

2017 ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT¹

1 Introduction

In accordance with Article VII of the Convention, this report is presented by the Secretariat to the Commission to outline its activities during financial year 2017.

2 Contracting Parties to the Convention

At 20 October 2017, the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) is comprised of the following 51 Contracting Parties: Albania, Algeria, Angola, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Canada, Cape Verde, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Curaçao, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, European Union, France (St. Pierre & Miquelon), Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea (Rep.), Guinea Bissau, Honduras, Iceland, Japan, Korea (Rep.), Liberia, Libya, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Philippines, Russia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom (Overseas Territories), United States, Uruguay, Vanuatu and Venezuela.

3 ICCAT Recommendations and Resolutions

Adoption and entry into force of the Recommendations and Resolutions

On 12 December 2016, the Secretariat officially transmitted the texts of the Recommendations and Resolutions adopted at the 20th Special Meeting of the Commission (Vilamoura, Portugal, 14 to 21 November 2016) to the Contracting Parties and to non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities that have Atlantic coastlines or that fish tunas in the Convention area, and to intergovernmental fishery organizations, requesting their cooperation in this regard.

The texts of the Recommendations and Resolutions adopted by the Commission in 2016 were published in the *Report for Biennial Period, 2016-2017, Part I (2016), Vol. 1*.

Following notification, the Secretariat received the following correspondence which was circulated to all Contracting Parties:

- Norway's objection to the *Recommendation by ICCAT to supplement "Recommendation 14-04 by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 13-07 by ICCAT to establish a multi-annual recovery plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean"* [Rec. 16-09].

Following the six-month grace period after the transmission of the Recommendations and Resolutions adopted by the Commission, the Recommendations entered into force on 12 June 2017, except Rec. 16-09 which did so on 11 August 2017 in accordance with Article VIII, paragraph 3 (a) of the ICCAT Convention.

In March 2017, following the meeting of the Mediterranean swordfish species group, the Secretariat conducted a vote by mail regarding the proposal of the ICCAT working group, which was established in accordance with paragraph 3 of Recommendation 16-05. This vote concerned the ICCAT allocation key for the Mediterranean swordfish stock. The proposal was adopted and is included as an addendum to the *Recommendation by ICCAT replacing the Recommendation [13-04] and establishing a multi-annual recovery plan for Mediterranean swordfish* [Rec. 16-05].

¹ Information at 20 October 2017.

4 ICCAT inter-sessional meetings and Working Groups

In accordance with Commission decisions in this regard, the following meetings were held in 2017:

- Intersessional Meeting of Panel 4 on Mediterranean Swordfish (*Madrid, Spain, 20 to 22 February 2017*)
- Bluefin Tuna Data Preparatory Meeting (*Madrid, Spain, 6 to 11 March 2017*)
- Shortfin Mako Data Preparatory Meeting (*Madrid, Spain, 28 to 31 March 2017*)
- Atlantic Swordfish Data Preparatory Meeting (*Madrid, Spain, 3 to 7 April 2017*)
- 1st Joint Tuna RFMO FAD Working Group Meeting (*Madrid, Spain, 19 to 21 April 2017*)
- Small Tunas Species Group Intersessional Meeting (*Miami, United States, 24 to 28 April 2017*)
- Working Group on Stock Assessment Methods Meeting (*Madrid, Spain, 8 to 12 May 2017*)
- Albacore Species Group Intersessional Meeting (Including Assessment of Mediterranean Albacore) (*Madrid, Spain, 5 to 9 June 2017*)
- Shortfin Mako Stock Assessment Meeting (*Madrid, Spain, 12 to 16 June 2017*)
- 5th Meeting of The Working Group on Convention Amendment (*Madrid, Spain, 26 June 2017*)
- Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Follow Up of the Second ICCAT Performance Review (*Madrid, Spain, 27 to 28 June 2017*)
- 3rd Meeting of the Standing Working Group to Enhance Dialogue between Fisheries Scientists and Managers (*Madrid, Spain, 29 to 30 June 2017*)
- Atlantic Swordfish Stock Assessment Session (*Madrid, Spain, 3 to 7 July 2017*).
- Intersessional Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Ecosystems (*Madrid, Spain, 10 to 14 July 2017*)
- Bluefin Stock Assessment Meeting (*Madrid, Spain, 20 to 28 July 2017*)
- Tropical Tunas Species Group Intersessional Meeting (*Madrid, Spain, 4 to 8 September 2017*).
- 3rd Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on FADs (*Madrid, Spain, 11 to 12 September 2017*)
- SCRS Species Groups Meeting (*Madrid, Spain, 25 to 29 September 2017*)
- Meeting of the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (*Madrid, Spain, 2 to 6 October 2017*)
- Meeting of the Port Inspection Expert Group for Capacity and Assistance (*Madrid, Spain, 9 to 10 October 2017*)

5 Meetings at which ICCAT was represented

Within the framework of ICCAT's mandate to inform other international organizations of the measures adopted by the Commission, the Secretariat participated in several meetings and technical consultation processes, which included several regional fisheries organizations (see **Annex 1** to this Report (**STF-201/2017-Anexo 1**), which summarizes the main issues discussed at these meetings).

- The first Regional Seabird Bycatch Pre-assessment Workshop (*Kruger National Park, South Africa, 23 February to 1 March 2017*)
- Tuna Compliance Network Workshop (*Vigo, Spain, 27 to 31 March 2017*)
- Informal meeting of the World Trade Organization Negotiating Group on Rules (fishing subsidies) (*Geneva, Switzerland, 27 March 2017*)
- Ministerial Conference on Mediterranean Fisheries (*Floriana, Malta, 29 to 30 March 2017*)
- Presentation of ICCAT in the University of Shanghai (*Shanghai, China, 7 to 14 May 2017*)
- Third session of the Preparatory Committee established by General Assembly Resolution 69/292 for development of a legally binding international instrument within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (*New York, United States, 27 March to 7 April 2017*)
- 1st Meeting of Parties to the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (*Oslo, Norway, 29 to 31 May*)
- United Nations Conference to Support Achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development (*New York, United States, 5 to 9 July 2017*)
- The Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project's Fourth Project Steering Committee Meeting (PSC) (*Rome, Italy, 11 to 13 July 2017*)
- Marine piracy off the African Atlantic coast: Extent and prospects for a more effective fight – ATLAFCO (*Tangier, Morocco, 18 to 19 September 2017*)

- Working Group (WG2) on pelagics –ICCAT MEDAC Advisory Council for the Mediterranean (*Palma de Mallorca, Spain, 10 to 11 October 2017*)
- 41st Session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (*Budva, Montenegro, 16 to 20 October 2017*)
- One-by-One Tuna Fisheries Conference (*Faial Island, Azores, Portugal, 16 to 18 October 2017*).
- Consultation and Validation Workshop on the Development of an electronic Monitoring and Reporting Information System (e-MARIS application) (Cape Town, South Africa, 25-17 October 2017).

6 Tagging lottery

National laboratories give awards or prizes to people who recover tags to encourage the return of tags. In order to support these programmes, ICCAT organizes an annual lottery with a \$500 prize.

In the last ICCAT draw, which was held on 2 October 2017, prizes were awarded for three tags in the following categories: small tunas, temperate tunas and sharks.

The winning tags were as follows:

- *Small tunas*: The winning tag carried the number ATP038795 and was recovered from a little tunny (*Euthynnus alletteratus*/LTA) by a crew member of a Senegalese vessel, 81 days after it had been attached. The tagging was carried out during EU-Spain campaigns.
- *Temperate tunas*: The winning tag carried the number AAB000926 and was recovered from an albacore tuna (*Thunnus alalunga*/ALB) by a Spanish citizen, 50 days after it had been attached. The tagging was carried out during EU-Spain campaigns.
- *Sharks*: The winning tag carried the number 354658 and was recovered from a blue shark (*Prionace glauca*/BSH) by a Spanish citizen. The tagging was carried out during the United States campaigns.

There was no winner in the category of billfish this year.

Atlantic-wide Research Programme for Bluefin Tuna (GBYP)

The additional draw supported by this programme comprises three prizes, two for €500 and one for €1,000 exclusively for recoveries of bluefin tuna tags (*Thunnus thynnus*/BFT). The winning tags and the awards were as follows:

- €1,000: the winning tag carried the number HM096670 and was recovered by a Croatian citizen, 119 after it had been attached. The tagging was carried out during EU-Slovenia campaigns.
- €500: the winning tag carried the number BYP074321 and was recovered by an Italian citizen.
- €500: The winning tag carried the number BYP013344 and was recovered by a Spanish citizen.

Atlantic Ocean Tropical Tuna Tagging Programme (AOTTP)

This year, once again, an additional draw was held supported by this programme with a €500 prize for each of the main species in the category of tropical tunas. The winning tags and the awards were as follows:

- Bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*/BET) The winning tag carried the number ATP038056 and was recovered by a crew member of a vessel from Côte d'Ivoire, 49 days after it had been attached. The tagging was carried out during EU-Spain campaigns.
- Skipjack (*Katsuwonus pelamis*/SKJ): The winning tag carried the number ATP029772 and was recovered by a crew member of a Senegalese vessel, 27 days after it had been attached. The tagging was carried out during EU-Spain campaigns.

- Yellowfin (*Thunnus albacares*/YFT) The winning tag carried the number ATP041228 and was recovered by a crew member of a vessel from Côte d'Ivoire, 3 days after it had been attached. The tagging was carried out during the EU-Spain campaigns.

7 Letters concerning fulfilment of budgetary obligations

In early 2017, the Executive Secretary notified all the Contracting Parties of the amount of their contributions to the 2017 budget. In July 2017, a reminder was sent to the Contracting Parties that had not made the corresponding payments. Later, a second reminder was sent in September to those Contracting Parties that had not acted. The following table summarizes the correspondence sent to the Contracting Parties that have outstanding contributions.

	<i>First reminder Letter of 19 July 2017</i>	<i>Second reminder Letter of 26 September 2017</i>
Algeria	X	
Angola	X	X
Brazil	X	X
Cabo Verde	X	X
Côte d'Ivoire	X	
Curaçao	X	X
Egypt	X	X
Ghana	X	X
Equatorial Guinea	X	X
Guinea, Rep.	X	X
Honduras	X	X
Liberia	X	X
Mauritania	X	X
Namibia	X	X
Nicaragua	X	
Nigeria	X	X
Panama	X	X
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	X	X
Sao Tomé and Príncipe	X	X
Senegal	X	X
Sierra Leone	X	X
Syria (Arab Rep.)	X	X
UK (Overseas Territories)	X	X
Uruguay	X	X
Vanuatu	X	
Venezuela	X	X

8 Publications of the Secretariat - 2017

In 2017, the following publications were issued:

- Report for Biennial Period 2016-17, Part I (2016), Vols. 1, 2, 3 and 4: English (Vols. 3 and 4 in electronic format only).
- Report for Biennial Period 2016-17, Part I (2016), Vols. 1, 2, 3 and 4: French (Vols. 3 and 4 in electronic format only).
- Report for Biennial Period 2016-17, Part I (2016), Vols. 1, 2, 3 and 4: Spanish (Vols. 3 and 4 in electronic format only).

- Statistical Bulletin, Vol. 43 (2), which includes the catch series by species and country from 1950 to 2015. Starting in 2013, the paper copy has been issued biennially, with annual updates which are available in electronic format, on the ICCAT web site.
- Collective Volume of Scientific Papers, Vol. 73, comprised nine volumes. The publication is available on the ICCAT web site.
- Collective Volume of Scientific Papers, Vol. 74, comprised two volumes. The publication is available on the ICCAT web site.
- ICCAT Newsletter (February and September 2017).
- ICCAT, 50th anniversary: The publication is available in DVD format.

9 Organisation and management of the Secretariat staff

9.1 Organisation

The Secretariat is organised as follows:

Executive Secretary
Mr. Driss Meski

Assistant Executive Secretary

On 16 May 2017, Dr Miguel Neves dos Santos was appointed as Assistant Executive Secretary. Reporting directly to the Executive Secretary, he performs all the tasks delegated to him by the Executive Secretary, which include management of the Secretariat and representation of the ICCAT Secretariat at meetings of a technical and/or administrative nature. In addition, he performs the functions of scientific coordinator, carrying out tasks related to the coordination of research programmes, collection of fisheries statistics, preparation of reports and coordination with closely relation organisations. He is in charge of the Department of Translation and Publications as well as coordination of work between the Department of Research and Statistics and the Compliance Department. He is also responsible for coordination between the Secretariat and the SCRS and preparation of SCRS meetings and management of Commission meeting documents.

Department of Research and Statistics

By reason of its mandate to manage and conserve tuna fishery resources, ICCAT members carry out a wide spectrum of scientific research and monitoring activities. The Secretariat is directly involved in the coordination of some of these activities, although a large part of the practical work is carried out by the Contracting Parties. The Secretariat maintains a large number of databases that include information on fishery statistics which are useful for stock assessments and entries concerning compliance. The main tasks that are carried out are requests for data, rules for data transmission, development of databases, user interfaces of the databases, quality control of data, data mining and publication of data, management of the web site, tagging inventory, preparation of reports and coordination with the SCRS and management of information technology.

The research and statistics activities, under the supervision of the Scientific Coordinator, are carried out by the Head of Department, a Population Dynamics Expert, a Fishery Data Analyst, a Biostatistician, two Database Programmers, a Programming Technician and a VMS Program Manager and an information technology specialist. Dr Paul de Bruyn is the Head of the Department of Research and Statistics as well as the By-catch Coordinator. Dr Laurence Kell is in charge of the activities related to coordination with the SCRS regarding stock assessments and other scientific matters. Dr Mauricio Ortiz is in charge of the activities relating to the analysis of tuna and tuna-like species data contained in the ICCAT databases. Mr. Carlos Palma is in charge of activities related to the creation and maintenance of databases, and Mr. Carlos Mayor, who was hired in September 2017 following approval by the ICCAT and STACFAD Chairs, performs tasks related to programming and development of databases, Mr. Juan Carlos Muñoz is the Database Programmer, Mr. Juan Luis Gallego is the Programming Technician, Mr. Alberto Parrilla is the VMS Program Manager and Mr. Jesús Fiz is the information technology specialist.

Compliance Department

In recent years, the Commission has adopted an increasing number of Recommendations and Resolutions that require the CPCs to communicate various types of information such as vessels lists, compliance reports, etc. The Compliance Department compiles and distributes a large volume of information. The Department's main tasks are: preparation of the compliance tables; implementation of the Regional Observer Programme for transshipment and for bluefin tuna; maintenance of the vessels lists; the inventory of vessel chartering agreements; bluefin tuna farming reports; data and validation of the ICCAT Statistical Document Programs and the Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation Programs; compendia of the management regulations; requests for cooperating status; requests for observer status; Annual Reports, and queries regarding compliance. The department is supervised by the Executive Secretary and is comprised of Ms. Jenny Cheatle, Head of Department, Ms. Carmen Ochoa, and Dr M'Hamed Idrissi, as Compliance Coordinators, and Ms. Aldana Vieito, as the Data Entry Clerk.

Department of Translation and Publications

The Department of Translation and Publications carries out tasks related to the compilation, adoption, translation and publication of circulars, reports and scientific documents, ASFA and FIRMS entries, in the three official languages of the Commission, the coordination of peer reviews of scientific documents, and publications in electronic format, communications and design of the web site. The department is coordinated by Dr Neves dos Santos and is comprised of six translators: Ms. Rebecca Campoy, Ms. Karen Donovan, Ms. Christine Peyre, Ms. Dorothee Pinet, Ms. María Isabel de Andrés and Ms. María José García-Orad.

Department of Finance and Administration

This Department carries out all the administrative and financial tasks of the Secretariat. Its main tasks are: preparation and control of the budget, accounting, preparation of the administrative and financial reports, organisation of ICCAT meetings, management of special funds, human resources within the Secretariat, purchases, travel, reception, archives, management of contact information, inventory of the library and publications, photocopying, scanning and mail. The department is comprised of eight members: Mr. Juan Antonio Moreno, Head of Department, who coordinates all the tasks related to the department, Mr. Cristóbal García (photocopying and library), Mr. Pablo Herranz (Administrative Assistant), Ms. Africa Martín (Accounting Assistant), Ms. Ana Martínez (Accounting Assistant), Mr. Juan Angel Moreno (photocopying and mail), Ms. Esther Peña (Administrative Secretary) and Ms. Gisela Porto (Administrative Assistant to the Executive Secretary).

Atlantic-wide Research Programme for Bluefin Tuna (GBYP)

The overall aim of the programme, which began in January 2010, is to improve the scientific basis for decision making in relation to management of bluefin tuna in the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. The programme includes a list of actions, to be carried out over several years, such as recovery of basic data collections, improvement of knowledge on key biological and ecological processes or improvement of assessment models and provision of scientific advice. The programme is implemented by Dr Antonio Di Natale (Coordinator), Ms. Stasa Tensek (Assistant Coordinator) and Mr. Alfonso Pagá (Database Specialist).

Atlantic Ocean Tuna Tagging Programme (AOTTP)

The aims of the programme, which began in 2015, are to contribute to data compilation and improve information for tropical tuna stock assessments, in order to provide sound scientific advice on management of these tuna species. The programme will collect, compile and analyse tagging data and tag recovery for the most important tropical tuna species in the Atlantic, such as skipjack, bigeye and yellowfin. The objective is to tag at least 120,000 species over five years with conventional and electronic tags. The activities carried out include chartering of professional fishing vessels, deployment of tag placement and recovery teams, data collection, scientific interpretation, development and running of training courses and promotion of awareness campaigns to promote tag recoveries. The following people have been hired to implement these activities: Mr. Doug Beare (Coordinator), Mr. Pedro Güemes (Tag Recovery and Publicity Officer), Mr. Jesús García (Database and Website Specialist), Ms. Seynabou Kebe (Administrative and Financial Officer) and Mr. Ricardo Pastor (Accountant).

9.2 New recruits

In September 2017, Mr. Carlos Mayor was hired to carry out tasks related to programming and development of databases within the Department of Research and Statistics. The recruitment took place following approval by the ICCAT and STACFAD Chairs.

Atlantic Ocean Tuna Tagging Programme (AOTTP)

In August 2017, Mr. Jesús García was hired in the capacity of Database and Website Specialist for the programme.

9.3 Future recruitments

At the 2016 meeting, the Commission adopted the selection procedure for the next Executive Secretary. In December, the vacancy announcement for the new ICCAT Executive Secretary was circulated, which included a brief description of the post, as well as the qualifications required and appointment procedures. The deadline for submission of applications was 1 April 2017. The Commission Chair received eight applications for the position. In accordance with the agreed procedures, the eight applications were reviewed by the Selection Committee which concluded that three did not satisfy the requirements set out in the vacancy announcement. The Commission Chair contacted the five candidates who had been shortlisted to arrange interviews during the Commission meeting.

10 Staff Regulations and Rules

10.1 Proposal by the Secretariat to amend the Staff Regulations and Rules

It is proposed to amend Article 33, Separation from Service due to Retirement, to adapt it to the Staff Regulations and Rules in force in the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), as well as the national regulations in force for staff in the General Services category included in the Public Social Security System of the country of destination. The new wording of this article would be:

- 33.1 *"Staff members shall not be retained in active service beyond the age of ~~65~~ 62 years, unless the Executive Secretary, and in his case, the Commission, in the interests of the Organization, extends this age limit in exceptional cases. Normally, such extension will be one year at a time. Staff members may, however, elect to retire at from the age of 60 years. Notwithstanding, staff members included in the Spanish Public Social Security System may extend the age of retirement in accordance with the rules in force of the Spanish Public Social Security System. ~~Hired before 1993 shall be exempt from the mandatory requirement provision for a period of three years from the final effective date of the revised Staff Rules (i.e. November, 1995).~~"*

11 Other issues

11.1 Management of other programs

It should be noted that the Financial Report contains detailed information on the financing of these programmes.

Since 2005, the United States has contributed to the Special Data Fund established in accordance with the *Resolution by ICCAT on Improvements in Data Collection and Quality Assurance* [Res. 03-21], to assist scientists from developing countries in participating in the meetings of the Scientific Committee. The two contributions received in 2017 were €42,350.00 and €8,420.00.

In 2006, the United States made a contribution to help establish the Fund to Prohibit Driftnets so as to encourage compliance with the *Recommendation by ICCAT Relating to Mediterranean Swordfish* [Rec. 03-04]. Since all CPCs have implemented the recommendation, the United States decided to destine the carryover to support the assessment of the impact of ICCAT fisheries on sea turtles in accordance with the *Recommendation by ICCAT on the by-catch of sea turtles in ICCAT fisheries* [Rec. 13-11]. The balance currently stands at €2,400.63.

In April 2016, the contract was extended with the Consortium MRAG/CapFish for the ICCAT Regional Observer Program, in compliance with *Recommendation by ICCAT on a Programme for Transshipment* [Rec. 12-06]. This program was financed in 2017 by voluntary contributions from Belize, China (People's Rep. of), Côte d'Ivoire, Japan, Korea, Senegal, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Chinese Taipei; the programme continues to be managed by the Secretariat.

To implement the provisions of the *Recommendation by ICCAT Amending the Recommendation by ICCAT to Establish a Multi-Annual Recovery Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean* [Rec. 08-05], in 2009 the Regional Observer Program for bluefin tuna was established. For this purpose, in April 2017, the contract with the Consortium MRAG/COFREPECHE was extended for the hiring and deployment of observers. During this period, vessels, farms and traps have participated, and their operators have financed the programme.

Since 2008, the United States delegation has made numerous contributions to the United States Fund for Capacity Building for developing countries. The contribution received in 2017 amounted to €21,175.00.

At its 16th Special Meeting (Marrakech, Morocco, 17 to 24 November 2008), the Commission endorsed a five-year coordinated Atlantic-wide bluefin tuna research program (known as GBYP-ICCAT). Currently, the Program is in its seventh phase. The European Union is financing 80.00% of this amount and the remainder is funded through voluntary contributions from Canada, China (People's Rep. of), Iceland, Japan, Libya, Morocco, Norway, United States, Tunisia, Turkey and Chinese Taipei.

Following the ICCAT-Japan Data and Management Improvement Project, which took place from 2009 to 2014, in December 2014, a special new project for capacity-building with a five-year duration began financed by the Government of Japan, the ICCAT-Japan Capacity-Building Assistance Project (JCAP). Its overriding objective is to assist ICCAT developing CPCs in complying with their obligations related to data compilation and reporting, as well as in implementing efficiently ICCAT measures.

In May 2017, the Secretariat received a contribution of €18,412.63 from the People's Republic of China for the continuation of the activities of the Special Data Fund-People's Republic of China.

Following approval in 2014 of the *Recommendation by ICCAT on the Establishment of a Meeting Participation Fund for Developing ICCAT Contracting Parties* [Rec. 14-14], the Secretariat received, in addition to the 2017 allocation of €200,000.00 from the Working Capital Fund, a voluntary contribution from Norway (€22,153.11), one from the United States (€12,630.00), and two from the European Union (€52,500.00 and €16,206.35) through the European Union Fund for Capacity Building.

In 2013, the Morocco Fund to Support National Capacity for Participation at Commission Meetings was established. For this purpose, in March 2017, Morocco made a voluntary contribution in the amount of €17,382.00.

In 2013, the Commission adopted the *Recommendation by ICCAT on the Establishment of a Scientific Capacity Building Fund for Developing States which are ICCAT Contracting Parties* [Rec. 13-19] for the purpose of supporting scientists from ICCAT Contracting Parties that are developing States in their need to acquire knowledge and develop skills on issues related to ICCAT. The special Scientific Capacity Building Fund (SCBF) was allocated €80,000.00 from the Working Capital Fund.

On 30 June 2015, the Secretariat signed the contract with the European Union for implementation of the Atlantic Ocean Tuna Tagging Programme (AOTTP). The contract has a five-year term, with the possibility of an 18-month extension for data analysis, and a budget of €15,000,000.00, of which the European Union will finance a maximum of €13,480,000.00 (90%). The remaining 10% must be financed by ICCAT or ICCAT CPCs. In 2017 voluntary contributions were received for the European Union programme (€4,504,734.00), United States (€20,352.00 and €12,630.00), Canada (€94,388.21), Chinese Taipei (€5,000.00) and the ICCAT Working Capital Fund (€345,578.99).

In March 2017, the Tunisia Fund for Participation in ICCAT Meetings was established. For this purpose, Tunisia made several contributions which total €30,000.15.

In July 2017, a contract was entered into with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to finance the costs of the Meeting of the Port Inspection Expert Group for Capacity and Assistance. The first amount received was €16,194.00.

In August 2017, a contribution was received the United States (€16,940.00) to contribute to the activities of the *Recommendation by ICCAT to Support Effective Implementation of Recommendation 12-07 by ICCAT for an ICCAT Scheme for Minimum Standards for Inspection in Port* [Rec. 14-08].

In April 2017, a contract was entered into with the European Union to develop a project between scientists from Ghana and from the IRD to finalise development of T3+ software which is necessary for comprehensive processing of Ghanaian statistics. The voluntary contribution received amounted to €24,710.00.

In August 2017, a contract was signed with the European Union for a one-year term, to continue improving the capacity of developing countries, and which includes the activities of the *Recommendation by ICCAT to Support Effective Implementation of Recommendation 12-07 by ICCAT for an ICCAT Scheme for Minimum Standards for Inspection in Port* [Rec.14-08], *Recommendation by ICCAT Amending Recommendation 11-26 on the Establishment of a Meeting Participation Fund for Developing ICCAT Contracting Parties* [Rec. 14-14] and several capacity-building courses for scientists and managers on management strategy evaluation (MSE), and for which a voluntary contribution of €112,000.00 has been received.

11.2 Audit of accounts

The 2017 audit will be the last one carried out by the firm Grant Thornton, S.L.P. Therefore, in 2018, the Secretariat will contact new firms to prepare a shortlist which will be submitted to the Commission at its next meeting, for the purpose of election of the account auditors for the next five years.