

**RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT FOR ENHANCING THE DIALOGUE
BETWEEN FISHERIES SCIENTISTS AND MANAGERS**

CONSIDERING scientific advice released by the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) as the corner stone for establishing a proper management framework on stocks and fisheries under the purview of ICCAT;

RECOGNIZING that an in depth understanding by the Commission of scientific advice and management recommendations made by the SCRS should ease the adoption by the Commission of relevant and effective conservation measures;

NOTING that the ICCAT Resolution 11-17 on best available science recommends improving the communication between CPCs, the Commission and the SCRS by enabling a constant dialogue;

RECALLING the work in the Working Group of Fisheries Managers and Scientists held in June 2013 in support of the W-BFT stock assessment;

HIGHLIGHTING the need to further enhance the dialogue between fisheries managers and scientists in the coming years in order to achieve the Convention objectives in the most efficient and effective way;

STRESSING that such enhanced dialogue should, in particular, allow the Commission to focus on the establishment of management frameworks that take into account Target and Limit Reference points, associated level of risks and related Harvest Control Rules consistent with Recommendation 11-13;

STRESSING FURTHERMORE that such enhanced dialogue should also allow the Commission to focus on the review and the establishment of research priorities, considering more particularly the development of Strategic Plan on Science, and to explore further improvements in ICCAT science and management processes;

RECALLING that provisions laid down in Recommendation 11-26 establishing a meeting participation fund should ease the attendance of fisheries scientist and managers from developing Contracting Parties and therefore contribute to an inclusive and participative dialogue.

EMPHASIZING that the Commission management decisions should be based on the best available science independently developed by the SCRS.

**THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION
OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) RECOMMENDS THAT**

1. A standing working group dedicated to the dialogue between fisheries scientists and managers (“SWGSM”) is established under the following objectives and rules.
2. The standing working group consists in enhancing communication and in fostering mutual understanding between fisheries managers and scientists, in particular on management strategies, including data collection, research needs and priorities, and establishment of limit and target reference points, as well as to promote the efficient use of scientific resources and information. The working group will seek to establish management strategies for the ICCAT fisheries which are consistent with the objectives of the ICCAT convention, an ecosystem-based approach and a precautionary approach.
3. The Chair of the standing working group will be selected by the Commission.

4. The standing working group will meet inter-sessionally and its meetings will be open to fisheries managers of Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities and Fishing entities (CPCs), SCRS scientists and accredited observers. Fishery managers of the CPCs and fishery scientists of the SCRS will be considered on an equal footing during the standing working group meetings. Other experts may be invited to specific meetings of the standing working group depending on the topics to be discussed.
5. The structure of the meetings will, include an open forum/dialogue. Recommendations to the Commission shall be developed through formal sessions of the standing working group.
6. The first meeting of the standing working group will take place prior to the 2014 Commission Annual Meeting. The focus of that meeting will be:
 - a. the use of B_{MSY} and F_{MSY} and other proxies as Target and/or Limit Reference points, Harvest Control Rules, and associated probabilities, allowing, in particular, the implementation of a precautionary approach and Recommendation 11-13, for the management of stocks under the purview of ICCAT, and
 - b. possible further improvements in ICCAT science and management processes and research needs and priorities, in particular in the light of the SCRS annual work programme and of the development of the Strategic Plan on Science.
7. Further meetings of the standing working group will be decided by the Commission during its special and regular meetings.