

**Report of the Intersessional Meeting of the Conservation
and Management Measures Compliance Committee (COC)**
(hybrid/Brussels, Belgium, 1-5 June 2026)

1. Opening of the meeting and meeting arrangements

The meeting was opened by the Chair of the Compliance Committee, Mr Derek Campbell, who outlined his plan for the meeting in accordance with the “[Letter from the Chair of the Conservation and Management Measures Compliance Committee \(COC\)](#)” transmitted on 29 October 2025 and the priority issues identified under item 6. The Executive Secretary, Mr Camille Manel, welcomed the participants and drew attention to the logistical arrangements for the meeting.

2. Nomination of Rapporteur

The European Union (EU) nominated Ms Sifra Blokhuis to serve as Rapporteur.

3. Adoption of agenda

Following an introduction by the Chair, it was decided to address the main focus of the meeting first i.e. agenda item 5, before moving onto the more general agenda items 4 and 6. The Agenda was adopted and is attached as **Appendix 1**.

4. Review of the draft course of action for streamlining and strengthening the process for the COC

The Chair introduced the “[Consolidated amendments and comments from CPC submissions in response to ICCAT Circular #00362/26 \(European Union, Japan, Mexico, United Kingdom, United States\)](#)”, in which CPCs provided input on the “Proposal to streamline and strengthen the process for the ICCAT Compliance Committee” that had been endorsed by the Commission at the 2025 Annual Meeting. He noted that in addition to edits, comments had been provided by six CPCs, which had been incorporated by the Chair into the textboxes in the document. The Chair opened the floor encouraging CPCs to provide high level interventions that could further strengthen the document.

Mexico had provided a written comment related to the inclusion of indicators in the identification of measures and obligations of which compliance is to be assessed. The European Union supported the Mexican suggestion and referenced the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) as an example of an organization that tracks progress and trends in compliance through time. While the IOTC applies an overall percentage, it was noted that the indicators could instead be assessed on a requirement-by-requirement basis. Given ICCAT’s large number of members, the Chair emphasized the need to provide the Secretariat with clear and specific instructions on how these indicators should be implemented.

Japan highlighted the high number of COC meeting documents and the challenges in reviewing all documents. It was suggested that the ICCAT Secretariat should highlight relevant information to the CPCs to minimize the number of COC documents. Japan pointed out that the Secretariat’s report may include not all but selected obligations to focus on subjects to review. Japan also noted that the timing of document availability and deadlines for submission of information should be considered. Japan’s suggestion was supported by several CPCs.

Other inputs to improve the process of identifying available information and the information needed to carry out the assessment included:

- clarifying and streamlining the number of documents available, by separating them into background and meeting documents, and providing guidance on what to read;
- establishing a structured assessment framework by identifying requirements and criteria, selecting and weighting indicators, and allowing CPCs to comment on the Secretariat’s preliminary assessment before it is finalized;

- creating a review cycle that prioritizes and identifies which measures require annual review and which could have a longer reviewing cycle;
- using the Integrated Online Management System (IOMS) as an evaluation strategy to apply technology to create efficient compliance systems;
- review and adjust the deadlines for document submission to allow CPCs more time for review;
- checking the practices of other Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), considering the dimension and characteristics of ICCAT.

The United States suggested that the COC consider its current efforts as both streamlining and clarifying, noting that the COC aims to streamline documents and products, while simultaneously clarifying processes. The discussion on identification of available information to carry out an assessment was closely linked to the following topic of the discussion: the design of documents with “abridged” information that would facilitate assessment. It was noted that the large number of members and obligations of ICCAT should be taken into account.

Another topic of discussion was finding a mechanism to ensure adequate follow-up of non-compliance issues detected, using available tools and possible innovation. Following the Chair’s introduction of the schedule of actions that is progressively being implemented by COC, Japan intervened and noted that a mechanism is currently in place for compliance and follow-up but that it is not yet fully functioning. Examining why this is not working should be done first before creating new mechanisms. The European Union (EU) agreed with this suggestion and noted that as the level of severity in the schedule of action is not referred to in the “Secretariat’s Report to the ICCAT Conservation and Management Compliance Committee” (COC_303/2025) or in the “Compliance summary tables” (COC_308/2025) non-compliance documents, it is therefore hard to tell what the severity of non-compliance is. In line with this discussion, the United States noted that it would be helpful to first look at existing documents, evaluate what information is already in those documents, and discuss if the format and structure serve the COC’s needs. The United States suggested this would be a logical, discrete intersessional task to facilitate a more detailed discussion about streamlining at the Annual Meeting.

It was suggested that the ICCAT Secretariat and the Chair could better integrate the schedule of action into other relevant ICCAT documents. For example, the ICCAT Secretariat could draft the “Compliance summary tables” two months in advance, giving CPCs sufficient time to review, and the revised tables could be published at least 30 days in advance of the annual meeting in November.

In response to the discussion, the ICCAT Secretariat agreed that a timeline should be available to clarify what needs to be prioritized for review. The Committee can provide input on what documents have priority and what are support documents, but the Secretariat also noted that certain documents are required by ICCAT Recommendations. Further, it was clarified that the Integrated Online Management System (IOMS) currently serves as an interface rather than managing the full process, so it cannot yet provide detailed extractable information, although it does show what has been submitted by CPCs. CPCs were reminded that all potential non-compliance cases (identified by the Secretariat, as well as by CPCs or Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) in accordance with the *Recommendation by ICCAT to establish a process for the review and reporting of compliance information (Rec. 08-09)*) are recorded in the “Compliance summary tables” (COC_308) and submitted to CPCs for review 15-21 days before the meeting, bearing in mind that draft versions may continue to be updated during that period.

The meeting continued with discussion on Table 1 of the “*Consolidated amendments and comments from CPC submissions in response to ICCAT Circular #00362/26 (European Union, Japan, Mexico, United Kingdom, United States)*”. Questions raised by the Chair and different CPCs included if all obligations suggested in the table were necessary, how to check that the table includes all required obligations, how to transform the table to a state where it is ready for future action and if the table has to be understood as a starting point to be further elaborated on at a later stage.

The EU provided clarification that this version of the table is just a starting point. The document is divided into 2 categories. The first category is for measures to be reviewed annually, and the other is for measures to be reviewed every 2-3 years. Senegal followed by inquiring about the role of the Panels in the compliance process and noted that the burden posed by the large volume of preparatory documents is even greater for developing countries and smaller delegations.

The Chair replied that a relevant ICCAT Panel could play a role in interpreting relevant Recommendations when differing views emerge, if needed, and concluded this agenda item by encouraging CPCs to continue work on the Table 1 in preparation for the Annual Meeting in November 2026, through an intersessional process that can be facilitated by the Secretariat and the Chair.

5. Consideration of updates for 2026 to the Strategic plan for review of compliance priorities

The Chair opened the next agenda item and recommended that CPCs take the discussions held under agenda item 4 into consideration in discussing both the utility and potential content of the COC Strategic plan. The Chair drew the attention of the Committee to the meeting document “[Updating ICCAT’s Strategic plan for review of compliance priorities](#)”. He recalled that the Compliance Committee had developed and approved a strategic planning approach in 2018–2019 to prioritise compliance reviews and reduce workload, which required updating for 2026 and beyond. CPCs were encouraged to apply and refine the approach reflected in the Strategic plan template more consistently to further identify the priorities for the 2026 Annual Meeting and beyond. The discussion revolved around the Appendices 1 and 3 to the document, with a priority review of Addendum 1 to Appendix 1 “[Draft schedule of compliance review priorities \(COC_320/2019\)](#)” and Appendix 3 “ICCAT measures scheduled to expire (listed by year)”.

The Chair opened the floor for comments accompanied with the question to CPCs on the structure and template of the Strategic plan as presented in Appendix 1 “Strategic plan for review of compliance priorities (COC_320/2019)” and wondered if this was still relevant today. How can the Strategic plan be elaborated on for it to be utilized for prioritization during the 2026 Annual Meeting?

Guatemala reiterated the challenge of managing a high volume of documents and underscored the importance of reviewing the Strategic plan in light of the heavy documentation burden. This should include an analysis of redundant requirements or excessive reporting demands, requests for simplification addressed to the relevant Panels and the need to clarify the purpose and length of required information. Guatemala further noted the importance of focusing on substantive compliance, including catch and effort data, as well as the quality and consistency of the information submitted. Guatemala clarified that both delegations and the Secretariat have a role to play in identifying information on reporting requirements that are redundant. In response, the Chair noted that a broader review of overlaps and reporting requirements may be needed, ideally one year in advance, and suggested that a more in-depth, CPC-by-CPC review of priority measures could be undertaken during the intersessional period with support from the Secretariat.

The United States mentioned that it will provide additional written comments to Appendix 3 “ICCAT measures scheduled to expire (listed by year)” and highlighted that it is looking forward to discussing the Strategic plan for 2027-2029 as well as suggestions for areas of focus this year (2026). It was suggested that the Compliance Committee should review the [Recommendation by ICCAT on the bycatch of sea turtles caught in association with ICCAT fisheries \(combine, streamline, and amend Recommendations 10-09 and 13-11\) \(Rec. 22-12\)](#), especially given that new requirements went into force in January 2026. The EU expressed support for the suggestion made by the United States.

The Chair noted that, when undertaking a prioritised review, it is important to draw on input from CPCs and the Secretariat on how best to structure and support the review through documentation. The Chair emphasised that further work is needed to ensure that prioritised measures are reviewed and discussed in a meaningful way, and observed that, given the low level of CPC engagement to date, additional efforts to facilitate broader participation would be beneficial.

In response to the Chair’s comment, Japan expressed doubts on the practicality of basing the timing of a prioritized review on the timing of stock assessment. Expiration of the Recommendation rather than stock assessment would be more appropriate timing for review. In order to consider the review results during the negotiation for revisions of the Recommendation, the review should be taken one year advance from the expiration.

The EU suggested that billfish could be an interesting example to obtain inputs for the measures for priority review. The EU suggested to revise “[Billfish check sheets received in accordance with Rec. 18-05](#)” (COC_315/2025) in a way that includes the contents of submissions to the document, to which the Chairs assures that the information has already been compiled in a way such as the EU suggested.

Canada expressed support for the shark check sheets ([Shark Implementation Check Sheets in accordance with Rec. 18-06 \(COC_314/2024\)](#)) being used as another example for obtaining inputs for the measures for priority review.

More questions were raised by CPCs on prioritizations with regards to how to define priorities, whether or not they should be part of the stock assessment exercise, the collaboration between a CPC and the Secretariat when a specific review is executed and, if more guidance could be provided on how to provide specific reviews.

The Secretariat provided comments on compliance reporting relating to billfish and sharks, clarifying that when a CPC submits information that does not address the relevant question, the Secretariat seeks clarification and makes this available to other CPCs as appropriate. The Secretariat also noted that Appendix 1 of the shark and billfish sheets provides a clear overview of compliance and encouraged CPCs to meet reporting deadlines so that timely and thorough analyses can be prepared to support the review of compliance with the relevant measures.

The United States agreed with other CPCs that additional time for COC could facilitate a better process, and commented that COC could consider having a standing meeting each June to continue some of the reviews discussed. The United States also commented that, while there is interplay with the work of Panels, the COC does not need to wait for Panels to set compliance priorities.

The Chair stressed that COC remains an independent body with responsibility for setting its own priorities and taking its own decisions on compliance review. The Chair continued to summarize the earlier discussions and stated that the priorities identified to date for upcoming meetings included the billfish and sea turtle measures. He further suggested that work should continue from pre-existing documents that can be updated as appropriate.

The Chair invited CPCs to individually assist in the preparation prior to the annual meeting of reviews of measures of interest to CPCs, through for example a Friends of the Chair position. He also invited CPCs to continue thinking about the utility of deep dives and redundancies, as well as how COC should communicate suggestions to relevant Panels to make sure the COC review discussions and recommendations are considered. The Chair proposed for the Secretariat and the Chair to create a meeting document for COC to complete to present to a relevant Panel to communicate COC input on a relevant measure a year in advance.

6. Review of progress made by the Online Reporting Technology Working Group (WG-ORT) relevant to streamlining and strengthening the process for the Compliance Committee (COC)

Mr Carlos Mayor, Head of the Statistics Department, presented the document “[Review of progress made by the Online Reporting Technology Working Group \(WG-ORT\) relevant to streamlining and strengthening the process for the Compliance Committee \(COC\)](#)”, on behalf of the Chair of the WG-ORT, Dr Bryan Keller. He emphasized that intersessional work had been done and is still ongoing on topics such as to support the streamlining of the Compliance Committee process, including on translation, accessibility and search functions, possible public access to selected data, simplification of shark and billfish check sheets, and related reporting and review processes. He encouraged CPCs to attend the next WG-ORT session in February 2027.

The Chair reflected after the presentation that access to IOMS should be expanded to let CPCs review the Annual Reports from other CPCs, allowing for individual deep-dives of CPCs.

7. Intersessional work to be carried out in 2026

The Chair concluded that intersessional work in 2026 should be undertaken to better structure COC discussions at the Annual Meeting. Work should continue to build upon the strategic plan template with the further inputs from CPCs during the intersessional period. It was also noted that further work is needed to elaborate on the “[Consolidated amendments and comments from CPC submissions in response to ICCAT Circular #00362/26 \(European Union, Japan, Mexico, United Kingdom, United States\)](#)”, and identify how to best review and streamline documents and processes, with the Chair, in coordination with the Secretariat,

to consolidate the COC's work and identify areas of positive progress in preparation for the Annual Meeting. Participants further called for more detailed review of the billfish and turtle documents to support the identification of measures for priority review, and for the continued involvement of CPCs, including through the Friends of the Chair, throughout the compliance process and in preparation for the Annual Meeting.

8. Other matters

No other matters were raised by CPCs.

9. Adoption of report and closure

It was agreed that the Report would be adopted by correspondence. The meeting was adjourned.

Agenda

1. Opening of the meeting and meeting arrangements
2. Nomination of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of agenda
4. Review of progress made by the Online reporting Technology Working Group (WG-ORT) relevant to streamlining and strengthening the process for the Compliance Committee (COC)
5. Review of the draft course of action for streamlining and strengthening the process for the COC
6. Consideration of updates for 2026 to the Strategic plan for review of compliance priorities, taking into account discussions under agenda item 4
7. Future program of work, including intersessional work to be carried out in 2026 and at the 2026 Annual Meeting
8. Other matters
9. Adoption of report and closure

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