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**U.S. COVER NOTE ON THE DRAFT RESOLUTION BY ICCAT ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM FOR
THE VOLUNTARY EXCHANGE OF INSPECTORS
TO CONDUCT JOINT INTERNATIONAL INSPECTIONS AT SEA**

For some time, the Commission has been considering modernizing its 1975 Scheme of Joint International Inspection, which was held in abeyance until it was activated for the eastern bluefin tuna fishery in 2006. As part of a revised comprehensive Scheme of Joint International Inspection (Scheme), consideration has been given in recent years to establishing a process for CPCs to exchange inspectors with a view to addressing, in particular, the special requirements of developing States. The attached proposal seeks to operationalize such a concept, which was discussed in PWG at the 2016 Annual ICCAT meeting, and for which a concept note was appended to the 2016 PWG report.

A number of CPCs have had positive experiences with inspector exchanges, both within the context of schemes of joint international inspection implemented by RFMOs, and otherwise. For example, several CPCs have had such experiences in the Atlantic, within the context of the inspection scheme that has been adopted by the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization. Others have had similar experiences in other tuna RFMOs (e.g., the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission) or through bilateral arrangements. The United States has prepared some information to provide to ICCAT participants on existing partnerships with other CPCs, including Senegal, Ghana, Cabo Verde, Canada, France, and the UK. The existing partnerships and lessons learned through these experiences should enhance the collaborative opportunities set out in this pilot program.

The attached draft Resolution establishing a pilot program for the exchange of inspectors is intended to complement ongoing efforts toward development of a revised Scheme by helping to familiarize inspectors from one CPC with the boarding and inspection processes and procedures of another, thereby enhancing understanding and building knowledge of such activities. Participation in the program will also help build capacity by providing direct experience both in the conduct of at-sea boarding and inspections, and in post-inspection cooperation and flag State follow-up. Participation is expected to provide particular benefits to developing CPCs who may have limited capacity to directly train inspectors in such procedures or to deploy inspection vessels.

Participation in this pilot program is completely voluntary, but broad participation will substantially strengthen cooperation and collaboration among CPCs and help inform ongoing discussions by the Commission on the structure and content of a revised Scheme.

Costs to ICCAT for supporting such a pilot program will be minimal, as the Secretariat's role will be to collect information on relevant authorities and points of contact for participating CPCs and post that information on ICCAT's website. It is anticipated that this will require no more than 20 hours of staff time per year and a minimal amount of space on the ICCAT server.

DRAFT RESOLUTION BY ICCAT ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM FOR THE VOLUNTARY EXCHANGE OF INSPECTORS TO CONDUCT JOINT INTERNATIONAL INSPECTIONS AT SEA

Proposal by the United States

RECALLING Recommendation 75-02 for a Scheme of Joint International Inspection and Annex 7 of Recommendation 14-04 establishing a joint international inspection scheme for the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna fishery;

DESIRING to collaborate in the adoption of a system of joint international enforcement as provided in paragraph 3 of Article IX of the ICCAT Convention and consistent with the General Outline of Integrated Monitoring Measures adopted at the 13th Special Meeting of the Commission (Doc. 02-31);

NOTING the joint inspection activities that have been carried out by CPCs in the Atlantic and other oceans;

RECOGNIZING that the exchange of inspectors through a voluntary pilot program will contribute to the capacity of CPCs, particularly developing CPCs, to conduct at sea inspections in ICCAT fisheries; and

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that lessons learned through a voluntary pilot program will inform future discussions at ICCAT regarding the development and implementation of a revised Scheme of Joint International Inspection, whether such a scheme is applied throughout the Convention area or in a single fishery.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS RESOLVES THAT:

Program Objectives

1. A pilot program is established for the voluntary exchange of inspectors to participate in boarding and inspection activities conducted by CPCs in the Convention area pursuant to their existing authorities. Such exchanges are intended to facilitate the sharing of information and expertise needed to strengthen at-sea inspection capabilities and capacities, enhance cooperation and collaboration among CPCs on this important area of fisheries monitoring, control, and surveillance, and inform future discussions on this issue within ICCAT.

Participation and Points of Contact

2. All CPCs are encouraged to participate in the pilot program and may join or leave it at any time.
3. CPCs interested in participating in the pilot program should submit to the Executive Secretary the following information:
 - (a) National authorities responsible for at-sea inspection and other supporting maritime agencies as may be appropriate, and
 - (b) Designated point(s) of contact (POC) within that authority with responsibility for program implementation, including name, telephone, fax numbers, and e-mail address.
4. The Executive Secretary shall make the information provided under paragraph 3 available on the public portion of the ICCAT website.

Pilot Program Process and Procedures

5. CPCs that have elected to participate in the pilot program should communicate with one another to identify opportunities to undertake joint inspection activities pursuant to this program.

6. CPCs deploying patrol vessels in the Convention area should:
 - (a) Consider their participation in the pilot program in developing patrol plans and strive, where possible, to arrange patrols that can accommodate one or more inspectors from other CPCs; and
 - (b) Provide relevant information to other participating CPCs, as appropriate, in order to determine their interest in deploying an inspector either on a particular patrol or on a patrol that may be planned in the future.
7. CPCs wishing to place an inspector on another CPC's inspection vessel should promptly contact the POC of the CPC that has provided information under paragraph 6, to indicate its interest.
8. Once a CPC provides notice of its interest in deploying an inspector under paragraph 7, the concerned CPCs will consult to determine whether the collaborative deployment of the inspector can be accommodated, taking into consideration operational limitations as well as training, operational and information security, and medical and physical requirements. CPCs deploying inspection vessel(s) should make special efforts to accommodate requests from developing CPCs, in particular.
9. CPCs that have agreed to conduct joint inspection activities under the pilot program shall enter into a standing or *ad hoc* bilateral agreement or arrangement to address relevant details of the deployment, including provisions for the cooperative deployment of personnel and the use of vessels, aircraft or other resources for fisheries surveillance and control purposes, and the protection of law enforcement sensitive or otherwise confidential or protected information from inappropriate disclosure.

Reporting and Review

10. CPCs should report to the Commission annually on any activities carried out under the pilot program for consideration by the Permanent Working Group for the Improvement of Statistics and Conservation (PWG). CPCs are also encouraged to provide information related to joint inspection activities undertaken outside the ICCAT context, as appropriate.
11. This pilot program will be reviewed after no more than 5 years after adoption.