

Original: French

**STATEMENT BY SENEGAL REGARDING THE VIRTUAL WORKING GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE FINANCIAL POSITION FOR ICCAT (VWG-SF) AND THE MEETING PARTICIPATION FUND (MPF) (STACFAD, DOC No. STF-205/2020, DOC No. STF-205-APP2/2020, DOC No. STF-205-APP3/2020)**

Senegal takes careful note the report of the Virtual Working Group on Sustainable Financial Position for ICCAT, of the proposal to amend Rec. 14-14 (Doc No. STF-205-APP2/2020) and of the proposal to amend the rules on procedures of the Meeting Participation Fund (MPF) for the developing countries (Doc No. STF-205-APP3/2020).

In relation to the report of the VWG-SF, the item on potential solutions for further progress in the payment of arrears seems sufficiently advanced for adoption by STACFAD and the Commission. On the other hand, the items related to the Meeting Participation Fund (MPF) and observer fees must be further discussed prior to adoption by STACFAD and the Commission.

The Meeting Participation Fund (MPF) is an important instrument that enables improved participation by developing countries in ICCAT processes (see Doc No. STF-206/2020). While optimal use of the fund is Commission objective, it should not be to the detriment of participation by developing CPCs. The Evaluation Panel of the ICCAT performance review expressed its concern in this regard in 2008.

For this reason, the additional criterion to those contained in Rec. 14-14 (para 4-a) which provides that financing must not be allocated to delegates of a CPC if there are four (4) delegates of that CPC at the same meeting that have been financed by other sources. That would affect participation by developing CPCs and the balance among delegations in particular at the Commission meeting.

Moreover, given that the issues to be addressed by the Commission pertain to several disciplines and specialties, the official delegates at these meetings are generally managers, scientists, those responsible for fisheries surveillance, legal experts etc. The capacity of developing CPCs to participate in the process and to implement the measures adopted by ICCAT depends to some extent on the diversity in their delegations.

Consequently, Senegal is of the view that the criterion established in paragraph 4-a of document STF-205-APP2/2020 and in the proposal on rules of procedure (document No. STF-205-APP3/2020) is not suitable and does not prove its adoption.

As to the obligation to pay contributions by cooperating members, Senegal thinks that this obligation could become an obstacle to adherence by some countries to ICCAT and does not support it. This matter can be further discussed by the working group (VWG-SF) in 2021.