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, 29 de noviembre de 2024

CIRCULAR ICCAT # 11968/ 2024

ASUNTO: CONVOCATORIA DE OFERTAS – RESPALDO A LA RECOPILACIÓN DE DATOS REGIONALES SOBRE EL CARIBE PARA MEJORAR LA COMUNICACIÓN Y ANÁLISIS DE DATOS – FASE 2

Me complace transmitirle adjunta la convocatoria de ofertas para el "Respaldo a la recopilación de datos regionales sobre el Caribe para mejorar la comunicación y análisis de datos" - fase 2.

Le agradecería que distribuyera esta convocatoria de ofertas entre las personas y las instituciones cualificadas que puedan estar interesadas.

Le saluda atentamente,

Secretario ejecutivo

Camille Jean Pierre Manel

DISTRIBUCIÓN:

- **Cargos de la Comisión:**

Presidente de la Comisión:	E. Penas Lado	**Presidente del COC:**	D. Campbell
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Segundo vicepresidente:	R. Chong	**Presidenta del STACFAD:**	D. Warner-Kramer
Presidentes Subcomisiones 1 a 4		**Presidente del SCRS:**	C. Brown

- **Jefes de delegación/jefes científicos**
- **Partes, Entidades o Entidades pesqueras no contratantes colaboradoras**

Documentación adjunta: Términos de referencia - Respaldo a la recopilación de datos regionales sobre el Caribe para mejorar la comunicación y análisis de datos (fase 2) (solo en inglés)

Terms of Reference

Support for Regional Caribbean Data Collection to Improve Reporting and Data Analysis, Phase 2

1. Background and objectives

Following the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, the Deepwater Horizon Natural Resource Trustees conducted a Natural Resource Damage Assessment to evaluate needs for restoration of injured resources. In 2016, a U.S. court approved a financial settlement through which the company responsible committed to pay up to $8.8 billion in damages to address natural resource injuries. A panel of experts identified species that would be prioritized for restoration project funding, which included Atlantic yellowfin tuna and Atlantic blue marlin. As a result, in 2023, the United States provided a voluntary contribution to ICCAT through the Deepwater Horizon Caribbean Restoration Fund. This financial contribution is intended to complement the work of ICCAT's Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) by strengthening data collection and analysis in data-poor areas of the western-central Atlantic, Caribbean Sea, and southern Gulf of Mexico. The project will identify gaps in data and infrastructure, analyze the impacts of these limitations, and provide direction for future data collection activities and restoration work, where appropriate, to address natural resource injuries from the oil spill.

Understanding data collection systems in the Caribbean region requires an understanding of the characteristics of fleets operated by the different countries. This is mostly because it is a complex of large scale, semi-large scale, and artisanal fleets that direct their operations towards tunas and tuna-like species (ICCAT-species). Many Caribbean nations operate fisheries for ICCAT species including artisanal/small-scale longline, drift-gillnet, and handline (trolling, dropline) fisheries for commercial, subsistence and recreational purposes. Yet some critical information on tunas and tuna-like species caught in these fisheries is unknown or poorly estimated because of limited fisheries monitoring and minimal analysis of existing data sources. Although some of these fisheries are conducted by ICCAT Contracting Parties, or Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties, others in the region are not members of ICCAT. In light of limited data availability, an earlier ICCAT-funded study identified some possible next steps to develop a comprehensive approach to data aggregation and compilation in the region (Arocha, 2019).

During Phase 1 of this project current information available from Caribbean fisheries for tuna and tuna-like was collated to identify gaps in data and infrastructure that highlight opportunities for future restoration, with a particular focus on yellowfin tuna and blue marlin (although not limited to these species). During Phase 1 a number of countries were identified as priority for conducting activities in Phase 2. These countries were among those reporting catches that contributed to the top 95% of the total Atlantic catch for either yellowfin tuna blue marlin or both. In addition to this, such countries had unexplained data gaps in the catch reports since 2000. Project activities focusing on such countries would have the most potential for impactful improvements on fishery data and monitoring capacity. These countries are a mix of ICCAT CPCs, non-members and countries with or without large industrial vessels. According to Phase 1, the countries to be considered in the activities of the current project are provided in **Table 1**. Many of these countries have challenges in terms of fishery governance and weak monitoring capacity, often due to lack of human resources, difficulties maintaining the statistical sampling systems and database software (Die *et al.*, 2024, Fernandez *et al.*, 2024).

Table 1. Priority countries to be considered in activities of the current project.

Country	*Larger harvester of*	*Data gap or issue*	*CPC or non-CPC*
Trinidad and Tobago	BUM and YFT	Gap in BUM 2017-2020 and 2022	CPC
Dominican Republic	BUM	Gap in BUM 2017-2022	Non-CPC
Grenada	YFT	Gap in YFT 2000-2002	CPC
Belize	YFT	Gap in YFT 2002-2005	CPC
Dominica	BUM	Gap in BUM 2000, 2012, 2013	Non-CPC
Guatemala	YFT	Gap in YFT 2000-2002	CPC
Venezuela	BUM and YFT	Increase uncertainty in reports	CPC
Costa Rica	BUM	New CPC	CPC

Phase 1 also revealed that there are documents available in ICCAT, FAO and general literature repositories that can help explain some of the gaps in fishery data that occur in ICCAT databases. There are examples in the region in which CPCs have been able to recover historical data series in ICCAT species, as well as resolve gaps in specific catch series of specific ICCAT species (Arocha *et al.*, 2015a, Arocha, *et al.*, 2015b). Literature search and thorough analysis of the data included in documents has often been used to improve global fishery data (Zeller *et al.*, 2015, 2016) and applied to other pelagic tuna fisheries (Heidrich *et al.*, 2023). Although these analyses are effective they can be enhanced by the development of a general repository for the information gathered during the initial analysis. Having a live repository of information can facilitate periodical updating of the database and provide researchers hoping to conduct for future analyses with access to data that is often difficult to access.

Gaps and under-reporting of information on ICCAT species (including yellowfin tuna and blue marlin), can only be resolved with direct participation and involvement of the national statistical correspondent and national scientists with the help of ICCAT specialists. Data recovery activities are always more effective when they involve national statistical correspondent, national scientists and industry stakeholders. Phase 1 identified that the next phase of the project should include involving in-country experts and field visits so that fishery actors, including those involved in the industry, can be asked to provide some of the knowledge they have on the history and operations of their fisheries. Phase 2 will address specific information gaps in the Caribbean region, as identified in Phase 1, and contribute to restoration of yellowfin tuna and blue marlin.

2. Contractor activities

Phase 2 of this study, **Regional Caribbean Data Collection to Improve Reporting and Data Analysis**, will focus on the countries identified in the background section above. The addition of any other country must be justified in accordance with the project objectives. Work conducted during Phase 2 must contain the following elements:

a) Analyze all possible sources of information to explain such inconsistencies, including a review of historical documents on ICCAT related fisheries;
b) Collaborate with country experts to provide alternative estimates of fishery statistics when appropriate. Information that may be consider include peer review and technical documents, data available in country, information gathered from stakeholder interviews with key informants, etc.;
c) Thoroughly review current monitoring processes for fishery catches of ICCAT species, including sampling design, database management and estimation of catches and effort required to be reported to ICCAT, and ensuring that the information is submitted using the official standardized ICCAT forms;
d) Wherever possible, provide support to enhance data monitoring processes in study countries aiming at improving statistical estimation of catch and effort and the collection of biological sampling for ICCAT fisheries;
e) Review of governance systems.

f) Update and continue to develop a digital data repository of the information obtained during the project.

NOTE: It is expected that these activities may also characterize the fisheries data and facilitate the reporting of other ICCAT species, irrespective of the emphasis on yellowfin tuna and blue marlin.

The contractor may consider the Caribbean region capacity needs identified in Die *et al.* (2024). Any activity that can address any of such needs will be considered as an added benefit during the contract awarding process.

3. Contractor minimum qualifications

- Documented multi-year experience in research on large pelagic species with experience in fishery data collection.
- University degree in one of the following: fisheries science, marine biology, statistics, natural sciences, biological sciences, environmental sciences or closely related fields (in case of individual scientists).
- Excellent working knowledge of two of the three official languages of ICCAT (English and Spanish). A high level of English is desirable.

4. Deliverables

1) For each country in the study, provide an SCRS document to be presented at the SCRS Subcommittee of Statistics (tentatively on **26 September 2025**) containing:

   - a summary of the in-country collaborative activities aimed at improving data reported to ICCAT;
   - recommendations for future improvement of monitoring processes.

2) A presentation of overall study results to the Subcommittee of Statistics (tentatively on **26 September 2025**)

3) For the overall study:

   - a proposed strategy for enhancing data from countries not included in Phase 2;
   - a workplan to support the incorporation of data improvements from the study into ICCAT databases;
   - a web-based document repository for work products (e.g., Google drive or SharePoint). SCRS Officers will have access to project files and may choose to engage in the project at their individual discretion.

4) A draft final report of the study shall be provided by **17 October 2025** at the latest. The report will be reviewed by the ICCAT Secretariat and selected SCRS Officers. The Contractor will need to consider the comments from this review process before the final report is submitted to the ICCAT Secretariat.

5) A final report of the study shall be provided by **31 October 2025** at the latest, which should address possible comments mentioned above provided by the ICCAT Secretariat and selected SCRS Officers.

However, in case funding became available for 2026, the activities may be extended until 30 April 2026. Accordingly, deliverables #4 and #5 above will be changed as detailed below and two additional deliverables shall be provided:

4) For each country in the study provide an updated SCRS document to those mentioned in deliverable #1 above, to be provided by **13 April 2026**, containing:

   - a summary of the in-country collaborative activities aimed at improving data reported to ICCAT;
   - recommendations for future improvement of monitoring processes.

5) A presentation of overall study results to the Subcommittee of Statistics (tentatively on **25 September 2026**).

Deliverables #4 and #5 shall be presented at the SCRS Subcommittee of Statistics (tentatively on **25 September 2026**). Attendance to the meeting can be done online.

6) A draft final report of the study shall be provided by **13 April 2026** at the latest. The report will be reviewed by the ICCAT Secretariat and selected SCRS Officers. The Contractor will need to consider the comments from this review process before the final report is submitted to the ICCAT Secretariat.

7) A final report of the study shall be provided by **30 April 2026** at the latest, which should address possible comments mentioned above provided by the ICCAT Secretariat and selected SCRS Officers.

5. Payment details

Disbursement will be made according to the following schedule:

1) 40% 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 signature of the contract.

2) 40% of the total amount of the contract upon receipt of Deliverables #1, #2 and #3 and after receiving a regular invoice.

3) 20% of the total amount of the contract upon receipt of the final version of Deliverables #5 and its acceptance by the ICCAT Secretariat, and after receiving a regular invoice and a complete set of documents concerning the expenses incurred under the contract.

However, in case funding became available for 2026 and the activities are extended until 30 April 2026, payment #3 above will be as follows and an additional payment will be considered:

3) 10% of the total amount of the contract upon receipt of the SCRS document and presentation referred to as deliverable #4 and #5 above, and after receiving a regular invoice.

4) 10% of the total amount of the contract upon receipt of the final version of Deliverables #7 and its acceptance by the ICCAT Secretariat, and after receiving a regular invoice and a complete set of documents concerning the expenses incurred under the contract.

6. Submission of proposals

The proposals should be developed according to the Terms of Reference herein attached. The detailed offer(s) shall be submitted **only to the attention** of the ICCAT Executive Secretary of ICCAT, Mr. Camille Jean Pierre Manel, and Cc'ing Ms. Stasa Tensek, by **13 December 2024 (18:00, Madrid time)**, including:

a) A detailed offer that shall include: i) a detailed description of the activities to be carried out; and ii) a detailed (breakdown) budget;
b) The *curriculum vitae* of the tenderer (in the case of individual scientists) and of any collaborator (sub-contractor);
c) The *curriculum vitae* of the institution (if an institution is the service provider), with any relevant documented experience;
d) The name, address, and telephone number of the tendering person/entity;
e) The institutional and administrative background of the tendering person/body (e.g., statutes, type of institution, annual budget, budget control procedures, etc. (if applicable));
f) A list of any relevant subcontracting activities;
g) The declaration that the offering person/entity shall follow the ICCAT procedures and formats for the provision of data;
h) A declaration that all the comments eventually made will be incorporated into the final reports prior to submission to the ICCAT Secretariat;
i) Acknowledgment of this Call for Tenders (if applicable);
j) A statement specifying the extent of agreement with all terms, conditions and provisions included in the attached Terms of Reference.

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

7. Selection of proposals

The ICCAT Secretariat will review the offer(s). Following the review 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.

The proposal(s) will be evaluated against a pre-determined set of criteria, which include: (i) cost; (ii) proven track record; (iii) technical merit based on workplan; and (iv) flexibility in relation to future changes to requirements.

8. Logistics

All documents provided by the Contractor must be in open format ODF 1.2 (click here) such as MS Word or "*.odf" of Apache OpenOffice and LibreOffice, figures must be in Excel format or compatible, figures and pictures must be in JPEG or TIFF format or compatible. All documents submitted must be in English.

Data must be provided in the standard ICCAT format for statistics. The biological data must be submitted in a format to be defined by the ICCAT Secretariat.

9. Copyright

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

References

Arocha F., Pazos, A., Larez, A., Silva J., and Gutierrez, X. 2015a. Enhanced monitoring of large pelagic fishes caught by the Venezuela artisanal off-shore fleet targeting tuna and tuna-like species in the Caribbean Sea and adjacent northwestern Atlantic waters: Final analysis. ICCAT, Col. Vol. Sci. Pap. 71: 2316-2333.

Arocha, F., Larez, A., Pazos, A., Gutiérrez, X., Marcano, L. and Silva, J. 2015b. Billfish catch in the Venezuelan artisanal off-shore pelagic longline fleet: past and present (1986-2013). Col. Vol. Sci. Pap. 71: 2203-2216.

Arocha F. 2019. Comprehensive study of strategic investments related to artisanal fisheries data collection in ICCAT fisheries of the Caribbean/Central American Region: Draft Final Report. Col. Vol. Sci. Pap. 75(8): 2319-2368.

Die D.J., Arocha, F., Mayor, C. and Fernandez F. 2024. 2024 ICCAT workshop in the Caribbean (West Atlantic) region for the improvement of statistical data collection and reporting on small-scale (artisanal) fisheries. Col. Vol. Sci. Pap., 81(11): 1-18.

Fernandez M., Die, D.J., Arocha, F., Mayor, C., Thomas, A., Ferreira, A., Martin, M., Taylor, C., King, J., Pinkard, D., Cardoso, L.G., Souza, A., Ferreira Matsunaga A.M., Bowen, C., and Martin C. 2024. Statistical data collection and reporting on small-scale (artisanal) Caribbean fisheries - Synthesis report for English-speaking countries. Document SCRS/2024/175 (withdrawn).

Heidrich, K. N., Meeuwig, J. J., & Zeller, D. 2023. Reconstructing past fisheries catches for large pelagic species in the Indian Ocean. Frontiers in Marine Science, doi: https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2023.1177872.

Zeller, D., Harper, S., Zylich, K. et al. 2015. Synthesis of underreported small-scale fisheries catch in Pacific island waters. Coral Reefs 34, 25–39. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00338-014-1219-1.