

**RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT CONCERNING MINIMUM
STANDARDS FOR VESSEL MONITORING SYSTEMS IN THE ICCAT CONVENTION AREA**

RECALLING previous recommendations by ICCAT establishing minimum standards for satellite-based vessel monitoring systems (VMS), in particular Recommendation 03-14;

RECOGNIZING the developments in satellite-based VMS, and their utility within ICCAT;

RECOGNIZING the legitimate right of coastal States to monitor the vessels fishing in waters under their jurisdiction;

CONSIDERING that real-time transmission to the Fishing Monitoring Center (FMC) of the coastal State of VMS data of all the vessels (including catching, carrier and support vessels) flying the flag of a CPC authorised to fish ICCAT species facilitates monitoring, control and surveillance by the coastal State to ensure the effective implementation of ICCAT conservation and monitoring measures;

MINDFUL that the SCRS acknowledged in its 2017 report that the higher the frequency of reporting the more useful VMS data are and that a 4-hour frequency of transmission is insufficient to detect fishing activity for many gear types;

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

1. Notwithstanding stricter requirements that may apply in specific ICCAT fisheries, each flag Contracting Party, Cooperating non-Contracting Party, Entity or Fishing Entity (hereinafter referred to as CPC) shall implement a Vessel Monitoring System (hereinafter referred to as VMS) for its commercial fishing vessels exceeding 20 meters between perpendiculars or 24 meters length overall (LOA) as well as, beginning no later than 1 January 2020, those above 15 meters LOA authorized to fish in waters beyond jurisdiction of the flag CPC and:
 - a) Require its fishing vessels to be equipped with an autonomous, tamper-evident system that continuously, automatically, and independent of any intervention by the vessel, transmits messages to the FMC of the flag CPC to track the position, course, and speed of a fishing vessel by the flag CPC of that vessel.
 - b) Ensure that the satellite tracking device fitted on board the fishing vessel collects and transmits continuously to the FMC of the flag CPC the following data:
 - i) the vessel's identification;
 - ii) the geographical position of the vessel (longitude, latitude) with a margin of error lower than 500 meters, with a confidence interval of 99%; and
 - iii) the date and time.
 - c) Ensure that the FMC of the flag CPC receives an automatic notification if communication between the FMC and the satellite tracking device is interrupted.
 - d) Ensure, in cooperation with the coastal State, that the position messages transmitted by its vessels while operating in waters under the jurisdiction of that coastal State are also transmitted automatically and in real time to the FMC of the coastal State that has authorized the activity. In implementing this provision, due consideration should be given to minimizing the operational costs, technical difficulties, and administrative burden associated with transmission of these messages.

- e) In order to facilitate the transmission and receipt of position messages, as described in subparagraph 1(d), the FMC of the flag CPC and the FMC of the coastal State shall exchange their contact information and notify each other without delay of any changes to this information. The FMC of the coastal State shall notify the flag CPC FMC of any interruption in the reception of consecutive position messages. The transmission of position messages between the FMC of the flag CPC and that of the coastal State shall be carried out electronically using a secure communication system.
2. Each CPC shall take appropriate measures to ensure that the VMS messages are transmitted and received, as specified in paragraph 1, and use this information to continuously track the position of its vessels.
 3. Each CPC shall ensure that the masters of fishing vessels flying its flag ensure that the satellite tracking devices are permanently and continuously operational and that the information identified in paragraph 1b) is collected and transmitted¹ at least once every hour for purse seine vessels and at least once every two hours for all other vessels². In addition, CPCs shall require that their vessel operators ensure that:
 - a) the satellite tracking device is not tampered with in any way;
 - b) VMS data are not altered in any way;
 - c) the antennae connected to the satellite tracking device is not obstructed in any way;
 - d) the satellite tracking device is hardwired into the fishing vessel and the power supply is not intentionally interrupted in any way; and
 - e) the satellite tracking device is not removed from the vessel except for the purposes of repair or replacement.
 4. In the event of a technical failure or non-operation of the satellite tracking device fitted on board a fishing vessel, the device shall be repaired or replaced within one month from the time of the event, unless the vessel has been removed from the list of authorized LSFVs, where applicable, or for vessels not required to be included on ICCAT's authorized vessel list, the authorization to fish in areas beyond the jurisdiction of the flag CPC no longer applies. The vessel shall not be authorized to commence a fishing trip with a defective satellite tracking device. Furthermore, when a device stops functioning or has a technical failure during a fishing trip, the repair or the replacement shall take place as soon as the vessel enters a port; the fishing vessel shall not be authorized to commence a fishing trip without the satellite tracking device having been repaired or replaced.
 5. Each CPC shall ensure that a fishing vessel with a defective satellite tracking device shall communicate to the FMC, at least daily, reports containing the information in paragraph 1b) by other means of communication (radio, web-based reporting, electronic mail, telefax or telex).
 6. A CPC may allow a vessel to power down its satellite tracking device only if the vessel will not be fishing for an extended period of time (e.g., in dry dock for repairs), and it notifies the competent authorities of its flag CPC in advance.

The satellite tracking device must be re-activated, and collect and transmit at least one report, prior to the vessel leaving port.

7. CPCs are encouraged to extend the application of this Recommendation to their fishing vessels not already covered pursuant to paragraph 1, as appropriate, to ensure the effective monitoring of compliance with ICCAT conservation and management measures.
8. CPCs are encouraged to cooperate, as appropriate and in accordance with their domestic laws, by sharing data reported under paragraph 1b) to support Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) activities.

¹ In the event that the connection between the satellite tracking device and the satellite is unavailable, the information identified in paragraph 1b) shall still be collected in accordance with paragraph 3 but may instead be transmitted as soon as the satellite connection becomes available.

² Developing CPCs may choose to apply this polling and transmission requirement (two hours) to their purse seiners targeting small tuna species in the Mediterranean.

9. The Commission shall review this Recommendation no later than 2020 and consider the need for revisions to improve its effectiveness.
10. To inform this review, the SCRS is requested to provide advice on the VMS data that would most assist the SCRS in carrying out its work, including frequency of transmission for the different ICCAT fisheries.
11. This measure repeals and replaces the *Recommendation by ICCAT Amending Recommendation 03-14 by ICCAT Concerning Minimum Standards for the Establishment of a Vessel Monitoring System in the ICCAT Convention Area* (Rec. 14-09).