Commission for the Conservation of
Southern Bluefin Tuna

みなみまぐろ保存委員会

CCSBT-EC/2610/19

Activities with Other Organisations

Purpose

To receive an update from the Secretariat on matters of relevance occurring within other tuna RFMOs during 2026, 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. BBNJ and COFI). 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.

The CCSBT SEFRA methodology was presented at this year's meeting of the IOTC Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch (WPEB) as a further example of the knowledge sharing taking place amongst the tuna RFMOs.

The Executive Secretaries of the tuna RFMOs also regularly share experiences on administrative matters of relevance.

(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 renewed in 2026 following the decision taken by Members at CCSBT 32.

The renewed MoU is provided at **Attachment A** for the convenience of Members.

(3) Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP)

The CCSBT also has a longstanding MoU with ACAP, which is set to expire at the end of 2027.

The Secretariat is recommending that work be undertaken in 2027 with ACAP so that the agreement may be presented for renewal and signing at CCSBT 34. Initial review of the MoU does not suggest the need for significant changes to the text prior to renewal.

(4) Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA)

During the most recent SIOFA meeting of the parties, SIOFA Members noted the overlap between the longline fisheries of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) and major SIOFA oilfish fishing grounds and tasked the SIOFA Secretariat to seek to promote collaboration with the CCSBT, including exchanging information on CCSBT longline fisheries.

As an initial step towards enhanced collaboration, the Executive Secretaries of SIOFA and CCSBT met in the margins of COFI to discuss potential information sharing between the two organisations. The two secretariats will continue these discussions further in the coming months to determine what collaborative opportunities may be available.

(5) World Trade Organisation (WTO)

Again in the margins of COFI, the Executive Secretary met with officials from the WTO to share views on the implementation of the WTO Fisheries Subsidies Agreement and how the CCSBT's existing processes (e.g. regular stock assessments) can support the WTO and its Members.

(6) 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 having entered into force on 17 January 2026, there is now a more pressing need to ensure that its implementation is carried out in a way that complements existing RFMO processes and leads to alignment and coordination. Once again this year, the tuna-RFMO Secretariats have emphasised the need to prioritise engagement with organisations, such as ours, whose mandates 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).

The Preparatory Commission meetings in the lead-up to the first Conference of the Parties (COP1), provided an initial opportunity to discuss the implementation of the BBNJ agreement and its interaction with existing organisations like the CCSBT. Under the theme of *Arrangements to Enhance Cooperation with IFBs*, the meeting covered several topics of interest for tuna-RFMOs including the prioritisation of engagement with organisations who share a mandate in ABNJ. These discussions, however, have yet to truly explore the operational realities behind some of the Agreement's commitments and much uncertainty remains. The draft decision on this topic, which will be presented to COP1 for adoption, includes the following:

The PrepCom recommends that COP1 decide, inter alia, that all cooperation with IFBs shall be guided, as appropriate, by:

- ***the need for regular engagement and consultations with relevant IFBs on matters related to the Agreement and facilitation of their participation, as observers, in the work of the COP and its SBs;***
- ***the need for a gradual approach towards and strategic prioritization of early cooperation arrangements with IFBs whose mandates directly intersect with the objectives of the Agreement;***
- ***the recognition of mandate complementarity and various synergies between the Agreement and relevant IFBs by leveraging the expertise and best practices of IFBs and existing cooperation and coordination arrangements and platforms;***
- ***the promotion of equity and inclusiveness, including by taking into account the needs and interests of all relevant stakeholders, as well as the prioritization of the full participation of developing states, in particular SIDS, LDCs, and LLDCs; and***
- ***the need for a flexible approach to cooperation under the Agreement and the need to maintain a flexible approach to operationalizing such cooperation that allows for cooperation arrangements to adapt to emerging needs and priorities that evolve over time, while taking into account the practicality of arrangements and complementarity in activities, as well as existing legal obligations and standards.***

Active engagement from fisheries stakeholders remains crucial in this process and the Secretariat continues to encourage Members to coordinate with their respective delegation to BBNJ to ensure that the concerns of CCSBT and other tuna-RFMOs are adequately considered. Experiences to date have shown that the level of awareness and understanding of RFMOs varies significantly across the various delegations at BBNJ, which does create a risk that decisions made in this forum may lack consideration for the potential impacts on existing 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.

The need for improved awareness of RFMOs is possibly greatest amongst some of the NGOs who participate in these forums and a considerable effort has been made at these meetings by the tuna-RFMO Secretariats to raise awareness and dispel some of the negative assumptions that exist.

The Secretariat also submitted a paper to this year's Extended Scientific Committee (ESC) to begin preliminary consideration of the potential workload impacts on the ESC from additional BBNJ related taskings. These conversations will be ongoing as we obtain greater clarity from BBNJ as to the nature and extent of the engagement required.

(7) United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

There continues to be a high level of engagement between the Secretariat and the FAO. However, the overall workload has decrease in 2026 with the conclusion of the Seabird Project but engagement in the wider Tuna Project continues.

In addition, the Secretariat is actively engaged in discussions regarding the development and implementation of the third phase of the Common Oceans Program. The Secretariat would welcome views from Members on the priority areas of focus for the next phase of the program.

(8) Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network (RSN)

The Secretariat continues to engage with the RSN throughout the year and at their most recent meeting held immediately prior to COFI. The network provides a valuable opportunity for Secretariats to discuss issues of shared interest and share experiences to learn from one another. These exchanges are particularly valuable for smaller secretariats, such as CCSBT, with limited resources. In particular, many RSN members have advocated for greater support from the FAO in dealing with administrative issues that can impact on the ability of smaller secretariats to manage an increasing workload.

(9) Summary of Secretariat Engagements in 2026

Secretariat staff and Chairs attended the following meetings since CCSBT 32:

- 3rd Joint Meeting of tuna RFMOs on the Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management.
- 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;
- Virtual attendance at IOTC allocation workshop;
- Virtual attendance at Annual Commission Meeting of the WCPFC;
- 3rd meeting of the Preparatory Commission of the BBNJ;
- 37th Meeting of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI);
- Meeting of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network (RSN); and
- Virtual attendance of Project Steering Committee for the Common Oceans Tuna Project.

(10) Planned Secretariat Engagement for 2027

Members of the CCSBT Secretariat and/or Chairs of Subsidiary Bodies, are likely to engage in the following activities in 2027:

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	TBC	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
BBNJ 1st Conference of the Parties (COP 1)	Executive Secretary	CCSBT funded
Tuna Project Steering Committee	Executive Secretary	Anticipate funding from Common Oceans Program
Tuna Compliance Network	Compliance Manager	CCSBT funded

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 for 2027; and
- Agree for the Secretariat to begin process to renew the existing MoU with ACAP in 2027.

Prepared by the Secretariat

Attachment A

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 data[1];

  (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.

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[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.

(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.

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 electronically this 3rd day of June 2026

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