

	منظمة الأغذية والزراعة للأمم المتحدة	联合国 粮食及 农业组织	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture	Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Agricultura y la Alimentación
---	--	--------------------	--	--	--

COORDINATING WORKING PARTY ON FISHERY STATISTICS
Twenty-first Session
Copenhagen, Denmark. 1-4 March 2005
Report by ICCAT
Author: ICCAT

1. Developments in ICCAT programmes in fishery statistics

Relational data base system

Over the last two years, the ICCAT relational database system (ICCAT-DB) has greatly improved being now a fully operational system built in ©MS-SQL Server. It contains a statistical database with around 1.5 GB of data and near 90 related tables containing all Task-I (nominal catch by fleet, gear, year and zone) and Task-II data (catch & effort and size sampling by fleet, gear, year, month and small area), a tagging database with around 500 MB and around 30 related tables, and other specific databases like catch-at-size estimates, CATDIS (catch distribution in smaller area), trade statistics, etc.

All statistical data management processes are fully integrated, and is supported by a newly-adopted data exchange protocol, which standardizes and simplifies the assimilation and validation of data (new and revised) and the publication process (standard outputs). Various electronic forms were created and a framework was developed for reading and validating and integrating automatically all statistical data received.

The Secretariat developed a routine that will incorporate the data received in electronic form into the ICCAT data base, but only a few parties has using this new method of submitting data.

Cooperation with FAO

FAO and ICCAT started in 1985 the harmonization of the tuna statistics for the Atlantic Ocean. In the continuation of this work, a document from both organisation was submitted in 2004 to the ICCAT Scientific Committee (SCRS) showing discrepancies between FAO and ICCAT tunas catches in the Mediterranean Sea . Following an in-depth examination of the document a major revision was made to both databases. Based on the good results of this work carried out by FAO-FIDI and ICCAT Secretariat, the ICCAT Scientific Committee asked the authors to conduct the similar work for the Atlantic Ocean.

NEI estimates

ICCAT continues to estimate the unreported catches (NEI) based on trade data submitted by contracting parties according to the bluefin, bigeye and swordfish statistical document programs. In some cases it was very difficult to calculate these estimations as the data coming from the trade data do not specify the gear used or the precise area.

Bluefin farming

The practice of bluefin farming in the Mediterranean has increase the uncertainties in the catches reported for bluefin tuna. A recommendation was made by the Commission to have a better picture of this activity. In 2003 and 2004 ICCAT adopted recommendations that require Contracting Parties to report the quantities transferred and the number of fish as well as the date and place of harvest. As well, the total amount of bluefin caged and marketed must be reported to the Secretariat.

Revisions of historical catch data.

Recently a few contracting parties started to revise the historical catches. To be sure that the newly-submitted data are accurate, the SCRS established strict rules for allowing changes to the historical catches already incorporated in the ICCAT data base. Each change should be documented and examined by the species group before approval.

2-Development of FIGIS-FIRMS

With the Commission's approval, in 2004 ICCAT became an official partner in the FIGIS-FIRMS Partnership. As part of the agreement, the Secretariat will be required to contribute the species Executive Summaries from the SCRS Report in a special (XML) format for publication in the FIRMS web site. These reports have not been formatted yet because the partnership needs to finalize a workplan for all partners. A technical meeting for partners is expected in early 2005.

3-Improvement in data collection and quality assurance.

Considering that collection and submission of accurate fishery data is essential for the assessment and the management and a fundamental responsibility for the fishing parties, the Commission decided to have a special funds that will be used for training, designing a data collection and supporting scientific participation from parties with insufficient capacity.

The scientific committee should also investigate the possibility to reinstate the ICCAT port sampling and each species group shall report on where the data deficiencies exist and make suggestions on how to improve data recording.

The survey on data collection systems is still on going. We expect to produce the preliminary report in 2005.

4. Elasmobranch statistics

A stock assessment workshop was held in Japan in June 2004 for blue shark and shortfin mako. The Secretariat worked closely with ICES and FAO to fill gaps noted in the ICCAT catch database. But during the meeting, it was noted the catches reported were unrealistically low. In view of the very incomplete data, the group attempted to construct a more accurate level of catches based on the ratio of sharks to tuna landings and from fin trade data in Hong Kong. These estimates, although highly uncertain, are considered to be more realistic than the reported catches.

5-Vessel list and measurement

The Secretariat maintains a database of fishing vessels larger than 24 metres in length (overall) authorized to fish for tuna and tuna-like species in the Convention Area. ICCAT also adopted a recommendation for a vessel monitoring system for the vessels exceeding 20 meters between perpendiculars or 24 meters length overall. These two kinds of measurement of the vessel are now being used by ICCAT.

6-Field manual

ICCAT initiated a new project for writing and publishing a new version of the ICCAT field Manual. This publication will be an effective instrument for capacity building to help all fishing parties to fulfil their data collection obligations. This manual will be the official source for data collection and reporting requirements.