

Original: English/French

Annex/Annexe/Anexo 1

**MEETINGS AT WHICH ICCAT WAS REPRESENTED  
FROM JANUARY 2019 TO OCTOBER 2019**

*SUMMARY*

*This document provides basic information on the meetings of an administrative and scientific nature at which ICCAT was represented by members of the Secretariat staff or by other persons acting on its behalf. The basic information on each meeting includes the main points of the agenda as well as their major implications for ICCAT.*

**RÉUNIONS AUXQUELLES L'ICCAT A ÉTÉ REPRÉSENTÉE  
ENTRE JANVIER 2019 ET OCTOBRE 2019**

*RÉSUMÉ*

*Le présent document fournit des informations de base sur les réunions administratives et scientifiques auxquelles l'ICCAT a été représentée par des membres du personnel du Secrétariat ou par d'autres personnes au nom du Secrétariat. L'information de base pour chaque réunion inclut les principaux points de l'ordre du jour ainsi que les principales implications pour l'ICCAT.*

**REUNIONES EN LAS QUE HA ESTADO REPRESENTADA ICCAT  
ENTRE ENERO DE 2019 Y OCTUBRE DE 2019**

*RESUMEN*

*Este documento presenta información básica sobre las reuniones administrativas y científicas en las que ICCAT estuvo representada, ya sea por miembros de la Secretaría o por otras personas que actuaron en su nombre. La información básica que se presenta para cada reunión incluye los puntos principales del orden del día y sus principales implicaciones para ICCAT.*

**HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON BLUE BELT INITIATIVE**

**Location:** Agadir, Morocco

**Dates:** 19 January 2019

**Representative:** Camille Jean Pierre Manel, ICCAT Executive Secretary

**Agenda items:** Building resilient and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in Africa – Blue Belt Initiative  
The Ministry of Agriculture, Marine Fisheries, Rural Development, and Waters and Forests has organized a High-Level Conference on Blue Belt Initiative on the theme: Building resilient and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in Africa: The way forward through the sustainable blue belt initiative. Representatives from 22 countries, including 17 ministers, international experts as well as international organizations, attended this half-day conference. The conference was more specifically aiming for sustainable, innovative, and protective fisheries and aquaculture of the oceans; the speeches of the different speakers, mostly ministers, were in that line.

I met several ministers from ICCAT member countries. I took the opportunity to call for greater collaboration with ICCAT in every regard, like more support to teams dealing with ICCAT issues at the national level, more flexibility in their travel organization when joining meetings, the countries financial contributions.

**SIXTH GLOBAL FISHERIES ENFORCMENT TRAINING WORKSHOP AND THIRD MEETING OF THE TUNA COMPLIANCE NETWORK**

**Location:** Centara Grand Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

**Dates:** 21-24 February 2019

**Representative:** Jenny Cheatle, Head of Compliance Department, ICCAT Secretariat

**Main agenda items:**

**GFETW:** Session 9: Improved compliance in RFMOs. ICCAT representative gave a presentation on "Towards improved Compliance in ICCAT". Other presentations during this session were given by NOAA, WCPFC, FFA, IOTC, NPFC. Also attended Session 8: Role of MCS practitioners in combating crime associated with and/or related to fisheries, Session 10: Control and enforcement over transshipment and Session 11: Global IUU risks, estimations and quantification.

**TCN:** Updates and discussion of TCN Workplan's projects; Overview of procedures to assess Members' compliance in tuna RFMOs; Purpose and reality of compliance assessment procedures; What to assess; Compliance of and how to assess it; The consequences of compliance procedures; How to improve existing compliance assessment systems (facilitated by ICCAT representative); Conclusions and next steps; TCN objectives and operation.

**Summary:** An interesting exchange was held with representatives from the Secretariats of the five tuna RFMOs and the Chairs of the Compliance Committees (or nearest equivalent) of these. There was general agreement that while each RFMO had its own needs, some of the procedures of others could be of interest to all, and that a certain amount of harmonisation across RFMOs, both in reporting procedures and compliance review would have some advantages. This would be particularly important during the development of online reporting systems, so that information and reporting modules could be shared if and when appropriate. While it was recognised that RFMOs were not tribunals or punitive bodies, some deterrents to non-compliance were necessary, but should be used with caution. Follow-up on the reasons for non-compliance together with capacity building to help toward improvement if needed were areas deemed important. It was noted that the number of compliance staff in the various RFMOs was small and that this dependency on a few key individuals should also be a cause for concern. Clarity (or lack thereof) of requirements was also noted as a potential contributor to non-compliance, as CPs may not be fully aware of expectations or have different interpretations. The clear and concise drafting of CMMs is therefore important.

**Future actions:** The Secretariat will follow up, in conjunction with the COC Chair and other Chairs as appropriate, on some of the initiatives already undertaken by other tuna RFMOs which may be beneficial or of interest to ICCAT.

**Report availability:** [in progress]

**COMMON OCEAN/ABNJ TUNA PROJECT WORKSHOP ON SEABIRD BYCATCH**

**Location:** Kruger National Park, South Africa

**Dates:** 25 February – 1 March 2019

**Representative:** Nathan Taylor, By-catch Coordinator

**Agenda items:** A group of scientists from several countries that have fishing operations South of 20° latitude were invited to the meeting in order to estimate seabird bycatch in tuna fisheries. The complete list of objectives was: to get a global estimate of seabird bycatch in the Southern Hemisphere; to determine uncertainties and sensitivity analyses; and to determine population level impact on key species, determine roadmap for future work, and to expand capacity. Scientists at the meeting included those from governments (Japan, Korea, Chinese Taipei, Brazil, China, Australia, United States of America, South Africa), NGOs (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds/BirdLife International, Projeto Albatroz) and international organizations (Agreement on the Conservation of Albatross and Petrels, FAO, SPC, IOTC and ICCAT).

The method of analysis consisted of scaling up by-catch per unit effort by effort and according to seabird distribution information, that was derived from tagging studies. The analysis used a common set of observer data in order to do the by-catch estimation. Each country brought its own observer data. These data were aggregated into 5x5 cells and compiled into a common dataset for analysis: the compiled dataset was destroyed at the end of the meeting. A variety of models to generate the by-catch per unit effort were explored and compared. The models produced consisted estimates of seabird by-catch. Additional analysis explored the impacts of the by-catch on the populations. A draft final report of the meeting accepted at the meeting. Once the report is accepted by FAO, it will be published.

**PRIMERA REUNIÓN PREPARATORIA DE LA COMISIÓN DE PESCA PARA EL ATLÁNTICO CENTRO-OCCIDENTAL (COPACO) PARA LA TRANSFORMACIÓN EN ORGANIZACIÓN REGIONAL DE ORDENACIÓN PESQUERA (OROP)**

**Location:** Bridgetown, Barbados

**Dates:** 25-26 Marzo 2019

**Representative:** Raul Delgado (Presidente de la Comisión Chair)

**Agenda items:** La reunión preparatoria se celebró para dar seguimiento al debate que se dio durante la 16ª Reunión de la COPACO, en la que se acordó iniciar un proceso para establecer una organización regional de ordenación pesquera y aclarar cuestiones en relación con el área de competencia, las poblaciones que se cubrirían, las consecuencias presupuestarias para los miembros, la estructura institucional, la composición, los procesos de toma de decisiones, aspectos de la soberanía nacional, sus objetivos y otras cuestiones pertinentes de sus miembros en la COPACO.

Tomando en cuenta lo expresado en párrafo anterior, y en base a las cuestiones sobre el área de competencia y las poblaciones que se cubrirían, se hizo una breve presentación sobre el alcance y área de cobertura de la ICCAT. También se presentó un enfoque general de los objetivos de la Comisión y los puntos de preocupación que se tienen como Comisión sobre los temas que se discuten en la COPACO.

Finalmente se expresó que el proceso es una excelente oportunidad entre ICCAT y COPACO para identificar la manera de fortalecer aún más la cooperación y la colaboración.

**Future actions:**

**Report availability:**

**SECOND PROGRAMMATIC THEORY OF CHANGE WORKSHOP FOR THE COMMON OCEANS ABNJ PROGRAM**

**Location:** FAO HQ, Rome, Italy

**Dates:** 23-26 April 2019

**Representative:** Camille Jean Pierre Manel, ICCAT Executive Secretary

**Agenda items:** Development of GEF-7 ABNJ programme, possible activities/projects for new ABNJ

As part of the preparation of Phase 2 of the ABNJ Programme, a second meeting took place after the one in December 2018 with a higher number of participants. This meeting mainly focused on the Theory of Change of the new programme, but the opportunity was taken to present possible activities and projects for the new phase.

The ABNJ coordination team presented a summary of the achievements of the current activities of the programme, which were discussed, and positively welcomed by the participants. The progress on the theory of change was also considered for further refinements, for example, with priorities, ecosystem approach.

As regards the possible activities/projects for Phase 2, sixty-three draft proposals were presented by the different participants. ICCAT submitted five proposals related to capacity building, IT, MSE, scientific knowledge on ecosystems, birds/turtles/sharks.

Considering the number of proposals on the table, with the limited budget from the GEF (although it was not indicated), the ABNJ coordination team asked for additional work from the proponents for possibilities to merge activities/projects that have similarities and called for cross-sectoral integration. It also encouraged participants to explore options of co-financing from other partners. The ABNJ coordination will inform about the selection of the proposals.

The participants discussed and proposed criteria for prioritization of the submitted proposals. The ABNJ coordination informed that a Project Identification Form is to be submitted at May/June 2020 GEF Council.

**INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS OF STATES PARTIES (ICSP) TO THE UN FISH STOCKS AGREEMENT - "PERFORMANCE REVIEWS OF REGIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND ARRANGEMENTS"**

**Location:** UN HQ, New York, USA

**Dates:** 2-3 May 2019

**Representative:** Stefaan Depypere, First ICCAT Vice-Chair, Camille Jean Pierre Manel, ICCAT Executive Secretary

**Agenda items:** Performance reviews of regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements

This 14th round of the ICSP to the UN Fish Stock Agreement has been convened in light of "paragraph 58 of resolution 73/125", in which the General Assembly asked to focus on "specific issues arising from the implementation of the Agreement." And as such, the performance reviews of regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements have been the main topic discussed.

Delegates from States Parties, United Nations specialized agencies, programmes, and bodies, as well as other intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, participated in the meeting, which elected Mr. Fabio Hanzin (Brazil) as Chairperson.

For the preparation of the meeting, the Secretariat sent a contribution to DOALOS request. ICCAT after showed its interest in being part of the Segment 3 Panel (Segment 3: Recommendations of and mechanisms for follow-up to performance reviews: experiences, best practices, challenges and opportunities).

During the meeting, the First Vice-Chair of ICCAT made a presentation in which he described the two performance reviews of the Commission. He particularly insisted on the recommendations made, the results and the lessons learned from their follow-up, highlighting the success with the Bluefin tuna management. In this regard, Mr. Depypere explained the mechanism put in place by ICCAT for the follow-up of the performance reviews. He also recalled the role of the Kobe Process in launching these performance reviews and in strengthening the cooperation between the tuna-RFMOs.

The meeting adopted the Terms of References for the UNFSA Fund that Norway presented (Part VII Assistance Fund); this fund is mainly for the assistance to developing States regarding the fulfillment of their obligation in the implementation of the Agreement.

The meeting also agreed to hold the fifteenth round of this ICSP in 2020 with a focus on the implementation of an ecosystem approach to fisheries management. During that meeting, the preparation of the resumed Review Conference for 2021 will also be discussed.

**SECOND MEETING OF THE JOINT T-RFMOs FAD WORKING GROUP**

**Location:** San Diego, California, USA

**Dates:** 8-10 May 2019

**Representative:** Camille Jean Pierre Manel, ICCAT Executive Secretary, Miguel Neves dos Santos, ICCAT Assistant Executive Secretary/Science Coordinator and Mauricio Ortiz, ICCAT Head of the Statistics and Research Department

**Agenda items:** A wide range of subjects were covered during the meeting, including among others: Review of the progress of the key areas for action for the joint t-RFMO FAD Working Group; Review of the current management measures on FADs; definitions of terms related to FAD fishing; Minimum standards and formats to optimize and harmonize the collection of data on FADs; FAD fishery indicators; Impacts of FADs in tuna fisheries and recent developments in their mitigation; Current and Future initiatives for FAD fishery sustainability; Areas of future cross-RFMO collaboration on FADs; and, Recommendations.

**Future actions:** Collaboration, mutual trust, and sharing of knowledge and data among t-RFMOs, scientists, industry and NGOs should be strengthened in order to tackle unresolved issues related to the sustainability of the FAD fishery. In addition, future collaboration between t-RFMOs should include a meeting to evaluate the information available to assess the effect of each t-RFMO's measures on FADs, with special focus on sharing information on challenges and successes.

**Report availability:**

[https://www.iccat.int/Documents/Meetings/Docs/2019/REPORTS/JWGFAD-02\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.iccat.int/Documents/Meetings/Docs/2019/REPORTS/JWGFAD-02_ENG.pdf)

**FAO/FIRMS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING ELEVENTH SESSION (FS11)**

**Location:** Rome, Italy

**Dates:** 13-14 and 18 May 2019

**Representative:** Carlos Palma, ICCAT Biostatistician

**Agenda items:** The most important items of the agenda were: Membership review - expanding Partnership with "Collaborative Arrangements"; FIRMS Intersessional activities; review of FIRMS Technical Working Group recommendations; FIRMS Governance leadership on the Global Record of Stocks and Fisheries (GRSF), and, the Tuna Atlas; review of FIRMS protocols and standards; review of FIRMS Governance structure; and, future work plan.

**Future actions:** A workplan was elaborated with the objective to continue providing the required support and capacity building to FIRMS Partners (currently 21 Institutions), and to release GRSF (Global Record of Stocks and Fisheries) and the FIRMS Tuna Atlas in a good timing in respect of the FAO International Fishery Symposium (November 2019). It was also planned the need to identify/study other suitable events to present/promote the GRSF and the Tuna Atlas, such as the COFI, given its potential use of the GRSF in policy. As recommended to all FIRMS partners, ICCAT expressed the willingness to have up to date factsheets in FIRMS.

**Report availability:** <http://www.fao.org/3/ca5247en/ca5247en.pdf>

**FAO/CWP 26<sup>TH</sup> SESSION: INTERSESSIONAL MEETINGS OF AQUACULTURE (6<sup>TH</sup> SESSION) AND FISHERIES (27<sup>TH</sup> SESSION)  
SUBJECT GROUPS**

**Location:** Rome, Italy

**Dates:** 15-18 May 2019

**Representative:** Carlos Palma, ICCAT Biostatistician

**Agenda items:** The most important matters covered were: Review of monitoring and reporting of SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) relevant to fisheries and aquaculture statistics; Progress report of activities relevant to CWP since 2016; Review of progress on CWP workplan agreed at the last intersessional meeting, including the CWP Handbook on standards, the CWP web-page, socio-economic enhancements to the Handbook, work of the CWP ad-hoc Task Group on reference harmonization, work of the GIS Technical Working Group, work on streamlining the report of national statistics. In addition, the Aquaculture Subject Group (CWP-AS) and Fisheries Subject Group (CWP-FS) had a parallel session, each one with a specific agenda. The outcome of the CWP-AS and CWP-FS sessions, was afterwards discussed at the CWP 26<sup>th</sup> session (CWP-26, 17-18 May). ICCAT has only participated at the CWP-FS intersessional meeting sessions (15-16 May). For CWP-26 where required for decision-making, ICCAT representative has given their proxy for voting to IOTC.

**Future actions:** Planned the 27<sup>th</sup> CWP Session and intersessional meetings and activities. Endorsed the establishment of five ad-hoc Task Groups (TG) to handle CWP intersessional work: TG on best practices (including confidentiality issues); TG on fishing effort concepts; TG on reference harmonization (includes fishing activity information); TG on catch concepts; TG for the improvements of aquaculture section of the CWP Handbook (including farming system classifications). ICCAT will participate in the first four ad-hoc Task Groups. The CWP-FS workplan for the intersessional activities (2019-2022) includes the main objectives the first four Task Groups.

**Report availability:** not yet published (TBA).

#### NEAFC-OSPAR COLLECTIVE ARRANGEMENT

**Location:** Gothenburg, Sweden

**Dates:** 28-29 May 2019

**Representative:** Jenny Cheatle, ICCAT Head of Compliance Department

**Main agenda items:** Updates on activities by NEAFC and OSPAR, as well as other organisations with an interest in the area (e.g. NAMCO; HELCOM) and progress on MPA designation. Emphasis was placed on actions in the context of BBNJ and eco-systemic approach.

**Summary:** NEAFC and OSPAR meet regularly in order to discuss issues of common interest, given the overlap in their Convention areas. As both areas fall within the ICCAT Convention area, updates to initiatives can be of interest to ICCAT. The ICCAT Secretariat gave a presentation of ICCAT activities which may be of interest to other organisations. OSPAR is still considering creating an MPA in the North East Atlantic, mainly with the aim of protecting seabirds. A consultative process, requesting views from other international organisations with competence in the area, including ICCAT was undertaken, and ICCAT expressed an interest in being kept fully informed and in participating in the process to ensure that the creation of such an MPA, if decided, would have no negative impact on legitimate ICCAT fisheries. At the 2019 collective arrangement it was clarified that OSPAR had no competence over ICCAT activities, and the designation of such an MPA would have no direct effect on ICCAT unless the ICCAT Commission decided to take any action.

**Future actions:** No further action by ICCAT is necessary, although an exchange of information with both NEAFC and OSPAR, particularly in relation to shark catches and seabird interactions, as well as consideration of possible measures to mitigate seabird by-catch in the NE Atlantic, could be beneficial.

**Report availability:** An Aide-Memoire will be drafted by OSPAR for circulation to participants.

#### SIXTH STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING FOR THE COMMON OCEANS ABNJ TUNA PROJECT

**Location:** FAO, Rome, Italy

**Dates:** 8-10 July 2019

**Representatives:** Camille Jean Pierre Manel, ICCAT Executive Secretary and Jenny Cheatle, ICCAT Head of Compliance Department

**Main agenda items:**

Review of progress of project implementation over the past year; plan for terminal evaluation; use of any remaining funds and consideration of next steps for the possible implementation of ABNJ II.

**Summary:** The ICCAT representatives co-chaired the Steering Committee meeting. The partners reported that all ongoing projects were on track to be completed successfully by the end of the project. The team selected to carry out the final evaluation was presented to the steering committee and it was agreed that all the experts were excellent choices for this work. The Steering Committee agreed that, once funding for the current activities had been set aside, any remaining funds could be used to fund the preparation of the next phase of the ABNJ project within the Common Oceans Programme. Meanwhile, those proposing activities

were requested to review their proposals and submit revised or, as appropriate, merged versions before the end of August 2019, for incorporation into the general proposal to be submitted to GEF. The Project Steering Committee participants were also encouraged to send any comments on the draft theory of change for the second phase of the ABNJ as well as the draft document outlining expected impact.

**Future actions:** The ABNJ coordinator proposed holding a final meeting of the ABNJ Steering Committee in January 2020. While some participants agreed that this could be useful, it was agreed that the final decision on this would be taken once the outcomes of the Programme Coordination Meeting were available.

**Report availability:** [in progress]

#### 17EME REUNION DE LA COMMISSION DES PECHEES POUR L'ATLANTIQUE CENTRE-OUEST (COPACO)

**Lieu :** Miami, Floride, États Unis

**Dates:** 15-17 juillet 2019

**Représentant:** Camille Jean Pierre Manel, Secrétaire exécutif de l'ICCAT

**Points de l'ordre du jour :** Etat des pêcheries, recommandations et résolutions, transformation de la COPACO en ORGP, plan d'action régional INN, etc.

Dans le cadre du renforcement de la coopération avec les organisations pertinentes, l'ICCAT a participé à la 17ème réunion de la COPACO qui a enregistré la participation des États membres ainsi que des observateurs. Cette réunion a traité de multiples questions dont sa transformation en Organisation régionale de gestion des Pêches. Ce dernier point a fait l'objet d'une rencontre préparatoire qui s'est tenue à la Barbade au mois de mars de cette année et à laquelle a assisté le Président de l'ICCAT.

Cette question sur la mutation de la COPACO est d'intérêt pour l'ICCAT et a suscité un suivi des différents développements de ce processus. Notant le besoin de rassembler davantage d'informations et de bonnes pratiques d'autres ORGP, la COPACO a retenu une feuille de route qui prévoit une seconde réunion préparatoire pour des recommandations à sa prochaine session en 2021.

Le Secrétaire exécutif de l'ICCAT a lancé un appel aux membres de la COPACO qui n'ont pas encore adhéré à sa Convention à le faire et à activement coopérer en vue de l'atteinte des objectifs mutuels des deux organisations. Il a, dans ce sens, réitéré la volonté de l'ICCAT à mettre en place un cadre formel de coopération à travers un protocole d'entente. La COPACO a favorablement accueilli cette offre et les deux Secrétaires exécutifs se sont engagés à la préparation d'un projet de texte à soumettre à leurs Commissions respectives.

#### IATTC: 10TH MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF MEASURES ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION

**Location:** Euskalduna Bilbao, Spain

**Dates:** 17-18 July 2019

**Representative:** Jenny Cheatle, ICCAT Head of Compliance Department

**Main agenda items:** Review of any follow up to recommendations made by the Committee in 2018. This was followed up by a CPC by CPC review.

**Summary:** This process is quite detailed, and compliance with each CMM is examined in detail. In many cases the information comes from the observer report / scientific data collected by IATTC, given that the modus operandi of this RFMO differs somewhat from ICCAT. Notwithstanding, some similarities can be seen between the treatment of compliance issues between the two organisations.

**Future actions:** No action necessary, but the Secretariat will consider the way in which IATTC Secretariat presents information / reports to see if any improvement can be made to those provided by the ICCAT Secretariat

**Report availability:** [in progress]

#### RAPPORT DE MISSION SUR LA PARTICIPATION À LA 94<sup>E</sup> RÉUNION DE L'IATTC

**Lieu :** Bilbao, Espagne

**Dates:** 22-26 July 2019

**Représentant :** Camille Jean Pierre Manel, Secrétaire exécutif de l'ICCAT

**Points de l'ordre du jour :** Réunion annuelle de la Commission

J'ai assisté aux deux premiers jours de la 70<sup>ème</sup> réunion annuelle de la Commission inter-américaine du Thon tropical (IATTC) organisée à Bilbao.

La participation du Secrétariat à cette rencontre entraine dans le cadre du renforcement de la coopération entre les ORGP, notamment thonières.

Cette participation a été l'occasion de mieux connaître cette organisation sœur, en particulier l'organisation et le déroulement de sa réunion. Elle a aussi permis de suivre les discussions sur des questions majeures que l'IATTC a abordées et de rencontrer plusieurs délégations d'Etats membres de l'ICCAT.

La WCPFC et l'ICCAT étaient les deux ORGP thonières qui avaient pris part à la rencontre.

#### THIRD SESSION INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE ON AN INTERNATIONAL LEGALLY BINDING INSTRUMENT UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA ON THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF MARINE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF AREAS BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION - NEW YORK, 19 – 30 AUGUST 2019

**Location:** UN HQ, New York, USA

**Dates attended:** 19 – 22 August 2019

**Representative:** Camille Jean Pierre Manel, ICCAT Executive Secretary

**Agenda items:** Draft text of an agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction

The Intergovernmental Conference on Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction held its third session from 19 to 30 August 2019, and The Executive Secretary attended the four first days. The Tuna FAO-ABNJ Project funded his participation. State Parties discussed the draft text of an agreement under UNCLOS on BBNJ.

Four topics agreed since 2011, were on the table: marine genetic resources, including questions on the sharing of benefits, measures such as area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, environmental impact assessments, and capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology.

In its side event, FAO was particularly interested in showing what the RFMOs are doing to conserve and manage the resources under their mandates. During the side event, the Executive Secretary made a presentation for sharing what ICCAT is doing, insisting on its mandate, science, conservation and management measures, compliance, and cooperation. The Executive Secretaries of NAFO and NEAFC presented their work. The Executive Secretary of IATTC also attended this event. Some discussions followed to further explain and exchange on the contribution of the RFMOs at the global level.



For the next steps, although it is stated in the draft text, and as recalled by many participants, that “this Agreement ... does not undermine [existing] relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional and sectoral bodies, ...”, it will be essential to encourage broader participation of the fisheries departments/experts from CPCs in the delegations along with consultations at the national level during the coming meetings of the BBNJ process.

The fourth session of the Intergovernmental Conference is scheduled for 2020.

**16<sup>TH</sup> LIAISON MEETING (SUB-GROUP OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION EXPERT GROUP ON FISHERIES DATA COLLECTION) BETWEEN THE CHAIRS OF RCGS & PGECON, STECF MEETINGS ON DCF, RDB STEERING GROUPS, KEY END-USERS (ICES, STECF, GFCM, RFMOS), JRC AND THE COMMISSION**

**Location:** Brussels, Belgium

**Dates:** 3-4 September 2019

**Representative:** Carlos Palma, ICCAT Biostatistician

**Agenda items:** The agenda items are summarised in the following items: Discussion with End Users (roles, legislative developments, needs, feedback on EU MAP revision); Data handling (end user data calls, progress achieved and future work in regional databases, problems identified); Discussion and agreement of end user meeting; Discussion on possible follow-up to the main output/recommendations (specific to the Liaison Group and generic ones) for future intersessional work; Governance model; Preparation for the RCG decision meeting (agreement on recommendations for National work plans, revision of the EU MAP, and others). The ICCAT Secretariat has only participated on the first day of the meeting as a possible “End User” of the European Union Data Collection Framework (DCF), where the majority of the discussion took place.

**Future actions:** A third day (Brussels, 5 September 2019) of the RCG (Regional Coordination Group) Chair’s Decision meeting was held, with a specific agenda. The work plan for future actions in matters related to the mandate of the Liaison Sub-Group, and other RCG sub-groups, was established at the end of the RCG Decision meeting.

**Report availability:** not yet published (TBA).

**MEDITERRANEAN ADVISORY COUNCIL MEDAC**

**Location:** Ljubljana, Slovenia

**Dates:** 11 October 2019

**Representative:** Mauricio Ortiz, ICCAT Head of Research and Statistics

**Agenda items:** Presentation on the results of the large pelagic species according to the results of the ICCAT Scientific Committee meeting.

The Mediterranean Advisory Council, MEDAC role includes the preparation of opinions on fisheries management and socio-economic aspects in support of the fisheries sector in the Mediterranean, to be submitted to the Member States and the European institutions in order to facilitate the achievement of the objectives of the European Union Common Fisheries Policy. The ICCAT Secretariat received an invitation to attend the meeting and Dr. Mauricio Ortiz provided a presentation on the recent findings of the SCRS as regards to the status of the stocks of eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna, as well as for the Mediterranean albacore and swordfish stocks.

It was noted the continued improvement of the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna stock status after the adoption of management recommendations by ICCAT. It was reported that in 2020, ICCAT will conduct an update assessment for East bluefin tuna to provide TAC management advice for 2021, while it will continue with the development of the bluefin tuna MSE process. With regards Mediterranean swordfish, it was indicated that ICCAT will conduct a stock assessment in 2020, also. The SCRS will review the effectiveness of the management regulations and the current recovery management plan as stated in Rec. 16-05. It was noted that in 2018 the catches of Med-SWO were below the TAC, raising concerns of the stock status. It was also indicated that due to the minimum size regulation (100 cm LJFL) the levels of discards in

the longline fisheries has substantially increased, however reporting of live and dead discards has been incomplete increasing the uncertainty of total removals for Mediterranean swordfish.

For Mediterranean albacore it was noted that recent trends of a larval index, a fishery independent indicator showed a decreasing trend. In 2020 ICCAT will review the trends of fishery indicators and make recommendations aiming to reduced fishing mortality. Finally, it was noted that in 2020 ICCAT will pay special attention to the stock status and reported catches of billfish in the Mediterranean Sea, in particular for Mediterranean spearfish. The Group noted the limited information provided for the Mediterranean swordfish and albacore main fisheries on fishing effort, recreational and sport fisheries, size of the catch and biological data, and discards. These gaps of information increase substantially the uncertainty of the stock status for these stocks and demand for efforts and actions by countries to improve this situation.