INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS

COMMISSION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA CONSERVATION DES THONIDES DE L'ATLANTIQUE

COMISION INTERNACIONAL PARA LA CONSERVACION DEL ATUN ATLANTICO

Madrid, 15 December 2025

ICCAT CIRCULAR # 12011 / 2025

SUBJECT: CALL FOR TENDERS – TERMS OF REFERENCE: FEASIBILITY STUDY ON TECHNOLOGICAL MIGRATION OF THE ELECTRONIC CATCH DOCUMENT (EBCD) SYSTEM AND OPTIONS FOR MULTI-SPECIES EXTENSION

I should like to transmit herewith the Terms of Reference for a Feasibility study on technological migration of the electronic catch document (eBCD) system and options for multi-species extension.

I should be grateful if you could kindly disseminate this Call for Tenders to qualified organisations and individuals who may have the requisite expertise and interest in participating.

The deadline for receipt of expressions of interest in this Call for tenders is **16 January 2026 at 18:00 Madrid time.**

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Executive Secretary

Camille Jean Pierre Manel

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Attachment: Terms of Reference and Annexes 1 to 3, as referenced in the Call for tenders.

Call for Tenders – Terms of Reference
Feasibility study on technological migration of the electronic catch document (eBCD) system and options for multi-species extension

1. Background and Objectives

ICCAT adopted in 2007 a paper-based Catch Documentation Programme (BCD) to ensure traceability of Atlantic bluefin tuna from capture to end-market distribution. The BCD consisted of separate sections (Catch, Transfer, Farming, Harvesting and Trade), to be completed by operators and validated by the relevant Flag, Trap or Farm State. Validation by Flag State authorities certified that the products recorded in each section had been caught and transferred in accordance with ICCAT conservation and management measures.

In light of the above, ICCAT has implemented the eBCD system for Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna, replacing the former paper-based scheme pursuant to the *Recommendation by ICCAT on an electronic bluefin tuna catch document programme (EBCD)* (Rec. 10-11) (**Annex 1**). The eBCD allows traceability of bluefin tuna from capture to the final trade transaction, improving reliability, monitoring and control.

The current application runs on a legacy .NET framework which has reached end-of-support by Microsoft. A migration to a modern, sustainable technology (to be proposed by the Contractor) is therefore required. The selected technology shall allow straightforward updating and ensure the longest possible operational lifetime. Consequently, the ICCAT Secretariat is launching this Call for Tenders to commission a feasibility study on the technological migration of the electronic Catch Documentation (eBCD) system.

Additionally, the *Recommendation by ICCAT on establishment of a Standing Catch Document Scheme Working Group (CDS WG)* (Rec. 23-22) (Annex 2) has established a mandate to extend the CDS beyond bluefin tuna to other species. In light of this, this Call addresses two sequential objectives: (i) a feasibility study recommending the most appropriate migration path and available options for the current eBCD, ensuring continuity of its existing functionalities; and (ii) a feasibility study evaluating the options for a multi-species CDS, namely whether to extend the migrated eBCD or to develop a new system.

Note: For the purpose of this Call, the term "offeror" is used to designate any entity submitting an offer. This term is equivalent to "bidder" or "contractor" as may appear in ICCAT Recommendations referenced in the Annexes (e.g. Rec. 10-11 and Rec. 23-22).

2. Deliverables

No deliverables are foreseen under Phase 1 (Expression of Interest). Deliverables apply exclusively to the selected offeror under Phase 2.

2.1 Technical Feasibility Study Report

The selected offeror shall prepare and submit a detailed and structured **Technical Feasibility Study Report**, covering the **tasks (Section 1)** and **technical requirements (Section 2)** described in **Annex 3** of this Call, as well as the functionalities outlined in **Annex 4**[1]. The study must include the proposed methodology and workplan, together with a timetable aligned with the indicative durations foreseen. The report shall include, at a minimum, the following components:

[1] Only the selected offeror, following the evaluation of Phase 1, will be provided with Annex 4 in order to submit its Feasibility Study Report.

I. The technical report, containing:

a) A **Technical Due Diligence Report**, which shall provide a full review of the current eBCD system, including source code, architecture, database schema, integrations, deployment processes and security.

b) A **Migration Options Report**, which shall present a comparative analysis of possible alternative migration strategies (upgrade, re-platform, refactor or rebuild), with the associated risks, costs and indicative timelines.

c) A **Target Architecture and Migration Roadmap**, which shall set out the recommended technological pathway, including scalability, maintainability and long-term sustainability measures.

d) A **Security and Compliance Assessment**, which shall demonstrate alignment with recognised standards and with ICCAT requirements.

e) **An Options Report for a multi-species CDS**, which shall evaluate whether to extend the migrated eBCD or develop a new system for other species.

f) **An indicative estimate of the implementation costs of the technical migration of the eBCD system** according to the technical specifications described in this Call, including the multi-species CDS functionality as evaluated under point (e). Such estimates shall distinguish, at a minimum, the costs related to the design, development, deployment and operation/maintenance of the system, and shall identify the main system components and their expected sourcing (external contract, consulting, etc.).

g) An **Executive Summary**, not exceeding ten pages, which shall provide a concise overview of the main findings of the Technical Report.

II. A PowerPoint presentation of the main findings

2.2 Final Feasibility Study Report

The **Final Feasibility Study Report** shall consolidate and refine the contents of the **Technical Feasibility Study Report**, incorporating the comments and revisions requested by the relevant subsidiary bodies in consultation with the ICCAT Secretariat. Acceptance of this final report by the Commission will constitute the basis for the completion of the project and the release of the final payment.

3. Contractor minimum qualifications

Offerors must provide evidence of compliance with the following minimum qualifications:

- **Proven multi-year experience in modernising and migrating enterprise applications** from legacy .NET or equivalent frameworks, with evidence of successful delivery of projects of similar size and complexity.

- **Demonstrated experience in the design and operation of secure, high-availability transactional systems**, including practical knowledge of large-scale data migration, system integration, and resilience planning.

- **Documented experience in preparing and delivering feasibility studies** or technical assessments for international or public sector organisations, ideally within the fisheries, compliance or resource management domains.

- **Excellent working knowledge of English**. Sound knowledge of the two other ICCAT official languages (French and Spanish) is highly desirable.

In addition, the following elements will also be positively evaluated:

- **Evidence of relevant past projects**, particularly those carried out for intergovernmental organisations or within highly regulated international environments.

- **Demonstrated reliability of proposed tools, methodologies and procedures**, showing that these are practical, tested and suitable for the project at hand.

- **Provision of in-kind contributions by the bidding entity(ies)**, such as access to proprietary technologies, technical expertise or additional resources that would support the successful implementation of the contract.

4. Submission of offers and deliverables

4.1 Phase 1 – Expression of interest

Companies, consortiums, and public or private scientific/research institutes interested shall submit an expression of interest only to the attention of the Executive Secretary of ICCAT, Mr Camille Jean Pierre Manel, and copying Ms Ana Martínez by **16 January 2026 (18:00 Madrid time) at the latest.**

This initial submission must include documentation sufficient to allow the relevant subsidiary bodies, in consultation with the ICCAT Secretariat, to verify compliance with the minimum qualifications set out in Section 3, along with the following:

a) **Detailed curricula vitae** of the tenderer(s), partners and subcontractors, evidencing relevant references and documented experience, including recent and comparable projects, in order to demonstrate compliance with the minimum qualifications required under this Call.

b) **The name, address and contact details** (including telephone and email) of the tendering body.

c) **A preliminary price** expressed in EUR, including all applicable taxes (e.g. VAT), and any discount terms.

d) **A technical description of the items being offered**, in sufficient detail to allow evaluation of compliance with the requirements set out in this Call for Tenders.

e) **The institutional and administrative background** of the tendering body, if applicable (e.g. statutes, type of institution, budget, budget control procedures, etc.).

f) **A declaration that all staff, including subcontracted personnel, are covered by full insurance** for all tasks to be carried out under this Call for Tenders, thereby excluding ICCAT from any responsibility concerning the work performed by each offering institution.

g) **Acknowledgement of this Call for Tenders** in its entirety.

h) **A statement specifying the extent of agreement** with all the terms, conditions and provisions included in this Call.

The relevant subsidiary bodies, in consultation with the ICCAT Secretariat, will evaluate the Expressions of interest received under Phase 1 in accordance with the selection criteria set out in Section 7. The contract will be awarded to the successful offeror whose offer best meets the technical, administrative and financial requirements of this Call.

Expressions of interest submitted after the deadline or failing to provide the required documentation or information, or that reject the terms and conditions of this Call for Tenders, shall not be considered.

4.2 Phase 2 – Feasibility Study Report

The selected offeror, after the evaluation of Phase 1, will be invited to submit its **Feasibility Study Report**. This must be submitted by **31 July 2026 (18:00 Madrid time)** to the attention of the Executive Secretary of ICCAT, Mr Camille Jean Pierre Manel, and copying Ms. Ana Martínez.

4.2.1 Familiarisation period

Prior to the submission of the study, the selected offeror will be granted a **familiarisation period** to review the application, the source code, manuals, and the full set of technical documentation, and to become fully acquainted with the business context and operational logic of the system. ICCAT will provide access to test environments and, where strictly necessary and feasible, to the production environment, under appropriate confidentiality arrangements.

This period shall encompass:

a) **Access provisioning and documentation handover**: during which ICCAT will grant access to all necessary materials (application, source code, manuals, technical and functional documentation, and test environments, and, where strictly necessary and feasible, the production environment) and respond to initial data requests.

b) **Due diligence and system familiarisation**: during this period, the selected offeror shall analyse the delivered materials in depth, perform exploratory testing, review manuals and documentation, consult with ICCAT where necessary, and, if required, interview key stakeholders in order to map functional modules and identify potential migration challenges.

This familiarisation period forms part of the overall timeframe leading to the submission deadline of the results of the study.

4.2.2 Submission of the Feasibility Study Report

The **Feasibility Study Report** shall be submitted in compliance with the requirements of Section 2.1 of this Call for Tenders.

Offerors should be available, if requested, to attend and report to meetings convened by ICCAT during both the pre-selection and evaluation phases. Online attendance will be accepted.

5. Duration of the contract

The work under this contract shall be concluded by **7 December 2026 at the latest**.

6. Payment details

Disbursements will be made according to the following schedule:

- 30% of the total contract amount upon signature of the contract and after receiving a regular invoice, which may be submitted within a maximum of 30 days following the contract signature.

- 30% of the total contract amount after the provision and acceptance by the relevant subsidiary bodies, in consultation with the ICCAT Secretariat, of the **Technical Feasibility Study Report**. Payment shall be subject to the approval of the administrative documents, together with the regular invoice, within 10 days of the notification of acceptance of the report.

- 40% of the total contract amount after the provision and acceptance by the Commission of the **Final Feasibility Study Report** at its 25th Special Meeting, to be held between 16 and 23 November 2026. This report shall consolidate and refine the Technical Feasibility Study Report, incorporating the comments and revisions requested by the relevant subsidiary bodies, in consultation with the ICCAT Secretariat (if applicable). Payment shall be subject to the approval of the administrative documents, together with the regular invoice, within 10 days of the notification of acceptance of the final report.

7. Selection of offers

All offers will be subject to review by the relevant subsidiary bodies, in consultation with the ICCAT Secretariat. The evaluation will follow a two-phase process, in accordance with Section 4 of this Call.

7.1 Phase 1 – Expression of Interest

Expressions of interest received will be reviewed by the relevant subsidiary bodies, in consultation with the ICCAT Secretariat, to verify compliance with the minimum qualifications established in Section 3 and the requirements under Section 4.1. Based on this assessment, an offeror deemed technically and administratively suitable will be selected to proceed to Phase 2.

These expressions of interest will be evaluated competitively, objectively and consistently, without bias towards any supplier.

The contract will be awarded to the successful offeror whose offer is considered the most advantageous overall, taking into account both technical and financial criteria.

Offers will be evaluated against the following weighted criteria:

a) **Technical merit**, including the adequacy of the methodology, assumptions, workplan and timetable (30%).

b) **Experience and proven track record** of the offeror, partners and subcontractors in comparable projects (25%).

c) **Cost-effectiveness**, based on the proposed budget breakdown and overall value for money (25%).

d) **Flexibility to accommodate future changes in requirements** (10%).

e) **Provision of in-kind contributions** to the project budget, if any (10%).

The ICCAT Executive Secretary will notify the successful offeror as soon as the selection process is completed.

7.2 Phase 2 – Feasibility Study Report

The selected offeror will be invited to submit the **Feasibility Study Report** as described in Section 4.2.

8. Logistics

Deliverables and all documentation provided shall be in MS Office-compatible format. All documents shall be submitted in the three official ICCAT languages, i.e. English, French and Spanish. The Contractor shall remain available to attend meetings convened by ICCAT (online participation possible).

9. Confidentiality

The contractor must sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA). Information and materials made available by ICCAT must be kept strictly confidential and used only for this contract.

10. Conflict of interest

Impartiality, objectivity, and integrity will be ensured in the management and provision of services, avoiding any situation in which employees, family members, friends, or other companies or individuals with a relationship of interest outside the professional relationship could be favored.

11. Copyright

All material produced by the Contractor shall remain the property of ICCAT. Any software developed by the Contractor under this contract shall be licensed under a Community Licence, granted exclusively to ICCAT Contracting Parties, relevant regional organisations, or their duly accredited contractors.

For additional information concerning this Call for Tenders, please contact Mr Miguel Neves dos Santos and Mr Alberto Parrilla at the ICCAT Secretariat.

10-11 **SDP**

RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT ON AN ELECTRONIC BLUEFIN TUNA CATCH DOCUMENT PROGRAMME (eBCD)

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the multi-annual recovery plan for eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna.

RECOGNIZING the developments in electronic information exchange and the benefits of rapid communication with regard to the processing and management of catch information,

NOTING the ability of electronic catch documentation systems to detect fraud and deter IUU shipments and the creation of automated links between Parties including exporting and importing authorities.

RECOGNIZING the necessity to develop and strengthen the implementation of the bluefin tuna catch documentation by the implementation of an electronic document system.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) RECOMMENDS THAT:

An electronic Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation System (eBCD) shall be developed and maintained at the ICCAT Secretariat covering all bluefin tuna caught, farmed, harvested and traded.

The technical specifications of the eBCD system along the lines of the concepts presented in the enclosed document together with full details of its implementation shall be developed by the Secretariat in collaboration with CPCs through the formation of an eBCD Working Group.

This Working Group shall meet throughout 2011 and discuss in detail which elements shall be developed by the Secretariat, based on their experience and management of other databases such as the ICCAT Record of Vessels, and those that will need to be undertaken by outsourced technical services.

On this basis the development and testing of the system will proceed under the guidance of the Working Group so as to be completed prior to the 2011 annual meeting.

The *Recommendation by ICCAT Amending Recommendation 08-12 on an ICCAT Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation Program* [Rec. 09-11] shall then be amended at the 2011 annual meeting so that the eBCD system is fully operational by 1 March 2012.

The Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation (BCD) Programme –
The way forward through the development of an electronic BCD system (eBCD)

1. Background

As part of the measures to sustainably manage eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna, improve the quality and reliability of statistical data and prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing, ICCAT adopted in 2007 a catch documentation programme for bluefin tuna entitled the blue-fin catch document (BCD) which must accompany bluefin tuna products from catch to trade.

Each BCD is composed of different sections (catch, transfer, farming, harvesting, trade) which must each be completed by concerned operators and subsequently validated by their flag and/or farm States. By validating, flag State authorities confirm that the products referred to each section of the BCD have been caught and transferred in accordance with appropriate conservation and management measures.

The programme has, however, suffered from a number of shortcomings which have been discussed during the 2009 ICCAT annual meeting as well as the 2010 intersessional Compliance Committee, which if not improved could weaken the management of E-BFT particularly within the purse seine and farming sectors.

In light of the discussions at the Second Joint Meeting of Tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organisations in San Sebastian, Spain, in 2009 which concluded that minimum standards or best practices for catch document systems should be adopted, and in the context of the draft recommendation for an electronic catch document pilot programme proposed by the Working Group on Integrated Monitoring Measures in Madrid, Spain in February 2010, the framework in ICCAT for technological developments to the BCD programme are well founded.

2. Current situation

The BCD programme is currently 100% paper based with validation authorities, seals, signatures and numbers provided by flag CPC authorities and registered with ICCAT.

A number of sections must be completed by operators while others by the competent validating authorities. The provisions of ICCAT Recommendation [09-11] require a copy of a BCD to be sent to the ICCAT Secretariat by the CPC authorities within five days of validation.

The EU considers the main problems associated with the programme to date include, but are not limited to:

(1) Delays in validation

Issues have been observed in the validation procedures associated with the relevant sections of the BCD. This concerns both delays in validation as well as the order in which the validations have taken place.

(2) Traceability

This specifically relates to where there have been variations in the numbers of individual eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna throughout the supply chain, particularly the case in live trade and split shipments (lots).

(3) Security / confidentiality of information

The lack of real-time centralisation of information cannot safeguard its integrity and confidentiality.

(4) Errors and unreadable entries

There are also cases, often due to faxed or scanned copies, where the entries have become unreadable and impossible to verify. Alternatively, there are cases where data has been entered incorrectly and/or in the wrong field.

3. The way forward

In light of recent developments in electronic information exchange, processing and management it is clear that electronic systems can improve the BCD Programme through the treatment of shipments (lots), the ability to detect fraud and deter IUU shipments and the facilitation of automated links between the various actors involved including exporting and importing authorities.

Alongside the deficiencies in the Programme, there is therefore the need through technological advances to strengthen and further develop the BCD Programme.

An electronic BCD system should be developed and maintained at the ICCAT Secretariat to ensure the legitimacy of actions and data related to the programme which will also facilitate enhanced monitoring and control at the critical control points.

4. Technical overview of the eBCD system

An electronic BCD system (eBCD) should involve a central database at the ICCAT Secretariat that can only be accessed by secure web-based technology by each respective 'actor[1]' involved in the catching, farming, harvesting and trading of bluefin tuna.

The online BCD form used by each actor will have the same appearance and be completed in the same way as the paper version.

The rights and obligations of each actor will be strictly related to their role in the BCD Programme by way of secured access or administrative rights, i.e. such that a validating authority can only validate, while a fisherman can only enter catch data.

The access to the system will be based on standard technology and users need only have an internet connection (with the required security installed). Alternatively, the system should be able to receive data automatically provided by catch information systems in the CPCs, for example systems managing electronic logbook data.

The system will be progressive in accordance with the known traceability of bluefin tuna, so for example the farming section cannot be filled in before the catch section is completed and subsequently validated. See **Figure 1**, which represents the basic flow of information and involvement of the different 'actors' within the BCD Programme.

The system can be customised for error and/or non-compliance prevention, so for example catch can only be recorded weighing between 8 and 500 kgs can be entered or catch can not be validated in a closed season / area.

The system should be linked with other ICCAT information sources such as the Record of Vessels, so that only those vessels authorised and active can report a catch. Likewise, other sources like the VMS Registry or the list of Joint Fishing Operation repartition keys could be linked to the eBCD system.

As there is a requirement for the BCD to follow the fish, it can be envisaged for a user to print out and display the BCD number and/or barcode on a shipment/lot. This BCD number barcode identifier could then be cross-checked by an inspector, who need only log onto to the secure ICCAT website. The compliance aspects / features should be further discussed between CPCs (e.g. prior authorisations could be dealt with by the system).

An important element of the system will be dedicated to managing the user accounts with the login name, password, contact details and/or security certificate. Every actor should receive one or more user accounts associated to their rights in the eBCD system. Every CPC shall manage the user accounts dedicated to them.

For the actors themselves, they will obtain the necessary information and/or security certificate from the system in order to start using the eBCD system simply with a default internet connection and web browser.

Account details and security certificates will also need to be implemented for automatic data exchange, for which the uniform data exchange format needs to be developed.

[1] 'Actors' refer to operators (fisherman, farms) and/or their representatives and validating authorities.

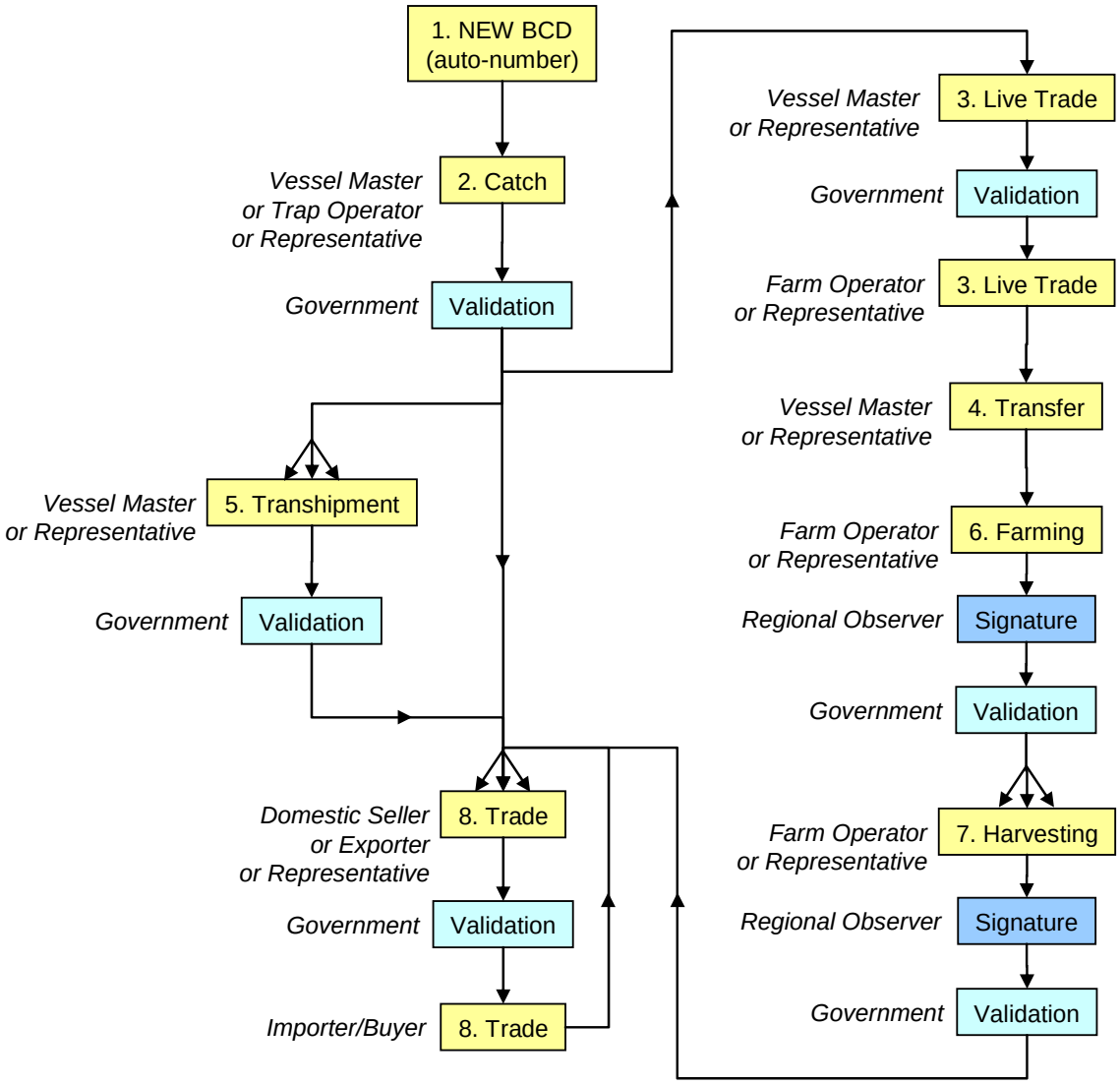

Figure 1. Basic flowchart of BCD sections with related actors.

5. Example actions and related actors:

Each 'action' in the system has different applications, each of which has its own actor's specific to it. Below are a number of example actions:

- ***Validating*:** after the completion of the catching, farming, trading and harvesting sections, a validating authority must validate the content before the eBCD can pass to the next actor.
- ***Inserting*** a new quantity into the system: can only be done by fishermen or trap owners which by doing so generates a new BCD and unique BCD ID number.
- ***Transmitting*:** actors like transfer vessels or transport companies cannot amend the entries relating to the quantities of bluefin tuna reported caught, but only complete transmit them to the next actor. Farming is a specific case as the number of individuals will remain equal while the weight increases.
- ***Splitting*:** Includes fish processing so the catch is split in different products, also splitting of shipments for different trade destinations.
- ***Combining*:** contrary to splitting, several batches of tuna could be combined into one before continuing the trade.
- ***Exiting*:** usually when the fish is sold on the market, it exits from the eBCD chain and becomes inactive nonetheless the data remains on the eBCD database.

The system should also have an 'alerting' function, such that each actor is alerted by means of an email which will direct them (URL link) to the eBCD system.

6. Advantages of the eBCD system

The electronic system will manage all aspect of the eBCD programme, also the printed BCD numbers which accompany the fish.

In general the eBCD system will look to improve the following:

- Copying, scanning, emailing etc.
- Delays in sending BCDs for validation
- Errors and poor quality entries
- Encoding of BCD data (within CPCs or by Secretariat)
- Non-compliance
- Administrative burden.

As mentioned, the system could be further expanded for control purposes and allow connections with other systems.

7. Way forward

The EU proposes that a system be discussed and agreed with a view to developing system specification and/or minimum standards, which could assist the Secretariat in the development of the system. External technical services may also be needed for some aspects of system development.

Following the agreement of the Commission, the *Recommendation by ICCAT Amending the Recommendation 08-12 on an ICCAT Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation Program* [Rec. 09-11] will then be revisited at the 2011 annual meeting with a view to incorporating the eBCD system.

Given the time required for the development and testing it is realistic to envisage the system being operational in 2012.

It would be more appropriate to have a instantaneous switch-over as opposed to a phased approach, consequently 1 March 2012 would be a suitable date for the system to go online as this date in the context of the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna Recovery Plan this represents the beginning of the campaign (submission date for authorised vessel lists, annual fishing plans).

The ICCAT Secretariat shall therefore establish an ICCAT eBCD system so as to be fully operational by 1 March 2012.

23-22 **TOR**

RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT ON ESTABLISHMENT OF A STANDING CATCH DOCUMENT SCHEME WORKING GROUP (CDS WG)

RECALLING that ICCAT agreed at the 2019 Annual Commission meeting that detailed discussion should be continued without prejudging the future course of development of Catch Document Schemes (CDS);

FURTHER RECALLING that the Ad Hoc Working Group on CDS, established by the *Resolution by ICCAT Establishing an ICCAT Working Group on a Catch Document Scheme* (Res. 21-21), exchanged views among CPCs on the expansion of CDS to other ICCAT species;

RECOGNIZING the ever-increasing market demand for fishery products whose legality are verified;

NOTING the successful development and implementation of an electronic bluefin tuna Catch Documentation Scheme in ICCAT;

RECALLING the *Recommendation by ICCAT on a process towards the establishment of a catch certification scheme for tuna and tuna-like species* (Rec. 12-09);

EMPHASIZING the need to implement a risk-based approach with respect to CDS;

MINDFUL of the Voluntary Guidelines for Catch Documentation Schemes adopted by FAO in 2017, which set out guidance to States, RFMOs, regional economic integration organizations, and other intergovernmental organizations when developing and implementing new CDS, or harmonizing or reviewing existing CDS;

RECOGNISING that the Convention amendment process consisted of two parts, *i.e.*, the first part focused on the review of the Convention and the second part focused on developing specific amendments, and a similar two-step approach could be a good way to proceed with the discussion on this issue;

NOTING the concern that the number of Working Groups has been increasing and the need to streamline the work of the Commission;

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) RECOMMENDS AS FOLLOWS:

1. A Standing Catch Document Scheme Working Group (CDS WG) shall be established. The CDS WG shall also incorporate the function of and replace the eBCD Technical Working Group, which includes review of the technical specifications of eBCD and possible improvements.

2. The CDS WG is open to all CPCs and accredited observers.

3. The CDS WG will elect its own Chair.

4. Simultaneous interpretation in the three ICCAT languages (English, French, Spanish) will be provided during the meetings of the CDS WG.

5. The CDS WG shall first consider which species and the product types should be covered by any CDS, taking into account the factors specified in paragraph 1 of Rec. 12-09. With a view to facilitating the implementation of any expanded CDS by CPCs, a phased/step-by-step approach should be considered, including technical approach. The CDS WG will then decide on details of the operational and technical aspects of the CDS, based on the information/views provided by CPCs, particularly regarding practical and technical considerations with respect to the design and implementation of any CDS, including the following:

a) What practical and technical difficulties exist with respect to the design and implementation of CDS and how they might be overcome;

b) Whether it is feasible and appropriate to expand the eBCD system to other species, or if developing a separate electronic system is more appropriate;

c) What capacity development programmes for developing CPCs may be needed to support their implementation of any expanded CDS;

d) How to avoid duplication with existing national and international schemes and reducing the workload of exporting CPCs, if possible; and

e) How to ensure compatibility between CDS being developed or implemented in other tuna RFMOs.

6. The CDS WG shall also deal with technical issues related to the eBCD and possible expansion of the eBCD to other species if considered the appropriate tool.

7. The CDS WG shall, as far as possible, identify the key components to facilitate the implementation of any expanded CDS, including taking into account the special needs and requirements of developing CPCs, in both the design and implementation of such schemes, among others.

8. From 2024 to 2026, the CDS WG shall hold a meeting at least once a year unless otherwise decided by the Commission. If the CDS WG is held in-person, it should preferably be held in conjunction with an intersessional meeting, particularly the IMM Working Group, so that the Meeting Participation Fund can be efficiently utilized to support the participation of developing CPCs. If the CDS WG is held in conjunction with an IMM Working Group meeting, the total duration of these two meetings should be no more than five days, unless otherwise decided by the Commission. The CDS WG may meet to discuss technical issues related to the eBCD whenever the Chair of the CDS WG considers it necessary and logistically feasible.

9. The CDS WG will, if appropriate, develop and submit a draft recommendation on any expanded CDS to the 2026 Commission meeting or earlier, if possible. If the CDS WG cannot submit the draft recommendation in 2026, it shall propose a new workplan to the Commission for approval.

10. This Recommendation shall repeal and replace the *Resolution by ICCAT establishing an ICCAT Working Group on a Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS)* (Res. 21-21).

Annex 3

Minimum Tasks and Technical Requirements for the eBCD Technological Migration Feasibility Study and Multi-Species Extension Options

1. Minimum Tasks to be covered in the offers

The following tasks shall be addressed by all offerors in their complete offer:

- **Conduct a comprehensive technical due diligence** of the current eBCD application, including a full review of the source code, system architecture, database schema, integration points, build and deployment processes, and the security model in place.

- **Review in detail all existing functionalities**, ensuring that each of the current modules - such as registrations, validations, trade flows, reporting, certificates, authorisations, observer and inspector data, and user and entity management, will be fully preserved following the migration process.

- **Analyse the different migration strategies available** (upgrade, re-platform, refactor or rebuild), and provide a thorough assessment of the respective risks, anticipated costs and likely implementation timelines associated with each option.

- **Propose a clear target architecture and migration roadmap** that guarantees the future system remains scalable, maintainable, compliant with ICCAT standards and resilient under operational conditions.

- **Assess the evolution of the database design and structure** required to enable a multi-species CDS, while at the same time safeguarding the continuity of all existing bluefin tuna-related processes and records.

- **Prepare a comparative cost–benefit analysis** of the proposed migration options, presenting the advantages, disadvantages and long-term implications of each alternative.

- **Identify the human and technical resources necessary** for both the migration phase and for subsequent operation, maintenance and technical support of the system.

- **Develop and maintain a comprehensive risk register**, identifying potential threats to the success of the project and proposing concrete mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate these risks.

- **Prepare a detailed options analysis for the extension of the CDS**, comparing the approach of adapting the migrated eBCD system to cover multiple species with the alternative of developing a new, dedicated application.

2. Technical Requirements

The complete offer must specifically address the technical specifications of the eBCD system. Access management (profiles/roles), together with the system's main functionalities, are outlined in Annex 4.

The following specifications shall be taken into consideration:

2.1 Software application development

2.1.1 Unique eBCD number and grouping/splitting

Each eBCD shall have a unique number (code number) following a format that identifies year, country code and sequential number of BCD by Contracting Party or Cooperating Non-Contracting Party, Entity or Fishing

Entity (CPC). This number shall be the main index for access, input and verification purposes. The unique eBCD number, however, must allow possibly combining and creating a "group BCD" from different eBCDs, or to split a BCD in the case of split catch disposition. An example of combining BCDs is related to Joint Fishing Operations (JFOs): A unique eBCD number should be generated for each vessel participating in JFOs but the system should allow for those BCDs to be combined into one group BCD. Another special case involves the allocation of a partial catch originating from a single BCD in a farm harvest. In this case, the BCD must be split to enable a BCD to accurately represent the partial catch. Based on recent records, the system handles over 25,000 eBCDs and more than 23,000 BFTRCs annually (e.g. in 2024: 25,437 eBCDs and 23,442 BFTRCs), with volumes expected to continue increasing year by year.

2.1.2 Roles and rights (users and permissions)

Define roles/rights for user groups including, at least: vessel master, trap operator, vessel representative, port authority, CPC validator, importer/buyer, exporter/seller, regional observer, CPC administrator, farm operator, and master administrator. Access is restricted to registered users with credentials. The roles and rights of some users may require being modified depending on the function or the stage of process of the eBCD. For example, initial catch can be input by a vessel operator initially, but once verified by a CPC official, it will be not possible to make any changes to the catch information.

2.1.3 Regional Observer Programme (ROP) data

Allow digital input of Regional Observer Programme data verification for each fishing operation, as established by *Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 22-08 establishing a multi-annual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean* (Rec. 24-05). Certain fields shall be accessible based on user rights; privileged verifications shall require secondary authentication.

2.1.4 Interoperability with ICCAT databases via API-based data exchange

The eBCD system shall interoperate with ICCAT systems through secure APIs, if possible, ensuring synchronization of relevant datasets (e.g., Record of vessels, authorised farms list, CPC validator lists, importers/exporters, compliance items). In case of inconsistencies, the system shall issue warnings or block actions as appropriate. The eBCD shall also allow data exchange with other eBCD systems (e.g., CPC platforms) via secure API-based interfaces.

2.1.5 Web front-end and languages

The front-end shall be web-based with translation in ICCAT's three official languages (English, French and Spanish), with standard display across machines and multiple browsers.

2.1.6 Security model

Login and user rights grouped by roles; permissions mapped to data objects enforcing the security policy. Access shall be via secure channels (https).

2.1.7 Traceability and audit

Record and retain the traceability of operations on each eBCD: user, timestamp, access level, and changes made.

2.1.8 Validation layers

Provide multiple levels of validation for each BCD generated, including: email notifications to designated recipients on defined actions (e.g., alert CPC validators when a new eBCD is created); internal data validation; ensuring UTC-based dates, quantities aligned with ICCAT Recommendations, and consistent units of measure.

2.1.9 Reporting

Generate reports by user role and allow users to create, print and save summaries, consolidation and monitoring reports (e.g., total catch per week per CPC).

2.2 Infrastructure considerations and Contractor involvement

2.2.1 Web access capacity

The hosting provider must ensure 24/7 web access for multiple users (historically up to 100 simultaneous users). The Contractor will notify the hosting provider in case access problems are detected.

2.2.2 Backup and redundancy

The hosting provider is expected to guarantee backup and redundancy. In case of failure, a mirror system will remain operational until the main system is restored. The Contractor should request from the hosting provider the recovery of backups that the ICCAT Secretariat considers necessary.

2.2.3 Hosting and traffic management

The hosting provider needs to supply infrastructure capable of supporting multiple simultaneous users, with load balancing and acceleration under high demand. The Contractor will inform the hosting provider of performance issues so that appropriate actions can be taken.

2.2.4 ICCAT Secretariat connectivity

The hosting provider is to provide secure high-speed connectivity with the ICCAT database/network. The Contractor will coordinate with the ICCAT Secretariat and the provider whenever connectivity problems arise.

2.3 Human resources and technical support requirements

2.3.1 Training and support

Provide comprehensive training and user support for both ICCAT Secretariat staff and CPCs, covering all aspects of the eBCD system, including its various functionalities and data entry requirements. The provider should also demonstrate the capacity to deliver ongoing user support once the application is deployed in production.

2.3.2 Technical documentation

Provide detailed description of database, software algorithms and structure, including formats and relations with ICCAT auxiliary databases; supply help materials and procedures manual.

2.3.3 HR assessment

Review and report on human resources required for proper operation of the eBCD: to run the system, produce summaries, provide technical support, and respond to enquiries and reporting needs.

2.3.4 User guidelines

Develop user guidelines (in multiple languages) with example models for operability and information on minimum computer and browser requirements.