

**ANNEX 8*****REPORT OF THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC  
COMMITTEE FOR TUNA AND TUNA-LIKE SPECIES IN THE NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN***

Plenary Session, March 23-27, 2006  
La Jolla, California U.S.A.

**Report of the Statistics Working Group meeting  
(January 23-24, 2006, Shimizu, Japan)****1.0 OPENING OF MEETING (Agenda items 1-4)**

Norihisa Baba opened the meeting and welcomed the delegates from Japan, Chinese-Taipei, the USA and the IATTC to the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Statistics Working Group (STATWG) of the ISC. He noted missing data correspondents from Canada, Mexico, Chinese-Taipei, China, Korea and the SPC. Also missing was the chairmen of the albacore species working group. Baba stressed the purpose of this meeting was three fold, 1) Understand the status of ISC data and strengthen data collection, 2) Understand the contents of ISC data base and consider a new data base system, 3) Understand problems of species working groups and consider a provision for these problems.

The first item of business was the election of a chairperson to convene the current meeting. Naozumi Miyabe was nominated and confirmed by the participants. Koji Uosaki and Al Coan were appointed rapporteurs for the meeting.

Miyabe began the meeting with a brief introduction of attendees (Attachment 1), Participants were asked for comments on the Agenda and asked that the species working group reports be moved from agenda item 5 to a new agenda item 9. The adjustment was made to the agenda and the agenda was adopted by the group (Attachment 2). A list of documents was presented and approved by the group (Attachment 3).

**2.0 REVIEW OF DATA REQUIREMENTS FOR STOCK ASSESSMENTS AND  
FISHERY MONITORING (Agenda item 5)**

Considerable discussion of the STATWG centered around two areas 1) what types of data are needed by the species working groups and 2) how are these data to be managed. The group generally agreed that there needs to be two data sets those submitted by national correspondents (official data set) and those used by the Species Working Groups (SWG) for stock assessments.

The official data set would be submitted by national data correspondents as required by the ISC. Data correspondents must be available at STATWG meetings to explain questions that may be raised with their data sets. Data should be supplied annually by July 1. Data should include Category I, II and III information for all fisheries operating in the North Pacific.

The SWG data holdings may have data that are in finer detail and that encompass a larger area than specified by the Official data set, because this is a general requirement recognized for stock assessments. The SWG data sets should contain the “best scientific data” for stock assessments. These data are confidential and are not in the public domain. Access to these finer detail data should be controlled by the SWG chair and the appropriate data correspondent.

The STATWG agreed that the two data sets would be maintained separately within the ISC database. The official data set would be maintained by the STATWG and the SWG assessment data set by each SWG. It is noted that full funding is not available to support this structure and as funding becomes available the structure may be changed. This arrangement will also necessitate procedures be developed to insure that changes that are made to one data set are relayed to the other data set. For example, the STATWG database administrator should convey STATWG data changes to the SWGs and changes made to SWG data should be conveyed to the STATWG by the SWG chairs. Metadata<sup>1</sup> should be added to each data set, and the STATWG should develop a list of metadata elements and options for storage of these data. Since all data sets will be kept on ISC data systems, all backups and security of the data will be the responsibility of the ISC database administrator. It was noted by the species working groups that managers need to know what catch and effort series are being used in stock assessments.

While the SWGs felt that the data correspondents should attend most SWG meetings, the STATWG participants felt that this would be too demanding, and suggested that each SWG designate a data coordinator that would work with the STATWG to insure the SWG needs.

### **3.0 REVIEW DATA COLLECTION BY PARTICIPANTS (Agenda item 6)**

#### **U.S.A., presented by Al Coan (ISC/06/STATWG/02)**

U.S. fishery data for 2003 and 2004 were submitted to the ISC at this meeting of the STATWG. The submission should have been completed in July 1, 2005, as required by the ISC data protocol, but was delayed for various reasons. Three types of data were submitted, Category I, Category II and Category III. Category I data was submitted for all species caught by purse seine, distant-water troll, longline, troll/handline, pole-and-line and other gears (gillnet, harpoon and sport) in the North Pacific Ocean (north of the Equator). Category II data were supplied for longline, harpoon, gillnet and troll fisheries. The data

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<sup>1</sup> Information describing how the data were collected and pooled. Information on conversion factors used would also be included.

have been screened to remove area-time strata with less than three vessels in order to comply with U.S. confidentiality requirements. The results of this screening in terms of species and effort are minimal and are contained in the report. Category III data were supplied for troll and longline fisheries. Troll data are length (fork length) frequencies and longline data are weight (round) frequencies.

Discussion: The group asked for clarification on why data were screened. Screening is done to protect the trade secrets of individual vessels and revenues of vessels owners. Al Coan also noted that as the North Pacific Albacore workshop data coordinator, he submitted the albacore workshop database with category II and III data for all countries except Japan to the ISC in October 2005.

**Japan, presented by Harumi Yamada (no document)**

Japan data for 2003 and 2004 were not submitted to the ISC in July 2005. Japanese data from the albacore workshop have also not been submitted to the ISC database. Submission of these data is pending approval by the Japan Fisheries Agency and approval is anticipated before the next ISC plenary in March 2006.

**Chinese-Taipei, presented by Chien-Chung Hsu (no document)**

Chinese-Taipei vessels participate in three major fisheries, large and small scale longline and purse seine, and several minor fisheries, coastal troll, drift gillnet, set gillnet and harpoon. in the North Pacific. The latter fisheries incidentally catch tunas and tuna-like species in the coastal waters off Chinese-Taipei and its adjacent Islands. The former longline fisheries target tunas, purse seine fisheries target skipjack and harpoon fisheries target billfishes and sailfish in coastal and high seas waters. To improve catch statistics, VMS was required on all distant water longline vessels, and a logbook system and a port sampling program was implemented for small scale longline and a portion of other coastal fisheries from 1996 and 2004. Along with data collected from these sources sales slips from fishermen associations and records of Coast Guard Stations at Fishing Ports were used to compile fishing effort of each vessel. Thus, three categories data were obtained from each fishery. In 2006, increased observers on board vessels may improve the low coverage of logbooks. Sizes of fish from distant water longline were measured on board; and the sizes of some important species were collected at unloading ports by port samplers and national scientists. The catch and effort data of purse seine fishery have been available since its inception in 1994, compiled from logbooks submitted by fishing boat owners. In the early years, logbook coverage was low. For recent years, however, coverage rate is 100%, there is no systematic size frequency sampling for the purse seine fishery.

## **4.0 UPCOMING DATA INVENTORY AND DEPOSITORY (Agenda item 7)**

### **4.1 ISC Database System**

A prototype ISC database was presented by Harumi Yamada and a contractor (INTERLINK, Inc.). The database system is a web-based system that allows for the management and display of data and some graphics. Insert, update and delete options are allowed for individual country data. Users can also download needed data in comma separated format. The system is user and password protected. Users can only change their country data. Category I, II and III data are available. Graphics are created dynamically from the data tables. Since no funding is available for maintenance, each country will have to maintain its own data.

Discussion: The prototype data base allows anyone from a country to update, delete and insert data for his country only. The STATWG suggested that only the data correspondent be allowed insert, update and delete roles of his country data. All other users should have read only capability. The ISC database administrator can change data but must obtain the consent of correspondents. The database administrator is responsible for mechanical changes to all data (format changes, system down and update needs, etc.). The prototype should be expanded to include metadata, SWG working documents (with appropriate cautions in the citing of papers) and stock assessment input and output data.

### **4.2 Updating data inventory and Depository**

#### **Data inventory in 2005, presented by Harumi Yamada (ISC/06/STATWG/01)**

A data inventory of the ISC data holdings was provided by Harumi Yamada. Category I data were collected from National Reports provided by members to the 5<sup>th</sup> ISC plenary meeting in March 2005, in Tokyo. Category II and III data were obtained from the North Pacific Albacore Workshop database (from Al Coan). Category I, Category II and III data for U.S.A. fisheries for 2003 and 2004 with metadata were made available in doc ISC/06/STATWG/02. No Category II and III data have been received from China, Mexico and Japan.

Discussion: Since no country reported data by the July 1, 2005 ISC submission deadline, the STATWG suggests the following actions.

- 1 - Establish and communicate format and types of data and metadata that need to be submitted by data correspondents. See if existing metadata formats and elements can be used.
- 2 - Data administrator, alert data correspondents before the submission dates of data required and follow up – cc delegation leader.
- 3 - Each species working group chair identifies a technical person to serve as coordinator for the species working group database. That person work with the Chair in announcing data due

dates and data needs for the species data group. Requests should be copied to delegation leaders.

## **5.0 REVIEW OF DATA REPORTING PROTOCOL (Agenda item 8)**

### **Changes in the Data Format submitted to the Database Site, presented by Harumi Yamada (ISC/06/STATWG/03)**

The data format submitted to the database site was proposed by ad hoc Statistics Submission Working Group in the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the STATWG in 2002, and revised in the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the STATWG in 2004. The clearing house found that there were still a lot of potential problems, when the submitted data will be incorporated into the ISC database. Therefore the clearing house proposed some more changes in the data format submitted, such as data file structure, data items and additional codes.

Discussion: The STATWG agrees that standardized codes should be used. However, due to the extent of the codes used in this document and other data format considerations, the STATWG asked that time be given to adequately review the document and prepare comments at a later time.

Data submission of Category II and III data should be modified as follows. Category II and III data should be submitted directly to the STATWG through the ISC database system if the system becomes available. The STATWG will review the data briefly and send the data to the species working group for review. The STATWG will receive comments from the species working group and seek solutions from the appropriate data correspondent. Solutions received from data correspondents will be presented to the species working groups by the STATWG chair.

#### **5.1 Review of ISC Website**

The ISC website will contain working group meeting reports, meeting dates and announcements, and summarized plots of category I, II, and III data. Meeting working documents will reside in the ISC database only. Species working groups will be responsible for numbering working group papers, bisecting disclaimer with appropriate labels - do not cite without authors consent and indication that it is a working document. Papers will be made available before meeting on secured site for registered participants. The website should state policy for applying for meeting attendance (meeting observers, procedures for requesting participation, etc.)

Due to a public comment on the contents of the ISC website, the STATWG suggests that the website be modified to include information on when the ISC was renamed the International Scientific Committee.

## 5.2 Update data correspondents

Changes (*italics*) were made to the list of data correspondents as follows:

| <u>Member</u>                              | <u>Data Correspondent</u> |
|--|---------------------------|
| Canada                                     | Max Stocker               |
| Chinese-Taipei                             | Shui-Kai Chang            |
| Japan                                      | Harumi Yamada             |
| Korea                                      | Dae-Yeon Moon             |
| Mexico                                     | Michel Dreyfus            |
| Peoples Republic of China (not designated) |                           |
| USA  | <i>Al Coan</i>            |
| IATTC                                      | Michael G. Hinton         |
| SPC  | Timothy Lawson            |

It was suggested that the STATWG chair confirm names of data correspondents not in attendance.

## 6.0 REPORT OF SPECIES WORKING GROUPS (Agenda item 9)

### **Albacore, presented by Al Coan (no document)**

The following concerns for the STATWG were expressed at the last Albacore Working Group (ALBWG) meeting (La Jolla, CA, November 25-December 2, 2005).

- 1) Clarify how Category II and III data will be submitted.
- 2) If category II data are to be submitted by the ALBWG then who is responsible for data spanning multiple SWG (e.g. longline data).
- 3) Updates to Chinese-Taipei Category II longline data. These changes are significantly different from the data set submitted in the past. The STATWG needs to contact the data correspondent from Chinese-Taipei to verify these changes before the past data can be updated.
- 4) Clarify what data will be contained on the ISC website. Will working documents be stored.
- 5) Will Category I, II and III summary plots be dynamically linked to the new website?
- 6) Should each SWG keep its own website?
- 7) What data is ISC archiving and what is it not?

Some of these concerns were addressed at this meeting.

### **Swordfish and Marlin, presented by Gerard DiNardo (no document)**

Gerard DiNardo reported on suggestions to increase the efficiency of the STATWG that stem

from recent efforts (Honolulu, HI, November 15-21, 2005) by the Marlin Working Group (MARWG) to complete a North Pacific striped marlin stock assessment. This was the first assessment of striped marlin under the umbrella of ISC, and as such, provided a unique opportunity to fully test the abilities of the STATWG to support stock assessments. This can not be said for the other ISC species working groups.

Two categories of issues are offered, procedural and operational. Procedural issues include:

1. Efficient protocols for submitting, verifying, and maintaining Category I, II, and III data need to be established. The responsibility of these tasks should lie with the STATWG.
2. Procedures for the collection and verification of detailed data by working group chairs to support stock assessments needs to be established. Working group chairs are currently responsible for these tasks and this is not an efficient process.

Operational issues include:

1. Data requests are generally given low priority by all countries. A mechanism that persuades countries to submit data on time should be implemented. On the rare occasion that data is submitted it generally arrives with no explanation. Having a data representative who is familiar with submitted data at the species working group meeting would be helpful.
2. The MARWG attempted to access data from the ISC Database but was unsuccessful. Because the ISC Database is not operational, individual data files were provided from the STATWG. When the data finally did arrive, the format of the data was problematic making it impossible to access.
3. Arrangements for sharing data between Organizations/Institutions housing data from the North Pacific need to be established.

Discussions: The swordfish and marlin working groups noted problems in obtaining data from non-member countries. It was noted that official arrangements with other RFMOs are being negotiated to resolve the problem.

#### **Bluefin, presented by Harumi Yamada (no document)**

PBFWG had no urgent data request for the STATWG. The PBFWG meeting was held earlier (January 16-20, 2006), and a stock assessment was carried out. The Working Group revised the species catch table through 2005. The table was used for the stock assessment, and it was noted that Korean catch was estimated by Japanese import statistics and should be verified in the future. Category II and III data were supplied for the stock assessment work, but not yet in a form for inclusion in the ISC database.

## **7.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS AND UPDATED WORK PLAN (Agenda item 10)**

### 7.1 Conclusion and Recommendations

The following conclusions and recommendations were made and assigned to individuals and/or groups for action: (a) STATWG/Data administrator, (b) Species working groups (SWG), (c) Data correspondent.

1. Supply detailed information on data submissions, including metadata standards and revised Category II and III data submission protocols, to data correspondents and cc delegation leaders. (a)
2. Alert data correspondents before submission date and follow up – cc delegation leader. (a)
3. The new ISC data base system should be placed by July 1, 2006. (a)
4. STATWG suggests that only the data correspondent be allowed insert, update and delete roles on his country data on the new ISC database. (a)
5. Modify the new ISC database system to accommodate archiving of input data, output data and software for stock assessments conducted by species working groups and working documents presented at species working group meetings. (a)
6. Differences between ISC, IATTC and WCPFC data bases should be investigated. (a)
7. Develop metadata needs and procedure for the collection and archival of metadata.(a)
8. Place a note on web site noting that the name of ISC was changed. (a)
9. Each species working group chair identifies a technical person to serve as coordinator for the species working group database. That person work with chair in announcing data due dates and data needs for the specie3s data group. Requests should be copied to delegation leaders. In the future, the species working group requests that the ISC employ a permanent database administrator to maintain the central database. (b)
10. Japan will submit historical data through 2004 by March, 2006. (c)
11. Data correspondents should attend STATWG meeting and are encouraged to attend most species working group meetings. (c)
12. Each country should submit metadata (information describing how the data were collected and pooled) of its own data. U.S. would provide example of metadata. (c)
13. Species working groups archive input data, output data, metadata and software for stock assessments. The new ISC database system will be modified to archive this data and working documents presented at SWG meetings. (a & b)
14. Submission of Category II and III data should be made directly to STATWG. (a & c)
15. Estimated Korean purse seine bluefin catches need to be discussed with data correspondent. (a & c)
16. Chinese-Taipei Category II submission differences need to be reviewed with Chinese-Taipei data correspondent. The reason of the differences should be documented. (a & c)
17. Develop procedures for insuring that changes made to official or species working



- group data sets are communicated. (a & c)
18. It was suggested that the STATWG chair confirm names of data correspondents not in attendance. (a & c)
  19. If data are not submitted to species working groups, data may be estimated from other information and the appropriate footnotes added. Estimates will be confirmed by the STATWG with the appropriate data correspondent. (a, b & c)

## 7.2 Work Plan

- 1) Decide on codes used in the ISC database. This should be accomplished by an ad hoc group at the March 2006 Plenary meeting.
- 2) Make positive progress in establishing the ISC database
- 3) Set up procedures for selecting species WG coordinators. The MARWG should take the lead in developing this.
- 4) Database administrator position needs to be decided and budget and staffing need identified. This should be done by correspondence. Japan should take the lead in developing a starting document for review by the group.

## **8.0 ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (Agenda item 11)**

The time and place of the next meeting of the STATWG will be decided at the Plenary meeting in March 2006.

## **9.0 ADOPTION OF REPORT (Agenda item 12)**

The report was adopted after the careful review of the draft report.

## **10.0 ADJOURNMENT (Agenda item 13)**

The Chair thanked all participants and the rapporteurs for their contribution in making this a successful meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 13:00 on 24 January 2006.

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**Attachment 2. Agenda**

**Statistics Working Group meeting  
(January 23-24, 2006, Shimizu, Japan)**

1. Opening of STATWG meeting
2. Appointment of chair and rapporteurs
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Tabling of Documents
5. Review of Data Requirements for Stock Assessment and Fishery Monitoring
6. Review of Data Collected by Participants
7. Updating Data Inventory and Depository
8. Review of Data Reporting Protocol
9. Report from the Species Working Groups regarding availability, timeliness and problems with data in conducting their works.
10. Conclusion, Recommendations and Updated Work Plan
11. Administrative Matters
12. Adoption of Report
13. Adjournment

**Attachment 3. List of Documents**

ISC/06/STATWG/01. Data inventory in 2005. Clearing House Staffs

ISC/06/ STATWG/02. Submission of U.S. fishery statistics for the North Pacific Ocean to the International Scientific Committee 2003 and 2004. Al Coan and Robert A. Skillman

ISC/06/STATWG/03. Changes in the data format submitted to the database site. Clearing house staffs (Harumi Yamada, Mio Takahashi and Fumihito Muto)