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**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND  
CONSERVATION OF TUNA AND TUNA-  
LIKE SPECIES IN THE CARIBBEAN –  
THE ROLE OF ICCAT**

*Prepared by:  
S. Singh-Renton*

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CRFM Secretariat  
Belize 2010

# **CRFM Technical & Advisory Document - Number 2010 / 2**

## **Sustainable Development and conservation of Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the Caribbean – The Role of ICCAT**

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S. Singh-Renton

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Caribbean – The Role of ICCAT

*@ CRFM 2010*

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## **1. Introduction**

Tuna and tuna-like fish are among the largest and fastest-swimming fish capable of migrating over long distances. The large pelagic fish resources occurring in the Caribbean region can be classified into two types. The first type includes those fish species that are considered highly migratory and so have distributions that extend beyond the Caribbean region and therefore also simultaneously support a number of coastal and distant water fishing industries, e.g. the larger-sized bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack tunas, billfishes, Atlantic swordfish and sharks. The second type of large pelagic fish resource includes the less wide-ranging species that are believed to be more or less contained within the Caribbean, e.g. a few small tunas and some tuna-like species such as the mackerels. For many Caribbean countries, these large pelagic fish resources sustain important commercial and sport fisheries (CRFM, 2008). The commercial fisheries contribute directly to: poverty alleviation via provision of employment and a local source of good quality protein especially for the existing myriad of rural coastal communities; export revenues, and; open ship registry revenues. Information on the amount of large pelagic fish harvests taken by the existing major commercial fisheries of CARICOM States are provided in Section 3. In comparison, the region's sport fisheries contribute directly to the tourism industry as a multitude of sportfishing anglers, in search of big game fish and often accompanied by friends and family members, choose to make their holidays in the Caribbean every year. At present, the true extent of sport fishing operations within CARICOM States is not known and is not routinely monitored.

Clearly, owing to the broad ocean areas over which these fish are distributed, the sustainable development and management of the fish stocks concerned require coordinated effort among the harvesting States. Recognizing this, various international fisheries instruments prescribe that where a Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMO) exists and has the competence for conservation and management of fisheries resources, States in whose jurisdictions the resources occur, as well as States which have a real interest in the fisheries, should co-operate with the RFMO by becoming a Member of the organization and should participate actively in the organization's work.

For the Atlantic Ocean and its adjacent Seas that includes the Caribbean Sea, the International Commission for Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) is currently the RFMO mandated to coordinate the management and conservation of tuna and tuna-like fishes.

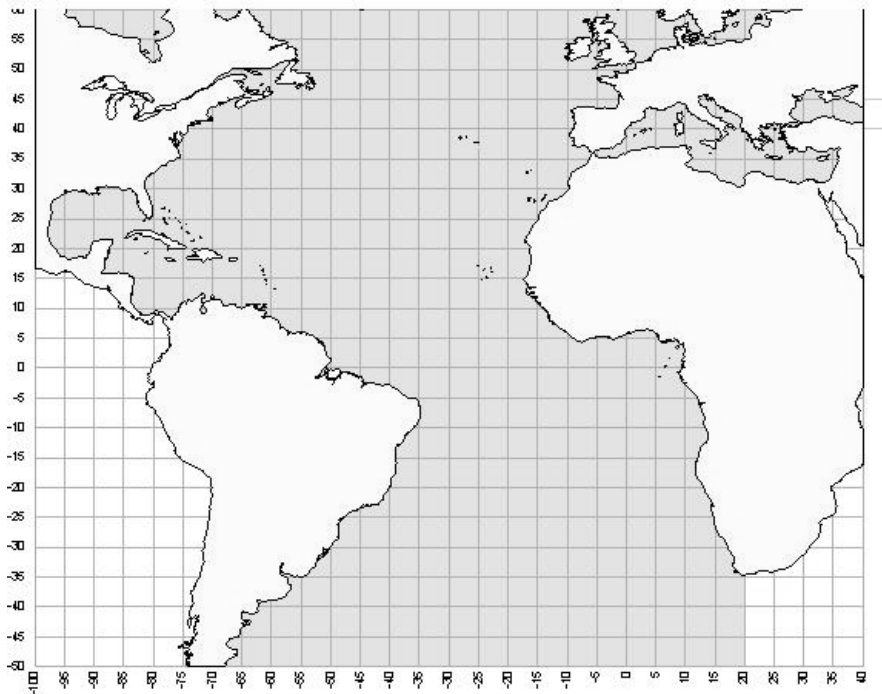
## **2. What is ICCAT?**

The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) is a RFMO, which was established in 1969 to co-ordinate the management of all tunas and tuna-like species in the Atlantic Ocean and adjacent seas, including the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico. The Atlantic Ocean and its adjacent Seas comprise the ICCAT Convention Area, which is shown in Figure 1.

ICCAT-managed species include all Atlantic tuna and billfish species, swordfish, several tuna-like

species such as kingfish and mackerels, and many shark species, comprising a total of 25 tuna species and 57 shark species. In recent years, ICCAT has assumed responsibility for monitoring and managing the level of bycatches in all Atlantic tuna fisheries, including bycatches of non-target fish species such as seabirds, turtles and whales.

As of 31 December 2009, ICCAT has 48 Contracting Parties: Albania, Algeria, Angola, **Barbados (joined in 2000)**, **Belize (joined in 2005)**, Brazil, Canada, Cape Verde, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, European Community, France (St. Pierre & Miquelon), Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea (Rep.), Honduras, Iceland, Japan, Korea (Rep.), Libya, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Philippines, Russia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, St. Tome and Principe, **St. Vincent and the Grenadines (joined in 2006)**, Syrian Arab Republic, **Trinidad and Tobago (joined in 1999)**, Tunisia, Turkey, **United Kingdom (Overseas Territories)**, United States, Uruguay, Vanuatu and Venezuela.



**Figure 1: Chart showing the ICCAT Convention Area shaded {Source: <http://www.iccat.int/en/convarea.htm>}.**

**Guyana** was granted Co-operating Party<sup>1</sup> status in 2003; this status is reviewed and renewed annually, and is considered a transitory status in preparation for attainment of Contracting Party status. At present, besides Guyana, other Co-operating Parties are Chinese Taipei, Netherland Antilles, and Colombia.

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<sup>1</sup> A Cooperating Party is a Country, Organization, Fishing Entity, or Entity that is NOT a Contracting Party, but which fully complies with ICCAT conservation and management measures.

### 3. ICCAT's actions directly impact the activities of tuna and tuna-like fisheries in CARICOM/ CRFM region

Several species of commercial importance to CARICOM/ CRFM countries, such as yellowfin tuna, swordfish, billfishes (marlins and sailfish), wahoo (kingfish), skipjack tuna, and sharks, are included in ICCAT's mandate (CRFM, 2008; FAO, 2004). Table 1 shows the quantity (tons) of tuna, tuna-like and shark species that were reported by CARICOM countries to ICCAT over the most recent 10 year period of 2000-09. The overall total quantity reported over the 10-year period was 135,226 tons (ICCAT, 2010a). ICCAT's management measures are adopted for enforcement throughout the ICCAT Convention Area that includes the CARICOM/CRFM fishing region (Figure 1). Consequently, ICCAT measures can directly help or hinder fisheries development and management activities within the region.

**Table 1. The quantity (tons) of tuna, tuna-like and shark species reported to ICCAT as harvested by CARICOM States, summed over the period 2000-09 {Source: ICCAT (2010a), and electronic version of ICCAT Task I database accessed from <http://www.iccat.int/en/accessingdb.htm>}.**

TUNAS & TUNA-LIKE SPECIES		SHARK SPECIES	
Standard Common English Name	Quantity caught (t) during 2000-09	Standard Common English Name	Quantity caught (t) during 2000-09
Yellowfin tuna	33042	Dogfish sharks, unclassified	16821
Serra Spanish mackerel	21509	Atlantic sharpnose shark	3849
Albacore tuna	12869	Smooth hounds, unclassified	2499
King mackerel	8770	Various sharks, unclassified	1210
Tunas, unclassified	6434	Blacktip shark	850
Blackfin tuna	4183	Blue shark	770
Atlantic skipjack tuna	3488	Smalltail shark	753
Bigeye tuna	3280	Smooth hammerhead	320
Wahoo	3279	Shortfin mako	93
Atlantic sailfish	2362	Ground sharks	60
Atlantic swordfish	1790	Hammerhead sharks, unclassified	57
Blue marlin	1663	Tiger shark	32
Atlantic bonito	1382	Thresher sharks, unclassified	18
Mixed tunas	1194	Nurse shark	14
Billfishes, unclassified	882	Thresher shark	10
Frigate tuna	660	Longfin mako	7
White marlin	341	Sand tiger shark	6
mackerel, unclassified	277	Great hammerhead	3
Longbill spearfish	253	Lemon shark	3
small tunas, unclassified	67	Oceanic whitetip shark	2

Black marlin	66	bull shark	1
Atlantic Spanish mackerel	28	Nurse sharks, unclassified	1
Cero mackerel	14		
Atlantic black skipjack	14		
Bullet tuna	1		

#### **4. ICCAT Activities Summarized**

ICCAT directs the formulation and implementation of recovery and other management and conservation strategies for all species of tunas, billfishes, mackerels and sharks found in the Atlantic region.

To facilitate ICCAT management decision-making, ICCAT maintains a statistical database of tuna fishing activities occurring within the ICCAT Convention Area (Atlantic Ocean and adjacent Seas), and coordinates international research programmes that examine the biology, ecology and abundance of the fish populations concerned.

ICCAT's work therefore involves the collection and analysis of statistical and research data on current conditions and trends of tuna and tuna-like resources and the associated fisheries in the Convention Area. Based on the results of data analyses and fisheries assessments completed annually, ICCAT determines and adopts appropriate resolutions and recommendations for management and conservation of the resources and fisheries concerned, including, in recent years, adoption and implementation of stock recovery/ rebuilding plans.

#### **5. ICCAT management trends**

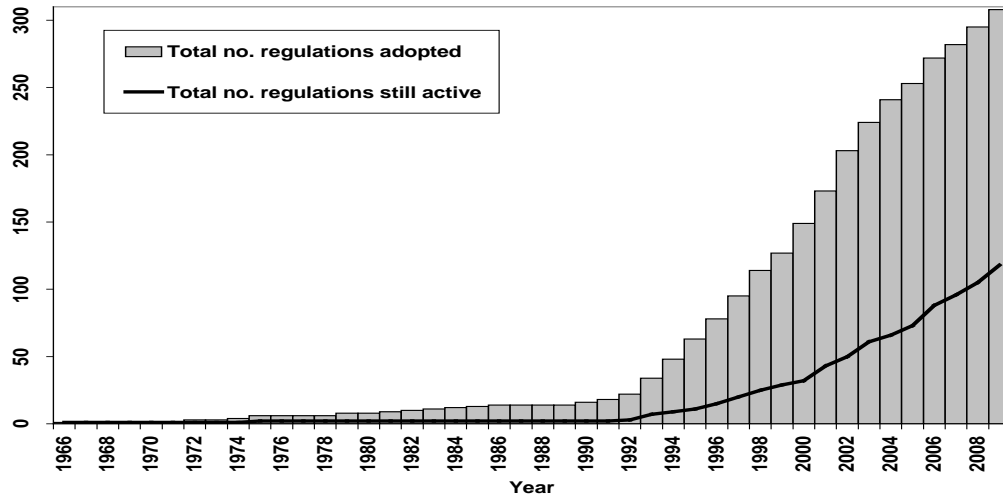
##### 5.1 ICCAT regulations

Prior to 1992, ICCAT had few fishery regulations in place. ICCAT's annual scientific reviews revealed that several major fish stocks were in serious trouble in the early 1990s. In response, ICCAT began to adopt more and stricter regulations in an effort to relieve fishing pressure, and to deal with an apparent serious problem of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing activities, which were allegedly supported by the operations of Flags of Convenience (FOC). Figure 2 shows the rapid increase in ICCAT-adopted regulations from the 1990s onwards. Regulations were often amended or fully replaced in subsequent years, to keep pace with rapidly evolving IUU strategies to evade ICCAT measures, as well as to facilitate new, developing, and re-habilitated fisheries. Notwithstanding, as many as 118 ICCAT regulations are still currently active (Figure 2).



## 5.2 Fish stock trends

Several major Atlantic tuna stocks have shown marked declines since the early 1990s, e.g. northern bluefin tuna, swordfish, blue and white marlin. ICCAT adopted recovery plans for these fish stocks, most of which are still in effect and currently limit opportunities for fishery development. However, when Atlantic swordfish showed recovery in the early 2000s, both Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago benefited directly because of their Contracting Party status with ICCAT at the time, and active participation by Trinidad and Tobago in the negotiation process.



**Figure 2: Chart showing the annual cumulative increase in ICCAT management regulations adopted since 1966, with the line showing the total number of active regulations {Source: <http://www.iccat.int/en/RecsRegsresults.asp>}.**

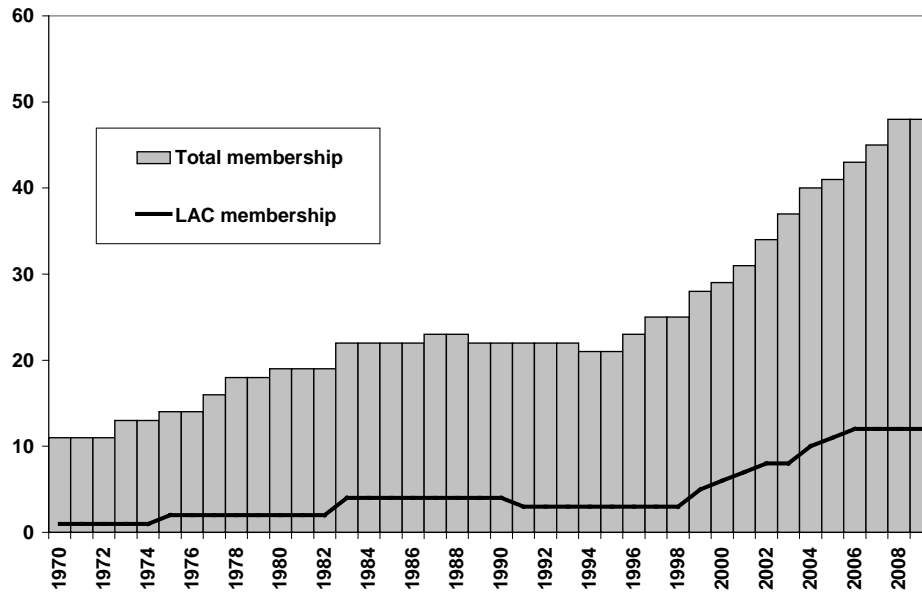
## 5.3 Catch allocation criteria and length of agreed fish catch quota schemes

There has been a general shift in ICCAT management approaches towards greater application of catch quota and fishing effort restrictions. New catch allocation criteria are being applied by ICCAT that exclude non-member countries from agreed/adopted fish catch allocation schemes (ICCAT 2002a). In recent years and at present, catch quota schemes are being established for longer time periods – this new approach limits the available opportunities for addressing catch quota requests by States with new and developing tuna and tuna-like fisheries in a timely fashion. Hence, to avoid delays in tuna fishery development plans, countries would need to develop longer-term development plans.

## 5.4 Rapid expansion of ICCAT membership and participation in ICCAT meetings

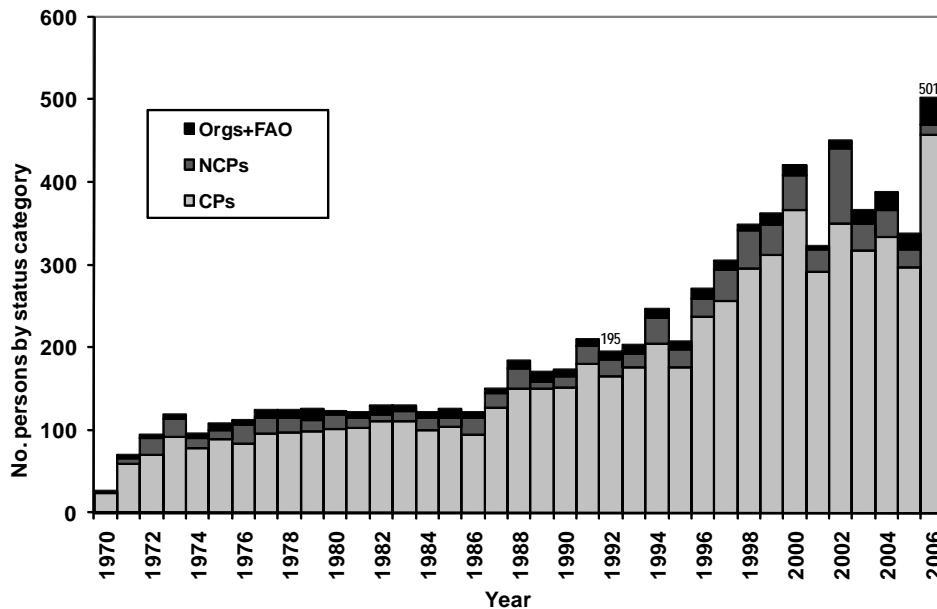
During the mid-late 1990s when many major Atlantic tuna fisheries were put under tighter regulations by ICCAT, and ICCAT began applying punitive measures to an increasing number of countries in response to allegation of IUU activities, ICCAT also saw a rapid growth in its

membership (ICCAT, 2008a) (Figure 3). This occurred because many countries recognized the benefits of ICCAT membership, particularly with regard to avoiding punitive actions and securing recognition for their tuna fisheries, e.g. Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago, as explained in section 5.3. Figure 3 shows how ICCAT membership has more than doubled from 21 Members in 1995 to 48 Members in 2009; membership from the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region also increased from 3 members in 1995 to 12 members in 2009 (also shown in Figure 3).



**Figure 3: Changes in the total number of ICCAT Member States during 1970-2009, and also showing changes in ICCAT membership from the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region (Source of data: ICCAT (2008a) and [www.iccat.int](http://www.iccat.int)).**

In accordance with the growing ICCAT membership, as well as the increasing and tighter regulations being adopted by ICCAT, attendance at ICCAT scientific and Commission meetings has been steadily climbing, from under 200 meeting delegates in the early 1990s to over 500 meeting delegates in 2006 (ICCAT, 2008a) (Figure 4).

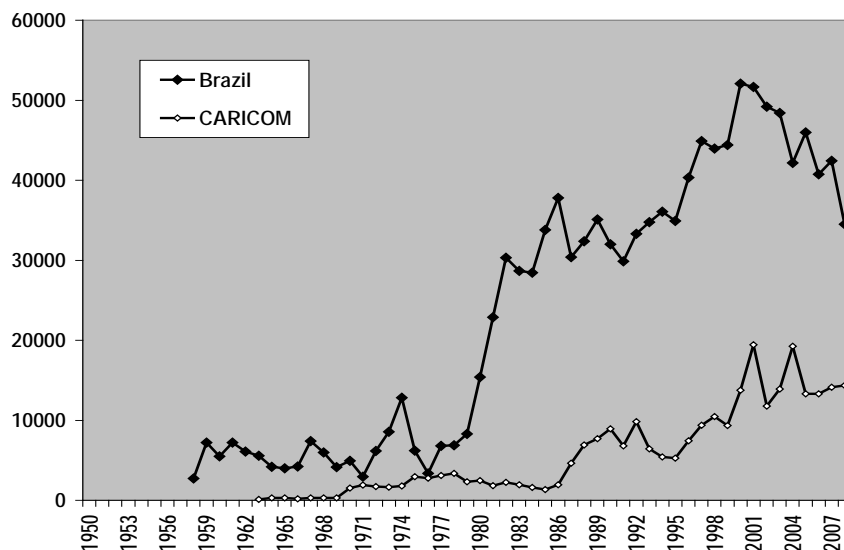


**Figure 4: History of participation in ICCAT SCRS and Commission meetings of delegates representing Contracting Parties (CPs), Non-Contracting Parties (NCPs), and international organizations and the Food and Agriculture Organization (ORGS+FAO) {Source of data: ICCAT (2008a)}.**

### 5.5. More rewards for more active participation and contribution to ICCAT

Some countries have been comparatively more aggressive in their ICCAT participation strategies, and such strategies have resulted in significant tangible benefits, e.g. Brazil. Brazil managed to achieve notable developments of its tuna and tuna-like fisheries during the 1990s (see Figure 5), at the same time when ICCAT was adopting many more restricting management measures and stock recovery plans that imposed reduced catches for some species. Moreover, Brazil now enjoys a strong position within ICCAT, primarily through its ongoing efforts to increase its contributions directly to ICCAT's scientific and Commission activities, including, *inter alia*: hosting of several key ICCAT meetings, assuming chairmanship responsibilities at both the ICCAT SCRS and Commission levels, fulfilment of basic membership obligations, and contributing to the debate and formulation of ICCAT management regulations.

In comparison, the CARICOM group of countries within ICCAT also enjoyed an overall, though proportionally smaller increase in the catches of its tuna fisheries (also shown in Figure 5). The CARICOM gains have been a result of the following: certain standard gains achieved when the countries concerned joined ICCAT; partial remedial actions in response to ICCAT punitive measures; development of justifications to gain approval for correction of errors in the ICCAT database; and development of negotiating positions for catch quota increases, to the extent afforded by present limited meeting participation and contribution.



**Figure 5: Total annual catches of tuna and tuna-like fishes by Brazil and the CARICOM countries within ICCAT {Data obtained from ICCAT (2010a)}.**

### 5.6 Working Group on the Future of ICCAT (WGFI)

In 2006, ICCAT established this Working Group primarily in view of the fact that several new international agreements and conventions, embracing new scientific and management thinking, have been adopted and enforced since the establishment of ICCAT in 1969. The WGFI held its first meeting in 2009, and made numerous recommendations to update ICCAT's approaches (ICCAT, 2010b). The salient recommendations include: revision of the ICCAT Convention to include concepts such as the precautionary approach and ecosystem management approaches; revision of the membership contribution scheme; revision of the operations of the Compliance Committee; revision of approach to the allocation of fishing opportunities (catch quotas) consistent with fishing capacity; expanding assistance to coastal developing states; implementation of the recommendations arising from the independent review of ICCAT's performance completed in 2008 (ICCAT, 2009a).

## **6. Acquiring ICCAT Contracting Party (Membership) status and its advantages**

Acknowledging ICCAT's mandate and mode of operation, it is clear that membership in ICCAT and participation in the two main annual meetings should be given urgent consideration by those States that have established tuna and tuna-like fisheries or, which intend to develop such fisheries in the foreseeable future.

## 6.1 Procedure for becoming a Contracting Party to ICCAT

If a country wishes to become a Contracting Party to ICCAT, an instrument of adherence to the **International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas** must be deposited with the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (**FAO**). Membership becomes effective on the date that the instrument is deposited (in reality, the date on which FAO advises the ICCAT Secretariat that the instrument of adherence has been deposited). Appendix 1, extracted from the ICCAT website, provides further information on becoming a Contracting Party to ICCAT, as well as information on becoming a Cooperating Party to ICCAT.

**A new membership contribution scheme entered into force in 2006.** Further information on ICCAT's financial period, changes in its annual operating budget over time, and the new membership contribution scheme are given in Appendix 2. The new membership contribution scheme has approximately halved the contributions previously paid to ICCAT by several Developing States. It should be noted that for those CARICOM/CRFM States that are already members of ICCAT (excluding UK Overseas Territories), the annual membership financial contribution usually represents a small percentage of the overall value of the national tuna and tuna-like fisheries.

Table 2 shows the annual membership financial contributions (in Euros) of CARICOM States to the ICCAT budget for 2007-2010. It should be noted that an individual state's annual contribution can change markedly, with industry changes in fulfillment of the criteria used in the calculations (see Appendix 2 for further explanations). For example, Trinidad and Tobago's annual contribution in 2007 was much higher than its estimated contributions for 2008-10, primarily because its total annual national catch of tuna and tuna-like species fell from just above the threshold level of 5,000 t in 2006 to less than 5,000 t in 2007 and subsequent years.

**Table 2. The annual membership contributions to the ICCAT budget (in Euros) for the period 2007-2010, paid by those CARICOM States that are currently members of ICCAT. The levels of annual membership contribution range widely, depending on a combination of criteria that could change from year to year, mainly: per capita GNP classification as explained in Appendix 2, tuna catch and canning activities species, and ICCAT panel membership. The catch and canning amounts and ICCAT panel membership for 2010 for the CARICOM States concerned are also shown here. Data obtained from: ICCAT (2007a, 2008b, 2009b, 2010c).**

Country	2007 fees & budget (Euros)	2008 fees & budget (Euros)	2009 fees & budget (Euros)	2010 fees & budget (Euros)	2010 catch & canning amount (t)	2010 panel membership (0-4)
Barbados	3,330.87	3,340.04	3,438.56	4,052.75	275	0
Belize	15,277.50	15,642.08	16,095.29	18,890.61	662	4

St. Vincent and the Grenadines	15,207.72	12,943.69	13,322.26	19,505.31	2817	3
Trinidad and Tobago	33,891.15	16,951.24	17,504.87	17,277.67	3492	2
<i>Total annual ICCAT budget</i>	<i>2,323,024.11</i>	<i>2,442,052.26</i>	<i>2,525,082.04</i>	<i>2,714,755.90</i>		

## 6.2 Consideration of Panel Membership at ICCAT

There are 4 species panels, two of which would be of interest to most CARICOM/ CRFM States: Panel 1 deals with ‘Tropical Tunas’ (yellowfin tuna, bigeye tuna and skipjack tuna), and Panel 4 deals with ‘Other Species’ including billfishes (marlins and sailfish), swordfish, small tunas (e.g. king mackerel and wahoo), and sharks. Given that the number of species being handled by Panel 4 has expanded considerably, the WGFI has requested the Commission to consider creating a new Panel 5 to deal with shark species only (ICCAT, 2010b).

*Panel membership is considered essential to guarantee a Party’s fishing interests.*

## 6.3 Benefits of ICCAT Membership

Membership in ICCAT can confer the following advantages if a State participates actively in ICCAT activities:

- I. Member States of ICCAT can directly influence and modify ICCAT management and conservation regulations before these are adopted and enforced. In this way, ICCAT Member States have adequate opportunity to have their needs and interests considered, especially if a particular regulation is impractical and/or could have severe socio-economic implications. On-site representation at ICCAT meetings can ensure that specific clauses are included in the texts of ICCAT management and conservation regulations in order to take into account any special conditions required by Member States.
- II. Member States can negotiate directly to obtain equitable catch quotas, which, of course, is most effective if there is a delegation on-site during the negotiations.

***NB: A country MUST have either Contracting Party status or Cooperating Party status in order to be given due recognition in the allocation of ICCAT catch quotas.***

- III. Active, regular contribution to ICCAT's scientific activities enhances a country's compliance (responsible fishing) profile, and by this means, also strengthens catch quota negotiating positions.
- IV. Advantages I - III guarantee a predictable and stable future environment for the optimal development of any State's tuna and tuna-like fisheries, including future opportunities for international trade in tuna and tuna-like fish products, and hence foreign exchange earnings.

The following points highlight specific reasons for active and directed participation in ICCAT.

- I. Many of the large tuna and billfish stocks within the ICCAT Convention Area are overfished. ICCAT membership has also been growing rapidly since the late 1990s, mainly because all interested countries want to establish agreed levels of access to the resources concerned. This is because of the finite nature of fish resources, which limits the possibilities available for further expansion of the fisheries concerned.
- II. There are growing limitations regarding access to other, non-tuna resources normally exploited by CARICOM/ CRFM fishing fleets. CARICOM/ CRFM States should therefore pursue vigorously alternative fishery development opportunities that include the tuna and tuna-like resources, consistent with their due rights by international law, thus ensuring maximum due benefits as well.
- III. CARICOM/ CRFM States need to ensure that their current and anticipated levels of fishing investments yield maximum returns, both socially and economically.
- IV. Given that CARICOM/ CRFM States are either island or coastal States or territories, these States have traditionally been dependent on fresh fish as one of the primary sources of food protein for their people. In view of growing concerns about food security, more active participation in ICCAT is required to guarantee consistently stable access to tuna and tuna-like resources in the ICCAT Convention Area that includes the Caribbean Sea.
- V. Fresh and local seafood is a major feature of the culinary attractions available to tourists in many CARICOM/ CRFM States. Hence, there is a need to guarantee continuation of the fresh seafood supply to the tourist industry.
- VI. Billfishes are very abundant in CARICOM/ CRFM waters and are the main target species that sustain the sport fishing sector that is an integral part of the tourism industry. Active cooperation in the management of Atlantic billfish will enhance the Caribbean's global image as a billfish conservation-friendly vacation destination.

## **7. Participation in the SCRS and Commission Meetings**

While it is necessary for CRFM States to send national delegations to the annual Commission Meetings and to have inputs into the formulation of any new ICCAT recommendations and resolutions being considered by the Commission each year, it is also desirable for CARICOM/

CRFM States to participate in the annual SCRS (Standing Committee on Research and Statistics) Meetings. During the SCRS meetings, the statuses of Atlantic tuna and tuna-like resources are evaluated and discussed in order to develop management advice for consideration by the Commission.

### 7.1 Benefits of participation in the SCRS

Participation in the ICCAT SCRS meetings confers the following benefits.

- I. Through its contribution to statistics and research, the participating state enhances its record of responsible fishing and compliance with ICCAT, which in turn strengthens that state's position to negotiate successfully for reasonable fish catch quotas.
- II. CARICOM/ CRFM States can make use of the broader membership of ICCAT and co-operative scientific expertise available at the ICCAT SCRS meetings to address the assessment and management of more regionally important shared tuna and tuna-like resources such as king mackerel and wahoo (kingfish).
- III. CARICOM/ CRFM national scientists will learn more about ICCAT assessment and research methods that have applications for improving the management of other fisheries, e.g. the dolphinfish fishery, which is a large pelagic fishery but which is not currently controlled by ICCAT.

### 7.2 Composition of Meeting Delegations

- I. In respect of the annual SCRS Meetings, the scientific delegation should consist of one or more senior large pelagic fish stock assessment scientists. If funds permit, the delegation should also include a blend of skills in fisheries biology, marine ecology, and statistics.
- II. In respect of the annual Commission Meetings, the national delegation should consist of:  
(a) one or more senior fisheries management and policy personnel (from the Ministry and/or from the Fisheries Division/Department); (b) at least one lawyer who has good familiarity with the relevant international legal instruments, as well as ICCAT procedures for drafting and adopting regulatory measures; and (c) at least one stock assessment scientist serving as the scientific/ technical advisor.

### 7.3 ICCAT Meeting Participation Costs

- I. The annual ICCAT SCRS (Scientific) and Commission Meetings are held every year, with at least the SCRS Meeting usually held in Spain. The cost of participation, including airfare, food and hotel accommodation, is about US\$5,000-US\$7,000 per person per meeting.
- II. Inter-sessional meetings can be held in any ICCAT Member State and participation costs could range from US\$5,000 to US\$8,000 per person per meeting.



## 8. A brief history of CARICOM/ CRFM representation and participation in ICCAT since 1991

CARICOM representation and participation in ICCAT Meetings have been facilitated since 1991 by the CARICOM Fisheries Unit (CFU, now the CRFM Secretariat) through its regional programmes: during 1991-1999 by the CARICOM Fisheries Resource Assessment and Management Programme (CFRAMP), and during 2000-2002 by the Fisheries Component of the Integrated Caribbean Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Development Programme (ICRAFD). The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) Secretariat replaced the CARICOM Fisheries Unit in 2003. The CRFM was formally established in 2002 as a regional fisheries organization, and ensures continuity in CARICOM representation at ICCAT and the essential support provided by such representation. Since 2003, the CRFM Secretariat has also provided legal support at the ICCAT Commission meetings, assisted in this regard through representation at key ICCAT meetings by staff from the General Counsel Office of the CARICOM Secretariat.

Through its representation at ICCAT and provision of technical support to CARICOM countries, the CARICOM Fisheries Unit /the CRFM Secretariat has played a crucial role in guiding the development of CARICOM national and regional ICCAT participation strategies for the benefits of the States concerned. These included the following.

- I. **Remedial action strategies for Belize** – ICCAT imposed three trade sanctions on Belize for allegedly carrying out illegal fishing activities: in 1996 for bluefin tuna and its products (ICCAT, 1997a,b), in 1999 for Atlantic swordfish and its products (ICCAT 2000a,b), and in 2000 for bigeye tuna and its products (2001a,b). It should be noted that these trade sanctions began to impact the revenues gained from other sectors of the fishing industry in Belize, as well as requests for foreign aid, especially from Japan. Prolonged CARICOM/CRFM collaboration with the Belize Fisheries Department and later directly with IMMARBE that operates Belize's open ship registry, resulted in the establishment of a High Seas Fishing Act (Anon., 2003), and significant remedial measures being put in place. *The CARICOM/CRFM-Belize-government-IMMARBE collaboration resulted in the lifting of all trade sanctions against Belize in 2004 (ICCAT, 2003a,b; ICCAT, 2004). Continued CRFM collaboration and advice has also ensured that IMMARBE continues to make progress with improving the management of tuna fishing vessels included in its open registry, and has also resulted in Belize enjoying a stronger position at ICCAT for catch quota requests. In particular, during its first Commission meeting as a member of ICCAT in 2005, Belize gained acceptance by ICCAT to harvest allocated catch amounts of the following tuna resources: up to 130 mt of north Atlantic swordfish; up to 150 mt of south Atlantic swordfish; up to 2000 mt of bigeye tuna (ICCAT, 2006; ICCAT, 2007b). Other tuna resources that Belize was allowed to harvest as a Contracting Party, and consistent with active regulations at the time were: skipjack tuna; yellowfin tuna; up to 200 mt of northern albacore; and up to 100 mt of southern albacore.*

- II. **Remedial action strategies for St. Vincent & The Grenadines** – St. Vincent and the Grenadines was placed under an ICCAT bigeye tuna trade sanction in 2000 for allegedly carrying out illegal fishing activities (ICCAT 2001a,b). Like Belize, St. Vincent & the Grenadines operates an open ship registry that is monitored by the government, and from which the government gains significant revenue through registry fees. Prolonged CARICOM/CRFM collaboration with the St. Vincent & the Grenadines Fisheries Division resulted in the establishment of a High Seas Fishing Act (Anon. 2001), and significant remedial measures being put in place (ICCAT, 2003a,c). *The CARICOM/CRFM collaboration resulted in the lifting of the bigeye tuna trade sanction against St. Vincent & the Grenadines in 2004 (ICCAT, 2003a,c; ICCAT, 2004). St. Vincent & the Grenadines continues to operate its open ship registry, which still includes large-scale fishing vessels for tuna and tuna-like species within the Atlantic Ocean. St. Vincent and the Grenadines now also enjoys a stronger position at ICCAT for handling its catch quota requests (e.g. ICCAT 2007b).*
- III. **Protection of Grenada’s billfish fishery** - During the late 1990s-early 2000s, Grenada had been the recipient of queries and threats of punitive action by ICCAT in respect of increased levels of fishing for blue and white marlin (e.g. ICCAT 2004) and for Atlantic swordfish, at a time when fish stock rebuilding plans were being implemented. In the case of the marlins, CARICOM/CRFM presented a case to ICCAT that Grenada’s fishing fleet was considered artisanal in nature, and that the ICCAT marlin regulations did not apply to Grenada. Given that Grenada had recently introduced some larger vessels, ICCAT agreed to review the definition of artisanal fisheries so that Grenada would only have to regulate the marlin catches of larger vessels. To date, Grenada has been able to continue harvesting blue and white marlin without further queries or threats of punitive actions from ICCAT. In 2002, the tuna and billfish fish industry in Grenada produced 1484 mt of fish, valued at US \$5,683,473, of which 631 mt was exported, with a market value of US \$3,731,360. *Given that billfish comprised 228 mt (36%) of the 2002 tuna/ billfish catch, the CARICOM/CRFM representation at ICCAT ensured protection of as much as US\$1,343,290 annually in fisheries-related revenues for Grenada at that time (ICCAT, 2004).*
- IV. **Protection of Grenada’s swordfish fishery** - In the case of Atlantic swordfish, when ICCAT began to enforce catch quotas in 1994, most countries were expected to limit their catches to the levels reported in 1993 (ICCAT, 1995). Grenada had harvested only 13 mt of Atlantic swordfish in 1993. However, when the Grenadian economy began to feel the negative impact resulting from declines in the banana industry at that time, many Grenadians turned to fishing as a new source of employment. This resulted in Grenada’s annual catch of Atlantic swordfish rising to 42 mt in 1999 and then doubling to 84 mt in 2000. During the 2000 and 2001 ICCAT Commission meetings, the increased swordfish catches by Grenada caused concern (ICCAT 2000a). CARICOM/CRFM prepared a defending statement on behalf of Grenada (ICCAT 2002b). *The CARICOM/CRFM inputs ensured that Grenada was*

*not sanctioned, and Grenada's annual harvest level of 84 mt was accepted as necessary for that country (ICCAT, 2002b). At a price of approximately US\$3.829/kg for swordfish (2001 Grenada Fisheries Division data), the permitted increase from 13 mt to 84 mt of swordfish for Grenada resulted in an increase in annual economic benefits by US\$271,918.*

- V. **Protection and expansion of Trinidad and Tobago's swordfish industry** - In the late 1990s, this country had been the recipient of ICCAT queries in respect of swordfish harvest levels (ICCAT, 1997a; ICCAT, 1998). Like Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago had harvested and reported a low amount (only 11 mt) of Atlantic swordfish in 1993. However, Trinidad and Tobago's swordfish industry continued to show growth and the production levels rose to as much as 158 mt in 1996. ICCAT began corresponding annually with Trinidad and Tobago from 1997, documenting the ICCAT Commission's concern about the increased swordfish catches by Trinidad and Tobago. Trinidad and Tobago attended the 1997 Annual ICCAT Commission meeting and presented ICCAT with information about that country's efforts to manage the swordfish fishery. In 1999, Trinidad and Tobago became a member of ICCAT, and from 2000, began attending the annual ICCAT Commission meetings. At the 2001 ICCAT Commission meeting, Trinidad and Tobago, assisted by CARICOM/CRFM, prepared a position paper advising ICCAT about errors in the ICCAT database in respect of Trinidad and Tobago swordfish statistics (ICCAT, 2002c,d). *Through CARICOM/CRFM collaboration, this effort resulted in gaining acceptance by ICCAT for an increase in the annual swordfish catch limit up to 68 mt (ICCAT, 2002c,d), valued at approximately US\$406,578 (using US Bureau of the Census data for swordfish imports in 2001).* In 2002, CARICOM/CRFM had participated in the annual ICCAT scientific meeting and realized that, due to some stock recovery evidence, the Atlantic swordfish catch quotas would be increased that year. CARICOM/CRFM worked with a representative from Trinidad and Tobago to prepare a position paper for negotiating a further increase in the swordfish catch quota allocated to that country (ICCAT, 2003d). *Through CARICOM/CRFM collaboration, this position paper resulted in ICCAT granting Trinidad and Tobago an increase in its annual swordfish quota from 68 mt to 125 mt, yielding an additional US\$340,808 of annual revenue for the swordfish fishery from 2003 (ICCAT, 2003d,e).*
- VI. **Protection and expansion of Barbados' swordfish industry** – During 1997-1999, Barbados had been the recipient of queries from ICCAT in respect of its Atlantic swordfish production levels (ICCAT, 1998; ICCAT, 2000a). Barbados had no swordfish catches in 1993, but harvested and reported a total of 33 mt in 1996. Barbados has continued to harvest swordfish since then, but at lower levels. *The CARICOM/CRFM inputs were primarily in terms of advising Barbados of the ICCAT concerns, and actions that were needed to avoid the imposition of trade sanctions. Barbados became a member of ICCAT in 2000. In 2002, when the Atlantic swordfish quota was increased for all countries and despite the small size of the Barbados*

*fishery, Barbados was granted an annual swordfish quota of 25 mt, with an estimated market value of US\$149,477 (using US Bureau swordfish import price data for 2001), allowing that country the option to expand its swordfish industry (ICCAT, 2003e).*

- VII. **Strategies to improve tuna fisheries statistical reporting, management compliance, and management gains by CARICOM/ CRFM countries –** CARICOM/ CRFM has maintained a regular level of participation in ICCAT annual scientific and Commission activities since 1991. This has enabled CARICOM/ CRFM to provide informed technical support to CRFM countries dealing with all ICCAT matters, including ICCAT letters of enquiry, reporting obligations, and opportunities for increasing catch quotas. *The CARICOM/CRFM efforts have resulted in more regular and improved reporting of tuna and tuna-like fishing operations to ICCAT by those CRFM States with established fisheries, and have also increased CRFM State awareness of ICCAT and its activities.*
- VIII. **Development of a regional position for revision of ICCAT catch allocation criteria –** During 1999-2001, a specially established ICCAT Ad Hoc Working Group on Catch Allocation Criteria conducted 4 meetings to develop a new suite of catch allocation criteria. This was essentially in response to the call by several Developing States, with Brazil playing a leading role, which considered that ICCAT's catch allocation negotiation process used unfair and limited criteria to determine country allocations. These efforts resulted in the formulation of a new suite of catch allocation criteria for achieving more equitable catch allocations among ICCAT States. *In terms of the CARICOM/ CRFM contribution to this process, CARICOM/ CRFM developed a regional position that was put forward through representation at ICCAT provided by Trinidad and Tobago on behalf of CARICOM and the region (ICCAT, 2002e). The regional position succeeded in facilitating positive consideration and incorporation of a number of Developing Country concerns into the formulation of a new agreed ICCAT suite of catch allocation criteria for achieving more equitable catch allocations among ICCAT States (ICCAT, 2002a). Singh-Renton et al. (2003) reviewed the rationale of the regional position and provided insight on the challenges posed by the new suite of allocation criteria adopted by ICCAT and the opportunities for addressing these.*
- IX. **Development of country positions to facilitate catch quota negotiations.** Further details have already been provided in preceding sections. *Specific advice was requested of and provided by CARICOM/ CRFM concerning preparation of catch quota requests for: north Atlantic swordfish for Trinidad and Tobago in 2002 (ICCAT, 2003d,e); several tuna species for Belize in 2005 and 2006 (ICCAT, 2006; ICCAT, 2007b); north Atlantic swordfish for St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 2006 (ICCAT, 2007b).*

- X. **Assistance to Guyana with application for Co-operating Party status in 2003, and in the handling of allegations in respect of IUU fishing activities in 2007.** In 2003, CARICOM/ CRFM assisted Guyana in the preparation of its application for ICCAT Cooperating Party status, and also presented Guyana's case during the discussions of the 2003 Commission meeting that resulted in the granting of Cooperating Party status to Guyana (ICCAT, 2004). This Cooperating Party status has been renewed every year since 2003. During 2007, ICCAT raised concerns about 2 vessels that were believed to be flagged with Guyana and involved in IUU tuna fishing activities. CARICOM/CRFM worked in collaboration with Guyana to investigate the allegation, and prior to the 2007 Commission meeting, Guyana was able to write to ICCAT, confirming that the vessels were no longer registered with Guyana. *CARICOM/ CRFM support and assistance has enabled Guyana to continue to retain ICCAT Co-operating Party status (e.g. ICCAT 2008c; ICCAT, 2009c; ICCAT, 2010d: ICCAT, in press).*
- XI. **Enhanced profile of CARICOM, the benefits of which are extended to CARICOM Member States, e.g. sponsored training and data collection projects.** The regular participation of CARICOM in ICCAT meetings since 1991, and CARICOM's persistent efforts to improve the contributions of its Member States to ICCAT's management process has enhanced CARICOM's profile at ICCAT. In view of this, ICCAT copies all CARICOM-related correspondence to the CARICOM/CRFM Secretariat, and seeks CARICOM/CRFM support and cooperation in all activities involving CARICOM States. *CARICOM/CRFM support and assistance facilitated the successful completion of an ICCAT-sponsored training workshop in data collection and analysis that was held in Guyana in February 2009 (Anon., 2010). Additionally, CARICOM/CRFM support and assistance enabled completion of two technical reports advising ICCAT of required ICCAT database revisions, and is currently facilitating development of proposals to obtain further sponsorship from ICCAT for improvement in port monitoring programs (CRFM, 2009).*
- XII. **Informal provision of general advice to UK Overseas Territories (UK OTs) on ICCAT issues.** At various times, selected UK OTs have requested general information and advice from CARICOM/ CRFM on ICCAT matters. This was to facilitate an informed response by the UK OTs to their ICCAT delegation for establishing informed negotiating positions, e.g. catch quota transfer requests, review of the progress of Chinese Taipei proposed remedial measures to address instances of excessive catch quota overages, northern bluefin tuna management measures. *The CARICOM/CRFM collaboration has provided an independent source of information on ICCAT developments and the implications of potential ICCAT measures on the sustainability and advancement of tuna fisheries within the Caribbean region where some UK OTs are located.*

## **9. Recommendations for improving ICCAT participation strategies**

Options for improving overall management of large pelagic fisheries in CARICOM countries, and the essential roles of States and the CRFM in strengthening cooperation with ICCAT for achieving long-term security of the benefits derived from these fisheries, have been given attention in the past (FAO, 2004; Singh-Renton and Haughton, 2004). Many of the recommendations formulated during these reviews are still valid but remain to be implemented. Following, therefore, is a general recommendation outlining the initial steps to be taken by individual States and the CRFM for achieving proactive ICCAT participation.

Acknowledging the value of large pelagic/tuna and tuna-like fisheries to the CARICOM/ CRFM region, and the current and potential contribution of these fisheries to the region's developing economies and to food security,

Recognizing the need to pursue strategies for food security, poverty alleviation and the creation of employment opportunities through the sustainable development of these fisheries,

And hence appreciating the need to protect present, and to secure future associated investments and benefits,

CARICOM/ CRFM States are urged to consider the following initial steps for achieving proactive ICCAT participation.

I. CARICOM/ CRFM States, which have tuna and tuna-like fisheries (tunas, billfishes and sharks) that: (i) contribute a significant percentage of the overall profits enjoyed by the national fishing industry, or (ii) take a total tuna and tuna-like harvest of at least 1,000 tons annually, or (iii) harvest less than 1,000 tons annually but that harvest species for which ICCAT has adopted specific catch and/or effort controls, or (iv) are developing rapidly through fleet and technology expansion and therefore are increasing harvests correspondingly, or (v) are not currently developed but which are expected to develop substantially within the next 5 years, should:

- Give urgent consideration to becoming a Contracting Party to ICCAT;
- Make the necessary budgetary allocations for ICCAT membership, for full active and regular participation in ICCAT activities, and for strengthening the capacity of fisheries divisions and departments to handle the associated, additional scientific, legal and management workload;
- Ensure active on-site participation in at least the annual ICCAT SCRS and Commission Meetings.

II. CARICOM/ CRFM States, which have small tuna and tuna-like fisheries that: (i) contribute a small percentage of the overall industry's profits, or (ii) harvest less than 1,000 tons of tuna and tuna-like species that are not subjected to ICCAT catch and/or effort controls, or (iii) are not expected to expand over the next 5 years but could expand thereafter, should consider participating in ICCAT activities in an observer capacity initially.

III. Each CARICOM/ CRFM State is urged to conduct a cost/benefit analysis of full membership in ICCAT, to gain a quantitative appreciation of the potential/current value of ICCAT membership in ensuring realization of the full range of social and economic benefits, in accordance with each State's development plan that outlines its needs for access to tuna and tuna-like resources in the context of exploitation rights and fishing opportunities.

IV. If not already completed, each CARICOM/ CRFM State is urged to develop a long-term fishery development plan for its tuna and tuna-like fisheries, so as to facilitate more strategic planning and implementation of ICCAT participation. Moreover, given that several large tuna and billfish species are currently strictly regulated by ICCAT, it is important to document and appreciate each State's dependence on the small tuna and tuna-like fisheries with regard to the present status of fishing activities, as well as the contribution of these fisheries to the State's social and economic development and well-being. Also in view of the present ICCAT management situation regarding the large tunas and billfishes, each CARICOM/ CRFM State is urged to explore and pursue available investment opportunities to develop both the fishing and processing industry for some of the small tuna and tuna-like species, while opportunities for such development exist.

V. At the regional level, the Caribbean Fisheries Forum should consider and formulate a strategy to improve regional collaboration and coordination towards the attainment of more effective ICCAT participation for the benefit of present and future CARICOM/CRFM tuna and tuna-like fishery interests.

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2 Position was supported by the following States at the time of its presentation: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, and St. Lucia.



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**APPENDIX 1: Procedure for becoming a Contracting Party  
and a Cooperating Party to ICCAT  
(Source: ICCAT website, [www.iccat.int](http://www.iccat.int))**

**Contracting Party Status**

The Commission may be joined by:

Any government that is a member of the United Nations (UN)

Any government that is a member of a Specialized Agency of the United Nations

Any inter-governmental economic integration organization constituted by States that have transferred to it competence over the matters governed by the ICCAT Convention

To become a Contracting Party, an instrument of adherence to the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas must be deposited with the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Membership becomes effective on the date that the instrument is deposited.

**Cooperating Status**

The Commission can also grant the special status of Cooperator. Cooperators have many of the same rights and obligations that Contracting Parties have.

The procedures and criteria for attaining this status are laid out in the 2003 Recommendation by ICCAT on criteria for attaining the status of Cooperating non-Contracting Party, Entity or Fishing Entity in ICCAT. Those wishing to attain Cooperating Status should make their application through the Secretariat 90 days before the annual meeting, which usually takes place in November.

**APPENDIX 2: ICCAT Financial period,  
Current Membership Contribution Scheme applied, and  
budget allocation by country grouping  
(Source: ICCAT website, www.iccat.int)**

The financial period of the Commission is the two calendar years following the date of its regular meeting (regular meetings take place every other year). Budget estimates are submitted to the Contracting Parties not less than 60 days prior to the opening of the regular meeting. Funding of the budget is by annual financial contributions made by the members of the Commission, and are payable in Euros or United States Dollars.

The change in the total budget approved by the Commission has increased over time. The annual budgets for the period 1999-2011 are shown below (in million Euros).

Year	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999
Million Euros	2.71	2.71	2.71	2.44	2.32	2.17	2.17	1.94	1.68	1.62	1.52	1.48	1.19

**Calculation Scheme**

The Madrid Protocol, which is in force since March 2005 has been used for the calculation of the 2006 and subsequent budget contributions. This scheme divides the Contracting Parties into four groups (essentially based on classification of market economies and per capita GNP, and on tuna catch and canned production), with every Contracting Party in each group being assigned a portion of the Commission's total budget. The intent of this scheme is to reduce the financial burden on less developed countries. The budget calculation scheme is summarized as follows:

- US\$1,000 for the basic Commission fee and US\$1,000 for each Panel membership.
- Group D countries are assigned [0.25] percent of the budget.
- Group C countries are assigned [1.0] percent of the budget.
- Group B countries are assigned [3.0] percent of the budget.
- Group A countries are assigned the percentage of the Budget remaining after assignment to the other three Groups.

**Notes:**

Group A: Countries with developed market economies.

Group B: Countries not included in Group A, with per capita GNP exceeding [US\$2,000] (adjusted to 1991 dollar values) and with combined tuna catch and canning exceeding [5,000 MT].

Group C: Countries not included in Groups A or B, with per capita GNP exceeding [US\$2,000] or whose combined catch and canned production exceeds [5,000 MT];

Group D: Countries not included in Groups A, B or C.

The US dollar amounts and MT amounts in [ ] are variables, which may be modified, by Commission decision.

The division of the annual budget by country grouping (A, B, C, and D) is illustrated in the following table for the 2010 budget.

**Table showing contributions by ICCAT Member group for 2010. Fees expressed in Euros.**

<i>Groups</i>	<i>Parties (a)</i>	<i>Panels (b)</i>	<i>Catch + Canning (c)</i>	<i>% of each Party (d)</i>	<i>% of the Budget (e)</i>	<i>Commission Fees (f)</i>	<i>Panels fees (g)</i>	<i>Other fees (h)</i>	<i>Total fees (i)</i>
<b>A</b>	8	21	513,212.3 0	---	60.00%	5,408.00	14,196.0 0	1,609,249.5 4	1,628,853.5 4
<b>B</b>	6	19	130,081.6 7	3.00 %	18.00%	4,056.00	12,844.0 0	471,756.06	488,656.06
<b>C</b>	18	35	157,191.0 0	1.00 %	18.00%	12,168.00	23,660.0 0	452,808.06	488,656.06
<b>D</b>	16	19	18,966.67	0.25 %	4.00%	10,816.00	12,844.0 0	84,930.24	108,590.24
<b>TOTA L</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>819,451.6 3</b>		<b>100.00 %</b>	<b>32,448.00</b>	<b>63,544.0 0</b>	<b>2,618,763.9 06</b>	<b>2,714,755.9 0</b>

a Number of Contracting Parties per Group.

b Number of Panels within each Group.

c Total catch and canning, in t, of each Group.

d Percentage of the budget financed by each member of each Group according to the Madrid Protocol

e Percentage of the budget financed for each Group.

f Commission membership fees within each Group

g Panel membership fees within each Group.

h Other fees: 1/3 for Commission and Panel membership and 2/3 for catch and canning

i Total contributions per Group.