



CCSBT-EC/1610/14

## Relationship with Non-members

### Purpose

To provide an update concerning discussion or issues with Non-Member and Non-CNM (Cooperating Non-Member) States/Entities.

### Identification of States that have or are likely to become important port or market States for SBT, for consideration at CCSBT 23

CCSBT 18 agreed that the following process would be used for nominating States that have or are likely to become important port or market States for SBT:

- Members nominate important States whose cooperation is desired, together with background information supporting that nomination and provide this information to the Executive Secretary at least 6 weeks in advance of the Annual Meeting.
- The Executive Secretary incorporates this information in the Secretariat's agenda paper for the standing agenda item on "Relationship with Non-Members" for consideration by the Extended Commission.
- With the Extended Commission's endorsement, the Executive Secretary write to the nominated State(s) seeking their cooperation.
- The nominating Member follow-up the Executive Secretary's letter with bilateral discussion. This is an important step because experience has shown that many States do not respond to written communication.

No nominations were provided to the Secretariat in advance of CCSBT 23.

### Interactions with Non-members

In accordance with the report of CCSBT 22, the USA, Fiji and Singapore have been invited to attend the October 2016 Annual Meetings of the Compliance Committee and Extended Commission.

The main interactions with non-Members since CCSBT 22 has been with the USA and China.

#### 1. USA

The USA has enhanced its cooperation with the CCSBT Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS) by providing the Secretariat with information relating to the CCSBT CDS Documents it receives.

The USA provided its first CDS submission during April 2016 which reported all CDS import documents the USA recorded it received during 2015. On 1 July 2016, the USA commenced quarterly submissions of CDS import information following the same general submission timeframes as CCSBT Members. The Secretariat's initial focus on the information from the USA is to improve estimates of the total catch by checking for possible unreported or invalid CDS documents from exporters.

2. China

CCSBT 21 agreed to Commission market analyses on significant markets to contribute to estimating non-member catch. Following intersessional discussion with Members<sup>1</sup>, the Secretariat contracted TRAFFIC and CSIRO to conduct an analysis of the presence of SBT in China's markets. The Secretariat wrote to China in relation to this project (see **Attachment A**) in order to provide information to China and to provide China with an opportunity to contact the Secretariat with any concerns or questions. Mr Zhou Fei from TRAFFIC delivered the letter to Vice Director Bo from China<sup>2</sup> and later determined that there was no official response from the Chinese authority.

Work on the project commenced late in 2015. Results of this work will be presented to the Extended Scientific Committee in September 2016 and to the Compliance Committee in October 2016.

There was considerable correspondence from Sea Shepherd in relation to driftnetting by the Chinese fleet *Fu Yuan Yu*, which included catch of southern bluefin tuna. This information was provided to Members in Circulars #2016/008, #2016/010 and in related email correspondence. It is understood that China is conducting an investigation into this matter. The Secretariat has not contacted China on this matter as there was not consensus for the Secretariat to write to China to request information on the annual SBT catch by Chinese flagged vessels and to request that China also investigate and provide information on the SBT catch (retained and discarded) by the Chinese *Fu Yuan Yu* fleet.

**Prepared by the Secretariat**

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<sup>1</sup> See Circulars #2015/044, 048 and 057.

<sup>2</sup> Division of Fisheries Resources and Environmental Conservation, Bureau of Fisheries and Fisheries Law Enforcement, Ministry of Agriculture, China

Commission for the Conservation of  
Southern Bluefin Tuna



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Mr Jiang Bo  
Vice Director  
Division of Fisheries Resources and Environmental Conservation  
Bureau of Fisheries and Fisheries Law Enforcement  
Ministry of Agriculture  
CHINA

30 October 2015

Dear Vice Director Bo,

Nihao,

My name is Robert Kennedy, the Executive Secretary of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT). I present my compliments to you, and have the honour to write this letter to you on referral from Mr Zhou Fei from TRAFFIC.

Mr Zhou Fei from TRAFFIC spoke with you recently in relation to CCSBT's research project in relation to southern bluefin tuna (SBT) in China's market. The purpose of my letter is to provide further information to you in relation to this project and to offer you the opportunity to seek further information from me.

The background and detailed information of our project is below. It is much appreciated if you would read our plan, and I look forward to cooperating with you on this project. We plan to commence this project in three weeks in order to complete most of the work and have either a final or interim report available for the September 2016 meeting of the CCSBT's Scientific Committee. I will provide you with copies of any reports from this work in a timely manner.

Please contact me if you have any concerns or questions in relation to the project. My contact details are shown at the bottom of this letter.

I look forward to further discussions with you on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Kennedy  
Executive Secretary

## **Background and Detailed Information of CCSBT's Project on SBT in China's Market**

The Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) has implemented a rebuilding plan for the southern bluefin tuna (SBT) stock, with an initial objective of reaching 20% of the original spawning stock biomass by 2035. Currently, the spawning stock biomass is estimated to be only 9% of its original biomass.

In order to reach the interim rebuilding target, the CCSBT has implemented a Management Procedure (sometimes called a Harvest Control Rule) that adjusts the total allowable catch of SBT every three years to ensure that the stock recovery follows the necessary rebuilding trajectory. However, the CCSBT Scientific Committee has advised that unaccounted mortalities, such as catches of SBT by non-Member fleets and unreported mortalities by Members (such as discards and recreational catches), would lower the probability of rebuilding under the Management Procedure to well below the desired level. In this case, the Management Procedure would need to be "retuned" (modified) to take account of those mortalities. Consequently, the Scientific Committee has advised the Commission to, "as a matter of urgency, to take steps to quantify all sources of unaccounted SBT mortality".

The CCSBT is following its Scientific Committee's advice by:

- Requesting its Members to conduct research on their own unaccounted SBT mortalities (such as discards and recreational fishing) and requiring Members to report on the outcomes;
- Conducting analyses of existing data sources (e.g. trade statistics and fishing effort data from other RFMOs) to try to estimate the magnitude of possible non-Member catches; and
- Commissioning market research on significant markets to contribute to estimating non-member catch.

Analysis of global trade data suggests that China may be the largest non-Member market for SBT. However, global trade data is not always robust for single species analysis. Consequently, as part of the third point above, the CCSBT wishes to conduct further research in relation to SBT in China's market. Our plan is to conduct more detailed trade analysis and to ground truth the analysis with DNA species identification and biochemical analysis of sashimi tuna sampled from Beijing and Shanghai. We will be working with TRAFFIC and CSIRO Australia to conduct this research. TRAFFIC will be focused on the analysis of trade data and CSIRO will conduct the DNA and biochemical analysis of samples.