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REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ICCAT REGIONAL OBSERVER PROGRAMME FOR EAST ATLANTIC AND MEDITERRANEAN BLUEFIN TUNA

ICCAT Secretariat

The Regional Observer Programme for eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna (ROP-BFT) is carried out under the provisions of the *Recommendation 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. 14-04, and as amended by Rec. 17-07]. The provisions of this Recommendation stipulate that observers are to be placed by the Secretariat to ensure observer coverage of 100% of purse seine vessels during all the annual fishing season. In this respect, an observer shall be present during the fishing operation; and during all transfer of bluefin tuna to the cages and all harvest of fish from the cage; and during all transfers of bluefin tuna from traps to transport cages.

Implementation in 2018

Following a Call for tender for the implementation of the Programme and a review of tenders by the selection committee the Commission again awarded the contract to the consortium MRAG/COFREPECHE. The Report of this consortium, available as **Annex 1** (Executive Summary attached as **Appendix 1**), contains more details on the implementation of the programme.

There were a total of 152 observer deployments on purse seine vessel in 2018. Ten CPCs participated in the programme. The list of vessels participating in the programme is attached as **Table 1**.

Since 2009, 451¹ farm deployments and 16 trap deployments have been requested, as shown in **Table 2**. The list of farms participating in the programme (25 of the 59 authorised farms) is attached as **Table 3**, and a list of traps which were observed by regional observers contained in **Table 4**.

All observer reports have been made available to CPCs as Annex 1 and 2 to **COC-305/18**. The submissions from the CPCs involved in relation to any issues of non-compliance are contained in **COC-305/18**.

Implementation difficulties in 2018

Failure to follow the procedures of requesting deployments and extensions to approved deployments continues to cause difficulties in the implementation, e.g. requests after 96 hours – in some cases one day before or even the same day; or requests for observers are not accompanied by proof of payment. It should be noted that the Secretariat cannot process any requests for which payment has not been made.

Some requests and payments for vessels were also received late. Completion of the section of the request for with details for any reimbursement is important, as in future this will be taken as official information for reimbursement of remnants at the end of the year. Of note in 2018 was the failure to communicate officially and in a timely manner to the Secretariat the change in deployment dates, particularly end dates, with some observers being retained on board well past the original date requested. All CPCs are requested to ensure that their entities participating in the ROP adhere to the procedures in the future.

With regard to the international aspect of the programme, non-nationals were deployed as far as possible, with the exception of Turkish vessels/farms given the provisions of bullet four, paragraph 5 of Annex 7 of Rec. 14-04, as despite a persistent search, the consortium has been able to recruit only one qualified Turkish-speaking non-Turkish national.

Future implementation

It should be recalled that with the eBCD system, the observers need electronic signatures to fill these eBCD sections.

¹ At 12 October 2018.

At present, no change is envisaged in the implementation of the ROP-BFT, unless required by any new measures adopted by the Commission.

Table 1. List of the 152 purse seiner vessels which participated in the ROP-BFT in 2018.

VESSEL DETAILS			
Rozafa 15	AT000ALB00010	Deela	AT000LBY00024
Beni Louma	AT000DZA00015	El Hader 2	AT000LBY00037
Borhan	AT000DZA00384	Al Hares 2	AT000LBY00074
Braham	AT000DZA00014	Tayma	AT000LBY00083
Echahid Mostefa Benboulaïd	AT000DZA00017	Alssafa IV	AT000LBY00060
Elfadjr	AT000DZA00010	Al-Mustakbel	AT000LBY00085
El Hadja Fatma	AT000DZA00383	Albahr Alhader	AT000LBY00077
El Madina	AT000DZA00003	Zarqa Alymama I	AT000LBY00064
Chahid Hasni Saidi	AT000DZA00009	Apollonia	AT000LBY00012
Neptune V	AT000DZA00005	Morina	AT000LBY00028
Neptune VI	AT000DZA00006	Cyrene	AT000LBY00010
El Madje	AT000DZA00332	Hanibal	AT000LBY00047
Sidi Maamar	AT000DZA00018	Mediouna	AT000MAR01418
Sidi Slimane II	AT000DZA00792	Azrou 1	AT000MAR00081
Younes 1	AT000DZA00007	Salvøy	AT000NOR00005
Safinat Nooh	AT000EGY00010	Hillersøy	AT000NOR00001
Neptun I	ATEU0HRV00134	Fesal	AT000SYR00019
Neptun Ii	ATEU0HRV00140	Futuro 1	AT000TUN00065
Ponos	ATEU0HRV00058	Ghedir El Gholla	AT000TUN00030
Sardina I	ATEU0HRV00133	Yousri	AT000TUN00040
Sardina Ii	ATEU0HRV00161	Hadj Mokhtar	AT000TUN00025
Preko	ATEU0HRV00021	Hadj Ahmed	AT000TUN00070
Tuljan Dva	ATEU0HRV00155	Mohamed Yassine	AT000TUN00045
Tacoma	ATEU0HRV00164	Imen	AT000TUN00010
Pelagos Ii	ATEU0HRV00017	Jamel	AT000TUN00011
Carica	ATEU0HRV00163	El Houssain	AT000TUN00049
Kali	ATEU0HRV00037	Jawhar	AT000TUN00046
Marlin	ATEU0HRV00156	Abderrahman	AT000TUN00047
Kornat	ATEU0HRV00153	Sayfallah	AT000TUN00043
Laguna	ATEU0HRV00063	Tapsus	AT000TUN00024
Hrvatski Uspjeh	ATEU0HRV00007	Tijani	AT000TUN00026
Alkya	ATEU0CYP00103	Hadj Elhedi	AT000TUN00007
Anne Antoine 2	ATEU0FRA00003	Ghali	AT000TUN00036
Chrisderic Ii	ATEU0FRA00019	Jannet 2	AT000TUN00044
Cisberlande V	ATEU0FRA00021	Essaidajannet	AT000TUN00050
Eric Marin	ATEU0FRA00087	Abou Chamma	AT000TUN00002
Gerald Jean Iii	ATEU0FRA00026	Mohamed Adem	AT000TUN00012
Gerald Jean Iv	ATEU0FRA00093	Ibn Rachiq	AT000TUN00037
Gerard Luc Iv	ATEU0FRA00028	Mabrouk	AT000TUN00015
Saint Sophie François 2	ATEU0FRA00064	El Horchani	AT000TUN00009
Saint Sophie François 3	ATEU0FRA00065	El Khalij	AT000TUN00014
Vent Du Nord II	ATEU0FRA00090	Hassene	AT000TUN00008
Ville D'agde Iv	ATEU0FRA00089	Sallem	AT000TUN00023
Ville D'arzew Ii	ATEU0FRA00077	Denphir 1	AT000TUN00479

Chrisderic V	ATEU0FRA14500	Mohamed Essadok	AT000TUN00051
Pierre Joseph Salvador	ATEU0FRA00088	Mabrouka	AT000TUN00980
Janvier Giordano	ATEU0FRA00037	El Kods	AT000TUN00978
Janvier Louis Raphael	ATEU0FRA00083	Mohamed Ali	AT000TUN00973
Jeanmarie Christian 4	ATEU0FRA00041	Ouled Hammali	AT000TUN00979
Jeanmarie Christian 3	ATEU0FRA00040	Awled Sahbi	AT000TUN00977
Jean Marie Christian 6	ATEU0FRA00043	Douaa Allah	AT000TUN00976
Jean Marie Christian 7	ATEU0FRA00078	Yousri II	AT000TUN00981
Maria Grazia	ATEU0ITA00694	Montaçar	AT000TUN00974
Angela Madre	ATEU0ITA00635	Fakhreddine Errazi 2	AT000TUN00975
Giuseppe Padre Secondo	ATEU0ITA00289	Mahmutcan-1	AT000TUR00419
Madonna Di Fatima	ATEU0ITA00348	Kul Balıkçılık-1	AT000TUR00030
Vergine Del Rosario	ATEU0ITA00617	Nursu-3	AT000TUR00104
Genevieve Prima	ATEU0ITA00654	Ağaoğullari-6	AT000TUR00315
Sparviero Uno	ATEU0ITA00565	Kiliç 16	AT000TUR00003
Atlante	ATEU0ITA00065	Haci Şevki Yalçın	AT000TUR00317
Maria Antonietta	ATEU0ITA00368	Burak Yağiz	AT000TUR07828
Lucia Madre	ATEU0ITA00664	Başoğlu Balıkçılık 1	AT000TUR00409
Angelo Catania	ATEU0ITA00636	Necati Reis 2	AT000TUR00526
Michelangelo	ATEU0ITA00671	Köroğlu Balıkçılık	AT000TUR00069
Enza Madre	ATEU0ITA00188	Akgün Balıkçılık 3	AT000TUR00296
Padre Pio P.	ATEU0ITA00470	Azizler 1	AT000TUR00146
Alto Mare Primo	ATEU0ITA00631	Nazim Kurşun	AT000TUR00038
Ta' Matthew	ATEU0MLT00001	H.Emrullah Reis	AT000TUR00023
Leonardo Brull Segon	ATEU0ESP00173	Bevedi Reis	AT000TUR00011
Nuevo Panchilleta	ATEU0ESP00276	Abdülkadir Oğullari	AT000TUR00055
Nuevo Elorz	ATEU0ESP00250	Kolcular	AT000TUR00341
La Frau Dos	ATEU0ESP00172	Sürsan-1	AT000TUR00407
Gepus	ATEU0ESP00119	Yeniay Balıkçılık	AT000TUR00090
Tio Gel Segon	ATEU0ESP00394	Zaman Avcı-2	AT000TUR00449
Aedonia	AT000LBY00011	Akerko-1	AT000TUR00115
Nawasi Alkir 1	AT000LBY00015	Geçiciler Balıkçılık	AT000TUR00496

Table 2. Number of farm/trap deployments by year*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of farm deployments</i>	<i>Number of trap deployments</i>
2009	10	
2010	52	
2011	54	
2012	50	
2013	47	2
2014	44	3
2015	56	3
2016	44	2
2017	52	2
2018	42	4

* At 12 October 2018.

Table 3. Farming facilities on which ICCAT Regional Observers were deployed in 2017/2018.

<i>CPC</i>	<i>2017</i>	
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00003	ATEU1HRV00003
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00006	ATEU1HRV00006
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00008	ATEU1HRV00008
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00011	ATEU1HRV00011
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00012	ATEU1HRV00012
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00015	ATEU1HRV00015
EU-Croatia		ATEU1HRV00017
EU-Malta	ATEU1MLT00001	ATEU1MLT00001
EU-Malta	ATEU1MLT00002	ATEU1MLT00002
EU-Malta	ATEU1MLT00003	ATEU1MLT00003
EU-Malta	ATEU1MLT00004	ATEU1MLT00004
EU-Malta	ATEU1MLT00007	ATEU1MLT00007
EU-Malta	ATEU1MLT00008	ATEU1MLT00008
EU-Portugal	ATEU1PRT00002	ATEU1PRT00002
EU-Portugal		ATEU1PRT00001
EU-Spain	ATEU1ESP00001	ATEU1ESP00001
EU-Spain	ATEU1ESP00003	ATEU1ESP00003
EU-Spain	ATEU1ESP00004	ATEU1ESP00004
EU-Spain	ATEU1ESP00005	ATEU1ESP00005
Morocco	AT001MAR00002	
Tunisia		AT001TUN00002
Tunisia	AT001TUN00004	
Turkey	AT001TUR00004	AT001TUR00004
Turkey	AT001TUR00005	AT001TUR00005
Turkey	AT001TUR00010	AT001TUR00010
Turkey	AT001TUR00011	AT001TUR00011
Turkey	AT001TUR00013	AT001TUR00013
Turkey	AT001TUR00014	AT001TUR00014

Table 4. Traps observed under the ICCAT Regional Observers Programme in 2017/2018.

<i>CPC</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>
EU-Italy	ATEU2ITA00003	ATEU2ITA00003
EU-Italy	ATEU2ITA00009	ATEU2ITA00009
EU-Portugal	ATEU2PRT00002	ATEU2PRT00002
Morocco	AT002MAR00002	AT002MAR00002
Morocco	AT002MAR00003	AT002MAR00003
Morocco	AT002MAR00005	AT002MAR00004
Morocco	AT002MAR00011	AT002MAR00005
Morocco		AT002MAR00010
Morocco		AT002MAR00011
Morocco		AT002MAR00012
Morocco		AT002MAR00013
Morocco		AT002MAR00015

CONSORTIUM'S REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ROP-BFT

Executive Summary

The service provider for implementing year seven (April 2018 / March 2019) of the ICCAT ROP-BFT comprises of a consortium led by MRAG based in London and COFREPECHE in Paris assisted by regional partners located around the Mediterranean. This is the ninth year that the Consortium has been awarded the contract to implement the ROP-BFT and experience gained in previous years has been used to enhance systems in place for recruitment, training and deployment of observers and overall performance of the Programme.

The ROP-BFT allows the Commission to assess compliance with the regulatory framework. During year nine of the ROP-BFT 182 observers have been trained, equipped and mobilised for 152 purse seine deployments, as well as 40 completed and 13 current deployments on farms to date, achieving 100% observer coverage on authorised purse seiners, farms and traps within the remit of the programme, which included monitoring all fishing, transfer, caging and harvesting activities.

This report describes the key issues faced in assessing compliance with the regulatory framework during implementation of year three of the ROP-BFT divided into operational and technical categories and focuses on issues that affect the observer role during deployments.

Estimating tuna transfers from video records: The key technical issue across all deployment types (on purse seiners and farms) was the inability to consistently estimate the amount of tuna transferred from video records. This was mainly a result of poor-quality video records and / or viewing facilities (on vessels) or video availability immediately following the transfer operation. Some operators repeated transfers during caging operations because the initial video record was unsuitable for providing a means of accurately estimating the amount of tuna. Therefore, further research / investigation is required to recommend a minimum standard of camera and viewing equipment for at sea conditions. Such an investigation should also produce recommendations on procedures that should be followed by operators so that the video record covers the entire transfer process and produce a video record that could be provided to the observer immediately following the transfer to ensure they have sufficient time to review the footage during their deployment. It can also be very difficult for an observer to determine if video footage has been tampered with when cuts in the video are hidden by cross fades. This problem is most likely when observers are not provided the video of the transfer immediately.

Improved consultation between CPCs, Secretariat, SCRS and ROP-BFT Consortium: During 2017 no meeting was held between CPCs, the Secretariat, SCRS and the Consortium. In previous years, meetings were held which proved to be constructive in improving the Programme and the Consortium would propose that they be continued prior to the next fishing season.