

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, 24 June 2024

ICCAT CIRCULAR # 06406/ 2024

SUBJECT: NEW POSTPONEMENT OF THE INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF PANEL 4 ON NORTH ATLANTIC SWORDFISH MSE

Subsequent to ICCAT Circular #6180/2024 of 17/06/2024, in coordination with the Chairs of Panel 4 and the SCRS, I regret to inform you that the Intersessional Meeting of Panel 4 on North Atlantic Swordfish MSE, recently rescheduled for 16 July 2024, must be postponed to allow more time for the SCRS to proceed with the necessary work.

Please find attached a letter from the SCRS Chair with the detailed explanations of this new postponement of the meeting.

The one-day meeting will now be tentatively scheduled for **9 October 2024**. If any CPC has any objections to this date, please inform the Secretariat by **5 July 2024**. The proposed date will allow the Secretariat to circulate the SCRS Plenary meeting report the week before (possibly on 1 October) and translate and publish by 4 October any documentation produced by the SCRS relevant to the Intersessional Meeting of Panel 4 on North Atlantic Swordfish MSE.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Executive Secretary

Camille Jean Pierre Manel

DISTRIBUTION:

– **Commission Officers:**

| | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Commission Chair: | E. Penas Lado | COC Chair: | D. Campbell |
| First Vice Chair: | Z. Driouich | PWG Chair: | N. Ansell |
| Second Vice Chair: | R. Chong | STACFAD Chair: | D. Warner-Kramer |
| Chairs Panels 1-4 | | | |
| SCRS Chair: | C. Brown | | |

– **Head Delegates / Head Scientists**

– **Cooperating Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities**

– **Observers**

Attachment: Letter from the SCRS Chair.



COMISION INTERNACIONAL PARA LA
CONSERVACION DEL ATUN ATLANTICO

Dear Panel 4 members,

Following the delay in adoption of a management procedure for North Atlantic swordfish at the 2023 ICCAT annual meeting, Recommendation 23-04 was adopted which set out a work plan for the SCRS in 2024. This work plan included review and approval of the combined index used to inform the candidate management procedures (CMPs), small updates to the structure of some CMPs, tests related to data lags and exceptional circumstance criteria, and continued work on robustness tests.

Between January and May extensive effort and time was spent updating and reviewing the combined index, and important improvements were made. In May of 2024, the newly revised combined index was reviewed by the SCRS Swordfish Species Group and was endorsed for use as the indicator CMPs to calculate TAC advice for 2025 and in future management cycles. During this process, the technical team (SWO Technical Sub-group on MSE) noted that since 2019 the combined index and other abundance indices have an increasing trend at levels not previously predicted. This technical team is in the process of incorporating this new information on stock trends into the MSE.

The additional analyses that are underway include updates to the individual CPCs' abundance indices used to inform the MSE's operating models. It is important to note that the SWO Technical Sub-group on MSE has not identified errors within this MSE. However, the Sub-group considers it important to include this new information so that the best possible performance can be achieved by the CMPs. The structure of the MSE will remain unchanged from what has previously been presented to Panel 4.

These analyses and updates take time, and unfortunately the Sub-group will not be able to present final CMP performance results to Panel 4 on July 16. After consultation between the SWO Technical Sub-group on MSE, the Chair of Panel 4, and the Secretariat, considering ICCAT's busy schedule and budget constraints, it was agreed that it would be best to postpone the date of the Panel 4 meeting to early October with the specific date TBD.

It is expected that the updates and additional analyses, including new CMP results, will be completed in time to allow for thorough review in advance of the SCRS meetings in September. The process and results will be reviewed by the full Swordfish Species Group for final adoption at the SCRS Plenary. The October Panel 4 meeting will discuss those SCRS-approved final results and should allow time for Panel 4 delegations to consider those results in advance of the 2024 Special Meeting of the Commission.

Sincerely,

Dr Craig Brown

SCRS Chair