

**INFORMAL DISCUSSION PAPER ON POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS
TO BIGEYE TUNA AND SWORDFISH STATISTICAL DOCUMENT PROGRAMMES (SDP),
INCLUDING DEVELOPMENT OF CATCH DOCUMENT SCHEME (CDS)**

Presented by Japan

1. Background

At the 13th meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Monitoring Measures (IMM) in Madrid, Spain held on 2-4 April 2019, there was discussion on a *“Review and consideration of possible amendments to swordfish and bigeye tuna Statistical Document Programmes”*. At the end of the discussion, *“Japan offered to author an informal discussion paper for the next PWG meeting that would give a more tangible item for the Group to discuss. This document would be non-binding and would not presuppose any outcome.”* (Page 2 of Report of the 13th meeting of IMM).

Based on the outcome, Japan drafted this document to facilitate discussion for possible future amendments to the current ICCAT SDPs, at the PWG in the 26th Regular meeting of ICCAT in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, in November of 2019. The document does not presuppose any outcome for this issue at ICCAT.

2. Summary of discussion until 2014

Discussion on possible amendments of the SDPs started in 2012 and continued until 2014. Unfortunately, no agreement was made on any amendment to the SDPs or development of a CDS. The main points of the argument during the discussion are:

1. Possible target tuna species for CDS should be the one that;
 - a) is subject to overfishing or overfished, and/or;
 - b) is threatened by IUU fishing
2. The Bigeye tuna (BET) SDP only covers 30-40% of all trades of the species: The scope of the SDP should be expanded to improve the effectiveness of the scheme.
3. An electronic SDP/CDS should be considered if any new scheme is established, and in this regard the eBCD would be anticipated to be able to accommodate other species.
4. There were technical difficulties to incorporate BET caught by purse seine vessels into the SDP.
5. Capacity of developing CPCs is very limited to implement any new ICCAT traceability program, even though they implement the EU IUU Regulations.
6. Dual certifications for one species should be avoided, i.e., EU-IUU Regulations and a new ICCAT program.

3. Recent developments and changes

3.1 Voluntary Guidelines for Catch Documentation Schemes adopted by FAO in 2017

The objective of these Guidelines is to provide assistances to states and RFMOs when developing and implementing CDSs. *“Information elements for Catch Certificates”* in the Annex of the Guidelines show core elements to be included in the catch certificates. Those elements seem to be very basic and not to cover all information required by EU-CDS.

3.2 Recommendation of 2nd ICCAT Performance Review in 2016

The review panel recommended “73. Works towards replacing all SDPs with electronic CDPs that are harmonized among tuna RFMOs where appropriate - in particular for bigeye tuna - while taking account of the envisaged FAO Voluntary Guidelines on Catch Documentation Schemes.”

3.3 Changes of stock status

The stock statuses of bigeye tuna and swordfish have become worse since 2014.

BET: Atlantic Ocean: Good (2013) → Overfished & Overfishing (2017)
SWO: North Atlantic: Good (2013) → Good (2017)
South Atlantic: Good (2013) → Overfished (2017)
Mediterranean: N/A → Overfished & Overfishing (2015)

4. Needs to consider a new CDS

Five years have already passed since ICCAT stopped discussing possible expansion of SDP/CDS. During that time, several new developments and changes have happened internationally, all of which demonstrate the need to consider this issue. Japan believes that consumers will be asking more assurance that the fish they eat are coming from legal sources. Members of ICCAT may be worse-off if ICCAT does not respond to it. It should be noted that even if ICCAT starts discussion now, it may take several years to complete all the necessary work. ICCAT should be proactive and start discussion now.

5. Major points to be discussed

5.1 Target species and utility of CDS

Which species should be covered by CDS? This depends on the stock status and the risk of IUU. BET and SWO are definitely candidates, but other species could be considered.

5.2 How to minimize increase in workload, particularly in developing CPCs

Consideration should be given to avoid duplication with existing schemes. Also, an electronic scheme should be considered, taking into account the experiences of the eBCD.

6. A proposed way forward

(1) Japan expects the Commission at this meeting to decide on whether it wishes to have more detailed discussion without prejudging future expansion of CDS.

(2) If the Commission decides to do so, this should become one of the agenda items at the next IMM meeting. Alternatively, the Commission can decide to hold a special working group meeting for this issue, depending on the number and schedule of other intersessional meetings.

(3) If the Commission agrees to discuss this issue in more details, Japan is willing to submit a paper to facilitate further discussion.