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Statement to the 25th ICCAT Special Meeting of the Commission
Vilamoura, Portugal
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Thank you, Chair, for the opportunity to address the Commission. I will deliver my intervention in French.

First, please allow me to thank Portugal for hosting the 25th Special Meeting of ICCAT.

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, my name is Ghada Souilah, I work for the FAO Common Oceans Tuna Project.

The Tuna Project is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by FAO. It promotes responsible, efficient and sustainable tuna fisheries and biodiversity conservation through a unique partnership of 25 organizations, including the five tuna RFMOs, intergovernmental organizations, industry and civil society.

Today, I would like to highlight some of the Project's activities of relevance to ICCAT.

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The ICCAT secretariat leads four major activities of the project. These include:

- *providing compliance-related capacity building*

Since 2023, port inspection, compliance and statistical reporting training courses have been held in Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Namibia, São Tomé, and Senegal. Additional trainings are planned in Republic of Guinea and Tunisia in 2027.

Additionally, the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) has developed – in close collaboration with ICCAT and Nelson Mandela University's Fish Force Academy – an accredited Certificate Fisheries Enforcement and Compliance training course for MCS officers operating in the ICCAT area.

The course will be offered to compliance officials of ICCAT members beginning in early 2027.

- *organizing three joint tuna RFMO workshops on globally relevant topics.*

The third joint workshop will examine how tuna stock assessments should address uncertainty and be convened from 18 to 22 January 2027 at FAO headquarters.

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In addition to the ICCAT led work, several Tuna Project activities will provide benefits both globally and for the ICCAT Region:

The FAO e-learning course series, "Management Procedures for Sustainable Tuna Fisheries," developed by the Tuna Project with support from the FAO eLearning Academy, The Ocean Foundation, The Pew Charitable Trusts, and the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF), is now freely available in English, French and Spanish.

To complement the online course, regional training sessions have been delivered in Seychelles, Egypt and Guatemala.

We welcome requests from ICCAT Members interested in hosting further customized training sessions. Please email info@harveststrategies.org.

QR codes to access all three language versions are displayed on the screen. I invite you to take advantage of this free learning opportunity and share it with colleagues in your administration.

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The project is supporting the operationalization of an Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management, including consideration of climate change.

The Tuna RFMOs are working with project partner ISSF, in collaboration with FAO, to better integrate ecosystem science and climate change into fisheries management. In this context, we welcome PLE-114, the draft Recommendation submitted by eight ICCAT members.

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Three partner organizations: Conservation International, the Pacific Community (SPC), and Mercator Oceans International have been working to model the effects of likely climate change scenarios on tuna distribution in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

The project plans to present preliminary results at relevant ICCAT meetings in 2027.

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In closing, the Common Oceans Tuna Project and its partners remain fully committed to supporting ICCAT and its Members in advancing sustainable fisheries management and marine biodiversity conservation in the ICCAT region.

We would like to thank the ICCAT Secretariat for their continued collaboration, as well as the Chair and the Commission for the opportunity to address this meeting.

Interested delegates are invited to consult document PLE_117 for further details on the Project's activities.

We wish the Commission every success this week.

Thank you, Chair.