

**RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE IMPROVEMENT OF ICCAT DATA  
COLLECTING PROCEDURES**

The Council:

NOTING the deficiencies in Atlantic tuna catch-effort statistics reported in the SCRS report of November 20-28, 1972.

NOTING further the view expressed in the SCRS Report that a substantial improvement in availability of accurate catch-effort statistics on a timely basis is necessary « if the status of stocks is to be assessed accurately and on a timely basis, and the stocks managed on a rational basis...»,

REALIZING that decisions regarding conservation programs to achieve the fundamental purposes of the Commission depend upon the availability of reliable stock assessments,

RECOGNIZING the need to remedy deficiencies in catch-effort data on an urgent basis,

NOTING with appreciation the cooperation of FAO in assisting in the establishment of efficient data collection systems by national offices,

CONSIDERING the long-term nature of programs to develop and refine national statistical systems, and noting particularly the problems created by transshipments of tuna in certain Atlantic ports which place great burdens on certain national statistical systems,

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT present limitations on the size of the ICCAT Secretariat and existing budgetary constraints during the 1972-73 biennium,

1. Urges Governments of all countries concerned with Atlantic tuna fisheries to make special efforts to establish efficient systems for the timely collection of tuna catch-effort data,
2. Invites, as an experiment applicable to 1973 only, member Governments to assist in the data collection work of ICCAT by offering to provide technical experts to the ICCAT Secretariat to participate in the collection of statistics in problem areas, such work to include the collection, as appropriate, of catch-effort data directly from fishing vessels in important transshipment areas, such as the Canary Islands, the Cape Verde Islands, Dakar, Luanda, Tema, Abidjan and Pointe Noire,
3. Authorizes the Executive Secretary to select one or more experts from the list of the experts offered by member Governments in order to carry out the program drawn up by the Executive Secretary and under his direction, after previous consultation with the concerned member Governments.
4. Urges all Governments concerned with Atlantic tuna fisheries to assist in arranging for such data to be made fully available to the technical experts collecting data for ICCAT, and
5. Requests the Commission at its 1973 Biennial Meeting to evaluate the experimental data collection program in the light of overall data needs, and to decide whether or not to continue the program on the basis of such evaluation.