

STATEMENT OF CANADA TO STACFAD - ROUND 2

Canada thanks the Chair of STACFAD and the Secretariat for the new and updated documents provided in response to input from Canada and other CPCs in the first round of correspondence.

With respect to the ICCAT budget for 2021 and adjustments that may be warranted given the disruption of some ICCAT work in 2020 and into 2021, we appreciate and support the revisions made to the budget, to reallocate funds from chapters that are likely to require less funding than initially foreseen to those that normally rely heavily on voluntary contributions.

Following on discussions at last year's STACFAD meeting, Canada echoes the EU's request that the SCRS Chair ensure the SCRS's work items be prioritized before requests for funding are submitted in 2021.

With respect to specific SCRS activities outlined in STF-209A, we would again note that we are concerned about dedicating funds to a tropical tuna MSE. While developing such an MSE is an important long-term goal, we believe that the focus of the SCRS's TRO time, effort, and monies should be on conducting a stock assessment for skipjack, while the Commission should focus on the implementation of science advice for bigeye and yellowfin. Thus, this MSE does not seem to be the best possible place to allocate these resources at this time.

If, despite the above concerns, the TRO MSE is to be provided funding in 2021, then the Commission should provide guidance on how Panel 1 would like to manage the three species, e.g., should the management procedure aim to include all three species or is the MSE only focused on one stock? Providing so much funding to a process with no agreed terms of reference may lead to a disconnect between what the Commission wants and what the SCRS produces.

Regarding the MPF, we agree with the comments of others who have proposed having the MPF focus on providing funds to delegations smaller than some threshold. We see this as a balanced way of pursuing the objective of the MPF to facilitate participation by developing country CPCs that would otherwise have difficulty attending, while at the same time managing the Fund's expenditures in order to ensure its long-term sustainability. We also agree, as noted by the STACFAD Chair, that larger delegations may be required for special and regular Commission meetings, and thus a higher threshold would be warranted for those meetings. We are, however, open to further discussion of what specific thresholds should be used in each case. We found the current draft of paragraph 4a difficult to follow, and so have suggested edits in the Word version of the file. In that version we have placed the thresholds for support in square brackets pending further discussion.