



CCSBT-EC/0310/04

2. Report from the Secretariat

Purpose

To submit a report to the Extended Commission on the activities of the Secretariat since the Ninth Annual Meeting in October 2002.

Secretariat Staff and Office Management

For 2003, Secretariat staff has comprised:

- Executive Secretary
- Deputy Executive Secretary
- Database Manager
- Office Administrator

Mr Morio Kaneko, the Deputy Executive Secretary, completed his appointment in May 2003 and was replaced by Mr Yukito Narisawa.

Ms Chika Scally, the Office Administrator returned from maternity leave in February 2003 and commenced a job share arrangement with Ms Kozue Loghem in the Office Administrator position. Kozue works for three days and Chika works for two days each week.

Financial

An operating surplus of \$230,384 is estimated for 2003. The main reason for the surplus is the decision not to hold a special assessment planning meeting in the light of the fisheries indicators analysis conducted in June 2003. A comparison between the approved budget and the estimated outcome is included in meeting document **CCSBT-EC/0310/05**. That document also provides a detailed explanation of the reasons for variations from the approved budget.

The Secretariat expended the full amount of \$139,425 in the special fund established to manage the net proceeds from the mortalities from the 2002 Australian east coast tagging pilot on the CCSBT tagging program. The net proceeds from the pilot in 2003 totalling \$85,381, have been placed in this fund.

A proposed budget for 2004 has been prepared for Commission consideration taking into account the recommendations of the Extended Scientific Committee and the

rotation of meetings to Korea. The proposed budget with supporting documentation is set out in meeting document **CCSBT-EC/0310/06**.

Organisation of CCSBT Meetings

The Secretariat organised and supported the following meetings and workshops:

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| - 2 nd Management Procedure Workshop | 7-12 April 2003 |
| - Indonesian Catch Monitoring Workshop | 14-15 April 2003 |
| - 2 nd Management Procedure Consultations | 21-25 July and
20-22 August 2003 |
| - 4 th Stock Assessment Group Meeting | 25-29 August 2003 |
| - 8 th Extended Scientific Committee | 1-4 September 2003 |

Meetings of Other Organisations

The Secretariat represented the Extended Commission at the following meetings and conferences:

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|--|---------------------|
| - NOAA Conference on Observer Programs | 18-21 November 2002 |
| - Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Stats | 21-24 January 2003 |
| - 25 th Session of COFI | 24-28 February 2003 |
| - 3 rd Meeting of Regional Fishery Bodies | 3-4 March 2003 |

A meeting of tuna regional fisheries bodies will be held in Madrid on 13-14 March 2004. The Executive Secretary proposes to attend this meeting.

CCSBT Central Database

The central database has continued to grow. At the time of writing, the database was up to date, with all relevant data provided by members, CCSBT tag recapture data and all TIS data having been loaded or entered onto the database. Work is currently underway to load past tag recapture data from the joint Australia/Japan SBT Recruitment Monitoring Program.

Trade Information Scheme

The TIS module of the central database and procedural arrangements of the TIS were modified as agreed at CCSBT9. The new arrangements have been working well.

The Secretariat issued a report on TIS exports for the final six months of 2002 in late May. The report for the first six months of 2003 is due on 1 December.

The Secretariat has written to the United States seeking their cooperation in the processing of TIS documents.

The Secretariat has contacted the Philippines, Seychelles and Indonesia to seek improvement in accurate completion of the TIS forms sent with consignments of SBT. The Secretariat has also requested these countries to cooperate with the procedural changes to the scheme by issuing TIS forms for all exports and by providing electronic records of forms issued to the Secretariat.

Further issues to be discussed for the TIS are detailed in meeting document **CCSBT-EC/0310/17**.

CCSBT Website

The Japanese version of the CCSBT website was developed and made operational in July 2003.

The document exchange area of the website has proved to be a very effective mechanism for distributing documents associated with CCSBT business. Since CCSBT9 there has been heavy use of the facility.

Action Plan

The Executive Secretary wrote to Belize informing that country that they had been elevated to the second level of the Action Plan. No response has been received.

The Executive Secretary wrote to the Philippines seeking confirmation that two vessels that had been identified as being involved in IUU fishing had been deregistered. The Philippines have responded advising that the two vessels have been deregistered.

As agreed at CCSBT9 the Executive Secretary wrote to the Seychelles seeking advice on their involvement in the SBT fishery and their plans for the future. The Seychelles responded indicating they do not intend to develop a SBT fishery and will cooperate with the Extended Commission. The Seychelles expressed an interest in attending CCSBT10 as an observer and they were officially invited to do so.

A full report on the Action Plan is contained in meeting document **CCSBT-EC/0310/09**.

IUU Fishing

The Secretariat developed two draft resolutions for consideration by the Extended Commission and circulated them to members in June 2003. One resolution provided for the Commission to decide on a statement of intent to combat IUU fishing. The second resolution proposed a more extensive operational response.

The resolutions and an associated discussion paper are listed for discussion at CCSBT10 and the documentation is provided in meeting document **CCSBT-EC/0310/16**.

Scientific Research Program

(i) Scientific Observer Program Standards

The Secretariat facilitated the inter-sessional development of the Observer Program Standards from the draft discussed at the Extended Scientific Committee in September 2002. The final draft was considered and agreed at the Extended Scientific Committee meeting in September 2003. The Chairman of the Committee will present the outcome in his report to the Extended Commission.

(ii) CCSBT Surface Tagging Program

The Secretariat managed the second year of the program and has begun preparations for the third year of activity, which is scheduled to commence in December 2003.

In total, 13,147 fish were tagged this season (2002-2003) at a cost of \$555,922. Tags from a total of 289 fish have been recaptured this season at the time of writing this report.

In addition to the deployment of tags, the Secretariat began a focus on tag recovery activities, which will be a significant factor in the budget for the program in 2004.

A report from the Secretariat on the tagging program outcomes in 2003 was considered by the Extended Scientific Committee. Recommendations from the Committee are contained in the Committee's report to the Extended Commission.

(iii) Characterisation of SBT Catch

As reported last year, members are collecting most of the crucial catch characterisation information specified in the SRP. Apart from Taiwan, most members made little progress in addressing deficiencies that have been identified in their data collection systems. This was largely due to the practical difficulties of implementing some of the specified improvements.

Most aspects of data reporting standards to the Secretariat have now been agreed, with only two issues (reporting of species other than SBT, and geographic resolution of reported data) remaining to be agreed. Consideration of reporting standards for scientific observer data awaits finalisation of the CCSBT observer standards with respect to collection of those data. Most members have now provided the historical times series for most of the required information.

(iv) Direct Ageing

The Secretariat facilitated the finalisation of the Direct Ageing Manual and the otolith exchange program among members. The Secretariat now holds a CCSBT reference set for future training in direct ageing.

Ecologically Related Species Working Group

The Secretariat facilitated the development of education pamphlets on seabirds and sharks as agreed at the 3rd Meeting of the Ecologically Related Species Working Group in November 2001.

The exercise proved very difficult to manage. Approval of the texts required many iterations with lengthy delays in responses from members. Translation of the texts into the five languages agreed at the meeting in November 2001 has also been very time consuming with responses from members again being delayed.

In total, development of the two pamphlets has taken about two years. If this time period is considered to be too long, the Commission might give consideration for future work of a similar kind to be led by an external consultant rather than the consensus approach used on this occasion.

Prepared by the Secretariat