

## PLAN FOR REVIEW OF COMPLIANCE PRIORITIES

### *Secretariat in consultation with COC Chair*

At the 2018 Annual Meeting, the Compliance Committee (COC) requested the Secretariat prepare for consideration in 2019 of a strategic plan that would prioritise certain conservation measures for more in-depth review in certain years, in order to reduce the workload of the COC during annual meetings and allowing it to prioritise as it considers appropriate. This prioritization could be in the form of a more in-depth focus on review of certain issues, while not excluding discussion of compliance issues that may arise in other areas that are not part of the priority topic that year.

Ideally, such a plan would be in concert with the SCRS strategic plan, but as the SCRS five-year plan is currently due for renewal, it is difficult to harmonise these two at present. The SCRS roadmap for the Strategic Plan is to review all material between end of SCRS Plenary and December 2019, draft the strategic between January and June 2020 circulate the Draft Plan for review, including discussions at the SCRS Functioning meeting and finalize the plan at the 2020 SCRS meeting.

It is proposed that at the current 2019 meeting, if time is available after considering the issues highlighted in 2018 as requiring prioritisation for review, available time be allotted to northern Albacore and Mediterranean swordfish, as these two species will be assessed in 2020.

For 2020, a year in which an additional two-day Compliance Committee meeting, it is suggested that the Committee review 1) billfish check sheets; 2) compliance with other by-catch measures; 3) bluefin tuna (both East and West) and 5) southern albacore. A fifth area may be identified by the Compliance Committee Chair, depending on the information available (or missing).

Alternatively, the species-specific measures could be reviewed the same year as the species assessment. Consideration should be given to whether COC review better informs the development of management measures if it is conducted the same year as consideration of the SCRS assessment and the development of the species management measure, or if COC review is of more utility is it occurs the year prior.

In 2020, the Chair and Secretariat, taking into account CPC views, would put forward a plan for the following five years in conjunction with the SCRS strategic plan, which includes non-species-specific measures as well as species measures, for consideration by the Committee / Commission.

### **Japan Comments:**

#### ***1. Proceedings of discussion at COC meetings for prioritized compliance issues***

Japan would like to know what "prioritization" actually means. It is not clear how the COC should proceed the discussion for prioritized issues. According to the meeting report of the COC last year, the purpose of "prioritization" is to reduce the workload of the COC during annual meetings and allow the COC to prioritize as it considers appropriate. In this context, we are assuming that those prioritized issues would be reviewed by using ordinary COC documents under the agenda item "CPC-by-CPC review", rather than by using special documents only for those issues under the specified agenda item. The COC members would be encouraged to focus on those prioritized issues in the CPC-by-CPC review, in which CPCs are also allowed to raise different issues. We would like to confirm if our understanding is correct. Anyway, Japan believes that the COC needs to decide on how to proceed the discussion for prioritized compliance issues, while developing this plan. As you know, Shark & Billfish check sheets are exceptional cases.

**2. *Aspects need to be considered to prioritize compliance issues***

Japan considers that it is very important for the COC to take into account the timing of renewing management measures when the COC decides its priorities. For example, ICCAT will discuss and develop new management measures for N-SWO in 2021 because the current measures will expire at the end of 2021. The COC should review the compliance of the current measures one year prior to the renewal of the management measures, namely in 2020 in this case. This one year would give enough opportunities to relevant CPCs to fully conduct an in-depth review and to reflect the results on draft new management measures. In this context, Japan agrees with your suggestion to prioritize N-ALB and Med-SWO this year. We suggest that the Secretariat and the COC Chair would carefully consider this point in drafting a plan for the following five years in 2020, while looking at other important aspects, such as the SCRS strategic plan or the extent of available compliance information.

**USA Comments:**

1. Regarding the timeframe for the plan and alignment with the SCRS schedule: While the circular suggests the plan would cover five years of COC priorities, recognizing that the SCRS plan is due for renewal and that assessment schedules may change from year to year, we recommend that the COC plan be informed by the SCRS five-year plan but that COC still review its own schedule on an annual or biennial basis. In addition, we believe these conversations will be most productive and would best inform the development of management measures if they are conducted the same year as relevant SCRS stock assessments and potential development of species management measures.
2. Regarding areas of prioritization at the 2019 meeting: The current slate of priorities for compliance review at the 2019 Annual Meeting is already quite extensive for the three scheduled COC sessions. It may be overly ambitious to allot limited available COC time this year to NALB and MSWO. We recommend the COC instead maintain focus on: 1) newly reported information in the shark check sheets, 2) preliminary review of billfish check sheet submissions, and 3) compliance with scientific observer program requirements. These priorities would be in addition to the annual standing COC priorities of data reporting and compliance with catch limits.
3. Regarding areas of prioritization for 2020: We agree with the proposed areas identified in the circular, including: 1) billfish check sheets, 2) compliance with by-catch measures, 3) bluefin tuna (both East and West), and 4) southern albacore. We also recommend reviewing the porbeagle information contained within the Shark check sheets given the planned 2020 assessment.