# **Blue Belt Overseas Territory Work** Plan: Engagement with RFMOs

# **Extended Work Plan**

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This Work Plan has been developed on the basis of a Blue Belt Programme annual budget of £4m. The Work Plan detail is subject to updates to reflect ongoing delivery. The Programme budget for FY19/20 (and therefore associated activities for FY19/20) is yet to be confirmed.







# **Document Control**

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# **Table of Acronyms**

Acronym	Full
BAS	British Antarctic Survey
CCSBT	Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna
CEFAS	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science
СММ	Conservation Management Measures
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EFZ	Exclusive Fishing Zone
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
ICCAT	International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
IPNLF	International Pole and Line Foundation
ЮТС	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (fishing)
ММО	Marine Management Organisation
ММР	Marine Management Plan
МРА	Marine Protected Area
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organisation
SEAFO	South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation
ИКОТ	United Kingdom Overseas Territory

# Introduction

# **Background information**

The United Kingdom's Overseas Territories (UKOTs) are together responsible for managing in excess of 5 million km<sup>2</sup> of the world's oceans and those waters are home to a great range of iconic, migratory and, in some cases, threatened marine species. Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs), which have been established under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA), are responsible for managing migratory, straddling and high seas stocks in the world's oceans. CCAMLR, having been established under the Antarctic Treaty, is not strictly an RFMO, but performs a similar role in the Southern Ocean.

The geographic location of the UKOTs, which fall within or around the area of competence of many RFMOs, give the UK and it's OTs an opportunity to engage with ten of the 16 RFMOs and with CCAMLR. Such engagement is potentially important to achieve UK policy objectives in terms of sustainability and conservation, as well as allowing the UKOTs access to a share of the resources. In all cases, engagement with RFMOs gives the UK an opportunity to initiate or support action against flag-states whose vessels are engaged in illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

All five tuna RFMOs are of relevance to the UKOT Blue Belt Programme OTs, with their area of jurisdiction overlapping the maritime zones of one or more of the relevant UKOTs. Three of the tuna RFMOs (ICCAT, CCSBT and IOTC) are considered high or medium priority for UKOT engagement. Engagement with ICCAT is essential for the Atlantic (and Caribbean), as it facilitates access to quota and allows the OTs to engage in the management of resources that pass through their waters.

Fisheries under CCSBT, IOTC and ICCAT are a source of mortality for albatross populations breeding on South Georgia, the Falklands and Tristan and, by engaging with these RFMOs, the UKOTs may be able to promote the implementation of suitable mitigation measures and improved reporting.

Five RFMOs (GFCM, NAFO, SEAFO, SIOFA, SPRFMO<sup>1</sup>) only have regulatory powers beyond areas of national jurisdiction and engagement with these organisations is considered a lower priority for the UKOTs. However, some species fished in Tristan waters are shared with the SEAFO area, so some engagement with SEAFO is important.

CCAMLR's area of competence includes the maritime zones of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands and the British Antarctic Territory. CCAMLR is not included here, as it is included in other work outside of the Blue Belt Programme.

# **RFMO Work Programme**

This work programme has been planned to help the OTs engage with relevant RFMOs to ensure that fish stocks are sustainably managed on a regional scale, that UKOTs comply with their obligations to the RFMOs and to ensure that RFMOs are utilised, where appropriate, as a tool for compliance and enforcement within UKOT waters. This document details the work associated with four workstreams for:

- 1. UKOT compliance with ICCAT;
- 2. UKOT science in support of ICCAT;
- 3. Compliance & enforcement;
- 4. Engagement with other RFMOs;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> GFCM – General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean; NAFO – North Atlantic Fisheries Organisation; SEAFO – South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation; SIOFA – Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement; SPRFMO – South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation.

## Workstream 1: UKOT Compliance with RFMOs

Activity: Work with the UKOTs to ensure full compliance with ICCAT Recommendations and reporting requirements and deadlines.

ICCAT Recommendations are legally binding and it is important that UKOTs are compliant with all requirements. The UKOT membership includes Bermuda, British Virgin Islands and Anguilla as well as the Blue Belt OT of St Helena, Ascension & Tristan. UKOT compliance is thus dependent on compliance by non-Blue Belt UKOTs and hence the programme will liaise closely with them. The UKOTs have, in some years, failed to comply with all the necessary requirements. Working closely with the FCO, the Programme will review the reporting requirements and develop reporting templates for each OT, organise regular meetings and co-ordinate the submission of the annual report. The Programme will also assist the OTs with Access agreements as required. As members of ICCAT the UKOTs have the potential to propose new Recommendations or influence those working their way through the various channels within ICCAT.

Table1. Planned tasks for RFMO Work to help UKOTs compliance with ICCAT.

Outcome	Activity	ID	Tasks / Outputs	Description	Deliverables	When	Who
		RFMO 1.1	Provide quarterly briefings to the relevant OTs on the activities of ICCAT	It is important that the UKOTs are aware of developments at ICCAT and feel engaged in interactions with ICCAT.  Quarterly briefings will provide key OT staff with updates from recent ICCAT meetings and activities.	Quarterly briefings and telecons.	Quarterly	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead
	Work with the UKOTs to ensure	RFMO 1.2	Review all reporting requirements for ICCAT	The reporting requirements are onerous and can be daunting. A review of the requirements will be undertaken and a report with recommendations provided to the OTs	Review of submission requirements	Jun-18	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead
UKOTs are compliant with all ICCAT Recommendations and Reporting	Recommendations and reporting	RFMO 1.3	Develop data reporting protocol or system for each	Based on RFMO 1.2, develop protocol for each of the relevant OTs for data reporting and support the OTs in	i. Data reporting protocol	Sep-18	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead
		1.5	OT OT	their annual reporting.	ii. Timely data submissions	Ongoing	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead
Requirements		RFMO 1.4	Annual report to ICCAT	The UKOTs must also provide an annual report with a summary of relevant activities. Liaise with OTs and FCO to collate the annual report to ICCAT, to include summaries of activities (e.g. tagging, observer programmes, inspections) of relevance to ICCAT in each of the member OTs.	UKOT annual report to ICCAT.	Annual (Sept)	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead
		RFMO 1.5	Access agreements	Under ICCAT (and CCSBT) access agreements are required for any foreign vessel fishing in waters under the jurisdiction of a coastal state. Support OTs to ensure appropriate access agreements are in place for any fishing.	Access agreements in place as required	Annual (Sept)	ммо
		RFMO 1.6	Development of new or revised ICCAT Recommendations	Review any proposed new ICCAT Recommendations and consider implications for UKOTs. Liaise with UKOTs and work with other parties to propose or amend Recommendations.	New Recommendations influenced by UKOTs	Sep-2018	MMO & Cefas

# Workstream 2: UKOT Science in support of ICCAT

Activity: Provide scientific input to ICCAT, through scientific research and submission of papers to the Standing Committee on Research & Statistics (SCRS) and subsidiary meetings

ICCAT is responsible for the management of tuna and other migratory species in the Atlantic Ocean, and the area of ICCAT jurisdiction overlaps with the Blue Belt OT EEZs of St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha. The ICCAT area also includes the UKOT waters of Bermuda, British Virgin Islands and Anguilla. Collectively this group of UKOTs are members of ICCAT.

Management of ICCAT stocks is dependent on research and information provided by member states. To ensure that the migratory fish species inhabiting their waters are properly managed it is important the UKOTs engage with ICCAT at the scientific level. This includes undertaking research (e.g. tagging) and analyses and submitting the outcomes to the relevant subsidiary groups of ICCAT. It is also important that the UKOTs contribute to the discussions regarding stock status and quota levels for the species that occur in their waters.

Table 2. Planned tasks

RFMO 2: U	RFMO 2: UKOT SCIENCE IN SUPPORT OF ICCAT											
Outcome	Activity	ID	Tasks / Outputs	Description	Description Deliverables		When	Who				
UK make a valuable contributio n to the scientific work of				Liaise with OTs to develop / support tuna	Tagging programmes developed	Management	Jun- 2018	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead				
		RFMO 2.1	Tagging Programmes	tagging programmes in OT waters. Report data / data analyses to ICCAT to	Tagging manuals	Management	Jul- 2018	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead				
				support management	Paper(s) to ICCAT on tagging data	Management	ТВС	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead				
		RFMO	Submission of biological	Work with OTs to ensure timely submission of biological data and	Papers to ICCAT/SCRS on biology of ICCAT species	Management	ТВС	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead				
	Provide scientific input to	ide 2.2 data and data undertake appropriate analyses of that data to support management of stocks  Attendance at SCRS m to scientific	Attendance at SCRS meeting to contribute to scientific process	Management	Sep- 2018	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead						
	ICCAT,	RFMO 2.3	Stock assessments for ICCAT Species	Support OTs through engagement with relevant ICCAT Stock Assessment meetings. This can be through attendance at meetings or reviewing reports from meetings and providing non-technical summaries for the OTs	Scientific papers; meeting attendance	Management	Various	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead				
ICCAT		SCRS and subsidiary	SCRS and subsidiary	SCRS and subsidiary	SCRS and subsidiary	RFMO 2.4	By-catch analyses and mitigation	Support UKOTs to produce publications on the bycatch rates of vulnerable species and compliance with conservation measures	Scientific papers; meeting participation	Management	Jun- 2018	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead
		RFMO 2.5 ma		Ensure science is appropriately utilised to deliver appropriate management measures in support of UKOT objectives	Attendance at Commission & SCRS meetings	Management	Sep- 2018	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead				
		RFMO 2.6	Report back to UKOTs on ICCAT engagement	Provide annual summary reports and meeting reports to ICCAT member OTs.	Attendance at Commission & SCRS meetings	Management	Nov- 2018	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead				

## Workstream 3: Compliance & Enforcement

#### Activity 1: All RFMOs have an IUU blacklisting process which represents a key option for dealing with IUU in the OTs

All RFMOs have a process to "blacklist" vessels that have engaged in IUU activity. This represents a key sanction option for the UKOTs and understanding the process and it's reporting requirements are key to the UKOTs being in a position to utilise the process (should it be required) in the relevant RFMO. The committees within each RFMO that deal with IUU blacklisting will also provide a forum for highlighting non-compliance where blacklisting may not be proportionate or the evidence is not substantial enough. In the event of a successful blacklisting further surveillance to ensure the obligations on the Flag State are adhered to will contribute to its effectiveness.

#### Activity 2: Develop systems for disseminating non-compliance to relevant RFMO

All RFMOs have requirements upon contracting parties and co-operating non-contracting parties (CPCs) to share intelligence on non-compliance or assist another CPC in the course of an investigation. The requirement to report will play an important role in the Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) efforts of the member CPCs and it is important for UK-OTs to play a role in that effort. Assistance from other CPCs in investigating non-compliance within UK-OTs waters will provide a useful avenue of investigation. In some cases the requirement is not mandatory and the emphasis is on voluntary cooperation, in these cases the UK-OTs should still fulfil engage fully with these processes. Sanitisation of intelligence disseminated to RFMOs (which will be non-EEA) must be robust enough to not reveal surveillance capability and methodology or source information.

## Activity 3: Attendance at RFMO compliance meetings, desk top of monitoring of relevant committees/working groups

All RFMOs have a structure of committees or working groups that are concerned with MCS issues, non-compliance, compliance trends or changes to Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs). The work of these committees/sub-groups can be monitored either through attendance or desk top monitoring of their reporting into the public domain. Awareness of these trends will enable continued compliance with RFMO reporting requirements as CMMs change and use trends in non-compliance to target of surveillance.

#### Activity 4: Analysis of RFMO catch & transhipment data is used to help develop OT risk profiles

Risk profiling of IUU risk in each OT will inform the targeting of surveillance activities and ensure that it is targeted at the areas and times where the IUU risk is highest. Background information/data on fisheries trends/IUU trends may not be generally available within the OTs and RFMO information in the public domain is an important

source in the developing the OT risk profiles. Transhipment and catch data being of particular importance in the profiling exercise. Continued monitoring of such information in maintaining the profile in accordance with trends will also be important.

Table 3. Planned tasks for St Helena Marine Environment and Biodiversity workstream. The lead organisation or contact (where one has been identified) is shown in bold type.

<b>RFMO 3: C</b>	<b>Compliance and Enforcement</b>
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Outcome	Activity	ID	Tasks / Outputs	Description	Deliverables	When	Who
				Analysis of reporting requirements of IUU for blacklisting process in each RFMO	Procedure document	Aug-18	ММО
UK-OTs are able to utilise Blacklisting of vessels engaged in IUU	Develop procedure for blacklisting in each RFMO/OT	RFMO 3.1	All RFMOs have an IUU blacklisting process which represents a key option for dealing with IUU in the OTs	Annual reporting schedule for each RFMO/OT	Timely reporting	Aug-18	ммо
		3.1		Input to RFMO compliance meetings for blacklisting where relevant	Input to RFMO/black listing where needed	Annual	MMO/FCO /RFMO delegation
				Ensuring blacklisting requirements are adhered to by relevant parties	Procedure document for NMIC	Aug-18	MMO/ NMIC
UK-OTs comply with requirement	Develop systems		UKOTs report non-compliance	Analyse non-compliance reporting requirements for each OT – what is to be reported to who and when	Report analysing reporting requirements	Aug-18	MMO/ NMIC
to report non- compliance detected	for disseminating non-compliance to relevant RFMO	RFMO 3.2	curvaillance in	Set dissemination requirements for NMIC for reporting non-compliance	Dissemination policy	Apr-18	MMO/ NMIC
through surveillance efforts	to relevant Krivio			Standard reporting by NMIC	Operational dissemination to RFMOs	Jul-18	MMO/ NMIC
UK-OTs/ NMIC have situational	Attendance at RFMO compliance meetings, desk	RFMO	OT compliance is sustained by OTs	Correct committees/working groups are attended/monitored - officer tasked for each RFMO	Tasking assigning RFMO responsibility	Jul-18	ММО
awareness of compliance	top of monitoring of relevant	3.3	as CMMS are amended or changed.	Situational awareness of compliance activities of RFMOs	Analysis of reports and quarterly reporting	Jul-18	ММО

trends and CMM changes	committees/work ing groups		Reporting protocols where required	UK-OTs are aware of changes in RFMO CMMs	Quarterly reporting	Jul-18	ммо/от
				MMO/NMIC/UK-OT are aware of RFMO compliance trends	Quarterly reporting	Jul-18	ММО
RFMO compliance	Analysis of RFMO catch &		Open source	Assessment of data available	Report	Sept-18	ММО
utilised in	information is transhinment	data is used to 3.4 inelp develop OT	availahle	Identification of spatial/temporal patterns for risk profile	Report	Sept-18	ММО
management				Incorporate into OT risk profile	OT risk profiles and vessel threat profiles	Sept-18	MMO/ NMIC

## Workstream 4: Engagement with RFMOs

Activity 1: Support UKOTs as observers at SEAFO meetings.

The UKOTs are not members of SEAFO, but the demersal longline and trawl fisheries at Tristan da Cunha are relevant to discussions on the stock status and management recommendations at SEAFO. Although there are currently no direct reporting requirements it would be beneficial for the OTs to engage with fisheries management in the wider SEAFO area. Relevant research conducted through the Blue Belt programme includes the stock assessment and longline fishery mortality levels of bluenose warehou in the Tristan da Cunha EEZ and pelagic dispersal of larvae over the seamounts.

#### Activity 2: Support UKOTs at Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT)

CCSBT develop appropriate management strategies for the conservation of southern bluefin tuna, including setting total allowable catch and allocating quota plus administering regulations on ecologically related species. Non-members are encouraged to participate as observers or apply for cooperating non-membership. The compliance committee reviews the adherence with conservation measures, including seabird bycatch mitigation, but the requirements reflect other RFMOs. Therefore, a watching brief is most appropriate for CCSBT at this time. If Tristan da Cunha decide to licence SBT then attendance at CCSBT would become more relevant.

#### Activity 3: Support UKOTs at other RFMOs as appropriate

There are other RFMOs that are of relevance to the Blue Belt OTs, including IOTC, IATTC and WCPFC<sup>2</sup>. MRAG currently represent BIOT (UKOTs) at IOTC, but there is no UK or UKOT engagement with IATTC or WCPFC. The programme will maintain a watching brief on these RFMOs and engage if and when required.

#### Activity 4: UKOTs are aware of EU withdrawal and possible implications for UKOT membership at RFMOs

The UK's exit from the EU has implications for the UKOTs, particularly in those RFMOs which the UKOTs are members and hold quota. It will be important to keep the UKOTs informed of the potential implications of the UK's exit and ensure that the UKOTs have a voice in relevant discussions.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> IOTC – Indian Ocean Tuna Commission; IATTC – Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission; WCPFC – Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

Table 4. Details of work planned under the Engagement with other RFMOs work stream

Outcome	Activity	ID	Tasks / Outputs	Description	Deliverables	When	Who
UKOTs engage with other RFMOs as appropriate to ensure sustainable management of regional marine resources					Summary report to SEAFO on relevant fisheries in Tristan EEZ	Oct-18	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead
	Support UKOTs	RFMO	Provide quarterly	SEAFO are responsible for non-ICCAT species in ABNJ in the SE Atlantic & the SEAFO CA	Report following attendance at SEAFO Scientific Committee	Nov-18	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead
	as observers at SEAFO	4.1	briefings to the relevant OTs on the activities of SEAFO	surrounds the EEZs of Tristan, St Helena and Ascension. Bluenose, which is exploited in the Tristan EEZ straddles the SEAFO zone and	Report following attendance at SEAFO Scientific Committee	Nov-18	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead
			activities of SEAFO	information is highly relevant to SEAFO	Provide feedback to OTs on SEAFO activities and developments, including advice on SEAFO CMs that may be appropriate for OT implementation	Dec-18	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead
	Support UKOTs at CCSBT	RFMO 4.2	Maintain a watching brief on developments at CCSBT, particularly in relation to seabird mortality and mitigation	CCSBT are responsible for SBT fishery, which is thought to be a major source of mortality of seabirds, including South Georgia & Tristan albatross populations.	Annual review of CCSBT activities of relevance to UKOTs	Oct- 2018	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead
	Support UKOTs at other RFMOs as appropriate	TS RFMO Maintain a watching OS 4.3 brief on other RFMOS		MRAG currently represent BIOT (UKOTs) at IOTC, but there is little UK involvement in other RFMOs of relevance to Pitcairn (IATTC & WCPFC).	Annual review of SC and Commission reports, noting information and activities of relevance to UKOTs	Mar-19	CEFAS – OT RFMO Lead
	Attendance at relevant DEFRA / FCO meetings	RFMO 4.4	UKOTs are aware of EU withdrawal and possible implications for UKOT membership at RFMOs	Current RFMO membership is through UKOT or EU delegations. This is subject to change at EU withdrawal. Quota allocation in ICCAT may also change	Input into DEFRA meetings and reporting to UKOTs	On- going	MMO & Cefas

# **Summary of Meeting Attendance**

RFMO	Meeting	Detail	Start	End	Days	Location	Priority	Who	Lead	Prep & Report	Total Time	T&S Cost
	IMM Working Group	Monitoring, IUU etc	09/04/18	12/04/18	4	Madrid	М	Andrew Deary	ммо	3	6	500
	Bigeye tuna data preparatory meeting	Bigeye tuna is a key species for UKOTs and has been overfished in recent years	23/04/18	27/04/18	5	Madrid	L	None				
	Stock Assessment Methods	Considers / reviews stock assessment methods	07/05/18	11/05/18	5	Madrid	L	None				
	Sub-committee on Ecosystems	Addresses by-catch species and other non-target species	04/06/18	08/06/18	5	Madrid	М	Oliver Yates	Cefas	3	7	750
	Bigeye stock assessment	Bigeye tuna is a key species for UKOTs and has been overfished in recent years	16/07/18	20/07/18	5	Pasala, Spain	М	Piera Carpi	Cefas	3	7	750
ICCAT	Intersessional meeting of Panel 1	UKOT joined Panel 1 at 2017 meeting and it is important that UKOTs are properly represented.	23/07/18	25/07/18	3	Bilbao	Н	Martin Collins	Cefas	3	5	500
	SCRS Species Group Meetings	Agenda TBC	24/09/18	28/09/18	5	Madrid, Spain	М	Cefas PB6	Cefas	4	8	750
	SCRS	Agenda TBC	01/10/18	05/10/18	5	Madrid, Spain	Н	Piera Carpi	Cefas	4	8	750
	Commission (Special Meeting)	Agenda TBC	12/11/18	19/11/18	8	Croatia	Н	Martin Collins and Andrew Deary	Cefas	3	10	2400
	Compliance Committee	Agenda TBC	10/11/18	11/11/18	2	Croatia	Н	Andrew Deary	ммо	2	3	500
SEAFO	Scientific Committee	Scientific advice on the status and harvesting levels of resources	19/11/18	23/11/18	5	Swakop	Н	Oliver Yates or Martin Collins	Cefas	3	7	- 2000
SEAFU	Commission	Establish input to meet the requirements of the Organisation.	26/11/18	30/11/18	5	Swakop	Н	Oliver Yates or Martin Collins	Cefas	3	7	2000

### **Key Deliverables:**

- D1: Review of ICCAT reporting requirements (Jul 2018);
- D2: Tagging manual for UKOTs (Aug 2018);
- D3: UKOT data submitted to ICCAT to ensure full compliance (various reporting deadlines);
- D4: UKOT annual report submitted to ICCAT on behalf of the member OTs (September 2018) and template provided for future submission;
- D5: Reports (to FCO & OTs) following attendance at SEAFO Scientific Committee and Commission (Annually, November);
- D6: Reports (to FCO and OTs) following attendance at ICCAT Commission, SCRS and other meetings (Annual);
- D7: Operational dissemination by NIMIC to RFMOs (Jul 2019);
- D8: Report on blacklisting process at each RFMO, including advice on procedures for UKOTs (Sep 2018);
- D9: Annual review of CCSBT activities of relevance to UKOTs (Oct 2018).