

The Pew Charitable Trusts'
Position Statement for the 29th Regular Meeting of ICCAT
November 2025



The Pew Charitable Trusts welcomes the opportunity to participate in the 29th Meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). We appreciate the work of the Secretariat, Chair, and members in convening this meeting. Throughout the year, Pew has participated in multiple ICCAT meetings, and we understand the very busy agenda ahead at this Commission meeting. This year's meeting provides substantial opportunities to advance conservation and management of Atlantic tunas and maintain the legacy ICCAT has built. To that effect, we would like to highlight the following plenary items:

1. Continue preparing for the entry into force of the Agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)

As highlighted by the [letter](#) from the Commission chair, ICCAT should improve coordination and performance in anticipation of its role in BBNJ implementation. Now that the BBNJ treaty is to enter into force, in January 2026, the [resolution 23-23 on the implementation of biodiversity conservation instruments](#) should be updated to provide a more comprehensive framework for ICCAT's engagement on this matter. Other RFMOs, such as [IOTC](#) have also set out clear definitions and participation expectations that ICCAT could follow.

2. MoU between ICCAT and Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO)

In anticipation of its role in BBNJ implementation, ICCAT should put in place agreements and mechanisms to improve data sharing and transparency in the Atlantic region. An MoU between ICCAT and NAFO would promote oversight beyond sector specific goals to provide a more holistic picture of ecosystem health and prepare both organizations to share data that may be necessary to review and contribute to BBNJ proposals. We urge members to agree to the development of this MOU to enable both secretariats to sign it in early 2026.

3. Progress toward entry into force of the ICCAT Convention Amendments

Recognizing that the 2019 Convention Amendments have only been ratified by a few members, Plenary should discuss CPCs' barriers to ratification and chart a path forward, including by providing capacity assistance where necessary. Noting the Amendments include an expansion of ICCAT's mandate to include elasmobranchs, CPCs should also work to improve data reporting, including by increasing submissions of data for dead and live discards.

Pew will provide opening statements to each panel, the permanent working group, and Compliance Committee; however, we would also like to raise the following opportunities for progress this year.

4. Adopt a management procedure (MP) for western Atlantic skipjack tuna

Management strategy evaluation (MSE) continues to be an important tool to ensure that MPs under consideration by ICCAT have been properly tested and are robust to environmental and fishery uncertainties. This year, ICCAT should adopt an MP for western Atlantic skipjack to complete the [framework measure \(Rec. 24-04\)](#) adopted last year. The SCRS recommended adoption of one of four candidate MPs that meet ICCAT's objectives for this stock. Adopting the western skipjack MP will let the SCRS and Panel 1 shift focus to the tropical tuna multi-stock MSE, set for adoption in 2026.

5. Utilize an MP to set Atlantic bluefin tuna total allowable catches (TACs) for the next 3-year management cycle.

The recovery of Atlantic bluefin tuna and 2022 MP adoption to lock in the long-term sustainability of the stocks are two of ICCAT's biggest historical accomplishments. As there has been just one management cycle so far, it is important to secure this achievement by continuing to implement an MP, tested by the collaboratively developed MSE. Pew urges ICCAT to use an MP to set the next management cycle's TACs, warning that alternative methods would undermine the investment in the MP, the broader MSE efforts at ICCAT, and perhaps most importantly, the continued long-term sustainability of fisheries targeting bluefin on both sides of the Atlantic.

6. Revise Recommendation 23-17 on port State measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing

Effective port State measures reduce the chances of illegal fish entering global markets. The FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) is the only binding international treaty specifically targeting IUU fishing. Aligning ICCAT's port State measures with the PSMA especially through improved coordination and real time data exchange, will help prevent IUU-caught species from reaching the market and promote consistency across regional fisheries bodies and PSMA Parties. We support the UK's proposal to strengthen ICCAT's Port State Measures and urges CPCs to amend Recommendation 23-17 for better alignment with PSMA.

There is a high level of ambition among CPCs to address all of this business and more. As each Panel and Working Group begins its work, please refer to our detailed statements for more information about the issues highlighted above and other agenda items.