



Madrid, 11 June 2018

**ICCAT CIRCULAR # 3933 / 2018**

**SUBJECT: FAREWELL LETTER FROM THE COMMISSION CHAIR TO THE OUTGOING ICCAT  
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

I have the honour to transmit to you a farewell letter from the Commission Chair to the outgoing ICCAT Executive Secretary.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration

Dr. Miguel Neves dos Santos  
Assistant Executive Secretary

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**Attachment:** Farewell letter from the Commission Chair to ICCAT Executive Secretary.



7 June 2018

Dear Driss,

Following fourteen years of excellent service at the head of the Secretariat of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, I am writing this farewell letter to you with deep regret.

With you at the helm, the Secretariat, which was already boasting about the professionalism of its staff, has embraced the 21st century, and aided by your leadership skills and dedication, is now able to consistently meet the ever greater challenges posed by the progressive complexity of modern fisheries management and the immediacy of data reporting afforded by the new technologies.

During your term of office, ICCAT has grown substantially, in terms of number of Contracting Parties (from 34 to 52 over this period) and number of staff members (from 20 to 35 members of staff). To address this situation, you undertook a number of actions to restructure the Secretariat with a view to giving a more prominent role to compliance, inclusion of large-scale research programmes and meeting the needs of developing Contracting Parties (capacity building, meeting participation funds, etc.). All this will remain with this organisation after your departure, being the lasting imprint that you leave behind you.

Your faith in the scientific community and your support of the SCRS have been largely acknowledged not only by the scientists themselves but also by the Commission, which is increasingly aware of the importance of a sound scientific basis which serves as a foundation for fisheries management. In this regard, your diplomatic skills have contributed to adoption by consensus of a myriad of conservation and management measures which have laid the foundation for important achievements in the recovery of some stocks which were on the verge of overexploitation and a reduction in illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing which undermines the effectiveness of ICCAT conservation and management measures. Owing to the high standards of management as well as inclusiveness – as reflected by the growing involvement of NGOs – achieved by ICCAT during your term of office, this Commission has become a leading organisation, setting a benchmark and example for many RFMOs.

This inclusiveness is also reflected in your participation in world events, such as numerous consultative processes within the UNFSA and UNCLOS. You currently hold the presidency of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network, which also bears witness to the reputation and esteem in which you are held internationally.

Moreover, during your term of office, you have maintained and strengthened the relations of this Commission with different bodies of the Spanish Government, the country where the Secretariat is headquartered, and consequently, you have recently been awarded the honour of Commendation of Civil Order of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Merit.

Following this period in which you have demonstrated at all times your strong sense of responsibility and great efficiency in managing the Secretariat of the Commission, I hope that you remain close to us to guide us in the future through your experience and knowledge in the area of fisheries resources management.

I sincerely appreciate the good work that you have done over the years and I trust that we will continue to maintain a close working and personal relationship in the future. I would like to wish you all the success possible and I wish you the best in this new stage of your life.

Kind regards,



Raul Delgado  
Commission Chair