

**REPORT FROM THE CCSBT OBSERVER TO
22nd Regular Meeting OF
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION
OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT)**

(11 November - 19 November 2011, Istanbul, Turkey)

CCSBT Observer (Japan)

The forty-eight Contracting Parties to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas were convened for the 22nd Regular Meeting of the Commission from the 11th to the 19th of November 2011 in Istanbul, Turkey. Thirty-nine Contracting Parties attended, joined by observers from two Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities, three Non Contracting Parties, six inter-governmental organizations and twenty-two non-governmental organizations.

The Commission reviewed the status of tuna stocks and by-caught shark species in the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea based on the findings of the Standing Committee for Research and Statistics Scientific (SCRS) which met in Madrid in October 2011, as well as compliance with ICCAT conservation and management measures. Recommendations and Resolutions adopted in the meeting is at Attachment.

No matter related to cooperation between ICCAT and CCSBT was discussed in the meeting.

Conservation by species

By the end of the meeting, the members of ICCAT has agreed and adopted new management measures for tropical tuna, North Atlantic and Mediterranean swordfish, North and South Atlantic albacore and billfish, as well as for the conservation of sharks that are taken in association with ICCAT fisheries. New improved measures for monitoring, control and surveillance were also adopted, together with measures to increase protection of seabirds, and structural improvements to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization.

Tropical tuna

For the first time since 1993 ICCAT adopted a management measure specifically aimed at the population of Atlantic yellowfin tuna, in conjunction with the continued management plan for bigeye tuna. A TAC of 85,000 t was set for bigeye tuna, with additional control measures comprising, *inter alia* a closed time/area season and a Regional Observer Programme.

Swordfish

The North Atlantic swordfish stock was successfully rebuilt in 2009 to levels above the target set by the Commission's management plan. This year a new multi-year conservation and

management plan was agreed with the objective of achieving BMSY. The Commission adopted the measure consistent with the Precautionary Approach, which will ensure the long term sustainable exploitation of this fishery.

Additional management measures on the Mediterranean swordfish fishery were taken in 2011 including obligatory monitoring, control and surveillance measures.

Albacore

Agreement was reached among the active fishers of the south Atlantic albacore fishery, with a new sharing arrangement being adopted by consensus, with a reduction in TAC to align it with scientific advice. Given the healthy state of the northern albacore stock, the existing conservation measures were continued into 2013.

Other species

The Commission amended the current management plan for billfish to bring catchers into line with scientific advice and agreed to study additional measures in 2012. The protection of vulnerable shark species taken in association with ICCAT species continued to be a priority in 2011 meeting, with new measures aimed at protecting the silky sharks being adopted, including the prohibition of taking on board, retaining, transshipping or landing the species. Measures to mitigate the impact of longline tuna fisheries in the South Atlantic on seabirds were also adopted.

Strengthening Compliance

The work of the Compliance Committee continued with a thorough review of compliance by each Contracting Party to identify failures to comply with ICCAT management measures such as a failure to report catch data or overharvesting of ICCAT species, and to review actions taken in relation to breaches of compliance detected in 2010. A general improvement in overall compliance was noted, with twelve Contracting Parties being in full compliance with all reporting requirements and deadlines. Additionally, the general improvement in compliance has led to the 15 of the 23 parties identified as having incurred a breach of ICCAT conservation and management measures in 2010 having the identification lifted in 2011. While some deficiencies still remain – in many cases due to the number and complexity of ICCAT reporting requirements rather than a lack of political will – all Parties undertook commitments to make further efforts to ensure full compliance in the future. To improve compliance with the bluefin tuna catch document scheme, Japan led the way in refining the scheme and proposing improvements, while the European Union chaired a technical group to determine the steps to be taken to establish an electronic Bluefin Catch Document scheme. The pilot study to be carried out in 2012 will test the eBCD system which will be set up at a cost of around 400,000 Euros. A resolution on the evaluation of systems for tracing products of other tuna species was also adopted. With regard to non-Contracting Parties, the Commission celebrated another success in the fight against IUU fishing, with sufficient information having been received from both

Bolivia and Georgia to warrant the trade restrictive measure against these two countries to be lifted. The Commission took a major initiative in adopting penalties for those Contracting Parties which do not report data to ICCAT, by linking the right to fish with the obligation to report catch data.

Into 2012

Mr. Masanori Miyahara of Japan was elected as Chairman of the Commission for the 2012-13 period. The next annual meeting of ICCAT will be held in Morocco between 12 November and 18 November 2012.