

Original: French

LETTER OF THE CHAIR OF THE WORKING GROUP ON RECREATIONAL AND SPORT FISHERIES

Mr. R. DELGADO
ICCAT Chair

Dear Chair,

A group of countries including Canada, Morocco, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, and the European Union proposed, through the voice of Senegal, an Intersessional Meeting of the Working Group on Recreational and Sport Fisheries.

Two (2) years ago, Canada offered to host this meeting.

As you know, this Working Group on Recreational and Sport Fisheries was established under ICCAT Recommendation 06-17 and met for the first time on 6 November 2009, during the regular meeting of the Commission that was held in Recife (Brazil).

It should be recalled that the recreational and sport fishery is considerably important from a socio-economic perspective throughout the world, and that it covers very diverse activities. The establishment of the working group in 2009 had created enthusiasm and immense hope within the family of the world sport fishery.

Yet unfortunately, this working group has been paralyzed by lethargy since its creation and we think that it is time to lend assistance by providing it with the means and potential for functioning. This could, in particular, improve the management of the recreational and sport fisheries, which gather more than 100 million members and only account for less than 3% of catches.

During the meeting in Recife, the working group proposed a programme based on the following guidelines:

- Collection of detailed, complete and reliable data from CPCs, on sport fisheries for all species managed by ICCAT;
- Development of a standardised data collection methodology, at the proposal of the SCRS;
- Development of a definition of recreational and sport fisheries;
- Census of infrastructure implemented by CPCs at national level to oversee and monitor their recreational and sport fisheries;
- Review of the different management and control measures capable of adaptation at ICCAT level.

It has been noted, with satisfaction, that the Commission has recommended the inclusion of further information in the annual reports of the countries, concerning the list of vessels that engage in recreational and sport fishing, as well as the techniques used to manage this fishery, which is an important stage in the improvement of the recreational and sport fisheries monitoring infrastructure in the member countries of our Organisation.

After assessing the status of the countries' annual reports, it is important to continue the work to densify the management approaches of these fisheries, through organisation of the working group to continue the reflection on the numerous issues of the recreational and sport fisheries.

Finally, the working group wishes to request the assistance of the SCRS to develop and adopt a standardised data collection methodology.

In addition, the Secretary would transmit to the CPCs a standard format for the purpose of collecting information on the infrastructure in place to oversee and monitor the recreational and sport fisheries.

The working group must be composed of CPCs, and all CPCs, especially, those with a track record in this area, in particular, Canada, the European Union and the United States, to which organisations can be added such as the Confédération Internationale de Pêche Sportive (CIPS) and the International Game Fishing Association (IGFA).

Finally, I would like to recall that at the last ICCAT meeting, in "Other matters" of the plenary, a group of ACP, through the voice of Senegal, had expressed the wish to relaunch the working group by holding an intersessional meeting. This meeting could be held in Canada, who were already agreeable.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Done at Dakar, 25 October 2019

Chair

Abdoulaye DIOUF