

OPENING STATEMENT BY THE UNITED KINGDOM

The United Kingdom extends its greetings to all those attending the 23rd Special Meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).

The United Kingdom extends its deepest thanks to the Secretariat as well as the Chairs of the Commission, the Panels and other ICCAT bodies for the excellent preparations for this meeting. We would furthermore like to thank the Government of Portugal for hosting the meeting, and the staff at the excellent venue at which we meet.

We are most grateful for the opportunity to meet again in person/hybrid format, and we intend to utilise this opportunity to make many new acquaintances and work in a spirit of collaboration and cooperation to address the many important matters facing us.

Among those matters we hope to make good progress on the management of tropical tunas and South Atlantic mako shark, on the landing of sharks with fins naturally attached, and on the need to ensure investigations of alleged IUU fishing extend to all potential beneficiaries. A further important issue will be how we take the impacts of climate change into account in the management of ICCAT fisheries. We thank the CPCs who have tabled proposals on these and several other topics, providing an excellent basis for discussion this year.

The UK has also submitted an additional written statement in respect of the Russian assault on Ukraine, which will be made available shortly.

The UK wishes all of our friends and colleagues at ICCAT a productive meeting.