providing direct experience both in the conduct of at-sea boarding and inspections, and in post-inspection cooperation and flag State follow-up. Participation would be expected to provide particular benefits to developing CPCs who may have limited capacity to directly train inspectors in such procedures or to deploy inspection vessels.

Participation in such a pilot program would be completely voluntary but broad participation would substantially strengthen cooperation and collaboration among CPCs and help inform ongoing discussions by the Commission on the structure and content of a revised Scheme.

CPCs would be free to join and leave the pilot program at any time.

Possible procedures for the exchange of inspectors under the pilot program are as follows:

1. CPCs volunteering to participate in the pilot program would submit to the Executive Secretary information on their national authorities responsible for at-sea inspection and other supporting maritime agencies as may be appropriate. CPCs would also identify a point of contact (POC) within its authority with responsibility for program implementation and notify the Executive Secretary of the name, telephone, fax numbers, and e-mail address of that POC. The Executive Secretary would make such information available on the password-protected part of the ICCAT website.
2. CPCs deploying patrol vessels in the Convention area would strive to arrange patrols that can accommodate one or more inspectors from other CPCs, provide timely notice of such patrols to other participating CPCs, and solicit other CPCs for the deployment of inspectors.
3. All CPCs would need to protect law enforcement sensitive or otherwise confidential or protected information including deployment and inspection plans, from inappropriate disclosure.
4. CPCs wishing to place an inspector on another CPC's inspection vessel would promptly contact the POC of the CPC that has notified its planned deployment under paragraph 2. The CPCs will consult to determine whether the collaborative deployment of the inspector can be accommodated, taking into consideration operational limitations as well as training, security, medical and

physical requirements. CPCs deploying inspection vessel(s) would, in particular, make special efforts to accommodate collaborative inspector deployment requests from developing CPCs.

5. CPCs that have elected to accommodate or deploy an inspector following consultations under paragraph 4, would enter into a standing or *ad hoc* bilateral agreement or arrangement to address the details of such deployment, including provisions for the cooperative deployment of personnel and the use of vessels, aircraft or other resources for fisheries surveillance and control purposes.
6. CPCs deploying patrol resources, subject to having an agreement or arrangement for the exchange of inspectors as outlined in paragraph 5 above, would seek to embark authorized inspector(s) from the requesting CPC on available patrol resources and involve these inspectors in fisheries control boardings pursuant to said arrangement or agreement.
7. CPCs participating in the pilot program would report annually on their experiences under the program.