



CCSBT-EC/1510/04

Report from the Secretariat

Overview

This report provides a summary of the main activities of the Secretariat since the Twenty First Annual Meeting in October 2014. The report contains two recommendations for the Extended Commission's (EC) consideration, which are that:

- The CCSBT's Rules of Procedure (RoP) be amended to:
 - a. Update the RoP in relation to intersessional decision making;
 - b. Provide a mechanism to allow reports of CCSBT subsidiary and advisory bodies to be released in a timely manner.
- The term of the Chair of the Scientific Committee and Extended Scientific Committee be extended for a further two years.

Officials of the CCSBT

The following official positions in the CCSBT were nominated, appointed or held during 2015.

Officer	Name	Date nominated / appointed
Chair – Commission & EC	Ms Hyunwook Kwon	21 July 2015
Vice Chair - Commission	<i>Japan – to be advised</i>	
Vice Chair – EC	Mr Hong-Yen Huang	8 November 2014
Chair - Compliance Committee	Mr Stan Crothers	23 October 2009* ¹
	Mr Frank Meere	16 October 2015* ¹
Chair –SC/ESC	Dr John Annala	7 May 2007* ²
Chair - ERSWG	Mr Alexander Morison	22 February 2011* ³

*¹ The final two year term of the current Chair of the Compliance Committee (CC), Mr Stan Crothers, expires after CCSBT 22. A new Chair, Mr Frank Meere, has been appointed to commence immediately after CCSBT 22.

*² The SC/ESC Chair's current contract expires on 10 May 2016. There is no limit to the number of reappointments for this position.

*³ The ERSWG Chair is appointed for a term of at least two ERSWG meetings with the possibility of extension. There is one ERSWG meeting remaining in the Chair's current appointment, this being ERSWG 12.

Secretariat Staff and Office Management

The Secretariat's staff comprised 5 full-time positions and 1 casual, part-time position during 2014. These were:

- Executive Secretary
- Deputy Executive Secretary
- Database Manager
- Compliance Manager
- Office Administrator (1 position, but shared by two people)
- Data Entry Officer (casual, part-time)

There have been no changes in the Secretariat's staff since CCSBT 21. However, an intern, funded by Korea, commenced work in the Secretariat during December 2014 for training and development purposes.

Financial

The preparation of CCSBT's Financial Statements for 2014 was conducted according to schedule. The Financial Statements were reviewed by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) and distributed to Members in Circular #2015/018. The outcomes of ANAO's review were positive and no items of concern were identified.

A draft revised budget for 2015 and a draft budget for 2016, including indicative budgets for 2017 and 2018 have been prepared for the EC's consideration and are presented in meeting documents CCSBT-EC/1510/05 and CCSBT-EC/1510/06.

Organisation of CCSBT Meetings and intersessional discussion following meetings

The Secretariat organised, or is in the process of organising, the following CCSBT meetings since CCSBT 21:

Effectiveness of Seabird Mitigation Measures Technical Group (in conjunction with Japan ¹)	4-6 November 2014
Eleventh Meeting of the Ecologically Related Species Working Group	3-6 March 2015
Fourth Meeting of the Strategy and Fisheries Management Working Group	28-30 July 2015
Sixth Meeting of the Operating Model and Management Procedure Technical Group	30-31 August 2015
Twentieth Meeting of the Scientific Committee, incorporating the Extended Scientific Committee	1-5 September 2015
Tenth Meeting of the Compliance Committee	8-10 October 2015
Twenty Second Annual Meeting of the Commission, incorporating the Extended Commission	12-15 October 2015

In addition to the above formal meetings, the Secretariat has organised and hosted four informal web meetings, these being:

- ESC webinar on 24 March 2015;
- CPUE webinar on 17 June 2015;
- MP Technical Group webinar on 1 July 2015; and
- MP Technical Group webinar on 8 July 2015.

Translation of the 2014 meeting reports into Japanese has been completed and the translated reports have been placed onto the CCSBT web site. Bound versions of the reports for 2014 meetings have been completed and distributed.

Organisation of meeting venues for 2016 is underway, with inspections conducted, quotes obtained, preferred venues selected and tentative bookings² made for meetings at the following venues and dates (the tentative dates shown below for the ESC, CC and EC meetings were agreed intersessionally and notified to Members in Circular #2015/001):

¹ Japan organised the meeting venue and associated aspects (such as equipment and catering).

² With the exception of bookings for the meeting room at Narita airport which can only be made three months before the meeting.

Meeting	City & Venue	Tentative booking date
ESC 21	International Convention Centre, Kaohsiung, Taiwan	Mon. 5 – Sat. 10 September 2016
SC 21	Meeting room, Terminal 2, Narita Airport	Sunday 11 September 2016
CC 11	Kaohsiung Exhibition Centre, Kaohsiung, Taiwan	Thu. 13 - Sat. 15 October 2016
EC of CCSBT 23		Mon. 17 – Thu. 20 October 2016
CCSBT 23	Meeting room, Terminal 2, Narita Airport	Friday 21 October 2016

Attendance at meetings of other organisations since CCSBT 21

The Compliance Manager attended a compliance coordination meeting between the IOTC and CCSBT Secretariats during November 2014. The Database Manager attended a joint tuna RFMO meeting during January 2015 on harmonisation of observer longline bycatch information and visited the ICCAT Secretariat to conduct a technical review of ICCAT's eBCD system to determine whether it could be modified for use with a future CCSBT eCDS. The Executive Secretary had planned to attend a meeting of the Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project³ Steering Committee, but cancelled his attendance as it occurred on the same days as the CCSBT's SFMWG meeting. A summary of progress in the ABNJ Tuna Project is provided at **Attachment A** for information.

Proposed Attendance at meetings of other organisations between CCSBT 22 and CCSBT 23

It is proposed that:

- The Compliance Manager attend the 5th Global IMCS Training Workshop in Auckland, New Zealand from 7-11 March 2016;
- The Database Manager possibly attend the Second Regional IMS Workshop in Auckland, New Zealand on 19 and 21 March 2016; and
- The Executive Secretary attend the 32nd meeting of the FAO Committee of Fisheries (COFI) in Rome, Italy from 11-15 July 2016. The Executive Secretary will also attend some of the other meetings that will be held in conjunction with COFI, including the Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project Steering Committee, the Regional Secretariat's Network, and the Secretariats of the tuna RFMOs.

If suitable opportunities arise, it is intended that the Compliance Manager and/or Database Manager participate in inter-Secretariat technical discussions with CCAMLR and possibly WCPFC.

New and Updated Policies and Resolutions

In addition to the usual preparation of meeting papers that contain updates to Policies and Resolutions etc., the Secretariat has:

- Contracted the Quality Assurance Review for 2015;
- Prepared a draft revision of the CCSBT's CDS Resolution (see CCSBT-CC/1510/09); and
- Developed a Compendium of CCSBT Measures, which is available on the General Private Area of the CCSBT website (see Circular #2015/055).

³ Project on Sustainable Management of Tuna Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation.

Changes to the CCSBT's Rules of Procedure

In Circular #2015/051, the Secretariat proposed two general changes to the CCSBT's Rules of Procedure (RoP), these being:

(1) Updating the RoP in relation to intersessional decision making

At CCSBT 12 (2005), the EC agreed to a revision to paragraph 5 of Rule 6 of the RoP to provide for the use of modern communication systems for intersessional decision making. Intersessional decision making through emails has been occurring since then, but the RoP was never physically updated (presumably due to an administrative oversight). The Secretariat has corrected this oversight by including the agreed changes to paragraph 5 of Rule 6 in the updated RoP at **Attachment B**. With the exception of the highlighted changes to paragraph 5, the tracked changes are the precise text that was agreed at CCSBT 12. The highlighted text are further changes made by the Secretariat to reflect the fact that CCSBT does not always have a Chair that the Executive Secretary can consult with and these changes allow the Executive Secretary to implement the rule in a practical manner in accordance with past practise.

(2) Providing a mechanism to allow reports of CCSBT subsidiary and advisory bodies to be released in a timely manner

The RoP do not provide for reports of subsidiary bodies to be released outside the EC prior to adopting the report of the subsequent meeting of the EC. This is an important matter to resolve if the CCSBT is to cooperate and work effectively with the other tuna RFMOs. In fact, the March 2015 meeting of the CCSBT's Ecologically Related Species Working Group stated that:

"The timeframe for CCSBT meeting reports becoming public under current CCSBT Rules and Procedures can prevent their timely use by working groups of other RFMOs and the ERSWG recommends that earlier release of ERSWG meeting reports be supported, particularly as ERSWG meetings are often out of phase with meetings of the Extended Commission."

During 2015, the current RoP prevented the report of the CCSBT's Effectiveness of Mitigation Measures Technical Group from being provided to ICCAT, the other tuna RFMOs and ACAP before their subsequent working group meetings.

In order to address this issue, the Secretariat has suggested a modification to paragraph 6 of Rule 10 at **Attachment B**. The modification allows reports of subsidiary bodies to be released prior to the annual CCSBT meeting, but only if the subsidiary body meeting is held at least 12 weeks prior to the annual meeting. This restriction is based on the assumption that early release of meeting reports is not important for subsidiary body meetings held close to the annual meeting. The RoP modification has a further restriction that only allows public release 21 days after the adopted report of the subsidiary body has been dispatched to Members and provided that no Member objects to its public release within that 21 day period. This follows a similar concept to the CCSBT's rule relating to public release of provisional agendas for CCSBT meetings.

CCSBT Circulars

Circulars are used to issue requests and to distribute information to Members/CNMs. A summary list of circulars is maintained on the private area of the web site 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 add-hoc and "once-off" intersessional activities of the Secretariat and EC. Sixty seven Circulars were issued between CCSBT 21 and 27 August 2015.

CCSBT Web site

The web site continues to be an actively updated and actively used information tool for both CCSBT members and the general public. The public side of the CCSBT website was updated immediately after CCSBT 21 to incorporate the results and decisions from the 2014 meetings of the CCSBT.

As described in Circulars #2015/024 and #2015/033, the CCSBT's current web site was developed using a proprietary Content Management System (CMS) that ceased being supported in late 2014. As a result, certain features of the website (particularly in the administrative area) do not work with the latest version of Microsoft Internet Explorer and incompatibilities are expected to increase as internet browsers are updated. Consequently, a new web site is being developed using the open-source CMS "Drupal" and the new web site is scheduled to be operating in November or December 2015.

Participation in the Fisheries Resource Monitoring System (FIRMS)

The CCSBT is a partner in FAO's FIRMS system. During 2014/15, 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 21; 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 21, this has included:-

- For the CDS:
 - Running CDS data reconciliations, and following up on errors and missing information and forms;
 - Continuing development and modification of the CDS database and software;
 - Processing CDS validation details;
 - Producing 6 monthly and annual CDS reports; and
 - Coordinating the purchase of centralised tags for use with the CDS.
- Continuing the subscription to the Global Trade Atlas database and monitoring trade of SBT as recorded on that database.
- Managing the operation of the CCSBT transshipment resolution.
- Managing the CCSBT records of Authorised Fishing Vessels, Carrier Vessels and Farms.
- Managing initial quota allocations and final catch by vessel/company data and associated access permissions.
- Checking for any submissions in relation to the new CCSBT IUU Vessel List Resolution.
- Preparing new and revised draft Compliance Measures and associated Resolutions.
- Producing reports for the Compliance Committee.

CCSBT Catch Reporting (excluding scientific data exchange)

Monthly Catch Reports

The Secretariat has continued to compile these statistics and has loaded them to the private area of the CCSBT web site on a monthly basis, providing email notification to members when updates occur.

Reporting of Initial Quota Allocations and Final Catches by Vessel/Company

The Secretariat has in most cases provided reminders to each Member approximately one month before they were required to submit this information. On receiving the information, the Secretariat has loaded this information to a special section of the private area of the CCSBT web site. This information is only available to those who 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.

CCSBT Surface Tagging Program

Tag deployment ceased after the 2006/07 season and the Secretariat's involvement in this program now relates only to tag recovery activity. As expected, the number of recaptured tags is declining each year.

Database Developments and Annual Scientific Data Exchange

The CCSBT Data CD and associated documentation was updated and provided to Members in January 2015. An interim update of the Data CD containing information from the 2015 Data Exchange was also placed on the private area of the CCSBT website in June 2015.

The Secretariat managed the 2015 scientific data exchange, which involved active exchange of data between Members and the Secretariat mainly between March and mid-June. The Secretariat conducted substantial post-processing of the data to produce derived datasets that were required as part of the data exchange.

The third annual ERSWG Data Exchange occurred during 2015. All Members submitted ERS data with the exception of Indonesia. No ERS data were provided by CNMs. However, 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.

Global Vessel List

The global vessel list (Consolidated List of Authorised Vessels, or CLAV) has received major improvements since CCSBT 21. The ABNJ Tuna Project worked with all tuna RFMO Secretariats in late 2014 to automate the updating of the CLAV from the individual tuna RFMO authorised vessels lists. As a consequence, the CLAV is now updated on a daily basis.

The CLAV is available at <http://clav.iotc.org/browser>. A web page has also been established in the Authorised Vessel and Farms section of the CCSBT web site to provide easy access to the CLAV.

PROJECT ON SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF TUNA FISHERIES AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION (Common Oceans ABNJ TUNA)

Partners of the Common Oceans Tuna Project gathered in Rome from 28-30 July 2015 to discuss Project Progress and next steps.

Project Partners of the Common Oceans Tuna Project gathered in Rome for the Second Project Steering Committee meeting to discuss Project Progress and next steps in implementation.

Project Progress achieved so far includes:

- The implementation of the precautionary approach via adoption of harvest strategies and a management strategy evaluation (MSE) has started in the t-RFMOs with project support in capacity building, support of science-management dialogues and analytic support.
- Preparations are advancing for a joint t-RFMO global meeting to develop plans implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries implementation, led by ICCAT.
- Addressing IUU fishing is supported through a number of strategies. Capacity building of enforcement officers by establishing, for the first time in the world, a certification-based training program being developed. Also related to capacity building, the Project has contacted the compliance staff in the t-RFMO Secretariats, as well as the Chairs of the Compliance Committees to enlist their support in the creation of a network of officials working in compliance and monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS).
- Work has been completed in automating the update of the Consolidated List of Authorized Vessels for the five t-RFMOs that provides a global framework for exchange information about vessels that have received authorization from their flag States.
- General Best Practices in MCS are being compiled, and supplemented by detailed analysis of Catch Documentation Schemes in global tuna supply chains, to identify possible weaknesses that would allow entry of IUU products into the markets, and legal templates for effective implementation of Port State Measures.
- The use of Electronic Monitoring Systems to expand the compliance and MCS capabilities in developing countries are being tested in Ghana and Fiji.
- WCPFC and IATTC have started working on developing a pan Pacific shark management strategy, improving data collection and preparing new stock assessment for the species involved, including the first global assessments of porbeagle sharks.
- The Project is also supporting the sharing of information on mitigation techniques for by-catch of small tuna and sharks in purse-seiners or incidental seabird mortality in long-line fleets, including the development of a global portal to access information on the success of various techniques.

- Gillnet fisheries in the ABNJ have been a reason for concern because of their bycatch rates, and the Project is working with fishing communities and nations involved, in creating awareness and promoting the use of alternative gears that might have a smaller impact on the environment.

Project Steering Committee members welcomed the progress achieved so far and discussed Project activities for the second year of Project implementation.

Component 1: Promotion of Sustainable Management (including Rights-Based Management) of Tuna Fisheries, in Accordance with an Ecosystem Approach

The first component focuses on supporting the full implementation of the precautionary approach at the RFMO level, according to the guidelines of international instruments such as the UN Fish Stocks Agreement and the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. This requires the adoption of Harvest Strategies in each of the t-RFMOs that have not yet done so (the CCSBT has already adopted a Harvest Strategy). Capacity building workshops for officials from t-RFMO member countries will help increase the familiarity and confidence with the process of Management Strategy Evaluation, while the Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project also supports dialogue between scientists and managers that is crucial in the development of Harvest Strategies. This process is moving forward, with the Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project having held two capacity building workshops of IOTC and IATTC countries in 2014. The project also supported the Second Management Procedures Dialogue under the IOTC framework in April 2014.

These activities contributed to the adoption by IOTC countries of a resolution strengthening the management strategy evaluation process. The Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna project will also promote and support the preparation of long-term plans for the implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries in each t-RFMO.

Highlights (maybe in a box to show that these are highlights and that there are other things going on)

Eastern Pacific Ocean coastal states work on how to improve tuna management



The partners of the Common Oceans Tuna Project, including the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) FAO, WWF and the International Sustainability Seafood Organisation (ISSF) welcome the engagement of Eastern Pacific Ocean developing coastal states towards ensuring effective management of the shared tuna stocks. Better tuna management can provide in many of these countries long term benefits for fishers and the millions of people who derive a livelihood from the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

Representatives from Eastern Pacific Ocean countries that are members of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission gathered in Panama on 24 and 25th February 2015 for a discussion on aspects of sustainable tuna fisheries management with world experts in tuna fisheries. As it is happening in similar regional fisheries management organizations around the world, IATTC members have started a new process to implement the precautionary approach through the adoption of harvest strategies, which provide a clear pre-agreed decision framework about what actions to take if stocks are declining or need rebuilding or if fishing mortality is excessive. The ideas presented during the workshop will assist coastal states representatives to become more familiar with the principles behind harvest strategies and, therefore, will empower coastal states representatives to meaningfully engage in the process of development of the strategies for key stocks under IATTC management.

Component 2: Strengthening and Harmonizing Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) to Address Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported Fishing (IUU)

This component aims at addressing IUU fishing through a number of strategies. To a large extent, these are based on empowering officials from t-RFMO member countries through capacity building of enforcement and compliance officers by establishing, for the first time in the world, a certification-based training program. The Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project also aims at creating mechanisms for exchange of experiences and information of enforcement and monitoring personnel in developing States, leading to a global community, and contributing to the formulation of best practices in Monitoring, Control and Surveillance. The Project will also work with the t-RFMO Secretariats to support various initiatives to improve compliance by their developing coastal member States. The FAO Port State Measures Agreement, close to entering into force, is one of the new international instruments developed to combat IUU fishing. The Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project is already taking steps towards its implementation by creating templates that will facilitate incorporation of the Agreement's provisions into national legislation. Also under this component, work has been completed on expanding a consolidated global record of authorized

tuna vessels for the five t-RFMOs that would provide a global framework for exchanging information about suspect vessels.

Another important activity involves pilot trials in the use of innovative Electronic Monitoring Systems to improve compliance in tuna fisheries with direct collaboration among the private sector, NGOs, and the governments of Ghana and Fiji.

Market controls constitute one of the best lines of defense against products from illegal fishing reaching consumers. The Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project supports an analysis of global tuna supply chains to identify possible weaknesses that might allow entry of IUU products into commercial markets.

Highlights:

A comprehensive global list of tuna vessels available online: Up-to-date information on the vessels authorized to fish for tuna in the world is now available to the public thanks to collaboration between tuna regional fishery management organizations (tRFMOs) facilitated by FAO

In the combat against illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing access to information on fishing vessels and cargo vessels linked to fishing operations, including their physical characteristics, ownership and flag histories have been recognized as key elements. The five tuna regional fishery management organizations (t-RFMOs) have merged their lists of authorized vessels on several occasions in order to create what was finally called the Consolidated List of Authorized Vessels or CLAV, as part of a process of collaboration between the RFMOs known as the Kobe process. Global tuna fisheries are under the management of five tuna regional fishery management organizations (tRFMOs): the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT), the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) and the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT).

As part of its programmed activities, the Common Oceans Tuna Project supported by the Global Environmental Facility and coordinated by FAO, entered into a collaborative effort with the five tuna RFMOs to address this challenge as part of its activities to promote sustainable tuna fisheries in the world. Following this collaboration, end users can now access online the integrated CLAV data via a common dissemination interface, available at <http://clav.iotc.org/browser> and which can be accessed through <http://www.tuna-org/>, hosted by ICCAT. Through this interface, users will have the option of searching the CLAV registry according to multiple criteria of increasing complexity, being able at the same time to access historical data collected by the CLAV during the past data exchange iterations.

Port State Measures to fight IUU Fishing

The Common Oceans Tuna Project is developing model legislation to implement Port State measures, as established under the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated



Fishing (not yet in force, but the implementation process has begun at the international, regional, and national levels). This model legislation is a template that will guide different legal systems in the implementation of port State measures and is being produced by Judith Swan (at left), who has extensive experience in preparing fisheries legislation and international agreements and has been involved in other port State

measure initiatives at FAO. For more information on the Common Oceans port State measures template, please see the [News item](#).

Tuna Catch Documentation Schemes – Best practices

Catch documentation schemes (CDS) aim to eliminate IUU fishing from supply chains, as well as improve quota management and catch and effort data. While there are CDS systems already in existence, clearly defined objectives and standards are lacking in these systems, making effectiveness an issue. The Common Oceans Tuna project aims to create a knowledge base of objectives and standards to improve CDS. Gilles Hosch, who has experience in the seafood industry as a traceability and certification expert, is working with RFMOs, national governments, NGO's, and industry to develop effective standards and indications for CDS systems. For more information, please click [here](#).

Component 3: Reducing ecosystem impacts of tuna fishing

The third component addresses the ecosystem impacts of tuna fisheries. The Common Oceans Tuna Project is supporting the collaboration between the WCPFC and IATTC to develop integrated and consistent management plans for sharks in both sides of the Pacific. The Project is also supporting the development and dissemination of mitigation techniques for by-catch of small tuna and sharks in purse-seiners and incidental seabird mortality in long-line fleets, including the development of a global portal to access information on the success of various techniques. The Project is also working towards fill bycatch and catch data gaps in the gillnet fisheries from the northern part of the Indian Ocean, as the characteristics of these fisheries and their levels of bycatch are largely unknown.

Highlights:

WCPFC and Common Oceans Tuna Project Co-Sponsored Pacific Shark Life History Expert Panel Meets in Cairns



One set of activities of the GEF-funded Common Oceans Tuna Project aims at reducing the impact of tuna fisheries on biodiversity by improving data and assessment methods for sharks and thereby promoting their sustainable management.

Inputs on age, growth and reproduction are often critical determinants of stock assessments, yet such data are lacking or highly uncertain for even the most common of shark species. An expert panel met from 28-30 April in Cairns, Australia to review life history information for the fourteen WCPFC key shark species, many of which are now subject to international conservation and management regulations. The panel then provided guidance on the prioritization of further studies, use of the parameters in stock assessment, and overcoming difficulties in sample collection. The report of the expert panel will be submitted to the WCPFC Scientific Committee meeting in August for review and comment.

The panel was convened by the Common Oceans Tuna Project with financial support for participants travel and expenses provided by WCPFC, and venue and on-site support provided by James Cook University's Centre for Sustainable Tropical Fisheries and Aquaculture. For more information, please see the Common Oceans [News item](#).

Seabird bycatch Mitigation

Longline operations pose a threat to albatrosses and petrels, which get hooked on the line and drown. Tuna RFMOs have regulations for mitigating seabird bycatch, including through the use of weighted lines, a controversial method due to safety and impacts to catch rates. Birdlife International and Birdlife South Africa are implementing the Common Oceans Tuna Project's effort to reduce ecosystem impacts of tuna fishing, which will focus on reducing seabird bycatch by finding safe ways to reduce seabird bycatch that do not impact catch rates.

In April 2015, a workshop, supported by the Common Oceans Tuna Project, the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels, New Zealand's Department of Conservation and the Shanghai Ocean University, was held in China to understand seabird bycatch issues. The workshop provided the opportunity for observers, managers, and industry to learn about measures for seabird conservation, including measures that many Chinese vessels do not employ. For more information, please see the Common Oceans [News item](#).



Participants of the April 2015 workshop on seabird bycatch issues, Picture BLI Sourht Africa.

COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF SOUTHERN BLUEFIN TUNA

**RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF THE COMMISSION FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF SOUTHERN BLUEFIN TUNA**

RULE 1

REPRESENTATION

1. Each Party to the Convention for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (Convention) shall be a member (Member) of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (Commission) and shall be represented on the Commission by not more than three delegates who may be accompanied by experts and advisers. Each Member shall inform the Executive Secretary¹ of the names of its delegates to the Commission including identification of the head of delegation and experts and advisers accompanying such delegates, and of any change thereof as far in advance as possible before the commencement of each meeting of the Commission.

2. Each Member shall designate a correspondent who shall have primary responsibility for liaison with the Executive Secretary during the periods between meetings and shall promptly inform the Executive Secretary of the name and address of such a correspondent and of any change thereof.

RULE 2

MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION

1. Until such time as a Secretariat is established and the location of the headquarters of the Commission is determined, the annual meetings of the Commission shall be held in one of the Member countries by rotation or as otherwise agreed.

ANNUAL MEETINGS

¹ For the purposes of these Rules and pursuant to Article 10.2 of the Convention, references to the term Executive Secretary shall also refer to the official acting as Secretary until such time as a Secretariat is established.

2. (a) The Commission shall hold an annual meeting before 1 August each year or at such other time as the Commission may determine.
- (b) After a Secretariat has been established and the location of the headquarters of the Commission has been determined, each annual meeting of the Commission shall be held in one of the countries of the Members by rotation. In the event that a Member does not wish to host an annual meeting, that meeting shall be held at the headquarters of the Commission, unless otherwise decided by the Commission.
- (c) Notice of the convening of an annual meeting together with the draft provisional agenda for the meeting shall be dispatched by the Executive Secretary to all Members not less than 100 days before the date fixed for the opening of the meeting.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

3. (a) Special meetings of the Commission shall be convened by the Chair at the request of a Member supported by at least two other Members.
- (b) The Chair shall after consulting with the Executive Secretary and such consultation with Members as may be feasible in the circumstances, determine the date and venue of special meetings.
- (c) Notice of the convening of a special meeting shall be dispatched by the Executive Secretary to all the Members not less than 30 days before the date fixed for the opening of the meeting.

QUORUM

4. Two-thirds of the Members shall constitute a quorum.

RULE 3

OBSERVERS

1. In accordance with Article 14 of the Convention, the Executive Secretary may, with the approval of all the Members, invite the following States, entities or organisations to send observers to attend meetings of the Commission:

(a) any State or entity not party to the Convention, whose nationals, residents or fishing vessels harvest southern bluefin tuna, and any coastal State through whose exclusive economic or fishery zone southern bluefin tuna migrates: and

(b) any inter-governmental or, on request, non-governmental organisations having special competence concerning southern bluefin tuna or competent to contribute to the attainment of the objectives of the Convention.

2. Except as provided in Rules 3.3 and 3.5, the Commission shall determine which States, entities, inter-governmental organisations and, on request, non-governmental organisations referred to in Rule 3.1 shall be invited to send observers to attend the next meeting of the Commission at the meeting immediately preceding the one to which the invitation shall be extended.

3. The Commission may approve long-term observer status to specific States, entities, inter-governmental organisations and, on request, non-governmental organisations referred to in Rule 3.1. Approvals by the Commission for long-term observer status will specify the types of meetings to which the approvals apply and approvals will remain in-force until cancelled by the Commission. Any Member may request the cancellation of an approval for long term observer status in writing, together with the reasons for the request. The Executive Secretary will circulate the request, together with the accompanying reasons, for information, to Members of the Commission and the affected observer. The long term observer status will cease on receipt of the above request from any Member. Such a request may be made intersessionally but no later than 60 days before the next meeting of the Commission. The Executive Secretary shall maintain the list of all current approvals for long-term observer status granted by the Commission and shall issue invitations for observers with long-term observer status to attend the specified meetings in accordance with Rule 3.7.

4. Any non-governmental organisation which has expressed an interest in sending observers to attend a meeting of the Commission shall provide the Executive Secretary with information explaining the organisation's competence concerning southern bluefin tuna or the organisation's competence to contribute to the attainment of the objectives of the Convention.

5. Not less than 50 days before a meeting of the Commission, the Executive Secretary shall advise the Members of the names of States, entities and organisations that do not have long-term observer status in accordance with Rule 3.3 which have expressed an interest in sending observers to attend the next meeting of the Commission, and provide the Members with any information received from non-governmental organisations pursuant to Rule 3.4. The Executive Secretary may also suggest to Members the names of States, entities and inter-governmental organisations referred to in Rule 3.1 not otherwise invited to attend a meeting of the Commission whose attendance at that meeting may facilitate the work of the Commission.

6. The Commission shall take a decision to extend an invitation to observers on the Executive Secretary's advice or suggestion made under Rule 3.5 in accordance with Rule 6.5. If a Member objects to an invitation being extended to particular States, entities or organisations to send observers to proceedings of the Commission, that Member shall inform the Executive Secretary in writing of its objection together with the reasons for such objection. The Members shall be informed of any objection and any reason given therefor by another Member to extending an invitation to particular observers and that objection shall be considered at an early point at the next meeting of the Commission. The Executive Secretary, upon receipt of the notification in writing of an objection, shall thereupon advise the State, entity or organisation against which the objection has been entered of the objection, by which Member it was lodged and the reasons provided therefor.

7. The Executive Secretary shall issue invitations with respect to observers to a meeting of the Commission not less than 28 days before the date of the opening of the meeting. Recipients of invitations shall be required to advise the Executive Secretary in writing at least 14 days before the opening of the meeting of acceptance of the invitation and of details of the observers who will attend the meeting.

8. Observers may be present at both public and private sessions of the Commission. If a Member of the Commission so requests, the Commission shall meet without observers present to decide whether the discussion of a particular agenda item shall be restricted to Members. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if a Member so requests, any session of the Commission concerning the invitation to non-governmental organisations to send observers to attend meetings of the Commission, shall be restricted to Members.

9. The Chair~~man~~ may invite observers to address the Commission unless a Member objects. Observers shall not be entitled to participate in the taking of decisions by the Commission and shall not vote.

10. Observers may submit documents to the Executive Secretary for distribution to Members as information documents only. Such documents must be relevant to matters under consideration in the Commission. Unless any Member of the Commission requests otherwise such documents shall only be available in the language in which they are submitted.

11. The Commission may decide to consider documents submitted by observers.

RULE 3A

CO-OPERATING NON-MEMBERS

1. A State or entity that is admitted to the Extended Commission in the capacity of a co-operating non-member will have the right to participate actively in meetings of the Extended Commission, the Extended Scientific Committee and their subsidiary bodies, including, but not limited to, the right to make proposals and the right to speak, but not to vote. The Extended Commission may decide to restrict the participation of a cooperating non-member in a particular Agenda item.

RULE 4

CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

1. At each annual meeting, the Commission shall elect from among the delegates a Chair and a Vice-Chair. The Chair and the Vice-Chair shall be elected from different Members and shall remain in office until the election of their successors at the next annual meeting. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the first meeting shall take office immediately on their election and shall remain in office until the election of their successors before the end of the first meeting. Subsequently, the Chair and Vice-Chair shall take office at the conclusion of the meeting at which they are elected.
2. The Chair shall participate in meetings of the Commission in that capacity and shall not at the same time exercise the rights of a delegate of a Member including the right to vote. A Member whose delegate has been elected as Chair may designate another person as delegate.
3. Until such time as a Secretariat is established, the Chair shall nominate from within his or her Government an official to act as Secretary to the Commission to perform the secretariat functions set out in Article 10.3 of the Convention for a term of one year. At each annual meeting of the Commission, the Chair shall advise the Member of the name and address of the Secretary.
4. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall exercise the functions of the Chair and in the event that the position of Chair or Vice Chair becomes vacant other than by expiration of the term of his or her office, the vacancy shall be filled for the remainder of such term by a representative to be selected by the same Member as the former occupant of such office, subject to the approval of the Commission.
5. The powers and duties of the Chair shall be:
 - (a) to declare the opening and closing of the meeting of the Commission;
 - (b) to direct discussions in the meeting;
 - (c) to accord the right to speak and to limit the time allowed for speaking to speakers;

- (d) to rule on points of order, subject to the right of any delegate to request that any ruling by the Chair shall be submitted to the Commission for decision;
- (e) to determine if consensus exists and, if necessary, to call for votes and announce results;
- (f) to direct the meeting to articulate its rationale for decisions;
- (g) to sign, on behalf of the Commission, a report of the proceedings of each meeting of the Commission, for transmission to all the Members and to any State, entity, inter-governmental or non-governmental organisation which has attended the meeting;
- (h) to exercise other powers and responsibilities as provided in these Rules and make such decisions and give such directions to the Executive Secretary as will ensure that the business of the Commission is carried out effectively and in accordance with its decisions.

RULE 5

AGENDA

1. A draft provisional agenda for each annual meeting shall be drawn up by the Executive Secretary in consultation with the Chair and transmitted to Members together with the notice of the convening of an annual meeting referred to in Rule 2.
2. Members proposing supplementary items for the agenda of a meeting shall inform the Executive Secretary of such items not less than 70 days before the date fixed for the opening of the meeting and shall accompany their proposal with an explanatory memorandum.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

3. A provisional agenda for each annual meeting shall be prepared by the Executive Secretary in consultation with the Chair. The provisional agenda shall be dispatched by the Executive Secretary to all the Members, not less than 60 days before the date fixed for the opening of the meeting. The provisional agenda shall include:

- (a) approval of decisions taken by the Extended Commission;
- (b) all items which the Commission has previously decided to include in the provisional agenda; and
- (c) all supplementary items the inclusion of which have been requested by any Member of the Commission.

3 Bis. A provisional agenda for an annual meeting shall become publicly available five working days after it has been dispatched to Members, unless a Member objects to its public release within that time.

4. A provisional agenda must be confirmed at the beginning of the meeting to which it relates and may be subject to further amendment during that meeting.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR A SPECIAL MEETING

5. A provisional agenda for a special meeting shall be drawn up by the Executive Secretary in consultation with the Chair on the basis of the items relating to the purpose for which the meeting is to be convened and shall be attached to the notice of the convening of the special meeting referred to in Rule 2.

5 Bis. A provisional agenda for a special meeting shall become publicly available five working days after it has been dispatched to Members, unless a Member objects to its public release within that time.

AGENDA ITEMS ON CERTAIN MATTERS

6. Agenda items concerning:
- (a) the decisions upon measures for the conservation, management or optimum utilisation of southern bluefin tuna under paragraph 3 of Article 8 of the Convention:
 - (b) the decisions upon recommendations under paragraph 5 of Article 8 of the Convention:

- (c) the establishment of subsidiary bodies under paragraph 10 of Article 8 of the Convention:
- (d) the invitation of observers under Article 14 of the Convention: and
- (e) the amendments to the present Rules of Procedure, and the establishment and amendment of other internal administrative regulations under paragraph 8 of Article 6 of the Convention:

shall require the Executive Secretary to prepare explanatory documents to be dispatched to all the Members not less than 60 days before the date fixed for the opening of the meeting.

RULE 6

VOTING

1. Each Member shall have one vote in the Commission. Decisions of the Commission shall be taken by a unanimous vote of the Members present at the Commission meeting.
2. Following consultation with all Members present, the Chair may advise the meeting that in the Chair's view a consensus exists on any proposal and propose that it be adopted as a decision of the Commission. Unless any Member thereupon requests a vote on the proposal or that the proposal be deferred for later consideration, the Chair shall declare the proposal adopted as a decision of the Commission.
3. Votes at meetings of the Commission shall be taken by show of hands unless a Member requests that a vote be taken by a roll call or secret ballot.
4. Voting by roll call shall be conducted by the calling in English alphabetical order of the names of all the Members. The name of the first Member to be called shall be designated by lot drawn by the Chair.
5. Where necessary when the Commission is not in session, decisions of the Commission shall be taken by a unanimous vote of the Members ~~effected by post or other means of textual communication including facsimile~~. The vote will be organised

by the Executive Secretary ~~in consultation with the Chair~~ using the post, facsimile or e-mail. The decision will be formally recorded by the Executive Secretary in a format agreed by the Commission and circulated to Members. In circumstances where the ~~Chair-Executive Secretary~~ is satisfied that a Member has received a proposal, and that Member has not responded within 21 days to the proposal, the Member shall be taken to have responded to that proposal in the affirmative.

RULE 7

SUBSIDIARY BODIES

1. The Commission may determine the composition and terms of reference of any subsidiary body it may establish. Insofar as they are applicable, these Rules of Procedure shall apply to all such bodies unless the Commission decides otherwise.

RULE 8

CHAIR OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

1. The Chair of the Scientific Committee may attend the meetings of the Commission, and such meetings of subsidiary bodies referred to in Rule 7 as may be determined by the Commission, without the right to vote and shall be entitled to present reports of the Scientific Committee to the Commission and to address the Commission with respect to such reports.

RULE 8 Bis

SCIENTIFIC ADVICE

1. The Scientific Committee shall incorporate advice consistent with the precautionary approach in its advice to the Commission.

RULE 9

SECRETARIAT

1. The Commission may establish a Secretariat consisting of an Executive Secretary to serve the Commission and Scientific Committee according to such procedures and on such terms as the Commission may determine in accordance with the Convention. The Executive Secretary shall hold office for a period of three years from the date of appointment and shall be eligible for re-appointment by the Commission.

2. Until such time as a Secretariat is established, the official referred to in Rule 4.3 shall perform the Secretariat functions set out in Article 10.3 of the Convention for a term of one year.

3. The Commission shall authorise such staff establishment for the Secretariat as may be necessary and the Executive Secretary shall appoint, direct and supervise such staff according to such rules and procedures and on such terms as the Commission may determine.

4. The Secretariat shall perform such functions as are prescribed by the Commission including:

- (a) receiving and transmitting the Commission's official communications;
- (b) facilitating the collection of data necessary to accomplish the objective of the Convention;
- (c) preparing administrative and other reports for the Commission and the Scientific Committee.
- (d) preparing an annual report on the Secretariat's activities for the annual meeting of the Commission.

RULE 10

REPORTS

1. The Executive Secretary shall prepare a report of every annual and special meeting of the Commission. The report of an annual meeting shall include a summary of Commission activities since the previous annual meeting of the Commission. The Executive Secretary shall provide a draft report to the Commission for its adoption, subject to amendment prior to the end of the annual or special meeting.
2. The Commission shall articulate the rationale for its decisions, including where they differ from the science advice provided to the Commission, for inclusion in the report of every annual or special meeting prepared by the Executive Secretary.
3. Where an annual or special meeting is adjourned, the Executive Secretary may be requested by the Commission to prepare a report of the meeting prior to the adjournment. In this case, the Executive Secretary shall provide a draft report to the Commission for its adoption, subject to amendment, prior to the adjournment of the meeting. Rules applying to an annual or special meeting shall also apply to an adjourned meeting.
4. Every subsidiary or advisory body shall adopt a report prior to the close of its meeting and submit its report to the next Commission meeting.
5. Subject to this paragraph, the report of a meeting of the Commission shall become available for release outside the Commission when that report is adopted, unless a Member requests that the report, or a specified part of the report, of a meeting of the Commission not be made available for release. The request must be made before adoption of the report. In that event the Commission shall decide whether and to what extent to restrict its release.
6. A report to the Commission from a subsidiary or advisory body shall become available for release outside the Commission when:
 - (a) the report of the meeting of the Commission to which the report of that subsidiary or advisory body was submitted, is adopted, unless a Member requests that the report, or a specified part of the report, of a subsidiary or advisory body not be made available for release. The request must be made

before adoption of the report of the meeting of the Commission to which the report of the subsidiary or advisory body was submitted.

Or

(b) there is more than twelve weeks between the adoption of the report by the subsidiary or advisory body and the commencement of the meeting of the Commission, and 21 days has elapsed after the adopted report of the subsidiary body has been dispatched to Members, unless a Member objects to its public release within that time.

7. Subject to paragraphs 9 and 10 and Rule 5, a document submitted to a meeting of the Commission shall become available for release outside of the Commission when the report of that meeting is adopted, unless either the author of that document, or the Member (if the author is a representative of a Member), makes a request to restrict its release. The request must be made before adoption of the report.

8. Subject to paragraphs 9 and 10 and Rule 5, a document submitted to a meeting of a subsidiary or advisory body of the Commission shall become available for release outside the Commission when the report of the meeting of the Commission to which the report of that subsidiary or advisory body is submitted, is adopted, unless either the author of the document, or the Member (if the author is a representative of a Member), makes a request to restrict its release. The request must be made before adoption of the report.

9. If a document submitted to the Commission, or a subsidiary or advisory body of the Commission contains data from a previous document submitted to the Commission or a subsidiary or advisory body of the Commission, the release of which has been restricted, the author of the document, or the Member (if the author is a representative of a Member) must obtain the permission of the author or the Member (if the author is a representative of a Member) that requested the restriction of the previous document before granting permission for its release. The author or the Member (if the author is a representative of a Member) of the previous document may request to restrict the release of the relevant part(s) of that document.

10. If a document submitted to the Commission, or a subsidiary or advisory body of the Commission, contains data or product of data, the release of which has been restricted, the author of the document, or the Member (if the author is a representative of a Member), must obtain the permission of the Member from whom the data

originated, for its release. The Member from whom the data originated may request to restrict the release of the relevant part(s) of that document.

11. Unless the Commission decides otherwise, a Member may circulate prior to a meeting of the Commission, copies of documents or reports of any subsidiary or advisory bodies that are to be considered at that meeting to individuals or organisations within the Member's country with whom a Member considers it necessary to consult. The Member shall obtain the necessary undertaking from such individuals or organisations to treat the said documents or reports as confidential and not to release them to the public or to the media until such time as they become public documents.

12. Documents submitted to a meeting of the Commission or a subsidiary or advisory body and reports of a meeting of the Commission or a subsidiary or advisory body shall be distributed at no cost to Members and observers. Printed copies of public documents and reports shall be available to the public at a price determined by the Executive Secretary to recover the cost of printing and distribution. Electronic copies of Commission reports shall be made available on the Internet.

RULE 11

OTHERS

1. Unless the Commission decides otherwise, the opening plenary session of a meeting of the Commission shall be open to the public.

2. Subject to Rule 3.8. all other proceedings of meetings of the Commission shall be private and open only to Members and observers unless decided otherwise by the Commission.

3. The Commission may decide to restrict the proceedings of any meeting to Members.