November 14, 2026

Sciaena's Opening Statement to PWG

25th Special Meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)

Sciaena thanks the PWG for the opportunity to contribute. Combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing requires closing regulatory gaps in at-sea enforcement and vessel governance, and we urge CPCs to prioritize:

Establish a roadmap for an ICCAT High Seas Boarding and Inspection (HSBI) scheme

Effective high seas governance depends on credible, participatory enforcement at sea. An HSBI scheme is a proven, cost-effective mechanism to verify compliance, deter IUU fishing, and build mutual confidence among Contracting Parties. ICCAT remains behind other major Regional Fisheries Management Organizations which already operate established HSBI frameworks. Sciaena strongly urges the PWG to initiate a structured, step-by-step process toward adopting an ICCAT HSBI scheme, ensuring the Commission equips itself with modern at-sea inspection tools.

Extend IMO number requirements to vessels down to 12 meters

Sciaena calls on CPCs to expand mandatory IMO number requirements to all motorized inboard fishing vessels down to 12 meters in length authorized to operate beyond national jurisdiction, harmonizing standards across ICCAT and the GFCM.

Mandate Ultimate Beneficial Ownership disclosure

Complex corporate structures and flags of convenience shield the true beneficiaries of IUU fishing from accountability. ICCAT must mandate Ultimate Beneficial Ownership disclosure during vessel registration, licensing, and chartering, starting by adopting the EU's bracketed text in Proposal PWG-434.

Sciaena looks forward to constructive discussions and decisive progress in the PWG to strengthen transparency, accountability, and compliance across all ICCAT fisheries.