



CCSBT-EC/2410/15

Activities with Other Organisations

Purpose

To receive reports from meetings of other RFMOs, agree on the CCSBT observers to attend meetings of other RFMOs during 2024, and to consider any other relevant activities with other organisations.

(1) CCSBT Observers at non-CCSBT meetings

CCSBT Members act as the CCSBT observer at RFMO meetings of interest (e.g. tuna RFMOs and CCAMLR¹), and the observing Member provides a report back to the CCSBT on matters of relevance in order to improve coordination with other RFMOs. The following Members were nominated at CCSBT 30 to observe the next series of RFMO annual meetings:

- Korea to observe meetings of WCPFC²;
- New Zealand to observe meetings of CCAMLR;
- Indonesia to observe meetings of IOTC³;
- Japan to observe meetings of ICCAT⁴; and
- Taiwan to observe meetings of IATTC⁵.

These CCSBT observers may have matters of relevance to report back to the CCSBT.

This approach has been in use for several years and it may be worthwhile for Members to consider whether this remains the best approach in terms of ensuring coordination across RFMOs. The current approach may become somewhat redundant if Members choose to support the alternative engagement model suggested by the tuna-RFMO Executive Secretaries and described further in the following section.

The alternative engagement model would not capture CCAMLR, however, it should be noted that the CCSBT and CCAMLR have an existing cooperation agreement in place (see Attachment A) that already empowers the two organisations to work together closely on matters of mutual interest.

(2) Cooperation Amongst Tuna-RFMOs

¹ Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources.

² Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

³ Indian Ocean Tuna Commission.

⁴ International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas.

⁵ Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission.

The level of cooperation amongst t-RFMOs continues to be high, particularly in the area of compliance and the Tuna Compliance Network. At an informal level, t-RFMO Executive Secretaries also maintain a good working relationship and will often communicate with one another on an ad-hoc basis when issues of potential shared interest arise. These exchanges have been occurring in the context of a largely dormant Kobe Process.

This year's COFI meeting (held in conjunction with the meeting of the Regional Secretariat Network (RSN)) provide a rare occasion for t-RFMO Executive Secretaries to meet in person and discuss more substantive issues. This brief exchange highlighted a need for t-RFMO Secretariats to meet on an annual basis to better coordinate across areas of shared interest (e.g. implications of the Convention on Biodiversity, increasing administrative efficiencies, managing the impacts of climate change, etc). Based on this, Executives Secretaries are recommending that t-RFMO Secretariats meet annually with one of the Secretariats hosting in the year where COFI is not held (the current practice of t-RFMO Executive Secretaries meeting in the margins would continue). The IATTC has offered to host the meeting in 2025.

The Secretariat suggests that a singular report of outcomes from these annual t-RFMO coordination meetings could serve as an alternative to the current practice of asking Members to report on individual t-RFMO meetings.

The Secretariat also notes that the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) will be attending CCSBT 31 and is recognised as a long-term observer.

(3) United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization

There continues to be a high level of engagement between the Secretariat and the FAO in the last year with the ongoing commitments relating to the current phase of the Common Oceans Program and in particular the Tuna Project element within that program.

The Secretariat anticipates that this increased workload will continue in 2025 with CCSBT's role as one of the Project Partners for the Tuna Project and the lead for the Seabird Project component. This engagement is likely to require input from Secretariat staff, the Chairs of Subsidiary Bodies (e.g. ERSWG and ESC), and potentially some Member experts in particular fields (e.g. electronic monitoring, MSE, stock assessment, etc).

As a reminder, the Tuna Project aims to improve tuna fisheries management, tackle IUU fishing, and reduce the impacts of tuna fisheries on the environment. The CCSBT has an interest in all of the areas defined by the project and in certain areas is seen as a leader amongst tuna RFMOs.

(4) Long Term Observers

In addition to a selection of Inter-Governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations, the CCSBT has granted long-term observer status to the Chairs of Joint Tuna RFMO committees, working groups, and networks. The following groups have not been active for years and the Secretariat recommends that their status be removed:

- Kobe Process Steering Committee
- MSE Working Group
- Technical Bycatch Working Group

Removing the long-term observer status would not prevent future engagement with these groups should they become active once more⁶.

The Secretariat recommends that the Chair of the Tuna Compliance Network retains its long-term observer status given that this group has remained active.

(5) Summary of Secretariat Engagement in 2024

Secretariat staff attended the following meetings since CCSBT 30:

- FAO virtual workshop on “Other effective area-based conservation measures” (OECMs)
- Various virtual meetings related to the Common Oceans Tuna Project;
- Various virtual sessions of the Pan-Pacific Fisheries Compliance Network (PPFCN);
- Various virtual engagement with the International, Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Network (IMCSN),
- Tuna Compliance Network;
- Meeting of the Regional Secretariat Network (RSN);
- FAO Conference on Fisheries (COFI);
- The Second Project Steering Committee for the Common Oceans Tuna Project; and
- The Third Meeting of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organisations and Regional Fisheries Bodies (virtual attendance due to Executive Secretary contracting COVID).

(6) Planned Secretariat Engagement for 2025

Members of the CCSBT Secretariat and/or Chairs of Subsidiary Bodies, have been asked to support the following activities⁷ in 2025:

Activity	Resourcing	Funding
3rd Joint Meeting of Tuna RFMOs on the Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management.	Executive Secretary Chair of ERSWG	Fully funded by Common Oceans Program
Joint tRFMO bycatch meeting	TBC	Fully funded by Common Oceans Program
Honiara Summit on Sustainability Development Goal (SDG) 14.4	Secretariat	Likely FAO funded
Tuna RFMO Secretariat Coordination Meeting	Executive Secretary	CCSBT funded
Tuna Compliance Network	Compliance Manager	CCSBT funded
Tuna Project Steering Committee	Executive Secretary Seabird Project Manager	Fully funded by Common Oceans Program

The Secretariat has also been asked to support an FAO Climate Change Workshop, a potential meeting of the Pan-Pacific Fisheries Compliance Network, and the UN Ocean

⁶ For example, discussions are currently underway for a join t-RFMO workshop on bycatch to take place in 2025.

⁷ Additional details on any of these activities (i.e. agendas, meeting announcements, etc) are available upon request. Members should contact the Executive Secretary for further information.

Conference, however, the Executive Secretary is recommending that support for these activities be dependent upon external funding and availability of Secretariat resources and not included in the initial list of planned activities.

Recommendations

The Secretariat recommends that Members:

- Note the activities undertaken by the Secretariat;
- Agree to cease the practice of having Members provide observer reports from other RFMOs/CCAMLR;
- Support the initiative proposed by t-RFMO Executive Secretaries for annual coordination meetings amongst Secretariats;
- Agree to remove the long-term observer status of the Kobe Process Steering Committee, MSE Working Group, and Technical Bycatch Working Group.
- Agree to the list of engagements planned by the Secretariat in 2025

Prepared by the Secretariat