



Madrid, 19 July 2024

## ICCAT GBYP CIRCULAR # G-00515/2024

### SUBJECT: ICCAT ATLANTIC-WIDE RESEARCH PROGRAMME FOR BLUEFIN TUNA (GBYP) - ELECTRONIC TAGGING IN PHASE 13

Since GBYP Phase 10, a new strategic approach for the development of the GBYP e-tagging program, based on strengthening the collaboration with CPCs' e-tagging national programs, has been successfully implemented. Consequently, in order to continue taking advantage of the synergies between the tagging programs developed at national level and that of GBYP, which is allowing both to widen and consolidate the national programs and to increase the efficiency of the GBYP e-tagging program, as well as to provide a better scientific advice, the GBYP Steering Committee has proposed to launch a new Call for Expressions of Interest to collaborate with the GBYP e-tagging program.

Considering the recommendations from the experts attending the GBYP workshop on Bluefin tuna tagging held in July 2023 and the meeting of the SCRS ad hoc Working Group on coordination of tagging held in July 2024, as well as the decisions taken during the GBYP Steering Committee meeting held in January 2024 and the SCRS Workshop held in March 2024, within the framework of this Call a total of 51 pop-up satellite tags, 18 archival internal tags and 40 acoustic transmitters will be awarded to research teams developing bluefin tagging activities in the North Atlantic and/or the Mediterranean. GBYP will provide an agreed number of these different types of electronic tags to each awarded team, which would deploy them within the framework of their own tagging campaigns carried out in 2024 or first semester of 2025, assuming the deployment costs. In some cases, if required and necessary, GBYP will provide additional support, such as expert taggers to help local teams in e-tagging operations.

The main criteria to evaluate the proposals will be:

- the experience in this field of the team presenting the proposal;
- the scientific and technical quality of the proposal;
- the interest for ICCAT of the proposed survey.

Regarding the latter point, the knowledge gaps and needs identified by the Bluefin Tuna Technical Sub-group on MSE and within the GBYP workshops on Close-Kin Mark-Recapture (CKMR) approach and electronic tagging will be considered to evaluate the relevance of the proposed studies from the ICCAT point of view. Therefore, studies focused on individuals less than 180 cm, designed to characterize the spatial patterns of the population spawning in the Slope Sea, those carried out in the Mediterranean to determine movements between the three main spawning areas of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, and in particular the Levantine Basin, as well as those carried out in the areas close to the northern and southernmost distribution of the species, will be prioritized.

Therefore, I would be grateful if you could disseminate this information to the research institutions you consider could be interested in your CPC. Research teams willing to collaborate with ICCAT GBYP e-tagging campaigns should submit a proposal to [gbyp@iccat.int](mailto:gbyp@iccat.int), **before 15 August 2024**, summarizing their experience in electronic tagging and the workplans for the next national e-tagging surveys. This proposal should include a description of methodologies, location and timing of tagging operations, targeted bluefin tuna sizes, and number and type of tags expected to be deployed, as well as the number and type of GBYP electronic tags (PSAT, archival internal or acoustics) that could be deployed within these surveys. For further information the applicants can contact the ICCAT GBYP Coordinator ([Dr. Francisco Alemany](mailto:Dr. Francisco Alemany): or [gbyp@iccat.int](mailto:gbyp@iccat.int)).



Expressions of interest will be evaluated by an evaluation committee nominated by ICCAT Executive Secretary to select the most adequate team(s) to fulfil the current SCRS research needs in this field. A Memorandum of Understanding will be signed between ICCAT and the awarded institutions.

Please receive the assurances of my highest consideration.

*Executive Secretary*

Camille Jean Pierre Manel

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