



CCSBT-EC/0710/04

2. Report from the Secretariat

Purpose

To submit a report to the Extended Commission on the activities of the Secretariat since the 13th Annual Meeting in October 2006.

Secretariat Staff and Office Management

For 2007, the Secretariat staff has comprised:

- Executive Secretary
- Deputy Executive Secretary
- Database Manager
- Office Administrator (job share)

The Extended Commission entered a 3 year contract with the Executive Secretary Neil Hermes from 16 October 2006.

The Deputy Executive Secretary, Mr Kiichiro Miyazawa, commenced in the Secretariat in May 2006.

The Executive Secretary extended the contract for the Database Manager, Bob Kennedy for 3 years with effect from 16 September 2007.

The Executive Secretary extended the contracts of both occupants of the office administrator position which is job-shared. Ms Rie Connor works two days per week the other three days are worked by Ms Mari Warren. Both employees speak Japanese and English.

The Executive Secretary negotiated two year extendable contracts with the Independent Chairs of the ESC and SAG.

The Data Entry Officer is a part time position to input the tagging program and Trade Information Scheme data into the database. The position represents about one fifth of a full time position.

Organisation of CCSBT Meetings

The Secretariat organised and supported the following meetings and workshops:

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| - Compliance Committee WG Meeting | 15-18 April 2007 |
| - CPUE Workshop | 21-25 May 2007 |
| - Ecologically Related Species WG | 2-6 July 2007 |
| - Stock Assessment Group Meeting | 4-8 September 2007 |

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| - Extended Scientific Committee | 10-14 September 2007 |
| - Scientific Committee | 10-14 September 2007 |
| - Compliance Committee Meeting | 14-15 October 2007 |
| - Extended Commission of CCSBT | 16-19 October 2007 |
| - Commission of CCSBT | 16-19 October 2007 |

Meetings of Other Organisations

The Secretariat represented the Extended Commission at the following meetings:

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|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| • Joint Meeting of Tuna RFMOs Kobe | 22-26 January 2007 |
| • FIRMS Steering Committee(FAO) | 26-February 2007 |
| • Tuna RFMO Secretaries (FAO) | 4 March 2007 |
| • COFI (FAO) | 5-8 March 2007 |
| • Meeting of tuna regional fisheries bodies (FAO) | 9 March 2007 |
| • Tuna RFMOs Working Meeting USA | 22-23 July 2007 |

Participation in FAO's Fisheries Resource Monitoring System (FIRMS)

The CCSBT is a partner in FAO's FIRMS system. During 2006/07, the Secretariat met its obligations to FIRMS by:

- Loading the Scientific Committee's stock status report (incorporating some of CCSBT 13's decisions) into the FIRMS system;
- Supplying agreed data to FIRMS; and
- Contributing to developments of the FIRMS system through e-mail discussion and through participation at the Fourth Meeting of the FIRMS Steering Committee.

Financial

In 2007, income dropped from an expected \$1,607,600 to \$1,601,600. Based on expenditure to end September 2007, total outlays in 2007 are currently estimated to be \$1,602,675 compared to the budget of \$1,607,600. Outlays on the surface fishery tagging program totalled \$611,526 compared to a budget of \$576,174 due to a significant increase in the cost of tag placement by the contractor

At the direction of the Commission, the Secretariat planned a cost saving in this program with an overall reduction in 20% tagging days than in 2006. This was split between the South Australian and Western Australian tagging locations This resulted in a \$20,000 saving on vessel charter on last years expenditure. However, despite the planned decreased tagging days the tag placement costs increased by \$55,000. East Coat tag returns were also less. The deficit of \$49,875 has been absorbed into the 2007 revised budget.

The draft general budget for 2008 provides for total expenditure of \$1,607,320 compared to the revised 2007 budget of \$1,602,675 in 2007.

However, due to the increased expenditure predicted, a carried forward loss and since rollover funds are no longer available to subsidise budgets, the increase required for the proposed 2008 budgeted expenditure in Members contributions would be about 17%.

2008 Budget options

There has been a trend in recent years for the Commission to fund overspends, additional meetings and the general increase in costs from its cash reserves thereby holding down annual increases in Members contributions. There has been a trend not to increase Members contributions to the full amount needed to cover additional expenses. This trend has placed the Commission in an extremely difficult cash position going into the October 2007 round of meetings and a similar issue is projected for 2008

This is a worrying trend for a range of reasons including the

1. increased movements in the exchange rate of the Australian dollar
2. tendency for some Members to pay late and pay slowly
3. costs of extra meetings and services not to be budgeted
4. accumulating staff long service benefits being unfunded
5. unfunded staff employment/separation costs

There is a serious and increasing risk of the Commission being regularly insolvent.

As a consequence, the Secretariat proposed a range of 3 different 2008 budget strategies for consideration by the Commission which are detailed in the budget papers. Briefly they are as follows;

Option 1 Approve budget as proposed (with adjustments as a consequence of decisions of CCSBT14)

This would essentially maintain the status quo and the Commission would operate with no significant reserves and no provision for accumulating staff liabilities. This option will have the 2008 cash position approximately \$0 at December 2008 and \$0 provision for accumulating staff liabilities

Option 2 Approve budget as proposed (with adjustments as a consequence of decisions of CCSBT14) and agree to a one off additional special budget

The Commission could resolve to deal with the two issues of provision for accumulating staff liabilities and the lack of cash reserves by creating two new cash management or trust accounts with contributions of around \$250,000. This option would be a prudent approach and have the 2008 cash position about \$100,000 at December 2008 and a \$125,000 provision for accumulating staff liabilities.

Option 3 Approve a decreased budget

This would have the Commission having to make significant cuts in operations, including staff, in 2008 and making no provision for accumulating staff liabilities. This option will have the 2008 cash position about \$0 at December 2008 and \$0 provision for accumulating staff liabilities and an actual cut in Secretariat services.

With the resignation of the Commissions previous accountant and the consequential lack of accounting support, the challenges of the 2008 budget it has been regrettable that there have been delays in preparing the 2007 financial papers and reports. A new accountancy firm is been engaged for Commission and they will takeover in November.

Interaction with Non-members

Indonesia

The Secretariat corresponded with Indonesian officials and industry concerning membership and, following a direct request, arranged for a true copy of the Convention to be provided to the Indonesian Embassy in Canberra.

On 20 September 2007 the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade advised that as depository for the CCSBT Convention they would contact the Government of Indonesia about its plans to accede.

On 24 September 2007 the Secretariat received the following advice from the Director of Fisheries Resource Management, Directorate General of Capture Fisheries in Indonesia's Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries

Kindly be informed that Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia has sent a letter to President of Republic of Indonesia dated 3 September 2007 No. 202/PO/IX/2007/60/08/01 to issue a Presidential Decree for Indonesia to become a full member of CCSBT. We may consider this step as final step of the internal process required to become a full member of any International Organization.

This advice was forwarded to the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. No further progress has been advised at the time of writing this report.

Belize

The Belize vessel registering authority contacted the IOTC concerning the requirements for fishing for and landing SBT in IOTC waters. The IOTC referred the enquiry to the CCSBT Secretariat. The CCSBT Secretariat advised the authority of the requirements set out in CCSBT Resolutions and indicated any formal requests would have to be made by the Belize Government.

Action Plan

No activity has been undertaken under the Action Plan since CCSBT10.

Trade Information Scheme

The Secretariat continued its management of the Trade Information Scheme. Six monthly reports were issued on 1 December 2006 for TIS exports from January to June 2006, and on 30 May 2007 for TIS exports from July to December 2006. The report for the first six months of 2007 is due on 1 December 2007.

Following CCSBT 13, the TIS Scheme was amended to include two new statistical areas (14 and 15). Intersessional discussion between Members and the Secretariat resolved that reporting in the TIS against the new statistical areas was to commence on 1 April 2007. The Secretariat reminded Members and Cooperating Non-Members of this implementation date on 17 March 2007.

A report on compliance with the TIS scheme was provided to the Compliance Committee in document CCSBT-CC/0710/04.

CCSBT Catch Reporting (excluding scientific data exchange)

Monthly Catch Reporting

At CCSBT 12, the Commission introduced a monthly SBT catch reporting requirement for Members and Cooperating Non-Members commencing January 2006. 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. The monthly catch reports for 2006 and 2007 were provided to the Compliance Committee in document CCSBT-CC/0710/04.

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

At CCSBT 13, the Commission introduced a requirement for Members and Cooperating Non-Members to report the initial SBT quota allocations and final catches by companies, quota holders or vessels. Subsequently, the Secretariat led an intersessional discussion with Members which agreed that information on initial quota allocations would be provided within two months after the commencement of the season and that final catches would be provided within 6 months of the end of the season.

The Secretariat has provided a reminder to each Member approximately one month before they were required to submit information. On receiving the information, the Secretariat has loaded this information to the private area of the CCSBT web site.

CCSBT Website

The CCSBT website continues to be an actively updated and useful information tool for both CCSBT members and the general public.

Since CCSBT 13, the public side of the web site has been modified to:

- Incorporate reports from meetings held in the CCSBT 13 calendar year and to ensure that the information presented on the web site was up to date and correct as at the end of CCSBT 13;
- Incorporate updated data sets on the data page, including global catches, catch and effort, catch at size and TIS data;
- Incorporate all updates provided by members and cooperating non-members for the authorised vessel list.
- Include a history of CCSBT vessel authorisations. This allows the user to determine what vessels were authorised at any specific date back to the commencement of the CCSBT authorised vessel list. This is necessary, for example, to determine whether a vessel listed on a TIS form was authorised to fish at the time that it conducted fishing.

The private section of the CCSBT web site has continued to be actively used for the distribution of meeting documents. It is also the primary mechanism for sharing data provided for the annual scientific data exchange; providing monthly catch reports; providing initial allocations and final catches by vessel/company; and for providing validation details for the TIS scheme. Seventy two people authorised by Members and Cooperating Non-members have accessed the private area of the web site in the past 12 months.

Following a request from the Eleventh Meeting of the Scientific Committee, the Secretariat created a new section at the bottom of the private area of the web site, which is labelled "Documents Submitted to past Meetings of CCSBT and its Subsidiary Bodies". The section has been populated with all documents submitted

to meetings under the jurisdictions of CCSBT 10 to CCSBT 13 inclusive. Work has also been conducted to prepare documents under the jurisdiction of CCSBT 9, but this has yet to be completed.

Database Developments and Annual Scientific Data Exchange

The CCSBT Data CD and associated documentation was updated and provided to Members in January 2007. The data on the CD is an extract of scientific data from the CCSBT database and is accompanied with extensive documentation.

The Secretariat installed a new server in March 2007 to replace the existing server which had reached the end of its serviceable life. This server is the central resource for the CCSBT database and the Secretariat's e-mail and file storage.

The Secretariat managed the 2007 scientific data exchange, which involved active exchange of data between Members and the Secretariat mainly between April and mid-June. The Secretariat loaded all data to the private area of the web site and also conducted substantial post-processing of the data to produce derived datasets that were required as part of the data exchange.

At the time of finalising this report, the database was up to date for most data received. Exceptions include some data provided in the scientific data exchange that were not required for use at SAG8/SC12, recently received tag recaptures and some recently received TIS forms. These data will be loaded to the database as time permits.

A significant risk with the CCSBT database continues to be the lack of technical documentation for this database. Development of adequate documentation was considered a high priority for the Secretariat in 2006 and 2007, but there has not been time available for this activity. Technical documentation remains a high priority for the Secretariat in 2008, but again this is subject to time availability.

An additional risk for the CCSBT database is the age of the software in which the database (SQL Server 2000) and the database interface (Visual Basic 6) were developed in. Both these development products are at least 7 years old and have now been superseded. In fact, when the new server was purchased, the Secretariat had to locate an older version of the server operating system to load onto the server so that the CCSBT database could continue to function without modification. For continued operation of the database, it will be essential that both the database and the database interface be migrated to current versions during either 2008 or 2009. Resources will need to be located for this activity.

CCSBT Surface Tagging Program

The Secretariat managed the sixth year of the program, which included tag deployment and recovery activity.

In total, 13,261 fish were tagged in the surface fishery during the 2006/07 season. The numbers tagged in South Australian waters was higher than average and those tagged in the Western Australian waters was less. The total number tagged in the surface fishery since commencement of this program has been 77,002 fish.

Tags from approximately 680 fish from the surface fishery tagging project, excluding seeded tags, had been recaptured and reported to the Secretariat this season at the

time of writing this report. This takes the total recaptures from the surface fishery tagging project to 7,025 or 9.1% of surface fishery releases. A total of 73 tags were retrieved from CCSBT employed observers on freezer boats

In addition to the deployment of tags, the Secretariat continued efforts on tag recovery activities.

Expenditure on tag deployment for the 2006-7 season was \$611,526. No special budget for the tagging program is presented since the Extended Scientific Committee has not recommended this program continue in 2008. However the general budget contains a budget for management of tag recovery.

Development of Discussion Papers

Discussion papers were prepared for the Compliance Committee on:

- Initial Considerations for a CDS (CCSBT-CC/0704/04)
- Sample costs and administrative comments on Member's CDS proposals (CCSBT-CC/0710/Info01)
- The Secretariat has prepared a draft meeting working paper "Draft Important CCSBT Decisions" to gain informal comments prior to circulation for Members formal comments after CCSBT14.

It is proposed that this paper could contain appropriate subject, descriptive text and status for each decision. It is suggested that the table could contain keywords for each decision and be searchable. It could be a web based document. To ensure accuracy of course it should be reviewed by CCSBT Members. The draft provided at CCSBT14 is not for circulation.

General

The Secretariat appreciates the support of Members this year which has been challenging one for the Commission. In particular the new Executive Secretary has had a taxing and sometimes complex time adjusting to the role and appreciates the patience of Members and Secretariat staff.

For Information

Prepared by the Secretariat