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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 Recommendation 14-04 on bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean* [Rec. 17-07], as amended by the *Recommendation by ICCAT Establishing a Multi-annual Management Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea* [Rec. 18-02]. 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 2019**

The Consortium MRAG/COFREPECH continues to implement the Programme. 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 was a total of 182 observer deployments on purse seine vessel in 2019. Ten CPCs participated in the programme. The list of vessels participating in the programme is attached as **Table 1**.

Since 2009, 521<sup>1</sup> farm deployments and 18 trap deployments have been requested, as shown in **Table 2**. The list of farms participating in the programme 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\_305/19**. The submissions from the CPCs involved in relation to any issues of non-compliance are contained in **COC\_305/19**.

**Implementation difficulties in 2019**

The increasing number of participating vessels and the very short amount of time between the submission of information and embarkation of observers continues to increase the difficulties both for the Secretariat and for the Consortium. Even though some advance information can be found in the fishing plans, definitive lists, language requirements and ports of embarkation cannot be known until two weeks before fishing starts. In addition, the revised deadline for JFO information makes it difficult to ensure that observers are fully briefed in advance, as this information is not publicly available and in some cases may not be available at the time of training/briefing observers.

In some cases, Latin script vessel names on the deployment requests did not match the submissions for inclusion on the ICCAT Record of Vessels. In addition to late submissions, some requests were sent incomplete, missing port of embarkation, contact details etc.

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.

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. 17-07, as despite a persistent search, the consortium has been able to recruit only one qualified Turkish-speaking non-Turkish national.

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<sup>1</sup> At 1 October 2019.

Some CPCs have raised the difficulties in investigating issues of potential non-compliance when there is a delay in receiving these from the consortium. It had been agreed at a meeting between CPCs and the consortium that administrative issues would not be reported in real time but included in the final reports. Notwithstanding, some more substantive issues are reported with delays, in many cases due to the lack of communication facilities on board the vessel or available to the observer. This issue will be further discussed with the consortium for the coming season, but input and possible solutions by all CPCs on how to resolve such issues would be welcomed.

### Future implementation

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

At present, no significant change is envisaged in the implementation of the ROP-BFT, unless required by any new measures adopted by the Commission, other than continued attempts to improve the timeliness of PNC reporting (see above).

**Table 1.** List of the 182 purse seiner vessels which participated in the ROP-BFT in 2019.

<i>CPC</i>	<i>VESSEL DETAILS</i>	
Albania	Rozafa 15	AT000ALB00010
Algerie	EL MADINA	AT000DZA00003
Algerie	NEPTUNE V	AT000DZA00005
Algerie	NEPTUNE VI	AT000DZA00006
Algerie	YOUNES I	AT000DZA00007
Algerie	CHAHID HASNI SAIDI	AT000DZA00009
Algerie	SIRENA MYRIAM	AT000DZA00012
Algerie	BRAHAM	AT000DZA00014
Algerie	BENI LOUMA	AT000DZA00015
	ECHAHID MUSTAPHA	
Algerie	BENBOULAI	AT000DZA00017
Algerie	SIDI MAAMAR	AT000DZA00018
Algerie	EL MAJD (NOUHA antiguo)	AT000DZA00332
Algerie	EL HADJA FATMA	AT000DZA00383
Algerie	SIDI SLIMANE	AT000DZA00001
Algerie	SID - AHMED	AT000DZA00549
Algerie	AHMED ROBAINE	AT000DZA00816
Algerie	LALLA MANOUN	AT000DZA00817
Algerie	EL CHOUROUK	AT000DZA00820
Algerie	EL DJAZAIR	AT000DZA00013
Algerie	FEL ABDELKADER	AT000DZA00819
Algerie	HABIB ALLAH I	AT000DZA00818
Algerie	BORHANE I	AT000DZ00384
Algerie	Sidi Slimane II	AT000DZ00792
Egypt	Safinat Nooh	AT000EGY00010
EU-Croatia	HRVATSKI USPJEH	ATEU0HRV00007
EU-Croatia	PONOS	ATEU0HRV00058
EU-Croatia	KALI	ATEU0HRV00037
EU-Croatia	PREKO	ATEU0HRV00021
EU-Croatia	EVA	ATEU0HRV00049
EU-Croatia	SARDINA I	ATEU0HRV00133
EU-Croatia	NEPTUN I	ATEU0HRV00134
EU-Croatia	NEPTUN II	ATEU0HRV00140
EU-Croatia	TULJAN DVA	ATEU0HRV00155
EU-Croatia	MARLIN	ATEU0HRV00156
EU-Croatia	SARDINA II	ATEU0HRV00161
EU-Croatia	PELAGOS II	ATEU0HRV00017
EU-Croatia	KORNAT	ATEU0HRV00153

EU-Croatia	CARICA	ATEU0HRV00163
EU-Croatia	TACOMA	ATEU0HRV00164
EU-Croatia	OSLJAK DVA	ATEU0HRV00020
EU-Cyprus	ALKYA	ATEU0CYP00103
EU-España	LEONARDO BRULL SEGON	ATEU0ESP00173
EU-España	NUEVO ELORZ	ATEU0ESP00250
EU-España	NUEVO PANCHILLET	ATEU0ESP00276
EU-España	GEPUS	ATEU0ESP00119
EU-España	LA FRAU DOS	ATEU0ESP00172
EU-España	TIO GEL SEGON	ATEU0ESP00394
EU-France	ANNE ANTOINE 2	ATEU0FRA00003
EU-France	CHRISDERIC II	ATEU0FRA00019
EU-France	CHRISDERIC V	ATEU0FRA14500
EU-France	CISBERLANDE 5	ATEU0FRA00021
EU-France	ERIC MARIN	ATEU0FRA00087
EU-France	GERALD JEAN III	ATEU0FRA00026
EU-France	GERALD JEAN IV	ATEU0FRA00093
EU-France	GERARD LUC IV	ATEU0FRA00028
EU-France	JANVIER GIORDANO	ATEU0FRA00037
EU-France	JANVIER LOUIS RAPHAEL	ATEU0FRA00083
EU-France	JEAN LOUIS RAPHAEL 2	ATEU0FRA00038
EU-France	JEAN MARIE CHRISTIAN 4	ATEU0FRA00041
EU-France	JEAN MARIE CHRISTIAN 6	ATEU0FRA00043
EU-France	JEAN MARIE CHRISTIAN 7	ATEU0FRA00078
EU-France	JEANMARIE CHRISTIAN 3	ATEU0FRA00040
EU-France	ORION SEA STAR	ATEU0FRA00027
EU-France	PIERRE JOSEPH SALVADOR	ATEU0FRA00088
EU-France	SAINT SOPHIE FRANCOIS 2	ATEU0FRA00064
EU-France	SAINT SOPHIE FRANCOIS 3	ATEU0FRA00065
EU-France	VENT DU NORD II	ATEU0FRA00090
EU-France	VILLE D'AGDE IV	ATEU0FRA00089
EU-France	VILLE D'ARZEW 2	ATEU0FRA00077
EU-Italy	ALTO MARE PRIMO	ATEU0ITA00631
EU-Italy	ANGELO CATANIA	ATEU0ITA00636
EU-Italy	ANGELA MADRE	ATEU0ITA00635
EU-Italy	ATLANTE	ATEU0ITA00065
EU-Italy	DOBERMANN	ATEU0ITA00163
EU-Italy	ENZA MADRE	ATEU0ITA00188
EU-Italy	GAETANO PADRE	ATEU0ITA00693
EU-Italy	GENEVIEVE PRIMA	ATEU0ITA00654
EU-Italy	GIUSEPPE PADRE SECONDO	ATEU0ITA00289
EU-Italy	LUCIA MADRE	ATEU0ITA00664
EU-Italy	MADONNA DI FATIMA	ATEU0ITA00348
EU-Italy	MARIA ANTONIETTA	ATEU0ITA00368
EU-Italy	MARIA GRAZIA	ATEU0ITA00694
EU-Italy	MICHELANGELO	ATEU0ITA00671
EU-Italy	PADRE PIO P	ATEU0ITA00470
EU-Italy	SPARVIERO UNO	ATEU0ITA00565
EU-Italy	VERGINE DE ROSARIO	ATEU0ITA00617
EU-Malta	TA MATTEW	ATEU0MLT00001
Libya	AEDONIA	AT000LBY00011
Libya	ALAMWAJE ALHADERE	AT000LBY00078
Libya	ALBAHR ELHADER	AT000LBY00077
Libya	ALHARES 2	AT000LBY00074
Libya	CYRENE	AT000LBY00010
Libya	HANIBAL	AT000LBY00047
Libya	MORINA	AT000LBY00028

Libya	NAWASI AL KIR 1	AT000LBY00015
Libya	RAS ETIN	AT000LBY00022
Libya	OEa	AT000LBY00026
Libya	EL HADER 2	AT000LBY00037
Libya	ALNOGOM AMODIAA 1	AT000LBY00072
Libya	AL-MUSTAKBEL	AT000LBY00085
Libya	OZU II	AT000LBY00009
Libya	ZARQA ALYAMAMAI	AT000LBY00064
Maroc	AZROU 1	AT000MAR00081
Maroc	MEDIOUNA	AT000MAR01418
Norway	Brennholm	AT000NOR00013
Norway	Notbas	AT000NOR00011
Norway	Orfjord	AT000NOR00012
Norway	Vibeke Helene	AT000NOR00010
Syria	Jawharat Almuhitat	AT000SYR00024
Tunisia	El Horchani	AT000TUN00009
Tunisia	Abderrahmen	AT000TUN00047
Tunisia	Abou Chamma	AT000TUN00002
Tunisia	Amir	AT000TUN00506
Tunisia	Oueled Hammali	AT000TUN00979
Tunisia	Denphir 1	AT000TUN00479
Tunisia	El Behi	AT000TUN00985
Tunisia	El Beji	AT000TUN00984
Tunisia	El Khalij	AT000TUN00014
Tunisia	Fakhreddine Rrazi II	AT000TUN00975
Tunisia	Futuro 1	AT000TUN00065
Tunisia	Ghali	AT000TUN00036
Tunisia	Ghedir El Gholla	AT000TUN00030
Tunisia	Hadj Ali III	AT000TUN00988
Tunisia	Haj Issaoui	AT000TUN00987
Tunisia	Hassen	AT000TUN00008
Tunisia	Imen	AT000TUN00010
Tunisia	Jamel	AT000TUN00011
Tunisia	Jawhar	AT000TUN00046
Tunisia	Mabrouk	AT000TUN00015
Tunisia	Mabrouka	AT000TUN00981
Tunisia	Mohamed Adem	AT000TUN00012
Tunisia	Mohamed Ali	AT000TUN00973
Tunisia	Mohamed Sadok	AT000TUN00051
Tunisia	Mohamed Salim II	AT000TUN00983
Tunisia	Mohamed Zied II	AT000TUN00986
Tunisia	Montaçar	AT000TUN00974
Tunisia	Sayfallah	AT000TUN00043
Tunisia	Sallem	AT000TUN00023
Tunisia	Tapsus	AT000TUN00024
Tunisia	Tijani	AT000TUN00026
Tunisia	Yosri	AT000TUN00040
Tunisia	Yosri II	AT000TUN00982
Tunisia	Ibn Rachiq	AT000TUN00037
Tunisia	Awled Sahbi (former Aoueled Essahbi)	AT000TUN00977
Tunisia	Dou Allah	AT000TUN00976
Tunisia	El Houssaine	AT000TUN00049
Tunisia	El Kods	AT000TUN00978
Tunisia	Essaida jannet	AT000TUN00050
Tunisia	Hadj Ahmed	AT000TUN00070
Tunisia	Hadj Mokhtar	AT000TUN00025

Tunisia	Haj hedi	AT000TUN00007
Tunisia	Jannet 2	AT000TUN00044
Tunisia	Mohamed Yassine	AT000TUN00045
Turkey	Akgün Kardesler	AT000TUR00219
Turkey	Margo Mahmut	AT000TUR07659
Turkey	Hicaz-5	AT000TUR00497
Turkey	Tokerler-II	AT000TUR00044
Turkey	Elmas Kardexler	AT000TUR00010
Turkey	Cihan Cengiz Karadeniz	AT000TUR00450
Turkey	Geciciler Balıkcılık - 1	AT000TUR00220
Turkey	Oktay-4	AT000TUR07894
Turkey	Tuncay Sagun - 2	AT000TUR00455
Turkey	Tuncay Sagun - 6	AT000TUR00040
Turkey	Yildiz Su Urunleri Z	AT000TUR00094
Turkey	Yilmazlar 5	AT000TUR00426
Turkey	Dursan Cinaroglu	AT000TUR00131
Turkey	Mamati Orhan	AT000TUR00448
Turkey	Soydemirler	AT000TUR00043
Turkey	Ergun Basaran	AT000TUR00248
Turkey	Eyupoglu Ahmet Reis	AT000TUR00211
Turkey	Habibin Enver	AT000TUR00022
Turkey	Habib Reis 4	AT000TUR00522
Turkey	Mehmet Kaptan 7	AT000TUR00034
Turkey	CINAR IBRAHİM	AT000TUR00014
Turkey	CINAR OSMAN	AT000TUR00516
Turkey	COSKUN KARDESLER-1	AT000TUR00015
Turkey	DENIZER	AT000TUR00501
Turkey	EYUP DEDE	AT000TUR00019
Turkey	KARAHASANOGLU BALIKCILIK	AT000TUR00114
Turkey	KAVRAMIS MAHMUT	AT000TUR00147
Turkey	KERİM REİS 1	AT000TUR00502
Turkey	MAMULİ REİS-III	AT000TUR00033

**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	51	2
2018	57	4
2019	56	4

\* At 1st October 2019.

**Table 3.** Farming facilities on which ICCAT Regional Observers were deployed in 2018/2019.

<i>CPC</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00003	
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00006	ATEU1HRV00006
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00008	ATEU1HRV00008
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00011	ATEU1HRV00011
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00012	ATEU1HRV00012
EU-Croatia	ATEU1HRV00015	ATEU1HRV00015
EU-Croatia		ATEU1HRV00016
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	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 2018/2019.

<i>CPC</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>
EU-Italy	ATEU2ITA00003	ATEU2ITA00003
EU-Italy	ATEU2ITA00009	ATEU2ITA00009
EU-Portugal	ATEU2PRT00002	
Morocco	AT002MAR00002	AT002MAR00002
Morocco	AT002MAR00003	AT002MAR00003
Morocco	AT002MAR00004	AT002MAR00004
Morocco	AT002MAR00005	AT002MAR00005
Morocco		AT002MAR00006
Morocco		AT002MAR00009
Morocco	AT002MAR00010	AT002MAR00010
Morocco	AT002MAR00011	AT002MAR00011
Morocco	AT002MAR00012	AT002MAR00012
Morocco	AT002MAR00013	AT002MAR00013
Morocco		AT002MAR00014
Morocco	AT002MAR00015	AT002MAR00015
Morocco		AT002MAR00016
Morocco		AT002MAR00017
Morocco		AT002MAR00018

## Consortium's report on the implementation of the ROP-BFT

### *Executive Summary*

The service provider for implementing year ten (April 2019/March 2020) 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 tenth 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. This report summarises the 179 deployments on authorised purse seiners during the 2019 fishing season, as well as the 31 farm and trap deployments completed to date since the start of the current contract. In addition, 31 outstanding farm and trap deployments are included from the previous season. 100% observer coverage has been achieved 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 ten 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) has been 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. However, the introduction this year of voluntary transfers (an optional additional transfer that may be performed in the event of a non-compliant initial transfer. If the voluntary transfer is successful, the ITD can be signed and no PNC issued) has improved this and reduced the number of potential non-compliances (PNCs) issued. 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:** A meeting was held between CPCs, the Secretariat, SCRS and the Consortium in April 2019 prior to the commencement of the fishing season, during which constructive feedback was provided to enable improvements to be made to the Programme. The Consortium would propose that such meetings continue to be held prior to each fishing season.