

**ECHEBASTAR SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP
MINUTES OF MEETING: 28th JANUARY 2021**

PARTICIPANTS

- Echebatar: José Luis Jauregui & Ian Scott
- AZTI: Ane Iriondo, Marga Andrés

MINUTES

The meeting opened at 10.00 (CET)

1. MSC Second Annual Surveillance Audit (SASA)

Echebatar has formally requested the CAB to request a variation to delay the second audit until late October 2021 to take account of the IOTC meeting programme, progress in the CFTO and AGAC assessments, and to coordinate, if possible, with the Maldives 4th ASA.

2. Progress in Meeting Defined Milestones for Conditions to Certification

Condition 1	
PI	2.3.3 ETP species information
Condition	By the fourth annual surveillance audit, the client must demonstrate that information is adequate to measure trends and support a strategy to manage impacts on ETP species.
Year 2: Milestone	Years 1-3. Echebatar must provide evidence at the 1-3 annual surveillance audits that the amount of processed data available has been significantly improved and that protocols for data processing have been established to assure the provision of the data required in future years.
Progress 1/21	While there have been issues with the continuity of data due to the impact of Corona (observer numbers), there is no reason to believe that this will prevent SASA auditors from concluding that Echebatar has met the milestone.
Condition 2	
PI	2.4.1 Habitat outcome
Condition	By the fourth annual surveillance audit, the client must demonstrate that FADs are highly unlikely to reduce structure and function of coral reefs to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm.
Year 2: Milestone	Echebatar must provide evidence to the second annual surveillance that the plan has been fully implemented with a description of the actions undertaken.
Progress 1/21	It is anticipated that FADWATCH and the Echebatar/AZTI project will provide evidence to the SASA auditors that Echebatar has met the milestone.
Condition 3	
PI	2.4.2 Habitats management strategy
Condition	By the third annual surveillance audit, the client must provide evidence that a partial strategy in place that is expected to result that it will be highly unlikely that derelict FADs could reduce structure and function of the coral reefs to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm.
Year 2: Milestone	Echebatar must provide evidence to the second annual surveillance that the partial strategy has been fully implemented with a description of the actions undertaken.
Progress 1/21	It is anticipated that the implementation of FADWATCH, the Echebatar/AZTI project, reduced number of FADs, bio-degradable FADs and accounting of active FADs will provide evidence to the SASA auditors that Echebatar has met the milestone. Given that results from all those activities will not be confirmed in 2021, the condition will likely remain open in the 3 rd year.
Condition 4	
PI	2.4.3 Habitats information
Condition	By the fourth annual surveillance audit, the client must provide evidence that information is adequate to allow for identification of the main impacts of derelict FADs on coral reefs, and there is reliable information on the spatial extent of interaction and on the timing and location of use of the fishing gear.
Year 2: Milestone	Year 2-3. Echebatar must provide evidence to the second and third annual surveillance that information is being collected.
Progress 1/21	The identified activities above should show that the milestone is being met. If progress is as expected it may be possible that the condition will be closed at 3ASA.

Condition 5	
PI	2.5.3 Ecosystem information
Condition	<p>Sl.a. By the fourth annual surveillance audit, the client must provide evidence that the main impacts of the FADs used in the UoA/UoC on these key ecosystem elements can be inferred from existing information, and some have been investigated in detail.</p> <p>Sl.d. By the fourth annual surveillance audit, the client must provide evidence that there is adequate information on the impacts of the UoA on these components to allow some of the main consequences for the ecosystem to be inferred.</p>
Year 2: Milestone	Echebatar must provide evidence to the second annual surveillance that the preferred option for investigation continues to be implemented
Progress 1/21	While it is to be confirmed, it may be that the report by Maria Jose may allow SASA to close the condition. It will be useful to have the outcomes of the AGAC and CFTO assessments.
Condition 6	
PI	3.1.2 Consultation, roles and responsibilities
Condition	By the third annual surveillance audit, the management system in the Seychelles includes consultation processes that regularly seek and accept relevant information, including local knowledge. The management system demonstrates consideration of the information obtained.
Year 2: Milestone	Echebatar will provide evidence to the audit team in the second annual surveillance audit that the consultation process for tuna management in the Seychelles has met regularly with stakeholders and a formal record of those meetings as made available to all stakeholders is provided to the team.
Progress 1/21	Two aspects may allow SASA to conclude that the milestone has been met; Echebatar communications with the Government; and Echebatar associate membership of SBOA.
Condition 7	
PI	3.2.1 Fishery-specific objectives
Condition	By the second annual surveillance audit, short and long-term objectives, which are consistent with achieving the outcomes expressed by MSC's Principles 1 and 2, are explicit within the fishery-specific management system
Year 2: Milestone	Echebatar will provide evidence to the audit team in the second annual surveillance audit on the progress of the establishment of explicit short and long-term objectives for the Seychelles skipjack tuna fishery within the management system for the national purse fishery for skipjack tuna. Expected outcome:
Progress 1/21	This issue must be monitored in the initial months of 2021 to assess progress and identify actions for the second and third quarters. It will be useful to have the outcome of the AGAC assessment.
Condition 8	
PI	3.2.2 Decision-making processes
Condition	By the third annual surveillance audit: Sl.d. Information on the fishery's performance and management action relevant to private agreements is available on request, and explanations are provided for any actions or lack of action associated with findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring, evaluation and review activity
Year 2: Milestone	Echebatar will provide evidence to the audit team in the second annual surveillance audit that information on private agreements is available to stakeholders
Progress 1/21	This issue must be monitored in the initial months of 2021 to assess progress and identify actions for the second and third quarters. It will be useful to have the outcomes of the AGAC and CFTO assessments.
Condition 9	
PI	PI 1.2.1 Harvest strategy
Condition	By the first annual surveillance audit following re-certification (anticipated to be in 2024), the client must demonstrate that the harvest strategy is responsive to the state of the stock and the elements of the harvest strategy work together towards achieving stock management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG80 (i.e., it is highly likely that the stock is above the PRI and is at or fluctuating around a level consistent with MSY).
Year 2: Milestone	Echebatar must provide evidence at the Year 2 surveillance that, independently or jointly with industry groups, it has worked with relevant management authorities to press for IOTC action on ensuring adoption of appropriate measures consistent with scientific advice and responsive to the state of the stock such that management objectives reflected at PI1.1.1 are met.

Progress 1/21	Echebatar has clear evidence that it has pressed for IOTC to act on HS, with the latest example being the submission to SS4.
Condition 10	
PI	PI 1.2.2. Harvest control rules and tools
Condition	By the first annual surveillance audit following re-certification (anticipated to be in 2024), the client must demonstrate that available evidence indicates that the tools in use are appropriate and effective in achieving the exploitation levels required under the HCRs.
Year 2: Milestone	Echebatar must provide evidence at the Year 2 surveillance that, independently or jointly with industry groups, it has worked with relevant management authorities to press for IOTC action on implementing measures that are effective in ensuring catch limits for skipjack tuna set using the HCR adopted in IOTC Res16/02 (or any successor) are not exceeded.
Progress 1/21	Echebatar has clear evidence that it has pressed for IOTC to act on HCR & T , with the latest example being the submission to SS4.

3. Biodegradable FADs

JL reported that Echebatar had made considerable progress. The last issue was the floaters buoys that are made with plastic. An alternative with bio materials is being tested.

Echebatar will report with technical data on materials used.

4. Active FADs

JL confirmed that its vessels are now working as per Echebatar's FAD Management Plan.

5. FADs Accounting

AZTI has implemented the project with data supplied by Echebatar

6. Tables 53/54

Data are up-to-date on:

- Table 53_2020: Echebatar: FADs - Observed Catch and Total Estimated Catch 2020
- Table 53_2020: Echebatar: FSA - Observed Catch and Total Estimated Catch 2020

The % of observed sets over the year has been reduced due to the impact of corona measures on the possibility of observers participating on fishing trips.

7. Report on Component 2.5 Ecosystems

The first draft has been reviewed and M^a Jose Juan Jorda will provide the revised draft by 29/01. This will be reviewed for approval by Echebatar before forwarding to SIOTI.

8. IOTC Special Session 4 - March 2021

Echebatar has drafted a submission for review by SIOTI. This will be considered at the next SIOTI PMT meeting scheduled for 2/02.

JL will participate in SS4 as part of the Seychelles delegation.

9. Habitat

J-L reported that FADWATCH (SIOTI/OPAGAC) is close to implementation. AI reported that AZTI would shortly present the proposal for the new project.

10. Silky shark tagging

JL described Project status.

11. Electronic Monitoring.

JL said that Echebatar is following the work of AZTI in considering the options for implementation. Confirmation was required on SFA requirements

12. SIOTI

JL commented on recent activities and that the work programme for FIP Year 4 would be confirmed in the next week.

13. Other MSC tuna

AGAC - last announcement 3 November 2020 CDR 21 August

CFTO - last announcement 19 November (PCDR)

Micronesia Skipjack, Yellowfin and Bigeye Tuna Purse Seine Fishery - last announcement 3 November CDR 2 August

Eastern Pacific Ocean tropical tuna - purse seine (TUNACONS) fishery- last announcement 6 Dec (change of lead assessor) CDR 24 Sept

PNA - a scope extension to assess skipjack tuna and yellowfin tuna for fish aggregating device (FAD) sets as well as non-FAD sets, and to assess bigeye tuna as P1 species last announcement 19 Jan '21 (stakeholder input) CDR 18 Dec

Eastern Pacific Purse Seine Skipjack and Yellowfin tuna fishery (FSC and FAD set fishery) - Last announcement CDR 20 Dec.

14. Any other business

- Next meeting 26 February, 2021
- Special meeting to be held to consider AZTI habitat proposal. Date to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 11.45 (CET)