

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS



COMMISSION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA
CONSERVATION DES THONIDES DE L'ATLANTIQUE

COMISION INTERNACIONAL PARA LA
CONSERVACION DEL ATUN ATLANTICO

Madrid, 22 May 2026

ICCAT CIRCULAR # 04097 / 2026

SUBJECT: CALL FOR TENDERS – SKIPJACK AGE VALIDATION USING BOMB RADIOCARBON

I should like to transmit a Call for Tenders for the *Skipjack age validation using bomb radiocarbon*, which will be carried out within the Tropical Tuna Research and Data Collection Programme (TTRaD), in line with the SCRS workplan for this year.

I would be grateful if you could distribute this Call for Tenders to qualified people and institutions that may be interested.

ICCAT is kindly requesting a quotation for such work, which shall be developed according to the Terms of reference herein attached. The detailed offer shall be submitted **only to the attention of** the ICCAT Executive Secretary, [Mr Camille Jean Pierre Manel](#), and Cc'ing [Ms. Stasa Tensek](#), by **3 June 2026**.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Executive Secretary

Camille Jean Pierre Manel

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Attachment: Terms of Reference – Skipjack age validation using bomb radiocarbon



Terms of Reference

Skipjack age validation using bomb radiocarbon

1. Background

The Tropical Tuna Research and Data Collection Plan has a primary aim to focus on the development and coordination of science and science-related activities needed to support provision of sound scientific advice for the conservation and management of tropical tuna in the Atlantic. In 2025, the Tropical Tuna species group established the priorities for the activities to be developed within Research Plan during 2026-27 which were approved by the SCRS and the Commission during the 2025 Annual Meeting.

While there are many knowledge gaps as regards skipjack biology, the uncertainty in age validation remains an important data gap. The most recent stock assessments for skipjack stocks used three scenarios of growth to account for this lack of information, which also affected natural mortality estimates. To reduce this uncertainty, the Group recommended that a validated reference age collection and standardized age key for input in stock assessment be produced. Therefore, a study on age validation was planned to be started in 2026, with potential to be carried out in 2026 and 2027.

2. Objective

To undertake an age-validation study for skipjack tuna, i.e. using bomb radiocarbon methodology, with a focus on validating the growth band deposition periodicity throughout the lifespan and early growth of skipjack tuna.

3. Contractor tasks

The Contractor will work in close consultation with the ICCAT Secretariat and will provide a detailed description of how work will be progressed. The following activities should be developed:

- 1) Contact laboratories (university and national institutes, and museum collection) which have offered otolith/spine samples and request that they are provided/shared for the age validation work. Organize the sample exchange and transport to the processing laboratories.
- 2) Preliminary sample processing and laboratory work related to age validation of SKJ, preferably using bomb radiocarbon methodology.
- 3) Initial data analysis and interpretation of the results.
- 4) Attend the 2026 September Tropical Tuna Species Group Meeting, where an SCRS Document should be provided and presented related to progress with the work carried out.

4. Deliverables

Deliverable #1. A progress report, including an overview of samples collected to date, in a form of an SCRS document, shall be submitted by **7 September 2026** and presented at the Tropical Tunas Species Group Meeting (14-16 September 2026).

Deliverable #2. A draft final document, to be prepared in a form of an SCRS document, shall be submitted by **1 December 2026** and include a:

- a) Executive summary.
- b) Full description of the work carried out.
- c) Description and interpretation of preliminary results



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- d) Any difficulties related to the current work.
- e) Proposals for further activities to be developed for achieving the objectives of the project.

Deliverable #3. A **final report**, prepared taking into account all comments and revisions made by the relevant SCRS officers and the ICCAT Secretariat on draft final document, shall be provided by **31 December 2026**.

5. Contractor minimum qualifications

- Documented multi-year experience on age validation work, preferably with experience in Tropical tuna species.
- Availability of sufficient qualified scientific and technical staff to carry out the activities.
- Excellent working knowledge of one of the three official languages of ICCAT (English, French, Spanish). A high level of knowledge of English is highly desirable.

6. Submission of proposals

The proposals should be developed according to these Terms of Reference. The detailed offer shall be submitted by e-mail **only** to the attention of Mr. Camille Jean Pierre Manel (camille.manel@iccat.int), the ICCAT Executive Secretary, and Ms. Stasa Tensek (stasa.tensek@iccat.int), by **03 June 2026**, including:

- a) Acknowledgment of this Call for Tenders.
- b) A detailed offer, based on the Terms of Reference of this Call for Tenders, describing the methodologies to be used.
- c) The curriculum vitae of the principal scientist(s).
- d) The curricula vitae of the institution(s) or entity(ies) involved.
- e) A detailed budget for the activities to be carried out, including unit prices (if applicable) and information on time to be assigned to the different work to be done (if applicable),
- f) The name, address, and telephone number of the tendering body and the focal point for the work and reporting components.
- g) The bank account of the tendering body, (bank name, account number, IBAN and SWIFT codes), and the VAT identification code.
- h) A statement specifying the extent of agreement with all terms, conditions, and provisions herein included, particularly specifying the date for the draft final report (**Deliverable #2**) and the date for the final report (**Deliverable #3**).

Offers that fail to furnish the required documentation or information, or that reject the terms and conditions of the Call for Tenders will not be considered.

Contractors can be either research institutions, such as government or private laboratories, universities, private firms, individual scientists or other entities having the qualifications required.

The Contractor should be available to report to any meeting requested by ICCAT.

7. Duration of the contract

The work under this contract will be concluded by **31 December 2026** at the latest.

8. Payment details

Disbursements will be made according to the following schedule:

1. **50%** of the total amount of the contract upon **signing of the contract** and after receiving a regular invoice which may be submitted at the latest 30 days after the signature of the contract.



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2. **30%** of the total amount of the contract upon the provision of the **progress report (Deliverable #1)** and after receiving a regular invoice.
3. **20%** of the total amount of the contract, after **approval of the final report (Deliverable #3)** and after receiving a regular invoice and a complete set of documents concerning the expenses incurred under the contract, no later than **31 December 2026**.

9. Selection of proposals

The ICCAT Secretariat will review the offer(s). Following the revision process, the ICCAT Executive Secretary will notify the entity selected for the contract as soon as the selection process is completed. The contract will be awarded on the basis of competitive tendering and the evaluation of proposals will be undertaken objectively, consistently and without bias towards particular suppliers.

Proposal(s) will be evaluated against a pre-determined set of criteria, which include: i) cost (30%); ii) proven track record (20%); iii) technical merit based on work plan (40%); and iv) flexibility as regards future changes in requirements (10%).

10. Logistics

All documents provided by the Contractor must be in MS Word or compatible software; tables must be in Excel format or compatible; figures and pictures must be in JPEG or TIFF format or compatible. Tagging data will be included in the ICCAT tagging database. All documents submitted must be in English.

11. Copyright

All the material produced by the Contractor will remain the property of the ICCAT, will be kept confidential, and cannot, in any case, be circulated by the Contractor. The scientific use of the data by the Contractor will always be notified to ICCAT in advance for clearance.

For further information concerning this Call for Tenders, please contact the ICCAT Secretariat the following address: miguel.santos@iccat.int.