

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, 28 June 2024

ICCAT CIRCULAR # 06628/ 2024

SUBJECT: MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH AND STATISTICS (SCRS)
(hybrid/Madrid (Spain), 23 - 27 September 2024)

On behalf of the Chairman of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), I should like to inform you that the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) will hold its 2024 meeting in hybrid format, from 23 to 27 September 2024. The in-person meeting will be held in Madrid (Spain), at the [Hotel Chamartín The One](#). In this regard please find here attached a letter from the SCRS Chair.

In order to carry out the preparatory work, the Subcommittee on Statistics and the Species Groups will also meet in a hybrid format, during the preceding week in Madrid, at the [Hotel Chamartín The One](#) (16-21 September 2024). Interpretation will be provided for the meetings of the Subcommittee on Statistics and Species Groups of albacore, tropical tunas and billfishes.

The Tentative Agendas for the SCRS Plenary, the Subcommittee on Statistics and the Species Groups meetings as well as other relevant information are attached herewith. The SCRS timetable will be made available at a later stage on the [ICCAT current meetings webpage](#). However, please note that a meeting is scheduled for Heads of Delegation at 8:30 (Madrid time) on 23 September 2024.

Please note that our mailing distribution list is limited. Therefore, I should like to ask that you circulate this announcement to potential delegates. This announcement will also be placed on our [website](#). Documents for general distribution which become available before the meeting will also be placed on the [website](#).

Funding is available to cover travel and subsistence expenses for a limited number of national scientists from developing States that are Contracting Parties and that can provide information relevant to the meeting objectives. According to the Rules of Procedure for the Administration of the Special Meeting Participation Fund adopted at the 2023 Commission meeting, requests should be received **45 days in advance (2 August** for the Subcommittee on Statistics and Species Groups, and **9 August** for the SCRS Plenary meeting). Requests for financial assistance cannot be accepted after these dates. All the information related to the [ICCAT special funds](#) for participation in ICCAT meetings and capacity building is available on the ICCAT website. It is highly recommended to visit this webpage in advance and to strictly follow the protocols. In particular, it is necessary to fully complete the invitation form including **explanations of the expected contribution to the meeting** and how it relates to the meeting objectives. These latter documents should be sent to ICCAT-Travel@iccat.int.

In order to organize the meetings in advance of the sessions, in particular, regarding the number of in-person participants, you are kindly requested to send to the ICCAT Secretariat a list of delegates who will participate in the SC-STATS, Species Groups and SCRS Plenary meeting by **30 August 2024**. Any late submission of the official delegation may cause delay in providing access to participants to the meeting and to the related documents. Participants must also register for the meetings by **6 September 2024**, at the latest, using the [online registration form](#) which will be shortly available on the current meetings page of our website.



COMISION INTERNACIONAL PARA LA
CONSERVACION DEL ATUN ATLANTICO

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Executive Secretary



Camille Jean Pierre Manel

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- **Observers, FAO/DOALOS, RFMOs**

Attachments: SCRS Chair letter. Tentative Agenda for the SCRS Plenary meeting (SCI_01/2024). Tentative agendas and schedule for the Subcommittee on Statistics and the Species Groups meetings. Call for Scientific Papers.



COMISION INTERNACIONAL PARA LA
CONSERVACION DEL ATUN ATLANTICO

Dear colleagues,

I look forward to seeing you all, both those participating in person and those joining online, at the September Species Group meetings and the SCRS Plenary. I'd like to take this opportunity to highlight for your awareness several aspects of these meetings.

First, I would like to point out that we will once again have the benefit of interpretation during the Species Group week for selected Groups and days. As we have seen, I expect that this will greatly facilitate the engagement of scientists in these very important discussions. Check the Species Group week schedule for which sessions will have interpretation.

Also, a reminder that the posted agendas do not necessarily represent the order in which items will be covered during the meetings. During Species Group meetings the order may be affected by the timing of availability of Secretariat Statistics Department staff to present the current data (since up to three meetings will be held simultaneously each day) and other logistical factors that the Chair of each meeting must have the flexibility to address. So, if you will be participating online, please take this into account.

The SCRS Plenary agenda follows the structure of the SCRS Annual Report. But we will be taking the same approach as last year in scheduling when topics will be covered. Each Species Group and Subcommittee will be assigned an initial block of time during which to cover all of their components of the SCRS Report. This initial schedule will be made available in advance of the SCRS Plenary. During the course of the SCRS Plenary, revised schedules may be posted, as needed, to accommodate incomplete presentations and discussions, as well as the availability of revised Report sections requiring a second review.

During the 2023 SCRS Plenary meeting, there was agreement to no longer include summaries of intersessional meetings within the SCRS Annual Report. It is always recommended to review the reports of intersessional meetings in advance of the SCRS Plenary, but the absence of these summaries highlights the importance of being familiar with these intersessional meetings reports for our discussions to be efficient and productive.

Finally, we will be considering a new format for Executive Summaries for endorsement by the SCRS this year. Please take the time to review the new format and example Executive Summaries once they are posted in advance of the meeting.

I am excited that all of you will have the chance to review all of the excellent intersessional work that has been undertaken this year by SCRS scientists, and to participate in the finalization of the scientific advice to the Commission.

Best regards,

Dr Craig Brown
SCRS Chairman

SCRS Plenary Tentative Agenda

1. General remarks by the SCRS Chair and the Executive Secretary
2. Adoption of agenda and arrangements for the meeting
3. Introduction of Contracting Party delegations
4. Introduction and admission of observers
5. Admission of scientific documents and presentations
6. Report of ICCAT Secretariat activities on statistics and science
7. Review of national fisheries and research programmes
8. Reports of intersessional SCRS meetings
 - 8.1 Blue Marlin Data Preparatory Meeting
 - 8.2 SCRS Workshop
 - 8.3 Yellowfin Data Preparatory Meeting
 - 8.4 Intersessional Meeting of Bluefin Tuna Species Group
 - 8.5 Intersessional Meeting of Swordfish Species Group (including MSE)
 - 8.6 Mediterranean Albacore Data Preparatory and Assessment Meeting
 - 8.7 Meeting of the Working Group on Stock Assessment Methods (WGSAM)
 - 8.8 Blue Marlin Stock Assessment Meeting
 - 8.9 Meeting of the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change
 - 8.10 Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Coordination of Tagging Information
 - 8.11 Yellowfin Tuna Stock Assessment Meeting
9. Executive Summaries on species:
 - 9.1 YFT - Yellowfin
 - 9.2 BET - Bigeye
 - 9.3 SKJ - Skipjack
 - 9.4 ALB-AT - Atlantic albacore
 - 9.5 ALB-MD - Mediterranean albacore
 - 9.6 BFT-E - Eastern bluefin
 - 9.7 BFT-W - Western bluefin

- 9.8 SBF - Southern bluefin
- 9.9 BUM - Blue marlin
- 9.10 WHM - White marlin
- 9.11 SAI - Sailfish
- 9.12 SWO-AT - Atlantic swordfish
- 9.13 SWO-MD - Mediterranean swordfish
- 9.14 SMT - Small tunas
- 9.15 BSH - Blue shark
- 9.16 SMA - Shortfin mako
- 9.17 POR - Porbeagle
- 9.18 Ecosystem and Climate Change considerations
- 10. ICCAT Research Programmes
 - 10.1 Atlantic-Wide Research Programme for Bluefin Tuna (GBYP)
 - 10.2 Small Tunas Year Programme (SMTYP)
 - 10.3 Shark Research and Data Collection Programme (SRDCP)
 - 10.4 Enhanced Programme for Billfish Research (EPBR)
 - 10.5 Albacore Year Programme (ALBYP)
 - 10.6 Swordfish Year Programme (SWOYP)
 - 10.7 Tropical Tuna Research and Data Collection Program (TTRaD)
- 11. Report of the Meeting of the Subcommittee on Statistics
- 12. Report of the Intersessional Meeting of the Subcommittee on Ecosystems and Bycatch
- 13. Discussions at the Intersessional Meetings of the Commission relevant to the SCRS
 - 13.1 Intersessional Meetings of Panel 1
 - 13.2 Intersessional Meeting of Panel 2
 - 13.3 Intersessional Meeting of Panel 4 on North Atlantic Swordfish MSE
 - 13.4 Intersessional Meetings of the Working Group on Electronic Monitoring Systems (WG-EMS)
 - 13.5 17th Meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Monitoring Measures (IMM)
- 14. Progress related to work developed on MSE
 - 14.1 Work conducted for northern albacore
 - 14.2 Work conducted for bluefin tuna

- 14.3 Work conducted for northern swordfish
- 14.4 Work conducted for western skipjack
- 14.5 Work conducted for tropical tunas multi-stock MSE
- 14.6 Review of the Roadmap for the ICCAT MSE processes adopted by the Commission in 2023
- 15. SCRS Science Strategic Plan
- 16. Update of the stock assessment software catalogue
- 17. Consideration of plans for future activities
 - 17.1 Annual workplans and research programmes
 - 17.1.1 Subcommittee on Ecosystems and Bycatch Workplan
 - 17.1.2 Subcommittee on Statistics Workplan
 - 17.1.3 Working Group on Stock Assessment Methods (WGSAM) Workplan
 - 17.1.4 Albacore Workplan
 - 17.1.5 Billfishes Workplan
 - 17.1.6 Bluefin Tuna Workplan
 - 17.1.7 Sharks Workplan
 - 17.1.8 Small Tunas Workplan
 - 17.1.9 Swordfish Workplan
 - 17.1.10 Tropical Tunas Workplan
 - 17.2 Intersessional meetings proposed for 2025
 - 17.3 Date and place of the next meeting of the SCRS
- 18. General recommendations to the Commission
 - 18.1 General recommendations to the Commission that have financial implications
 - 18.1.1 Subcommittee on Ecosystems and Bycatch
 - 18.1.2 Subcommittee on Statistics
 - 18.1.3 Albacore
 - 18.1.4 Billfish
 - 18.1.5 Bluefin tuna
 - 18.1.6 Sharks
 - 18.1.7 Small tunas
 - 18.1.8 Swordfish

- 18.1.9 Tropical tunas
- 18.1.10 Working Group on Stock Assessment Methods (WGSAM)
- 18.2 Other general recommendations
 - 18.2.1 Subcommittee on Ecosystems and Bycatch
 - 18.2.2 Subcommittee on Statistics
 - 18.2.3 Albacore
 - 18.2.4 Billfishes
 - 18.2.5 Bluefin tuna
 - 18.2.6 Sharks
 - 18.2.7 Small tunas
 - 18.2.8 Swordfish
 - 18.2.9 Tropical tunas
 - 18.2.10 Working Group on Stock Assessment Methods (WGSAM)
- 19. Responses to the Commission's requests
- 20. New templates for Executive Summaries and Revised Publication Guidelines for the SCRS Plenary meeting report
- 21. Other matters
 - 21.1 Memorandum of Understanding between ICCAT and ICES
- 22. Election of SCRS Chair
- 23. Adoption of the report

2024 Tentative Agenda of Bluefin Species Group Meeting

(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 18 September (14:30-18:00 hours) - 20 September 2024 (09:00-13:00 hours))

1. Review of fisheries statistics (Tasks 1, 2 and 3) and most recent relative abundance indicators
2. Update on the ongoing work regarding bluefin tuna MSE process
 - a. Evaluation of exceptional circumstances for Atlantic bluefin tuna
 - b. Revision of the MSE roadmap approved by the COM in 2023
3. Review of new scientific documents for bluefin tuna
4. Review of CKMR-related matters
5. Review the work conducted under the ICCAT GBYP
6. Bluefin tuna Executive Summaries
7. Responses to the Commission (Recs. 11-05, 22-07, 22-08, 22-09, 23-07)
8. Workplan for 2025
9. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
10. Terms of reference for the 2025 contracts within GBYP
11. Other matters

2024 Tentative Agenda of Tropical Tunas Species Group Meeting

(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 18 September (09:00-13:00 - 14:30-18:00 hours) – 20 September 2024 (09:00-13:00 hours))

1. Review of fisheries statistics (Tasks 1, 2 and 3)
2. Review of new scientific documents for tropical tunas (including ongoing research activities on biology and tagging)
3. Update on the ongoing work regarding tropical tunas MSE processes:
 - a. SKJ-W MSE
 - b. Multi-stock TT MSE
 - c. Revision of the MSE roadmap approved by the COM in 2023
4. Yellowfin tuna stock status and management advice
5. Tropical tunas Executive Summaries (BET, YFT and SKJ)
6. Responses to the Commission (Recs. 22/23-01, 22-02)
7. Workplan for 2025
8. Recommendations for 2025 (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
9. Tropical Tuna Research and Data Collection Program (TTRaD)
10. Terms of reference for the 2025 contracts within TTRaD
11. Other matters

2024 Tentative Agenda of Swordfish Species Group Meeting

(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 17 September (09:00-13:00 - 14:30-18:00 hours) – 18 September 2024 (09:00-13:00 hours))

1. Review of fisheries statistics (Tasks 1, 2 and 3)
2. Review of new scientific documents for swordfish (including ongoing research activities on biology and tagging conducted under the Swordfish Year Programme (SWOYP))
3. Update on the ongoing work regarding the swordfish MSE process
 - a. Northern Atlantic SWO
 - b. Revision of the MSE roadmap approved by the COM in 2023
4. Swordfish Executive Summaries
5. Responses to the Commission (Recs. 22-03, 22-04 and 23-04)
6. Workplan for 2025
7. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
8. Terms of reference for the 2025 contracts within SWOYP
9. Other matters

2024 Tentative Agenda of Small Tunas Species Group Meeting

(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 20 September (14:30-18:00 hours) – 21 September 2024 (09:00-13:00 - 14:30-18:00 hours))

1. Review of fisheries statistics (Tasks 1, 2 and 3)
2. Review of new scientific documents for small tunas (including ongoing studies related to Small Tunas Year Programme (SMTYP))
3. Small tunas Executive Summary
4. Workplan for 2025 (including extension of the ongoing studies under the SMTYP)
5. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
6. Terms of reference for the 2025 contracts within SMTYP
7. Other matters

2024 Tentative Agenda of Albacore Species Group Meeting

*(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 17 September (09:00-13:00 - 14:30-18:00 hours) –
18 September 2024 (09:00-13:00 hours))*

1. Review of fisheries statistics (Tasks 1, 2 and 3)
2. Review of new scientific documents for albacore (including ongoing research activities on biology and tagging conducted under the Albacore Year Programme (ALBYP))
3. Update on the ongoing northern Atlantic albacore MSE process
 - a. Evaluation of exceptional circumstances for North Atlantic albacore
 - b. Revision of the MSE roadmap approved by the Commission in 2023
4. Mediterranean albacore stock status and management advice
5. Mediterranean and Atlantic Albacore Executive Summaries
6. Responses to the Commission (Recs. 21-04 and 22-05)
7. Workplan for 2025
8. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
9. Terms of reference for the 2025 contracts within ALBYP
10. Other matters

2024 Tentative Agenda of Sharks Species Group Meeting

*(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain;
18 September 2024 (14:30-18:00 hours) and
19 September 2024 (09:00-13:00 - 14:30-18:00 hours))*

1. Review of fisheries statistics (Tasks 1, 2 and 3)
2. Review of new scientific documents for sharks (primarily related to ongoing studies within Shark Research and Data Collection Programme (SRDCP))
3. Sharks Executive Summaries (BSH, SMA and POR)
4. Responses to the Commission (Recs. 18-06, 21-09, 22-11, 23-10, 23-11, 23-12, 23-14)
5. Workplan (including extending the ongoing studies/activities under the SRDCP) for 2025
6. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
7. Terms of reference for the 2025 contracts within SRDCP
8. Other matters

2024 Tentative Agenda of Billfishes Species Group Meeting

*(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain;
20-21 September 2024 (09:00-13:00 - 14:30-18:00 hours))*

1. Review of fisheries statistics (Tasks 1, 2 and 3)
2. Review of new scientific documents for billfishes (particularly on ongoing biological studies and tagging within the Enhanced Programme for Billfish Research (EPBR))
3. Atlantic blue marlin stock status and management advice
4. Billfishes Executive Summaries (SAI, BUM, and WHM/SPF)
5. Responses to the Commission (Recs. 16-11, 18-05 and 19-05)
6. Workplan for 2025 (including extending the ongoing studies/activities under the EPBR)
7. Terms of reference for the 2025 contracts within EPBR
8. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
9. Other matters

2024 Tentative Agenda of Subcommittee on Statistics Meeting

(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 16 September-17 September 2024 (09:00-13:00 hours))

1. Opening, adoption of agenda and meeting arrangements
2. Summary of fisheries and biological data submitted during 2024 (Tasks 1, 2 and 3), including historical revisions
3. Summary of ICCAT Secretariat's standard (yearly based) datasets estimations
4. Review of data deficiencies and ongoing data recovery plans pursuant to [*Recommendation by ICCAT on compliance with statistical reporting obligations \(Rec. 05-09\)*](#)
5. Review of ICCAT data collection forms and templates (statistics and tagging)
6. Brief overview of ICCAT Online Management System (IOMS) work
7. Ongoing Pilot project to test the use of stereoscopic cameras on BFT first transfer and the automation of video footage analysis
8. Responses to the Commission (Rec. 16-04)
9. Workplan for 2025
10. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
11. Other matters
12. Adoption of the report

Tentative Timetable

2024 Species Groups Meeting and Subcommittee on Statistics

(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín the One, Madrid, Spain, 16-21 September 2024; 9:00-13:00 14:30-18:00 hours)

	MON 16		TUE 17		WED 18		THU 19		FRI 20		SAT 21	
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
SC-STATS	*	*										
ALB			*	*								
SWO												
TT					*	*	*	*				
BFT												
SHK												
BIL									*	*	*	*
SMT												
Officers meeting (Saturday 18:00-19:30)												

* Interpretation will be available for the meetings of: Subcommittee on Statistics, Albacore, Tropical Tunas and Billfishes Species Groups.

**2024 Species Groups Meetings and Plenary Meeting of the
Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS)**

(hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 16 to 27 September 2024)

Call for Scientific Papers

Participants in the Species Groups and/or the SCRS meetings are encouraged to submit relevant scientific papers. The titles and names of authors of papers should be submitted to ICCAT (info@iccat.int) as soon as possible, but at least two weeks in advance of the meeting so that Rapporteurs can plan the sessions. The electronic versions of the documents and presentations, if any, shall be submitted at least **one week** before the beginning of the corresponding meeting, to give the ICCAT Secretariat time to organize the work and to make information available to participants in advance of the meeting. Documents submitted after the deadline i.e., one week in advance of the meeting could be deferred to next year for discussion. Authors are reminded to closely follow the [Guidelines for Authors of Scientific Documents for the ICCAT SCRS and Collective Volume Series](#). Documents can be presented in PDF format, although the original documents (text, tables and figures) should be prepared in MS Word or compatible software.