



CCSBT-EC/2110/04

Report from the Secretariat

Overview

This report provides a summary of the main activities of the Secretariat since the Twenty Seventh Annual Meeting of the CCSBT in October 2020.

This report also contains four specific matters for consideration by the Extended Commission (EC), which are:

- Whether to renew the appointment of the Chair of the Compliance Committee for another term;
- The process for recruitment of a new Executive Secretary;
- Granting Long-term observer status for Compliance Committee meetings to ACAP¹ and BirdLife International; and
- Granting Long-term observer status for Compliance Committee, Extended Commission and Commission meetings to The Pew Charitable Trusts (Pew).

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to affect the operation of the Secretariat during 2021, but despite this, with the exception of travel for meetings, the Secretariat has conducted most of its work as normal.

The Secretariat has operated a hybrid work environment since CCSBT 27, with all staff working from home some days/part-days and from the office on other days/part-days. This arrangement has been convenient for staff, whilst also maintaining the Secretariat's flexibility to easily transition to full-time work from home in the event of further COVID-19 related lockdowns².

Organisation of meetings during 2021 has involved substantial additional work from the Secretariat, because all meeting arrangements had to be made for both physical meetings and virtual meetings.

The cancellation of all of CCSBT's physical meetings during 2021 has resulted in substantial reductions in expenditure this year.

¹ Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels.

² And Canberra went into lockdown again at 5pm on 12 August 2021.

Officials of the CCSBT

The following official positions in the CCSBT were nominated, appointed or held during 2021.

Officer	Name	Date nominated / appointed
Chair – Commission & Extended Commission	Mr Max Kitchell	29 June 2021
Vice Chair – Commission & Extended Commission	Mr Arthur Hore	23 June 2021
Chair – Finance & Administration Committee (FAC)	Mr Dominic Vallières	10 October 2016 ^{*1}
Chair – Compliance Committee (CC)	Mr Frank Meere	16 October 2015 ^{*2}
Chair – SC/ESC	Dr Kevin Stokes	1 November 2017 ^{*3}
Chair – ERSWG	Mr Alexander Morison	22 February 2011 ^{*4}

*1 The FAC Chair is appointed one year at a time, either at or before the annual meeting of the Extended Commission. There are no limits to the number of reappointments to this position.

*2 The CC Chair is appointed for a three-year term with the possibility of up to two reappointments. The CC Chair's second term expires at the end of CCSBT 28 during October 2021.

*3 The SC/ESC Chair is appointed for a three-year term with the possibility of up to two reappointments. The SC/ESC Chair's second term expires on 1 November 2023.

*4 The Chair of the Ecologically Related Species Working Group (ERSWG) is appointed for a term of at least two ERSWG meetings with the possibility of up to two reappointments. The ERSWG Chair has one more ERSWG meeting remaining on his current term, which is also his last term.

The second term of the Compliance Committee Chair's appointment finishes on 17 October 2021. The Extended Commission will need to decide whether to renew the appointment of the current Compliance Committee Chair for a third three-year term. The Compliance Committee Chair may serve for a total of three three-year terms.

Consultants to the CCSBT

The Secretariat engaged five consultants to assist the CCSBT in selected scientific meetings or projects during 2021. These comprised:

- The CCSBT's independent Scientific Advisory Panel, consisting of Drs Ana Parma, Jim Ianelli and Sean Cox;
- A technical coding consultant (Dr D'Arcy Webber) in relation to the CCSBT's Operating Model and Management Procedure; and
- A technical consultant (Dr Simon Hoyle) in relation to development of the CCSBT's CPUE series.

The Secretariat also contracted three independent experts to work on the Performance Review of the CCSBT, these being Mr Bill Gibbons-Fly³, the late Professor Fábio Hazin⁴, and Mr Hussain Sinan⁵.

³ Mr Gibbons-Fly notified the Secretariat on 1 January 2021 that for personal reasons, he was unable to continue as either the Chair or a member of the CCSBT's performance review panel (see Circular #2021/001).

⁴ Sadly, Professor Hazin, who took over from Mr Gibbons-Fly as Chair of the performance review panel, passed away from COVID-19 on 7 June 2021 (see Circular #2021/031).

⁵ Mr Sinan became Chair of the performance review panel on 8 July 2021 (see Circular #2021/038).

Secretariat Staff and Office Management

The Secretariat's staff comprised 5 full-time positions and 2 casual, part-time positions during 2021. These were:

- Executive Secretary;
- Deputy Executive Secretary;
- Database Manager;
- Compliance Manager;
- Office Administrator (1 full-time position, but shared by two people working part-time);
- Data Entry Officer (casual, part-time); and
- Compliance Assistant (casual, part-time).

There have been no changes in the Secretariat's staff since CCSBT 27.

The Executive Secretary has advised that he will retire during 2022, with his last day to be 30 October 2022. The EC will need to consider a process for recruiting a new Executive Secretary. A draft process for recruiting the new Executive Secretary is provided at **Attachment A** for Members' consideration.

Financial

The preparation of CCSBT's Financial Statements for 2020 was conducted according to schedule. The Financial Statements were reviewed by the CCSBT's auditor, RSM Australia Pty Ltd and distributed to Members in Circular #2021/018. The outcomes of RSM's review identified no items of concern.

A draft revised budget for 2021 and a draft budget for 2022, including indicative budgets for 2023 and 2024 will be provided for the EC's consideration in meeting documents CCSBT-EC/2110/05 and CCSBT-EC/2110/06.

Organisation of CCSBT Meetings

The Secretariat has organised, or is in the process of organising, the following formal CCSBT meetings since CCSBT 27:

Twenty Sixth Meeting of the Scientific Committee, incorporating the Extended Scientific Committee	23-31 August 2021
Sixteenth Meeting of the Compliance Committee	5-8 October 2021
Twenty Eighth Annual Meeting of the Commission, incorporating the Extended Commission	11-15 October 2021

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, contingency arrangements were developed and activated for the above meetings, and all Meetings will be conducted in a virtual environment.

The Secretariat also organised three CPUE web meetings (19 February 2021, 22 July 2021, 20 August 2021), a meeting of the eCDS Working Group (7-8 April 2021), and two meetings of the Seabird Project Working Group (1 April 2021 and 29 June 2021). In addition, the Secretariat has organised a meeting of the Technical Compliance Working Group for 4 October 2021. All of these meetings were or will be virtual meetings.

Translation of the 2020 meeting reports into Japanese has been completed and the translated reports have been placed onto the CCSBT web site. In accordance with a decision at CCSBT 26, bound versions of the reports are no longer being produced.

Organisation of meeting venues for 2022 is underway. Quotes have been obtained for two venues for the tentative meeting dates that were agreed intersessionally and notified to Members in Circular #2021/027. However, the actual venues have yet to be chosen.

Meeting	City	Tentative meeting date
ERSWG ⁶	Online ⁷	Mon. 21 – Fri. 25 Mar. 2022
SC/ESC 27	To be advised, New Zealand ⁸	Mon. 29 Aug. – Sat. 3 Sep. 2022
CC 17	To be advised, New Zealand ⁹	Thu. 6 – Sat. 8 Oct. 2022
CCSBT 29		Mon. 10 – Thu. 13 Oct. 2022

Long-term observer status for CCSBT meetings

Long-term CCSBT observers receive invitations to all CCSBT meetings for which they have long-term observer status. Long-term observer status helps to increase the transparency of the CCSBT, and it is simpler to administer (for the Secretariat, Members and observers) than the process of seeking case by case approvals for attendance at meetings by observers.

In recent years, ACAP, BirdLife International and Pew have attended CCSBT Compliance Committee and Extended Commission meetings as observers¹⁰ and all have received approval to attend the same meetings in 2021. However, none of these organisations have Long-term observer status for Compliance Committee meetings and Pew does not have Long-term observer status for Extended Commission meetings.

To improve transparency and reduce the administrative burden in requiring annual applications/approvals for observer status, the Secretariat proposes that ACAP, BirdLife International and Pew be granted Long-term observer status to Compliance Committee meetings and that Pew be granted Long-term observer status to Extended Commission meetings¹¹.

There has been close cooperation between these organisations and the CCSBT. For example, BirdLife International has been working in conjunction with the CCSBT to develop an externally funded project for enhancing education on and implementation of Ecologically Related Species seabird measures within CCSBT fisheries. Both ACAP and BirdLife are partners in this project with the CCSBT. Pew has provided the Compliance Committee with reports on possible transshipments utilising AIS data.

⁶ Ecologically Related Species Working Group.

⁷ It is assumed that the ERSWG meeting will be an online meeting.

⁸ It is currently planned that the SC and ESC meetings will be in-person meetings. If these are changed to online meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the dates will be changed to 29 August – 6 September with a rest day on Sunday 4 September.

⁹ It is currently planned that the CC 17 and CCSBT 29 meetings will be in-person meetings. If these are changed to online meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the dates will be changed so that CC 17 meets on 4-7 October and CCSBT 29 meets on 10-14 October.

¹⁰ ACAP attended CCSBT 26, CCSBT 27 and CC15. BirdLife International attended CCSBT 25, CCSBT 26, CCSBT 27, CC 13, CC 14 and CC15. Pew attended CCSBT 26, CCSBT 27, CC 14 and CC 15.

¹¹ ACAP and BirdLife International already have Long-term observer status for Extended Commission meetings.

The list of observers that have been granted Long-term observer status for CCSBT meetings, together with the proposals for new Long-term observer status are provided in the table below:

List of observers provided with long-term observer status for CCSBT Meetings					
	Strategy and Fisheries Management Working Group	Ecologically Related Species Working Group	Extended Scientific Committee	Compliance Committee	Extended Commission
States					
-					
IGOs					
ACAP		Yes	Yes	Proposed	Yes
CCAMLR		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
ICCAT		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
IOTC		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
WCPFC	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
NGOs					
Birdlife Int.		Yes		Proposed	Yes
HSI Int.		Yes		Yes	Yes
Pew				Proposed	Proposed
TRAFFIC Int.		Yes		Yes	Yes
WWF Aust.		Yes		Yes	Yes
Chairs of Joint Tuna RFMO committees/working groups/networks					
Kobe Process Steering Committee					Yes
MSE Working Group			Yes*		
Technical Bycatch Working Group		Yes			
Tuna Compliance Network				Yes	

* Including the Operating Model and Management Procedure Technical Working Group.

Attendance at meetings with other organisations since CCSBT 27

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Secretariat staff have not attended any physical meetings of other organisations during 2021. However, the Executive Secretary attended online meetings for COFI 34¹² and RSN 8¹³. In addition, the Compliance Manager attended several on-line meetings including The Tuna Fishery Data Collection Committee¹⁴ hosted by the Pacific Community, the IMCSN business meeting¹⁵ the first virtual GFETW¹⁶, meetings of two groups that fall under the IMCS umbrella (the Tuna Compliance Network and the newly formed Pan-Pacific Fisheries Compliance Network¹⁷), and two SAFET sessions¹⁸. The Compliance Manager (and Compliance Committee Chair) also attended the second virtual Pew/ISSF¹⁹ joint Expert Workshop on “Best Practices in Compliance in RFMOs”.

¹² Thirty Fourth Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries from 1-5 February 2021.

¹³ Eighth meeting of the Regional Secretariat’s Network on 25 February 2021.

¹⁴ For the virtual Longline Electronic Monitoring Compliance Data and Transshipment Standards Workshop, in November 2020.

¹⁵ International Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Network’s Business meeting in January 2021.

¹⁶ Global Fisheries Enforcement Training Workshop during July 2021.

¹⁷ As an observer.

¹⁸ Seafood and Fisheries Emerging Technology in February and April 2021.

¹⁹ Pew Charitable Trusts/International Seafood Sustainability Foundation workshop in March 2021.

Proposed Attendance at meetings with other organisations between CCSBT 28 and CCSBT 29

It is proposed that the Compliance Manager attend the fourth workshop of the Tuna Compliance Network and the Seventh Global Fisheries Enforcement Training workshop (August 2022, Halifax, Canada). The Compliance Manager would also attend the Tuna Compliance Network and the Pan Pacific Fisheries Compliance Network meetings which are expected to be held at the same time.

The 35th Session of COFI is scheduled for 5-9 September 2022. The Executive Secretary will not attend this session of COFI due to the close proximity to the CCSBT's ESC meeting. The Secretariat will consider attending other relevant meetings that arise depending on COVID-19 related travel restrictions, time and budget.

Outsourced Projects

The Secretariat has contracted the following projects for the CCSBT to be conducted during 2021:

- Long term Gene tagging (with CSIRO);
- Close-kin sampling, DNA extraction and sequencing (with CSIRO);
- Close-kin identification and exchange (with CSIRO);
- Sampling and ageing of Indonesian SBT Otoliths (with CSIRO);
- Development of the CPUE series; and
- Performance Review of the CCSBT.

CCSBT Circulars

Circulars are used to issue requests and to distribute information to Members. A summary list of circulars is maintained on the private area of the CCSBT web site for easy reference by Members. The summary list contains the Circular number, date, subject(s), whether a response is required, the due date for a response and the outcome (or a reference to the location of the outcome). The list of circulars gives an indication of the add-hoc and "once-off" intersessional activities of the Secretariat and the EC. Sixty Circulars were issued between CCSBT 27 and 25 August 2021.

CCSBT Web site

The web site continues to be an actively updated and actively used information tool for both CCSBT members and the general public. The public side of the CCSBT website was updated immediately after CCSBT 27 to incorporate the results and decisions from the 2020 meetings of the CCSBT. The draft budget for 2022 has included funds for redeveloping the website, as the version of "Drupal" that the website is based on will no longer be supported after November 2022.

Participation in the Fisheries Resource Monitoring System (FIRMS)

The CCSBT is a partner in FAO's FIRMS system. During 2020/21, the Secretariat met the CCSBT's obligations to FIRMS by:

- Updating the CCSBT fact sheet for southern bluefin tuna by incorporating the ESC's latest stock status report together with relevant decisions from CCSBT 27; and
- Supplying agreed data to FIRMS.

Integrated MCS Measures

Managing and implementing the CCSBT MCS measures continues to be a significant component of the Secretariat's work. Since CCSBT 27, this has included:-

- For the CDS:
 - Running CDS data reconciliations, and following up on errors and missing information and forms;
 - Maintenance of the CDS database and commencing development and testing of a trial electronic CDS (eCDS);
 - Processing CDS validation details and completing an authorised validator on-line submission and update interface to allow Members to enter this information directly.;
 - Producing 6 monthly and annual CDS reports; and
 - Coordinating the purchase of centralised tags for use with the CDS.
- Completing the Phase 1 Quality Assurance Review (QAR) of the European Union.
- Managing the CCSBT records of Authorised Fishing Vessels, Carrier Vessels and Farms.
- Managing the operation of the CCSBT transshipment resolution.
- Managing the operation of the Resolution for Minimum Standards for Inspection in Port.
- Managing initial quota allocations and final catch by vessel/company data and associated access permissions.
- Checking for any submissions in relation to the CCSBT IUU Vessel List Resolution²⁰ and implementing the cross-listing provisions of the Resolution.
- Convening an intersessional eCDS working group meeting and preparing two background papers for consideration by the working group.
- Producing papers and reports for the Compliance Committee.
- Maintaining compliance relationships with relevant bodies and organisations.

CCSBT Catch Reporting (excluding scientific data exchange)

Monthly Catch Reports

The Secretariat has continued to compile these statistics and has loaded them to the private area of the CCSBT web site on a monthly basis, providing email notification to members

²⁰ Resolution on Establishing a List of Vessels Presumed to have Carried Out Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing Activities For Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT).

when updates occur. Member were given access to a new online submission and update interface for monthly catch reports during July 2021, so that Members can now manage their own monthly catch report data.

Reporting of Initial Quota Allocations and Final Catches by Vessel/Company

The Secretariat has provided reminders to each Member for submitting this information. On receiving the information, the Secretariat has loaded this information to a special section of the private area of the CCSBT web site. This information is only available to those who have agreed to share it and have applied for and been granted access to this information in accordance with the Rules and Procedures for the Protection, Access to, and Dissemination of Data compiled by the CCSBT.

CCSBT Surface Tagging Program

Tag deployment ceased after the 2006/07 season and the Secretariat's involvement in this program now relates only to tag recovery activity. Between 8 and 71 tagged SBT per year were recaptured each year from 2013 to 2020. The number reported recaptured so far during 2021 was 3 SBT as at 25 August 2021. The number of recaptured tags is expected to decline each year.

Database Developments and Data Exchange

The CCSBT Data CD content and associated documentation was updated and made available to Members for downloading on 15 January 2021. An interim update of the Data CD containing information from the 2021 Data Exchange was also placed on the private area of the CCSBT website on 7 June 2021.

The Secretariat managed the 2021 scientific data exchange, which involved active exchange of data between Members and the Secretariat mainly between April and mid-June. The Secretariat conducted substantial post-processing of the data to produce derived datasets that were required as part of the data exchange.

The Eighth annual ERSWG Data Exchange occurred during 2021. With the exception of South Africa²¹, all Members have submitted ERS data required for this data exchange, although Korea provided no Table 2 data for 2020 since it had no observers deployed on SBT vessels. The European Union had no SBT catch and therefore had no relevant data to submit for the ERSWG Data Exchange which is defined as being for "shots/sets where SBT was either targeted or caught".

At the time of finalising this report, the database was up to date for all data received.

In conjunction with Shore Informatics, the Secretariat has continued upgrading its database and has completed a "Monthly Catch Reports" module and an "Authorised Validator" module that allows Members to provide this information directly through an on-line interface. Work has also progressed on a module to allow Members to provide information on Authorised Vessels directly through the on-line interface, that is currently undergoing testing.

²¹ Which advised that the recent loss of key personnel responsible for collection and synthesis of scientific data, coupled with the strict lockdowns for the COVID-19 pandemic, made it difficult to remain up-to-date with processing of data from the fishery.

Significant work has also been conducted with Shore Informatics on the development of a trial eCDS for the CCSBT. Members were provided with access to a prototype eCDS for trial purposes during August 2021. The prototype is not a complete eCDS and was only provided to enable Members to obtain a “feel” for how the system will work. A report on progress with development of the eCDS will be provided to the October 2021 meeting of the Compliance Committee.

Draft Process for Recruitment of a new Executive Secretary for the CCSBT

It is proposed that the target commencement date of the new Executive Secretary be Monday 26 September 2022. This will provide approximately one month of overlap with the current Executive Secretary (ES) and it will also allow the new ES to attend the October 2022 annual meetings of the Compliance Committee and Extended Commission. It is further proposed that the recruitment process be conducted sufficiently early, so that if an international applicant is successful, that person can arrive in Canberra and commence work by the target commencement date.

The following recruitment timetable is therefore proposed, noting that there may need to be some flexibility with the exact dates. Each step of the recruitment timetable is described in further detail after the table below.

Task	Completion Date in 2022
1. Position Description and Selection Criteria agreed	1 February (<i>Tuesday</i>)
2. Position advertised	4 February (<i>Friday</i>)
3. Applications close	4 March (<i>Friday</i>)
4. Applications sent to Members by Secretariat	7 March (<i>Monday</i>)
5. Members Rank their top 5 preferred candidates for an interview and send to Sec	25 March (<i>Friday</i>)
6. Secretariat score the candidates and advise Members of the top 5 candidates to be interviewed	29 March (<i>Tuesday</i>)
7. Secretariat contact interviewees and notify them of interview date	30-31 March (<i>Wed.-Thu.</i>)
8. Conduct interviews and select preferred candidate	11-14 April (<i>Mon.-Thu.</i>)
9. Notify successful candidate	19 April (<i>Tuesday</i>)

(1) Position Description and Selection Criteria

The Secretariat will circulate a draft position description, selection criteria and advertisement to Members for their consideration. Members will be asked to suggest changes to these documents and the Secretariat will circulate the agreed documents to Members by 1 February 2022.

It is proposed that the ES position be open to all people, regardless of nationality.

The advertisement will specify that applications are to be sent to the current ES. The current ES will also be the contact point for any questions in relation to the position.

(2) Advertising the position

The Secretariat will provide the agreed position description, selection criteria and advertisement to the Regional Secretariat Network for distribution to all RFMOs and to the IMCSN for distribution to its network. The Secretariat will also publish these documents on the CCSBT's website and on the joint tuna RFMO website (www.tuna-org.org).

Members are asked to advertise the ES position domestically through newspapers or other appropriate means. Members may also wish to target people that they consider to be suitable for the position and provide the position information to those people. Furthermore, Members

and the Secretariat are asked to distribute the advertisement and associated documents to any other interested parties.

(3 & 4) Applications close & sent to Members

No applications will be accepted after the closing date unless the closing date is extended.

Applications will be treated confidentially, so the current ES will only email applications to Heads of Delegations (unless a Head of Delegation nominates a different person to receive this communication).

(5, 6 & 7) Ranking and scoring of the top 5 candidates and notification of interviewees

It is proposed that only five people be interviewed for the ES position. Members are therefore asked to rank their top 5 preferred candidates and provide those rankings to the current ES.

The current ES will then sum all the ranks received²², advise Members of the top 5 candidates that will be interviewed, and contact the candidates to set the interview dates.

(8) Interviews and selection of the preferred candidate

The CCSBT Chair (or the Vice-Chair if the Chair has not been nominated) will Chair the interviews as well as the session to select the preferred candidate after the interviews. If neither the Chair or Vice-Chair has been nominated, the 2022 CCSBT hosting Member (New Zealand) will Chair the interviews and the selection session. The interview panel will consist of one representative of each Member. The current ES will be present to provide support to the panel if requested by the Chair.

The interviews will be conducted online in English, via Zoom. Two interviews will be conducted each day and it is assumed that each interview will last for approximately 1-1.5 hours.

It is envisaged that all prepared interview questions will be read out by the Chair. This will be the most efficient approach for an on-line interview. To assist with this process, interview panel members are asked to send any questions they have to the Chair at least two weeks prior to the interviews. The Chair may amalgamate similar questions from different panellists and may add additional questions. About one week before the interviews, the Chair will send panellists a copy of all the questions that the Chair will ask. All interview questions will be treated as being confidential to the panel. During each interview, panellists will be allowed to ask follow-up questions of each candidate.

Once the interviews are complete, a final Zoom session will be held to select the preferred candidate. Selection of the preferred candidate will be by consensus of the panellists present at this selection session. Second and third preferences will also be decided by the panel in case the preferred candidate does not accept the offer.

(9) Notification to successful candidate

The current ES will notify the preferred candidate and offer the ES position to that candidate. If that candidate declines the offer, the current ES will contact the second and third (if necessary) preferences of the selection panel. The Chair will sign a contract with the successful candidate.

²² Giving “5” to each Member’s top ranked candidate and “1” to their fifth ranked candidate.