



Madrid – 21 February 2012

Dr. Tsutomu Nishida
Chairman, IOTC Scientific Committee
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SUBJECT: INITIATION OF THE JOINT TUNA-RFMO WORKING GROUP ON MSE

Dear Dr. Nishida,

As I am sure you recall, the participants at the Kobe III meeting held in La Jolla, USA in July 2011, recommended that a Joint Technical Working Group on Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) be created. The Group is to be composed of scientists from the different tuna-RFMOs working on MSE related issues and, in order to reduce costs, will carry out its work electronically. During the last SCRS meeting last in November 2011 it was agreed that ICCAT would initiate actions to promote the creation of the Joint Technical Working Group on MSE. I, as ICCAT Scientific Committee Chair, have nominated Dr. Paul de Bruyn, Rapporteur of the ICCAT Working Group on Stock Assessment Methods, to start promoting this initiative.

The Kobe III participants recommended that the Technical Working Group should include the following terms of reference:

- a) Review of the literature and experiences of tRFMOs in relation to MSE in order to investigate the feasibility of their application to different tunas;
- b) Provide guidance for developing MSE and operational models (OM) for tuna biology/ecology/fisheries in relation to the main sources of uncertainty arising from tuna assessments; and
- c) To the extent possible, provide and develop the modeling framework to apply the OM/MSE to tuna assessments by tRFMOs.

There are a number of issues that need to be addressed and thus, at this initial stage of the process of forming and developing this Group, I am interested in receiving some feedback regarding key matters. You have been contacted due to your position as Chairman of IOTC's Scientific Committee.

I would appreciate hearing from you as to who from your organization would be most suitable to participate in this Group. Once we have an idea of who will be making up the Joint MSE Technical Working Group, the key issues that each RFMO is interested in, within the scope of the Working Group, can be identified as well as how these can most efficiently be addressed with the available personnel.

In order to initiate this work, I would like to request you to provide a list of scientists that you believe could contribute to this Working Group. Once we have that list, a preliminary list of key issues that should be addressed by the Group can be compiled and a decision made on the most convenient way for communications to be maintained among the Group members (e.g., a dedicated wiki, Skype, email, etc.).

Thank you for your consideration on this matter and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Josu Santiago
Chairman, ICCAT Standing Committee
on Research and Statistics (SCRS)