

## Opening Statement

26<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of ICCAT  
Palma de Mallorca, Spain  
18-25 November 2019

### Japanese Delegation

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentleman,

On behalf of the Japanese Delegation, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Government of Spain as well as the European Union for hosting this important meeting in this beautiful city, Palma de Mallorca. We also thank the ICCAT Secretariat staff for the excellent preparation and arrangement of the 26<sup>th</sup> regular meeting of the Commission.

This year's Commission meeting will be probably one of the busiest ones in recent years. We must develop management measures for tropical tunas, shortfin mako and blue marlin. Finalization of the Protocol to amend the Convention and how to advance MSE processes are also important issues. Japan would like to cooperate with the Chairman and other CPCs to produce good outcomes for these important issues.

Among other things, Japan attaches great importance to management of tropical tuna stocks, particularly Bigeye tuna. Introduction of effective management measures on this stock is a great challenge for ICCAT. On the one hand the TAC should be reduced to a level which would achieve the stock recovery within a reasonable period while containing the total catch to the level below the TAC. At the same time, due consideration should be given to the right of developing coastal states to develop their own fishery. It would be very difficult, if not impossible, for the Commission to resolve all the issues at one time. We believe that a practical solution would be to consider this in two steps, i.e., what the Commission should do now and what the Commission will do when the stock recovers and the TAC is increased.

Conservation of shortfin mako is another important issue. The SCRS tells that the northern stock is depleted and recommends prohibition of retention without any exemption. Japan submitted a proposal for conservation of this species two

years ago based on the SCRS recommendation, but the adopted recommendation was full of exemptions that diluted the original intention of Japan's proposal. We do not want to see the same argument at this meeting.

Last year Japan expressed concern about very high growth ratios observed in BFT farming. After the annual meeting, Japan has been communicating with several BFT farming states for further investigation. We would like to thank them for their constructive cooperation. Nevertheless, we believe that more work should and could be done to mitigate such concern. We will provide results of our investigation as well as some ideas for improving the management of farming during the course of discussion at relevant bodies.

Mr. Chairman, the Japanese Delegation is ready to work closely and cooperatively with other delegations to find good solutions and sincerely hopes that this regular meeting will be successfully and fruitfully concluded.