

**RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT ON TRANSHIPMENT**

*TAKING ACCOUNT* of the need to combat illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing activities because they undermine the effectiveness of the conservation and management measures already adopted by ICCAT;

*EXPRESSING GRAVE CONCERN* that organized tuna laundering operations have been conducted and a significant amount of catches by IUU fishing vessels have been transhipped under the names of duly licensed fishing vessels;

*IN VIEW THEREFORE OF THE NEED* to ensure the monitoring of the transhipment activities on tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species that were harvested in the ICCAT Convention area, in particular by large-scale pelagic longline vessels (LSPLVs), including the control of their landings;

*TAKING ACCOUNT* of the need to ensure collection of catch data from such LSPLVs to improve the scientific assessments of those stocks;

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

**SECTION 1. GENERAL RULES**

1. All at-sea transhipment operations:
  - a) within the Convention area of tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species, and
  - b) outside the Convention area of tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species that were harvested in the ICCAT Convention area,are prohibited, except that large scale pelagic longline vessels, defined as those greater than 24 meters length overall, may conduct at-sea transhipment under the program established in Section 3 below. All other transhipments must take place in port.
2. The flag Contracting Party, Cooperating non-Contracting Party, Entity or Fishing Entity (hereafter referred to as CPCs) shall take the necessary measures to ensure that fishing vessels flying their flag comply with the obligations set out in **Appendix 3**, when transshipping tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species in port.
3. This Recommendation does not apply to harpoon vessels engaged in the transhipment of fresh swordfish<sup>1</sup> at sea.
4. This Recommendation does not apply to transhipments outside the Convention area where such transhipment is subject to a comparable monitoring program established by another regional fisheries management organization.
5. This Recommendation is without prejudice to additional requirements applicable to transhipment at sea or in port in other ICCAT recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this Recommendation, "fresh swordfish" means swordfish that are alive, whole or gutted / dressed but not further processed or frozen.

## **SECTION 2. RECORD OF CARRIER VESSELS AUTHORISED TO RECEIVE TRANSHIPMENT IN THE ICCAT AREA**

6. Transshipment of tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species may only be authorized with regard to carrier vessels authorized in accordance with this Recommendation.
7. An ICCAT Record of Carrier Vessels authorized to receive tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species in the Convention area shall be established. For the purposes of this Recommendation, carrier vessels not entered on the record are deemed not to be authorized to receive tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species in transshipment operations.
8. In order for its carrier vessels to be included on the ICCAT Record List of Carrier Vessels, a flag CPC or flag non-Contracting Party (NCP) shall submit each calendar year, electronically, and in the format specified by the ICCAT Executive Secretary, a list of the carrier vessels that are authorized to receive transshipments in the Convention area. This list shall include the following information:
  - Name of vessel, register number
  - ICCAT Record Number (if any)
  - IMO number
  - Previous name (if any)
  - Previous flag (if any)
  - Previous details of deletion from other registries (if any)
  - International radio call sign
  - Type of vessels, length, gross registered tonnage (GRT) and carrying capacity
  - Name and address of owner(s) and operator(s)
  - Type of transshipment authorised (i.e., in port and/or at sea)
  - Time period authorised for transshipping
9. Each CPC shall promptly notify the ICCAT Executive Secretary of any addition to, any deletion from and/or any modification of the ICCAT Record of Carrier Vessels, at any time such changes occur.
10. The ICCAT Executive Secretary shall maintain the ICCAT Record of Carrier Vessels and take measures to ensure publicity of the Record through electronic means, including placing it on the ICCAT website, in a manner consistent with domestic confidentiality requirements.
11. Carrier vessels authorized for transshipment shall be required to install and operate a VMS in accordance with all applicable ICCAT recommendations, including the *Recommendation by ICCAT Amending Recommendation 03-14 by ICCAT concerning Minimum Standards for the Establishment of a Vessel Monitoring System in the ICCAT Convention Area* [Rec. 14-09], or any successor recommendation, including any future revisions thereto.

## **SECTION 3. PROGRAMME TO MONITOR TRANSHIPMENT AT SEA**

12. At sea transshipment by LSPLVs for tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species may only be authorized in accordance with the provisions set forth in this Section, in Section 4, and **Appendix 1 and 2** below.

### **Large Scale Pelagic Longline Vessels (LSPLVs) authorized to tranship at sea**

13. Each flag CPC that authorizes its LSPLVs to tranship at sea shall submit each calendar year electronically and in the format specified by the Executive Secretary, the list of its LSPLVs that are authorized to tranship at sea.

This list shall include the following information:

- Name of vessel, register number
- ICCAT Record Number
- Time period authorized for transshipping at sea
- Flag(s), name(s) and register number(s) of the carrier vessel(s) authorized for use by the LSPLVs

Upon receipt of the lists of LSPLVs authorized to transship at sea, the Executive Secretary shall provide to the flag CPCs of the carrier vessels the list of LSPLVs authorized to operate with its carrier vessels.

#### **Coastal State authorization**

14. Transshipments by LSPLVs in waters under the jurisdiction of a CPC are subject to prior authorization from that CPC. An original or copy of the documentation of coastal State prior authorization must be retained on the vessel and made available to the ICCAT observer when requested. CPCs shall take the necessary measures to ensure that LSPLVs flying their flag comply with the provisions of this Section:

#### **Flag CPC authorization**

15. LSPLVs are not authorized to transship at sea unless they have obtained prior authorization from their flag State. An original or copy of the documentation of prior authorization must be retained on the vessel and made available to the ICCAT observer when requested.

#### **Notification obligations**

##### ***Large Scale Pelagic Longline Vessels (LSPLVs):***

16. To receive the prior authorization mentioned in paragraph 14 and 15 above, the master and/or owner of the LSPLV must notify the following information to its flag CPC authorities, and, where applicable, the coastal CPC, at least 24 hours in advance of the intended transshipment:
  - the name of the LSPLV and its number in the ICCAT record of fishing vessels,
  - the name of the carrier vessel and its number in the ICCAT record of carrier vessels authorized to receive transshipments in the ICCAT area, and the product to be transhipped, by species, where known, and, if possible, by stock,
  - the quantities of tuna and tuna-like species and, if possible, by stock, to be transhipped,
  - the quantities of other species caught in association with tuna and tuna-like species by species, where known, to be transhipped,
  - the date and location of transshipment,
  - the geographic location of the catches by species and, where appropriate, by stock, consistent with ICCAT statistical areas.

The LSPLV concerned shall complete and transmit to its flag CPC, and, where applicable, the coastal CPC not later than 15 days after the transshipment, the ICCAT transshipment declaration, along with its number in the ICCAT record of fishing vessels in accordance with the format set out in **Appendix 1**.

##### ***Receiving carrier vessel:***

17. The master of the receiving carrier vessel shall complete and transmit the ICCAT transshipment declaration to the ICCAT Secretariat and the flag CPC of the LSPLV, along with its number in the ICCAT record of carrier vessels authorized to receive transshipment in the ICCAT area, within 24 hours of the completion of the transshipment.
18. The master of the receiving carrier vessel shall, 48 hours before landing, transmit an ICCAT transshipment declaration, along with its number in the ICCAT record of vessels authorized to receive transshipment in the ICCAT Convention area, to the competent authorities of the State where the landing is to take place.

### ***ICCAT Regional Observer Program***

19. Each CPC shall ensure that all carrier vessels transshipping at sea have on board an ICCAT observer in accordance with the ICCAT regional observer program specified in **Appendix 2**. The ICCAT observer shall observe the adherence to this Recommendation, and, notably, that the transhipped quantities are consistent with the reported catch in the ICCAT transshipment declaration and, as feasible, as recorded in the fishing vessel logbook.
20. Vessels shall be prohibited from commencing or continuing transshipping at sea in the ICCAT Convention area without an ICCAT regional observer on board, except in cases of *force majeure* duly notified to the ICCAT Secretariat.

### **SECTION 4. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

21. To ensure the effectiveness of the ICCAT conservation and management measures pertaining to species covered by Catch and Statistical Document Programs:
  - a) In validating the Catch or Statistical Documents, flag CPCs of LSPLVs shall ensure that transshipments are consistent with the reported catch amount by each LSPLV.
  - b) The flag CPC of LSPLVs shall validate the Catch or Statistical Documents for the transhipped fish, after confirming that the transshipment was conducted in accordance with this Recommendation. This confirmation shall be based on the information obtained through the ICCAT Observer Program.
  - c) CPCs shall require that the species covered by the Catch or Statistical Document Programs caught by LSPLVs in the Convention area, when imported into the area or territory of a CPC, be accompanied by catch or statistical documents validated for the vessels on the ICCAT record and a copy of the ICCAT transshipment declaration.
22. The flag CPCs of LSPLVs which have transhipped during the previous year and the flag CPCs of carrier vessels accepting transshipments shall report annually before 15 September to the Executive Secretary:
  - The quantities of tuna and tuna-like catches by species (and, if possible, by stock) transhipped during the previous year.
  - The quantities of other species caught in association with tuna and tuna-like species by species, where known, transhipped during the previous year.
  - The list of the LSPLVs which have transhipped during the previous year.
  - A comprehensive report assessing the content and conclusions of the reports of the observers assigned to carrier vessels which have received transshipment from their LSPLVs.

These reports shall be made available to the Commission and relevant subsidiary bodies for review and consideration. The Secretariat shall post these reports to a password protected website.
23. All tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with those species landed in or imported into the area or territory of CPCs, either unprocessed or after having been processed on board and which are transhipped, shall be accompanied by the ICCAT transshipment declaration until the first sale has taken place.
24. The Flag CPC of the LSPLV engaged in at-sea transshipments, and the coastal CPC, where applicable, shall review the information received pursuant to the provisions of this Recommendation to determine consistency between the reported catches, transshipments, and landings of each vessel, including in cooperation with the landing State as necessary. This verification shall be carried out so that the vessel suffers the minimum interference and inconvenience and that degradation of the fish is avoided.
25. At its request, and subject to ICCAT confidentiality requirements, the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) shall have access to the data collected under this Recommendation.

26. Each year, the Executive Secretary of ICCAT shall present a report on the implementation of this Recommendation to the annual meeting of the Commission which shall, *inter alia*, review compliance with this Recommendation.
27. This Recommendation replaces the *Recommendation by ICCAT on a Programme for Transshipment* [Rec. 12-06].



### ICCAT Regional Observer Programme

1. Each CPC shall require carrier vessels included in the ICCAT record of vessels authorized to receive transshipments in the ICCAT area and which tranship at sea, to carry an ICCAT observer during each transshipment operation in the Convention area.
2. The Secretariat of the Commission shall appoint the observers and shall place them on board the carrier vessels authorized to receive transshipments in the ICCAT area from LSPLVs flying the flag of CPCs that implement the ICCAT observer program.
3. The ICCAT Secretariat shall ensure observers are properly equipped to perform their duties.

#### Designation of the observers

4. The designated observers shall have the following qualifications to accomplish their tasks:
  - demonstrated ability to identify ICCAT species and fishing gear with a strong preference given to those with experience as observers on pelagic longline vessels;
  - satisfactory knowledge of the ICCAT conservation and management measures;
  - the ability to observe and record accurately;
  - a satisfactory knowledge of the language of the flag of the vessel observed.

#### Obligations of the observer

5. Observers shall:
  - a) have completed the technical training required by the guidelines established by ICCAT;
  - b) to the extent possible, not be nationals or citizens of the flag State of the receiving carrier vessel;
  - c) be capable of performing the duties set forth in point 6 below;
  - d) be included in the list of observers maintained by the Secretariat of the Commission;
  - e) not be a crew member of the LSPLV or the carrier vessel or an employee of the LSPLV or carrier vessel company.
6. The observer shall monitor the LSPLVs and carrier vessel's adherence to the relevant conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission. The observers' tasks shall be, in particular, to:
  - 6.1 Visit the LSPLV intending to tranship to a carrier vessel, taking into account the safety concerns reflected in point 10 of this Appendix, and before the transshipment takes place, to:
    - a) Check the validity of the fishing vessel's authorization or license to fish for tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with those species in the Convention area;
    - b) Inspect the fishing vessel's prior authorizations to tranship at sea from the flag CPC and, if appropriate, the coastal State;
    - c) Check and record the total quantity of catch on board by species and, if possible, by stock, and the quantities to be transhipped to the carrier vessel;
    - d) Check that the VMS is functioning and examine the logbook and verify entries, if possible;
    - e) Verify whether any of the catch on board resulted from transfers from other vessels, and check the documentation on such transfers;
    - f) In the case of indication that there are any violations involving the LSPLV, immediately report the violation(s) to the master of the carrier vessel (taking due regard of any safety considerations) and to the observer program implementing company, who shall promptly forward it to the flag CPC authorities of the LSPLV; and
    - g) Record the results of these duties on the LSPLV in the observer's report.
  - 6.2 Observe the activities of carrier vessel and:
    - a) record and report upon the transshipment activities carried out;
    - b) verify the position of the vessel when engaged in transhipping;

- c) observe and estimate quantities of tuna and tuna-like species transhipped by species, if known, and, if possible, by stock;
- d) the quantities of other species caught in association with tuna and tuna-like species by species, where known;
- e) verify and record the name of the LSPLV concerned and its ICCAT record number;
- f) verify the data contained in the transshipment declaration, including through comparison with the LSPLV logbook, where possible;
- g) certify the data contained in the transshipment declaration;
- h) countersign the transshipment declaration; and
- i) observe and estimate quantities of product by species when offloaded in the port where the observer is disembarked to verify consistency with quantities received during at sea transshipment operations.

6.3 In addition, the observer shall:

- a) issue a daily report of the carrier vessel's transshipping activities;
  - b) establish general reports compiling the information collected in accordance with the observer's duties and provide the captain the opportunity to include therein any relevant information;
  - c) submit to the Secretariat the aforementioned general report within 20 days from the end of the period of observation;
  - d) exercise any other functions as defined by the Commission.
7. Observers shall treat as confidential all information with respect to the fishing operations of the LSPLV and of the LSPLV owners and accept this requirement in writing as a condition of appointment as an observer.
8. Observers shall comply with requirements established in the laws and regulations of the flag State and, where relevant, the coastal State, which exercises jurisdiction over the vessel to which the observer is assigned.
9. Observers shall respect the hierarchy and general rules of behaviour which apply to all vessel personnel, provided such rules do not interfere with the duties of the observer under this program, and with the obligations of vessel personnel set forth in point 10 of this program.

#### **Responsibilities of the Flag States of carrier vessels**

10. The conditions associated with implementation of the regional observer program *vis à vis* the flag States of the carrier vessels and their captains include the following, notably:
- a) Observers shall be allowed access to the vessel personnel, pertinent documentation, and to the gear and equipment;
  - b) Upon request, observers shall also be allowed access to the following equipment, if present on the vessels to which they are assigned, in order to facilitate the carrying out of their duties set forth in point 6:
    - i) satellite navigation equipment;
    - ii) radar display viewing screens when in use;
    - iii) electronic means of communication; and
    - iv) scale used for weighing transhipped product.
  - c) Observers shall be provided accommodations, including lodging, food and adequate sanitary facilities, equal to those of officers;
  - d) Observers shall be provided with adequate space on the bridge or pilot house for clerical work, as well as space on deck adequate for carrying out observer duties;

- e) Observers shall be allowed to determine the most advantageous location and method for viewing transshipment operations and estimating species/stocks and quantities transhipped. In this regard, the master of the carrier vessel, giving due regard to safety and practical concerns, shall accommodate the needs of the observer in this regard, including, upon request, temporarily placing product on the carrier vessel deck for inspection by the observer and providing adequate time for the observer to carry out his/her duties. Observations shall be conducted in a manner that minimizes interference and avoids compromising the quality of the products transhipped.
- f) In light of the provisions of point 11, the master of the carrier vessel shall ensure that all necessary assistance is provided to the observer to ensure safe transport between the carrier and fishing vessels should weather and other conditions permit such an exchange; and
- g) The flag States shall ensure that captains, crew and vessel owners do not obstruct, intimidate, interfere with, influence, bribe or attempt to bribe an observer in the performance of his/her duties.

The Secretariat, in a manner consistent with any applicable confidentiality requirements, is requested to provide to the flag State of the carrier vessel under whose jurisdiction the vessel transhipped and to the flag CPC of the LSPLV, copies of all raw data, summaries, and reports pertaining to the trip.

The Secretariat shall submit the observer reports (covering the information and activities of both the fishing and carrier vessels) to the Compliance Committee and to the SCRS.

#### **Responsibilities of LSPLVs during transhipments**

- 11. Observers shall be allowed to visit the LSPLV, if weather and other conditions permit, and shall be granted access to personnel, all pertinent documentation, VMS and areas of the vessel necessary to carry out their duties set forth in point 6 in this Appendix. The master of the LSPLV shall ensure that all necessary assistance is provided to the observer to ensure safe transport between the carrier and LSPLV. Should conditions present an unacceptable risk to the welfare of the observer such that a visit to the LSPLV is not feasible prior to the start of transshipment operations, such operations may still be carried out.

#### **Observer fees**

- 12. The costs of implementing this program shall be financed by the flag CPCs of LSPLVs wishing to engage in transshipment operations. The fee shall be calculated on the basis of the total costs of the program. This fee shall be paid into a special account of the ICCAT Secretariat and the ICCAT Secretariat shall manage the account for implementing the program.
- 13. No LSPLV may participate in the at-sea transshipment program unless the fees, as required under point 12, are paid.

#### **Information sharing**

- 14. To facilitate information sharing and, to the extent possible, harmonization of at sea transshipment programs across relevant regional fisheries management organizations, all training materials, including observer manuals, and data collection forms developed and used to support implementation of ICCAT's at sea transshipment regional observer program shall be posted on the public portion of the ICCAT website.

#### **Identification Guides**

- 15. The SCRS shall work with the ICCAT Secretariat and others as appropriate to develop new or improve existing identification guides for frozen tuna and tuna-like species. The ICCAT Secretariat shall ensure that these identification guides are made broadly available to CPCs and other interested parties, including to ICCAT regional observers prior to deployment and to other regional fisheries management organizations running similar at sea transshipment observer programs.

### **In-Port Transshipment**

1. In the exercise of their authority over ports located in areas under their jurisdiction, CPCs may adopt more stringent measures, in accordance with domestic and international law.
2. Pursuant to Section 1 of this Recommendation, transshipment in port by any CPC of tuna and tuna-like species and other species caught in association with these species from or in the Convention area may only be undertaken in accordance with *Recommendation by ICCAT for an ICCAT Scheme for Minimum Standards for Inspection in Port* [Rec. 12-07] and the following procedures:

#### **Notification obligations**

##### ***3. Catching fishing vessel***

- 3.1 At least 48 hours in advance of transshipment operations, the captain of the fishing vessel must notify to the Port State authorities the name of the carrier vessel and date/time of transshipment.
- 3.2 The captain of a fishing vessel shall, at the time of the transshipment, inform its flag CPC of the following:
  - the quantities of tuna and tuna-like species, if possible, by stock, to be transhipped;
  - the quantities of other species caught in association with tuna and tuna-like species by species, where known, to be transhipped;
  - the date and place of the transshipment;
  - the name, registration number and flag of the receiving carrier vessel; and
  - the geographic location of the catches by species and, where appropriate, by stock, consistent with ICCAT statistical areas.
- 3.3 The captain of the fishing vessel concerned shall complete and transmit to its flag CPC the ICCAT transshipment declaration, along with its number in the ICCAT record of fishing vessels, where applicable, in accordance with the format set out in **Appendix 1** not later than 15 days after the transshipment.

##### ***4. Receiving fishing vessel***

- 4.1 Not later than 24 hours before the beginning and at the end of the transshipment, the master of the receiving carrier vessel shall inform the port State authorities of the quantities of catches of tuna and tuna-like species transhipped to his vessel, and complete and transmit the ICCAT transshipment declaration to the competent authorities within 24 hours.
- 4.2 The master of the receiving carrier vessel shall, at least 48 hours before landing, complete and transmit an ICCAT transshipment declaration to the competent authorities of the landing State where the landing takes place.

#### **Port and Landing State Cooperation**

5. The port State and the landing State referred to in the above points shall review the information received pursuant to the provisions of this Appendix, including in cooperation with the flag CPC of the fishing vessel as necessary, to determine consistency between the reported catches, transshipments, and landings of each vessel. This verification shall be carried out so that the vessel suffers the minimum interference and inconvenience and that degradation of the fish is avoided.

#### **Reporting**

6. Each flag CPC of the fishing vessel shall include in its Annual Report each year to ICCAT the details on the transshipments by its vessels.