Commission for the Conservation of
Southern Bluefin Tuna

みなみまぐろ保存委員会

CCSBT-EC/2610/04

Report from the Secretariat
(EC Agenda item 2.1 and 2.2)

Overview

This report provides a summary of the main activities undertaken by the Secretariat since the Thirty-Second Annual Meeting of the CCSBT in October 2025.

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

- Whether to extend the appointment of Dr Martin Cryer for a second term as ERSWG Chair.
- Consider Terms of Reference for and ongoing use of live streaming of meetings.

Officials of the CCSBT

The following official positions in the CCSBT were nominated, appointed or held during 2026.

Officer	Name	Date nominated / appointed
Chair – Extended Commission	Mr Luis Molledo	7 May 2026
Chair – Commission	Mr Mandisile Mqoqi	7 May 2026
Vice Chair – Commission	Mr Takeshi Miwa	7 May 2026
Vice Chair – Extended Commission	Mr Mandisile Mqoqi	7 May 2026
Co-Chairs – Finance & Administration Committee (FAC)	Mr Patrick Sachs Ms Heather Benko	11 June 2026
Chair – Compliance Committee (CC)	Mr Frank Meere	16 October 2015[1]
Chair – SC/ESC	Dr Kevin Stokes	1 November 2017[2]
Chair – ERSWG	Dr Martin Cryer	8 February 2023[3]

The Chairing term for the ERSWG Chair, Dr Martin Cryer, is set to expire this year and requires the attention of Members. This concludes Dr Cryer's first term as Chair and he now becomes eligible for a further two reappointments under the Chairing Arrangements for CCSBT Subsidiary Bodies.

[1] The CC Chair is appointed for a three-year term with the possibility of up to two reappointments. The CC Chair's third term expired at the end of CCSBT 31 where Members agreed to allow an additional three-year term.
[2] The SC/ESC Chair is appointed for a three-year term with the possibility of up to two reappointments. The SC/ESC Chair's third and final term expires on 1 November 2026.
[3] 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. ERSWG 15 was the first meeting for the ERSWG Chair.

Consultants to the CCSBT

The Secretariat engaged five consultants to assist the CCSBT in selected scientific projects and/or meetings during 2026. 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 Charles Edwards) in relation to the update of the estimate of unaccounted mortality.

This is in addition to the contractual arrangements with CSIRO, which are also managed by the Secretariat.

The Secretariat also managed the contract for Dr Ross Wanless who serves as the Seabird Project Manager for the FAO funded Seabird Project as well as Mr Hyungmin Lee who was seconded to the Secretariat as part of the Secondment Program with the Korean government. Both the Seabird Project and Mr Lee's secondment concluded during 2026.

Secretariat Staff and Office Management

The Secretariat's staff was comprised of five full-time positions and three casual part-time positions during 2026. These were:

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

Assessment of Current Workloads

The pressure on Secretariat resources continues to be high particularly with the transition to eCDS and increased science, compliance and ERS related commitments. The Secretariat continues to supplement its core roles with casual, part-time positions. The eCDS implementation will require the Secretariat to change some processes and the actual long-term implications of this are difficult to forecast at this time. However, in the short-term the eCDS will result in increased demands on the Secretariat due to increased requirements for capability development (priority tasks in the Compliance Action Plan) and to support Member implementation.

The conclusion of the Common Oceans Seabird Project will, however, help reduce the administrative burden that has been carried by the Secretariat during the last three years.

The Secretariat resourcing requirements will also be impacted by decisions at this year's annual meetings, particularly related to the Indonesian transhipment trial, which has significantly increased the amount of transhipment data and information, and also increased the associated monitoring requirements for the Secretariat. During 2026, the Secretariat has completed the system updates that were approved at CCSBT 32 to further develop the transhipment module within eSBT. The Secretariat continues to rely on casual part-time support to manage and respond to all the data related to the Indonesian transhipment trial, but the changes to eSBT have improved the efficiency of the Secretariat's data entry and monitoring of implementation.

The upcoming Independent Performance Review, whose Terms of Reference are set to be defined at this meeting, may present an opportunity for an independent assessment of Secretariat workload and resourcing.

Financial

The preparation of CCSBT's Financial Statements for 2025 was conducted according to schedule. The Financial Statements were reviewed by the CCSBT's auditor, RSM Australia Pty Ltd and the outcomes of RSM's review identified no items of concern.

A mid-year financial report was also completed and circulated to Members under Circular #2026/46.

A draft revised budget for 2026 and a draft budget for 2027, including indicative budgets for 2028 and 2029 are available for the EC's consideration in meeting documents CCSBT-EC/2610/06 and CCSBT-EC/2610/07. Members are encouraged to consult these papers for a more fulsome review of CCSBT's current financial position.

Organisation of CCSBT Meetings

The Secretariat has organised, or is in the process of organising, the following formal CCSBT meetings since CCSBT 32:

Sixteenth Ecologically Related Species Working Group (Canberra, Australia)	3 – 6 March 2026
Sixteenth Operating Model and Management Technical Meeting (Seattle, USA)	22 – 26 June 2026
Thirty-First Meeting of the Scientific Committee, incorporating the Extended Scientific Committee (Brussels, Belgium)	24 – 28 August 2026
Twenty-First Meeting of the Compliance Committee (Brussels, Belgium)	1 - 3 October 2026
Thirty-Third Annual Meeting of the Commission, incorporating the Extended Commission (Brussels, Belgium)	5 - 8 October 2026

In addition to the above official meetings, the Secretariat has organised the following intersessional meetings since CCSBT 32:

Technical Meeting to Review Projection Code (Online)	12/13 February 2026
Fifth Meeting of the Technical Compliance Working Group (Online)	24 - 25 February 2026
2026 First Intersessional Allocation Discussion Workshop (Online)	22 April 2026
2026 Second Intersessional Allocation Discussion Workshop (Online)	23 July 2026

Translation of the 2025 meeting reports into Japanese has been completed and the translated reports have been placed onto the CCSBT website.

Organisation of meeting venues in Cape Town for 2027 is underway. The Secretariat is currently working with venues based on the meeting dates that were agreed intersessionally and notified to Members in Circular #2026/42.

Meeting	City	Tentative meeting date
SC/ESC 32	Cape Town, South Africa	30 August to 3 September 2027
CC 22	Cape Town, South Africa	30 September to 2 October 2027
CCSBT 34		4 to 7 October 2027

Consideration of Streaming Capacity for Future Meetings

In 2024, the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC) of CCSBT 31 recommended:

> *"FAC noted some interest by Members in an ability to observe meetings remotely. This would be limited to a viewing capacity only, not an interactive platform in which Members or Observer could participate remotely. FAC recommends that the Secretariat be tasked with providing a costing for this activity for consideration by FAC and CCSBT 32."*

CCSBT 31 approved this recommendation as part of the report from the FAC (paragraph 25 and 27 of the CCSBT 31 report).

CCSBT 32 further discussed the possibility of adding streaming capacity for future CCSBT meetings. Most Members supported the live streaming of future meetings noting that this would increase transparency while also recognising the need for certain constraints on its use.

Members agreed that while there was general support for the live streaming of meetings, there were some outstanding questions in terms of access, security, and other operational issues and tasked the Secretariat to intersessionally develop Terms of Reference for the use of live streaming. One Member also noted the growing workload of the Secretariat and asked for clarification on potential staffing impacts for future meetings.

Based on the above, the 2026 meeting budget was set to accommodate a trial of live streaming capabilities for the meetings of the Extended Scientific Committee, Compliance Committee, and Extended Commission.

The Secretariat developed initial draft Terms of Reference for live streaming of meetings and circulated these to Members for comment as part of Circular #2026/25. Based on the feedback received, the Secretariat made the necessary changes to the arrangements for the trial of live streaming. Notably, the trial was limited to the Extended Scientific Committee and does not include the Compliance Committee or Extended Commission meetings for 2026.

The revised Terms of Reference following the intersessional consultation are also attached at **Attachment A.**

Regular Engagement with Members

The Secretariat continues to encourage regular one-on-one meetings with individual delegations in order to maintain engagement outside of traditional meeting times. Many

Members have continued to utilise these opportunities in the last year to the benefit of both Members and the Secretariat.

This type of engagement ensures that the Secretariat is attuned to the needs of Members throughout the year and helps us address potential issues before they become problematic. The Executive Secretary plans to continue the practice in the coming year and encourages all Members to make use of these opportunities.

Projects Managed by Secretariat

The Secretariat managed the contracts for the following projects in 2025/26:

- Long-term gene tagging;
- Close-kin sampling, DNA extraction and sequencing;
- Close-kin identification and exchange;
- Sampling and ageing of Indonesian SBT Otoliths;
- Update of the unaccounted mortality estimate;
- CCSBT Management tag and Market survey in Toyosu Market; and
- FAO Common Oceans Seabird Project.

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 website 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 intersessional activities of the Secretariat and the EC. Fifty-six Circulars were issued between CCSBT 32 and 1 September 2026.

CCSBT Website

The website continues to be an actively updated and used information tool for both CCSBT Members and the general public. The public side of the CCSBT website was updated immediately after CCSBT 32 to incorporate the results and decisions from the 2025 meetings of the CCSBT. This update also included the relocation of the CCSBT decision compendium from the Private Area of the website to a publicly accessible page (see paper CCSBT-EC/2510/12).

Changes were also made to the display of the vessel register to include whether the vessel is authorised to operate outside of national waters.

Following the conclusion of CCSBT 33, the Secretariat will once again make all necessary updates to the CCSBT website to reflect the outcomes of the meeting.

Participation in the Fisheries Resource Monitoring System (FIRMS)

The CCSBT is a partner in FAO's FIRMS system. During 2025/26, 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 32; 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 32, this has included:

- For the CDS:
  - Data entry and upload of all CDS forms and data received from Members and non-members that cooperate with the CDS;
  - Notifying Members of reporting deadlines, running CDS data reconciliations, and following up on errors and missing information and forms, correcting errors based on resubmitted forms and information from Members;
  - Producing 6 monthly and annual CDS reports;
  - Providing advice on the CDS implementation as required;
  - Coordinating the purchase of centralised tags for use with the CDS;
  - Maintenance of the CDS database;
  - Continuing development and testing of the electronic CDS (eCDS), including managing and facilitating Member testing, managing feedback and documenting and coordinating system improvements;
  - Notification and follow up with Members on emerging CDS issues.
- For the eSBT:
  - Checking and maintaining validator and seal information entered by Members and notifying Members of updates and changes;
  - Testing,developing and deploying the updated transhipment module; and
  - Ongoing bug fixes.
- Managing the CCSBT records of Authorised Fishing Vessels, Carrier Vessels and Farms.
- Managing the operation of the CCSBT Transhipment Resolution.
- Managing the operation of the Resolution for Minimum Standards for Inspection in Port.
- Monitoring compliance with CCSBT Resolutions and obligations and following up with Members as required.
- Managing initial quota allocations and final catch by vessel/company data and associated access permissions.
- Sending reminders and managing Member carry-forward notifications.
- Checking for any submissions in relation to the CCSBT IUU Vessel List Resolution[4] and implementing the cross-listing provisions of the Resolution.
- Progressing TCWG intersessional discussions.
- Monitoring and implementation of the CCSBT Compliance Plan.
- The development and update of the eCDS manual and other resources to support eCDS implementation.
- Drafting letters to each Member to identify compliance matters raised at the preceding CC for that Member to support the development of national reports.
- Producing papers and reports for the Compliance Committee.

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

- Maintaining compliance relationships with relevant bodies and organisations, and ensuring effective and ongoing engagement with other tuna RFMO Secretariats.

CCSBT Catch Reporting (excluding scientific data exchange)

Monthly Catch Reports
Members are successfully entering and updating their monthly catch reports through the online eSBT system. This system also provides Members with the opportunity to view the reports of other Members. Members are now completing monthly catch reports in eSBT more consistently, which has meant that less support has been required from the Secretariat in the last year to ensure Members meet monthly catch report requirements.

Reporting of Initial Quota Allocations and Final Catches by Vessel/Company
The Secretariat has provided reminders to each Member to submit this information and following receipt it is loaded to a special section of the private area of the CCSBT website. 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.

Database Developments and Data Exchange

The CCSBT Data CD content and associated documentation was updated and made available to Members for downloading on 30 January 2026. An initial interim update of the Data CD containing information from the 2026 Data Exchange was placed on the private area of the CCSBT website on 3 June 2026.

The Secretariat managed the 2026 scientific data exchange, which involved active exchange of data between Members and the Secretariat mainly between April and late-June. The Secretariat conducted substantial post-processing of the data to produce derived datasets that were required as part of the data exchange.

The annual ERSWG Data Exchange occurred during 2026. Australia, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, South Africa and Taiwan submitted ERS data required for this data exchange. 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.

The online database system, eSBT, continues to be used by Members and the Secretariat for the management of CDS validator information, monthly catch report data, and transhipment data. The eSBT has undergone minor maintenance during the year, along with enhancements to the transhipment module, and at this stage no new features are planned for 2027.

Development of an eCDS for the CCSBT continued in 2026. Members agreed that the eCDS will be implemented on 1-April-2027. A report on progress with development of the eCDS will be provided to the October 2026 meeting of the Compliance Committee.

Prepared by the Secretariat

Attachment A

Draft Terms of Reference on Live Streaming of CCSBT Official Meetings

(Adopted at the Thirty-Third Annual Meeting – 8 October 2026)

Background

At the Extended Commission during CCSBT 31 in 2024, Members[5] raised the possibility of adding live streaming capacity for future CCSBT meetings and recommended that the Executive Secretary provide indicative costs for consideration by the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC) and CCSBT 32.

In response, the Secretariat submitted a paper to the Extended Committee in October 2025 outlining matters to be taken into account when considering the live streaming of future CCSBT meetings (CCSBT-EC/2510/04), together with cost estimates for the possible options (CCSBT-EC/2510/06).

Most Members supported the live streaming of future meetings, noting that it would increase transparency, but with restrictions on users, such as registered and approved participants from Members and observers, virtual attendees only having observer status, and the possibility of not streaming certain discussions due to confidentiality concerns.

Following the discussion at CCSBT 32, Members tasked the Secretariat to intersessionally develop the Terms of Reference for the use of live streaming, noting that while there was general support for the live streaming of meetings, there were some outstanding questions in terms of access, security, and other operational issues.

In light of the above background, ~~CCSBT~~ Members agree on the Terms of Reference for the live streaming of CCSBT official meetings as set out below.

1. Definition

In the Terms of Reference,

1) "Live streaming" means the real-time transmission of the proceedings of a CCSBT official meeting using an online platform for the purpose of enabling Members and/or Observers to follow the plenary discussions without participating in the in-person meeting.

2) "Viewer" means an individual who has been nominated by Members and/or Observers to access the live streaming of a CCSBT official meeting for the sole purpose of viewing the proceedings without participating in the in-person meeting.

3) "Observer" means a State, entity, or organisation that has been granted approval to attend a CCSBT official meeting, in accordance with Rule 3 of the CCSBT Rules of Procedure.

[5] Throughout the Terms of Reference, any reference to "Members" includes Members of the Extended Commission and any reference to the "CCSBT" includes the Extended Commission.

2. General Principles

1) In principle, live streaming of CCSBT meetings applies to the plenary sessions of the following CCSBT official meetings:
   (a) The Annual Meetings of the Commission and the Extended Commission;
   (b) The Scientific Committee and the Extended Scientific Committee meetings:
   (c) The Compliance Committee meeting (and the Technical Compliance Working Group meeting, if appropriate);
   (d) The Ecologically Related Species Working Group meeting (and the ERS Tech meeting, if appropriate); and
   (e) Any other meetings designated by the Extended Commission.
2) In principle, all agenda items are subject to live streaming. Any Member wishing to object to the live streaming of an agenda item must advise the Chair of the meeting prior to the adoption of the Agenda. However, Members may also request at any time during the meeting, that a particular agenda item be excluded from live streaming. In the event that such a request is made and consensus cannot be reached among Members, the Chair will determine whether to accept such request.
3) Live streaming will be made available to Members and Observers, subject to the eligibility requirements set out in section 3 of the Terms of Reference.
4) Live streaming is for viewing purposes only, and viewers cannot participate in the discussions and/or activities of the in-person meeting. Remote participants shall not be able to raise objections and/or take part in voting, nor shall their attendance constitute part of the quorum.
5) During the meeting period, the on-site in-person meeting will take complete priority. Accordingly, even if live streaming encounters difficulties due to equipment malfunction or any other issues, the progress of the in-person meeting will not be delayed.
6) Recording, filming, transmission, sharing, or any similar activity by viewers of the live streaming will not be permitted.
7) Members acknowledge in advance that, given the need for flexible arrangements in the practical operation of live streaming during the meeting, the Secretariat may, in consultation with the Chair, apply discretion in addressing any issues as necessary.
8) Rule 10 of the CCSBT Rules of Procedure also applies to the information shared via live streaming and shall not be disclosed outside the viewer's respective delegation.
9) The adopted meeting report constitutes the official record of the meeting. Accordingly, any form of captions or other text electronically displayed during the live-streaming shall not prevail over, nor be used as a basis for interpreting, the content of the meeting report.
10) Viewers are responsible for ensuring that they have an appropriate environment for

accessing the live streaming, including equipment, internet connectivity, and platform settings.

3. Eligibility for Viewing Live Streaming

1) Subject to the registration procedures outlined in Section 4, live streaming will be made available to the following:

   (a) ~~Members of delegations of CCSBT Members~~Those who are part of a Member delegation;

   (b) ~~Members of delegations of Observers~~Those who are part of an Observer delegation holding long-term observer status for the meeting concerned; and

   (c) ~~Members of delegations of Observers~~Those who are part of an Observer delegation whose participation in the meeting concerned has been approved in advance.

2) A delegation of Observers shall be represented by a minimum of one in-person delegate in order to access live streaming. This requirement does not apply to Observers that have been granted long-term Observer status by CCSBT for respective meetings.

3) Access to live streaming will be limited to those individuals who receive the direct link from the CCSBT Secretariat, and is not transferable.

4) There will be no limit on the number of viewers that may be registered by a CCSBT Member.

5) For Observers, the number of viewers permitted will be limited to three participants.

4. Registration Procedures before and during the Meeting

1) The registration procedures for viewers will mirror the CCSBT Rules of Procedure on the registration of in-person meeting participants, with required adjustments.

2) Specifically, viewers of the live stream should be registered, using the prescribed format, no later than six weeks prior to the commencement of the meeting, together with the in-person participant(s).

3) Members may change their list of viewers at any point prior to the start of the meeting.

4) Observers may change registered live streaming viewer(s) in their List of Participants up to 14 days prior to the commencement of the meeting, in accordance with the CCSBT Rules of Procedure.

~~4)~~5) The list of live streaming viewers will be included in the List of Participants for the respective CCSBT meeting report.

5. Operation of Live Streaming

[Platform and language]

1) The preparation and operation of live streaming for each meeting will be managed by the Secretariat, in cooperation with the service provider as necessary.
2) Live streaming will be conducted through the platform that the Secretariat considers most appropriate, taking into account the technology available at the meeting venue and from the service provider.
3) In principle, for meetings in which simultaneous interpretation is provided, both English and Japanese will be made available through the live streaming. However, Members acknowledge that, in the event that only a single language can be provided due to technical difficulties or any other issues, English will take priority.

[Entry and admission]

4) Entry of viewers into the live streaming platform will be strictly controlled in accordance with the pre-registered List of Participants/Viewers.
5) Viewers acknowledge that entry may be denied if the name displayed on the platform cannot be matched with the pre-registered List of Participants/Viewers. In addition, entering the platform with multiple devices or accounts is not permitted.
6) Viewers should join the platform using the link provided by the Secretariat no later than 15 minutes prior to the commencement of the meeting.
7) The Secretariat's management of viewer entry will generally be conducted only at the timing around 15 minutes prior to the start of plenary sessions and during breaks. Viewers who are not in the waiting room at the time the Secretariat conducts admission may not be permitted to enter until the next break.
8) During the meeting period, the Secretariat will not be available to resolve technical issues affecting an individual user.

[Control during the meeting]

9) Where certain agenda items are excluded from live streaming (pursuant to section 2-2), the audio and video connection from the meeting room to the platform will be turned off during the discussion of those items. Accordingly, viewers will not be required to re-enter the platform.
10) As stated in section 2-4), viewers cannot participate in the discussions and/or activities of the in-person meeting. Therefore, viewers are requested not to use the chat or reaction functions on the platform, even when such functions are available. Chat from viewers on the platform will not be monitored during the meeting. However, the Secretariat may use the chat function to provide information to viewers (for example, the time at which the plenary will resume).
11) As stated in section 2-5), the in-person meeting will take complete priority in the conduct of the meeting. Therefore, viewers acknowledge that, if disconnection or

other issues occur on the platform during live streaming, such issues may not be addressed until the next break.

12) Where a breach of the provisions of the Terms of Reference by a viewer is confirmed, the Secretariat may, in consultation with the Chair, remove the individual concerned from the platform. A person who has been removed during the meeting may be permitted to re-enter the platform at the discretion of the Chair, following consultation with the relevant delegation and the Secretariat.

6. Other Notes

1) The Terms of Reference set out the minimum rules that can be envisaged at the time they are agreed. Therefore, they should be updated as necessary and in light of technological developments and experience gained through the introduction and delivery of live streaming.

2) If circumstances arise that cannot be addressed under the Terms of Reference during an actual CCSBT meeting, the Chair will determine the course of action following consultation with the Secretariat and, as necessary, with Members.

3) For circumstances arising during an actual CCSBT meeting that the Chair considers to be minor and not requiring approval by Members, the Secretariat will address them as appropriate.

4) The Secretariat will provide summary information on the live streaming of CCSBT meetings in its report to the EC meeting, and will, as necessary, present proposed revisions to the Terms of Reference.