

Original: English

**DRAFT RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT ON MONITORING AND AVOIDING  
CETACEAN INTERACTIONS IN ICCAT FISHERIES**

*Proposal submitted by the United States and Canada*

*RECOGNIZING* the potential for interactions between cetaceans and ICCAT fisheries;

*CONCERNED* about incidental mortality or serious injury to cetaceans that may occur in ICCAT fisheries;

*RECALLING* that under *Recommendation 10-10*, Contracting Parties, non-Contracting Parties, Entities and Fishing Entities (CPCs) with national observer programs shall require their observers to record and report on, *inter alia*, the bycatch of marine mammals;

*FURTHER RECALLING* that *Recommendation 11-10* requires CPCs with logbooks and observer programs to collect bycatch data in their domestic scientific observer programs and logbook programs, and report these data to the Secretariat in the format specified by SCRS;

*NOTING* measures adopted by other Regional Fisheries Management Organizations aimed at monitoring and avoiding cetacean interactions, and committed to taking similar measures in ICCAT fisheries;

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

1. Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities, or Fishing Entities (CPCs) shall prohibit their flag vessels from setting a purse seine net on a school of tunas associated with a cetacean if the cetacean is sighted before the commencement of the set.
2. CPCs shall require that, in the event that a cetacean is unintentionally encircled in the purse seine net, the master of the vessel shall:
  - a) ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure its safe release. This shall include stopping the net roll and not recommencing fishing operations until the animal has been released and is no longer at risk of recapture; and
  - b) report the incident to the relevant authority of the flag State, including details of the species (if known) and number of individuals, location and date of such encirclement, steps taken to ensure safe release, and an assessment of the life status of the animal on release (including, if possible, whether the animal was released alive but subsequently died).
3. In applying this recommendation, the safety of the crew shall remain paramount.
4. The Commission requests that the SCRS develop further best practice guidelines for the safe handling and release of cetaceans caught in association with ICCAT fisheries, taking into account the guidelines already developed in other Regional Fisheries Management Organizations, and that these guidelines be submitted to the 2018 annual meeting for adoption by the Commission.
5. CPCs shall report on the implementation of this Recommendation in their Annual Reports, and report any interactions with cetaceans in accordance with Recommendations [10-10] and [11-10] in the format specified by the SCRS.