



CCSBT-EC/2510/18

Activities with Other Organisations

Purpose

To receive an update from the Secretariat on matters of relevance occurring within other tuna RFMOs during 2025, and to consider any other relevant activities with other organisations.

(1) Cooperation Amongst Tuna-RFMOs

The level of cooperation amongst tuna-RFMOs continues to be high across all areas of work. The tuna-RFMO Executive Secretaries continue to maintain a good working relationship and communicate regularly on topics of shared interest. This collaboration between tuna-RFMOs is further enhanced by their engagement in the wider Regional Secretariat Network (RSN).

This year, Executive Secretaries engaged regularly online and in the margins of shared meetings where possible (e.g. Honiara Summit and Oceans Conference). This has allowed tuna-RFMOs to leverage their strength as a group into greater visibility in these international settings. By sharing the responsibility across the group, tuna-RFMOs have been able to ensure that our shared interests are represented across the various forums in a way that would not be possible for a single tuna-RFMO to achieve. This is particularly true in the case of the CCSBT where our limited Secretariat resources simply do not allow us to be present at all engagements.

Another area of noticeable improvement is in the coordination of communications material amongst the tuna-RFMOs. By combining our influence, the tuna-RFMOs have proactively served to raise the profile of our commissions and celebrate our successes. Some examples of these efforts include the following:

- World Tuna Day Press Release: <https://www.fao.org/in-action/commonoceans/newsroom/news-and-stories/news-detail/celebrating-sustainability-this-world-tuna-day/en>
- Speaking at the Honiara Summit on the role of Regional Fisheries Bodies in supporting the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 “Life Below Water”: <https://honiarasummit.sig.gov.sb/resources>
- Speaking at various side events held as part of United Nations Ocean Conference: <https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/ocean2025>
- Statement in support of tuna-RFMOs delivered at United Nations Ocean Conference panel by the President of the Federated States of Micronesia: <https://sdgs.un.org/events/ocean-action-panel-8-promoting-and-supporting-all-forms-cooperation-especially-regional-and>
- Speaking at side event of Our Oceans Conference (delivered by IOTC): <https://www.ouroceanconference.org/conferences/busan-2025/>

- Statement at First Session of the Preparatory Commission for the BBNJ (delivered by WCPFC): https://www.un.org/bbnjagreement/sites/default/files/2025-04/WCPFC_Sec_22April.pdf
- Statement at Second Session of the Preparatory Commission for the BBNJ (delivered by ICCAT): [link not yet available](#).

(2) Cooperation with the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)

The CCSBT has a longstanding Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with CCAMLR, which was last renewed in 2023 and is set to expire next year. Members are asked to consider renewing the existing agreement for a further three-year term.

The Secretariat has not proposed any changes to the previous agreement, nor have there been any requests from CCAMLR to modify the existing terms. Therefore, the draft MoU update provided at **Attachment A** simply reflects a change in the signing date and the respective Chairs. Members will note that the Chair for CCSBT 33 has yet to be agreed and will therefore need to be reflected at the time of signing. The renewal will also be considered at the upcoming CCAMLR Commission meeting in October. Assuming that both Commissions support the renewal, the MoU will be renewed in 2026 following the appointment of the next CCSBT Chair.

(3) United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)

With BBNJ receiving a significant boost in the number of ratifications during this year's United Nations Ocean Conference, ensuring that its imminent implementation is carried out in a manner that aligns with and compliments existing RFMO processes is becoming critical. The tuna-RFMO Secretariats have emphasised the need to prioritise engagement with organisations whose mandate on the high seas overlaps with the BBNJ. This will ensure that systems such as the Clearing-House Mechanism are developed with consideration for the need to harmonise with existing RFMO processes where possible. More broadly, the “arrangements to enhance cooperation with relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies” will need to be well-defined and not create an unmanageable workload for CCSBT subsidiary bodies (in particular the ESC). Many of the implementation details are still being negotiated in Preparatory Commissions through 2025 and 2026, creating some uncertainty about how the Agreement will work in practice. These Preparatory Commissions are a key opportunity for the fisheries sector to share their perspectives and help shape the process.

With the assistance of Australian colleagues, the Executive Secretary met with one of the co-Chairs of the BBNJ Preparatory Commission, Mr Adam McCarthy, for an informal conversation on BBNJ implementation and how best for the CCSBT to engage with the Preparatory Commission and CoP.

The CCSBT has not engaged directly with either of the first two Preparatory Commission meetings that have occurred to date. Other tuna-RFMOs have sent representatives to these meetings, which has allowed the CCSBT to maintain some connection with the discussions

taking place but as the agenda moves towards a greater focus on the operational relationship between the BBNJ and RFMOs, the CCSBT will need to take a more active role to ensure that our unique operational framework is taken into consideration. Indications at this stage are that the next Preparatory Commission (PrepComm 3) is likely to have a greater focus on this cooperation and coordination with RFMOs, which is why the Secretariat has added this engagement to the list of potential 2026 activities.

Active engagement from fisheries stakeholders is crucial and the Secretariat also wishes to encourage Members to coordinate with their respective delegation to BBNJ to ensure that the concerns of CCSBT and other tuna-RFMOs are considered. The participation and contribution of fisheries officials will help build institutions and processes that are more accessible to fisheries agencies and are compatible with established fisheries management and governance processes. As observers to these meetings, tuna-RFMOs are constrained in their ability to influence BBNJ discussions and we therefore rely on our respective Members to strengthen our advocacy.

(4) 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 workload will decrease in 2026 with the conclusion of the Seabird Project, however, engagement in the wider Tuna Project will continue to be a part of the Secretariat's workload. This engagement is likely to require input from Secretariat staff, the Chairs of Subsidiary Bodies, 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.

(5) Summary of Secretariat Engagements in 2025

Secretariat staff and Chairs attended the following meetings since CCSBT 31:

- 3rd Joint Meeting of tuna RFMOs on the Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management.
- Joint tRFMO bycatch meeting
- Various virtual meetings related to the Common Oceans Tuna Project;
- Joint TCN and PPFCN workshop;
- Various virtual sessions of the Pan-Pacific Fisheries Compliance Network (PPFCN) and Tuna Compliance Network (TCN);
- International, Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Network (IMCSN) workshop to further develop the programme of RFMO support;
- Various other virtual engagement with the IMCSN, including CCSBT representation on the Executive Committee;
- United Nations Ocean Conference;

- Virtual Meetings of the Regional Secretariat Network (RSN);
- The Third Project Steering Committee for the Common Oceans Tuna Project; and
- Meeting of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organisations and Regional Fisheries Bodies (in margins of UNOC).

(6) Planned Secretariat Engagement for 2026

Members of the CCSBT Secretariat and/or Chairs of Subsidiary Bodies, have been asked to support the following activities in 2026:

Activity	Resourcing	Funding
Joint tuna-RFMO meeting on Management Strategy Evaluation	TBC	Fully funded by Common Oceans Program
Joint tuna-RFMO meeting on Stock Assessment	ESC Chair	Fully funded by Common Oceans Program
Joint tuna-RFMO meeting on Harmonizing EM Standards	CC Chair	Fully funded by Common Oceans Program
Joint tuna-RFMO meeting on EAFM	TBC	Fully funded by Common Oceans Program
United Nations Committee on Fisheries (COFI) including tuna-RFMO Coordination Meeting	Executive Secretary	CCSBT funded with FAO support
Tuna Project Steering Committee	Executive Secretary Seabird Project Manager	Fully funded by Common Oceans Program
Tuna Compliance Network	Compliance Manager	CCSBT funded
BBNJ PrepCom3	Executive Secretary	CCSBT funded with potential FAO support

The Secretariat is typically asked to support other processes throughout the year (e.g. Sustainable Ocean Initiative, Our Oceans conference, etc) but these will be determined on a case-by-case basis and only in circumstances where external funding is provided and Secretariat resources allow.

Recommendations

The Secretariat recommends that Members:

- Note the activities undertaken by the Secretariat;
- Agree to the list of engagements planned by the Secretariat in 2026; and
- Agree to the renewal of the MoU with CCAMLR for a further three years.

Prepared by the Secretariat

**Arrangement between
The Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna
and
The Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources**

The Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (hereafter CCSBT) and the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (hereafter CCAMLR);

NOTING that the objective of the Convention for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (hereafter CSBT Convention) is to ensure, through appropriate management, the conservation and optimum utilisation of southern bluefin tuna;

NOTING FURTHER that the objective of the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (hereafter CAMLR Convention) is the conservation of Antarctic marine living resources, which includes rational use;

RECOGNISING that Article 12 of the CSBT Convention requires the CCSBT to collaborate with other inter-governmental organisations which have related objectives to, among other things, obtain the best available information including scientific information to further the attainment of the objective of the Convention and seek to avoid duplication with respect to the work of the other organisations.

CONSIDERING that the Preamble to the CAMLR Convention recognises that it is desirable for CCAMLR to establish suitable machinery for recommending, promoting, deciding on and co-ordinating the measures and scientific studies needed to ensure the conservation of Antarctic marine living organisms;

NOTING that provisions of the CAMLR Convention address the conservation of non-target, associated or dependent species which belong to the same ecosystem as the target species;

NOTING FURTHER that the Preamble to the 2008 CCSBT Recommendation to Mitigate the Impact on Ecologically Related Species of Fishing for Southern Bluefin Tuna identifies that the CCSBT is determined to mitigate incidental harm to ecologically related species caused by fishing for southern bluefin tuna;

DESIRING to put into place arrangements and procedures to promote cooperation in order to enhance the conservation and rational use of stocks and species which are within the competence and/or mutual interest of both organisations so as to avoid duplication or conflict between the activities of the two organisations;

NOW THEREFORE the CCSBT and CCAMLR record the following arrangements:

1. OBJECTIVE OF THIS ARRANGEMENT

The objective of this Arrangement is to facilitate, where appropriate, cooperation between the CCSBT and CCAMLR ('the Commissions') with a view to enhancing the conservation and rational use of stocks and species which are of interest to both Commissions.

2. AREAS OF COOPERATION

The Commissions will establish and maintain consultation and cooperation in respect of matters of common interest to both organisations. In particular, the Commissions will:

- (i) exchange meeting reports, information, documents and publications regarding matters of mutual interest, consistent with the information sharing policies of each Commission;
- (ii) exchange data and scientific information in support of the work and objectives of both Commissions, consistent with the information sharing policies of each Commission including, but not limited to information on:
 - (a) vessels authorised to fish in accordance with the Commissions' conservation measures;
 - (b) illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing vessels;
 - (c) catch, bycatch and vessel information and/or data¹;
 - (d) an annual CCSBT report to CCAMLR covering the global stock assessment of southern bluefin tuna for that year; and the latest southern bluefin tuna catch data classified by ocean, gear and catching country; and
 - (e) an annual CCAMLR report to CCSBT detailing any catches (by flag and gear) of southern bluefin tuna from vessels fishing within the CAMLR Convention area.
- (iii) cooperate to harmonise approaches in areas of mutual interest and concern, most notably on bycatch of non-target, associated and dependent species (ecologically related species);
- (iv) where appropriate, collaborate on analyses and research efforts relating to species of mutual interest;
- (v) consider methods of recognising and cooperating with each other's conservation and management measures; and
- (vi) consistent with each Commission's rules of procedure, grant permanent reciprocal observer status to representatives of the respective Commissions in relevant meetings of each Commission.
- (vii) encourage cooperation between the Secretariats in areas of common interest such as information management, compliance evaluation, CDS, website developments, data modelling and infrastructure, database development, data exchange protocols and secretariat-administrative matters.

¹ Noting that publicly available CCSBT bycatch data is currently limited to information provided in reports to the CCSBT; that the confidentiality classification of bycatch data exchanged between CCSBT Members prevents its release without explicit approval of the Members providing the data together with a signed confidentiality agreement; and that catch data relating to individual vessels is classified as confidential.

3. CONSULTATIVE PROCESS

To facilitate effective development, implementation and enhancement of cooperation, the Commissions may establish a consultative process between the two respective Secretariats that includes, telephone, email and similar means of communications. The consultative process may also proceed in the margins of meetings at which both Commissions' Secretariats are represented by appropriate staff.

4. MODIFICATION

This Arrangement may be modified at any time by the mutual written consent of both Commissions.

5. LEGAL STATUS

This Arrangement does not create legally binding rights or obligations.

This Arrangement does not alter the obligations of members of either body to comply with the management and conservation measures of those bodies.

6. OTHERS

- (i) This Arrangement will commence on the date of signature.
- (ii) Either Commission may terminate this Arrangement by giving six months prior written notice to the other Commission.
- (iii) This Arrangement will continue to operate for three (3) years. At that stage the Commissions will review the operation of the Arrangement and decide whether it will be renewed.

7. SIGNATURE

Signed at thisday of202~~63~~

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Dae Yeon Moon TBD
Chair CCSBT

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Vitalii Tsymbaliuk Robbie
Bullock
Chair CCAMLR