

Original: English

**CORRESPONDENCE FROM COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE (COC) CHAIR
REGARDING THE 2019 COC MEETING
(ICCAT Circular #7428/2019 of 11 October 2019)**

SUBJECT: 2019 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

Dear Distinguished Delegates and Observers,

I am looking forward to working with all participants at the 2019 meeting of the ICCAT Compliance Committee (COC).

To ensure our discussions are constructive and efficient, I would like to take this opportunity to inform the Commission about how I intend to structure the meeting, subject to further input from CPCs and adoption of the [tentative agenda](#). I would also like to provide additional information relevant to certain agenda items to help ensure that all CPCs submit and review relevant information in advance and come prepared to actively engage in the COC discussions.

Compliance Summary Tables

Pursuant to paragraph 2 of [Res. 16-22](#), I am working with the Secretariat to develop and circulate the first draft of the COC-308 Compliance Summary Tables on or around October 28, three weeks prior to the first COC session, after which point CPCs are invited to submit “initial, written explanations of inaccuracies or additional information to the Secretariat on their own compliance information as reflected in the Draft Summary Compliance Tables and any supplementary tables at least five days before the start of the first session of the COC” (deadline Thursday, **November 14**). Additionally, I encourage CPCs to review compliance information relevant to other CPCs prior to the annual meeting and to provide their input on potential issues for the COC to consider including in subsequent versions of COC-308 developed at the meeting. CPCs may provide such views in writing in advance of the Annual Meeting or raise them during the meeting.

Annual Report format and other submissions

As of the date of this letter, a number of CPCs have not submitted certain required data, reports, or other documents, such as Part I or Part II of the Annual Report, billfish check sheet, updates to the shark check sheet, compliance tables, and/or Task I and Task II data. Lack of timely reporting undermines ICCAT’s ability to carry out its mandate and the COC’s ability to assess compliance. In the case of a number of CPCs, failure to submit these documents by the deadline (or at all) is a recurring issue. In order to address this matter, I intend to recommend that the COC consider taking more significant actions at the 2019 meeting in the case of CPCs that repeatedly fail in this respect, including possible identification under [ICCAT’s Recommendation on Trade Measures \(Rec. 06-13\)](#). Missing information will be noted in the draft version of COC-308, as indicated above. Guidelines for Submitting Information and Data Required by ICCAT are available at: <https://www.iccat.int/en/SubmitCOMP.html> and <https://www.iccat.int/en/submitSTAT.html>. For any such late submissions, please ensure that the latest forms are downloaded from the ICCAT web site or request these from the ICCAT Secretariat.

Friends of the Chair Group

This very useful process was formalized in Res. 16-22. Thank you to those delegations that represented their geographical area in this group. If there are any changes to CPCs representing these areas, please inform me and the Secretariat prior to the first COC session. I will be in touch with these representatives to discuss my proposed work plan for this Group in more detail.

Updated Shark Check Sheet and Billfish Check Sheets

Following the 2018 Annual Meeting, the Secretariat has updated the [shark check sheet](#) required under Rec. 18-06 to add reporting fields for the *Recommendation by ICCAT on the conservation of north Atlantic stock of shortfin mako caught in association with ICCAT fisheries* (Rec. 17-08). Additionally, pursuant to Rec. 18-06, CPCs are to submit any updates to the shark check sheet annually. So while an in-depth review of the shark check sheet is not scheduled for this year, I nevertheless welcome discussion, during the individual CPC review, of new information reported by CPCs as well as on the sufficiency of follow-up actions by CPCs in response to issues identified by the COC in its in-depth review of check sheets in 2018.

With respect to billfish, under Rec. 18-05, the first in-depth review by COC will take place in 2020. This was scheduled in 2020 in order to utilize 2019 to conduct a preliminary review of check sheets, in particular to identify any issues with how they have been completed by CPCs, in order to ensure we have a full set of accurately completed check sheets for review in 2020.

Compliance table submission, review, and formatting

In accordance with [Rec. 11-11](#), the deadline for submitting compliance tables to the Secretariat was August 15. Unfortunately, last year the COC was again plagued with the submission of numerous changes to the compliance tables throughout the week of the meeting, which was very disruptive to the COC's work. The Secretariat has been in touch with a number of CPCs recently to rectify issues in their compliance tables; I kindly ask such CPCs to make every effort to work with the Secretariat to resolve these issues prior to the Annual Meeting. If you have any questions about your tables, please do not hesitate to contact the Secretariat at info@iccat.int.

As in 2018, agendas for Panels 1-4 include an item early on in the meeting for the consideration of compliance tables for species under their purview, after which point the Panels are encouraged to refer to the COC any observations or issues that they consider appropriate. Last year, there was some lack of clarity as to what the Panels should discuss under this agenda item. I defer to the Panel chairs as to how they wish to conduct this agenda item, but suggest considering including the following two components in the discussion:

- 1) Are there any issues in the Panel's compliance tables that indicate interpretive issues with the underlying Recommendation (e.g., how to apply carry forward or payback rules) that the Panel has views on?
- 2) Do Panel members have any other observations about the Panel's compliance tables that they consider appropriate to discuss in the Panel? For example, whether overharvest should be taken into account by the Panel in its development of a revised management measure.

Additionally, CPCs are encouraged to come prepared to discuss potential ways to improve compliance table formats, in furtherance of the COC's 2017 recommendation to review the format to improve the effectiveness and ease of use of this important tool. In this regard, I have asked the Secretariat to present ideas they have on improvement of the tables for consideration by the COC.

IMO Number Requirement

At the COC's request at the 2018 meeting, the Secretariat sent Circular #8934-18 to CPCs noting the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) expansion of applicability of its numbering scheme, which effectively expands the scope of vessels to which the IMO number requirement specified in [Rec. 13-13](#) applies. The circular requested CPCs to notify the Secretariat of IMO numbers for relevant vessels or provide an explanation to the Secretariat as to why they could not obtain a number. I am pleased to report that IMO numbers have now been reported for nearly all relevant vessels, along with explanations in the case of two vessels that were unable to obtain a number. And through coordinated action of the Secretariat and flag CPCs, a number of vessels were removed from the authorized list because they did not have an IMO number. Only seven ICCAT Parties still have vessels for which this issue needs to be addressed. I encourage these Parties to provide the required information to the Secretariat prior to the Annual Meeting. Vessels to which this requirement applies and for which CPCs have submitted neither an IMO number nor an explanation will, as required by paragraph 5bis of Rec. 13-13, be removed from the ICCAT authorized list and, as a result, will no longer be authorized to fish for ICCAT species.

COC Strategic Plan

At the 2018 Annual Meeting, the COC asked the Secretariat to prepare a draft strategic plan that would prioritize certain conservation measures for more in-depth review in certain years, without prejudice to discussion of compliance issues that may arise in other areas that are not part of the priority topics that year. To this end, on October 9 the Secretariat circulated a draft Plan for Review of Compliance Priorities (Circular #7315-19). As this document includes suggestions for the prioritization of certain species-specific measures at the 2019 Annual Meeting, CPC preliminary views (particularly on the items proposed for 2019) are requested by **October 21**.

Other priority matters

As discussed at the 2018 Annual Meeting, I recommend that the COC undertake a review of CPC implementation of *Recommendation by ICCAT to establish minimum standards for fishing vessel scientific observer programs* (Rec 16-14), as paragraph 18 of that Recommendation calls for Commission review in 2019. I have asked the Secretariat to prepare a document that reviews CPC response rate in submission of forms ST-11 and ST-09, summarizes CPC response about Rec. 16-14 in their annual reports, and includes an annex of ST-11 reports submitted by CPCs. If CPCs have not submitted or have updates to these forms, please provide these to the Secretariat as soon as possible so they can be taken into account by the COC in its review.

If CPCs have recommendations on other areas for the COC to prioritize this year, I welcome that input as far in advance of the meeting as possible.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Derek Campbell



Compliance Committee Chair