

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY BRAZIL AT COC SESSION
MARRAKECH 16 NOVEMBER 2017**

Mr. Chair,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

Since you have mentioned Rec 11/15, I take this opportunity to present to the COC the reasons that have led Brazil to fail to submit data on our fishing activities this year.

Due to the gravity of the situation, I would request you to bear with me, while I give you details on the matter.

Mr Chair,

My country has been going through both an economic recession and institutional changes.

The consequences have been so broad that all areas have been affected, including fisheries.

In October 2015, the Fisheries Ministry was dismantled and the management of the sector has, since then, been dealt with by a Secretary, which has been moved from Ministry to Ministry.

The institutional instability has deeply affected the correct functioning of the system.

In addition to this, the recession has led to several cuts in budget that have also contributed to furthering the difficulties.

Such lack of resources has led, for example, to the collective resignation of the scientific committee responsible for conducting research and statistic work.

Mr. Chair,

We fully understand the gravity of the situation we find ourselves into and this is why we have strived to take several concrete measures before coming to Morocco, despite the continuing difficulties.

We strongly believe that such measures will start to get Brazil back on track.

On November the 3rd a new Secretary, with ministerial status, has been created under the Presidency.

The Secretary currently in charge, Mr. de Souza, stands by my side and leads the Brazilian delegation.

In addition, approximately 600.000 dollars have been allocated to the scientific subcommittee to allow it to return to its activities.

The President of the subcommittee, Mr. Paulo Travassos, is also a member of my delegation and can attest to the changes in progress.

Mr Chair,

I now turn to the issue of the lack of data submission.

The government has already tasked the scientific committee that has just been reinstated to start a full revision of all the data submitted in the past 5 years, in addition to the collection and processing of data related to 2017.

We will closely coordinate with ICCAT Secretariat to assess all the statistical deficiencies we might have.

We anticipate that such work will require at least 4 months to be completed properly.

Having that in mind, we would like to request the COC to allow for a derogation of the application of measure 11/15 until the 31st of March 2018, so that we have enough time to produce a thorough analysis.

We make this request based on the rationales that lead us to come to this meeting with no data submitted.

We would rather face the possibility of a fisheries prohibition than submitting bad data.

As a CPC that has for several years been deeply involved in the elaboration of scientific advice to guide the Commission, we know the negative impact of unreliable data.

We are confident that this commission share our view that it is more important to submit adequate and accurate data than to just submit any data to fulfill a requirement.

We are ready to submit, by the 31 of December, a plan of data recovery, where we would detail the work to be conducted by the task force mentioned above and the coordination means with the Secretariat.

My delegation and I stand ready to answer to any questions you might have.

Thank you Chair