

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, 8 August 2024

ICCAT CIRCULAR # 08171/ 2024

SUBJECT: THIRD MEETING OF THE JOINT EXPERTS GROUP ON CLIMATE CHANGE: NEW LETTER FROM CHAIR (online, 3 October 2024)

I would like to inform you that as an outcome of the Second Meeting of the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change (JEG-CC), held on 2-3 July 2024, and upon a request from the JEG-CC Chair, the Third Meeting of the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change has been scheduled for **3 October 2024**. The meeting format will be online using the ZOOM platform.

The meeting times will be 12:00 to 15:30 (Madrid time), and if work cannot be completed an additional 30 minutes may be envisaged. There will be one 30-minute break at 13:30.

Please find here attached a letter from the JEG-CC Chair, together with the Tentative agenda. Meeting documents will be posted in the [Nextcloud meeting document folder](#). 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 included on our [current meetings](#) webpage.

In order to organize the meeting and issue the online participant links, you are kindly requested to send to the Secretariat a list of delegates who will participate in the meeting by **26 September 2024**, including information on those **members allowed to speak** during the meeting on behalf of the delegation. Any late submission of the official delegation may cause a delay in providing access to the meeting to participants. All participants must also register for the meeting by **26 September 2024**, using the [online registration form](#), which will soon be available on our [meetings webpage](#).

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**

Attachments: Tentative agenda (CLIM_OCT_01), Letter from Chair (CLIM_OCT_02) and Revised roadmap (CLIM_OCT_03).

Tentative agenda

1. Opening of the meeting and meeting arrangements
2. Nomination of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of agenda
4. Consider, revise, and aim to agree on the draft ICCAT Plan of Action on Climate Change
5. Any other matters
6. Adoption of the report and adjournment

Letter from the Chair of the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change (JEG-CC)

Dear colleagues:

Many thanks to those CPCs that participated in the Second Meeting of the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change July 2-3, 2024. I'd also like to thank the SCRS Chair, Dr. Craig Brown, for working closely with me and the SCRS to facilitate the stock-take analysis and co-facilitate the meeting.

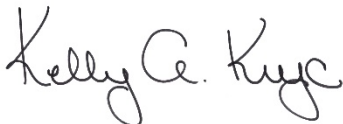
The "Draft Report of the Second Meeting of the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change" (virtual, 2-3 July 2024) is available for review and adoption on the [Nextcloud](#). The updated Plan of Action (CLIM_OCT_03/i2024) is also available on the [Nextcloud](#), with brackets remaining around the text that is still to be decided.

Given that there are just a few outstanding issues to resolve with the Draft Plan of Action, we will hold an abbreviated Third Meeting of the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change on October 3, 12:00-15:30 Madrid time to "Consider, revise, and aim to agree on the draft ICCAT Plan of Action on Climate Change" as called for by Res. 23-19. Many thanks to the Secretariat for their willingness to work with me to find an acceptable time given the challenging ICCAT calendar.

The tentative agenda (document CLIM_OCT_01/i2024) for the Third Meeting of the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change is straightforward, with the bulk of the discussion focused on the Plan of Action. The updated Plan of Action from our 2-3 July meeting (CLIM_OCT_03/i2024) will be what we work off of for the 3 October meeting.

Thank you for your attention to these details and for your partnership in this important work.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly A. Kryc". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kelly A. Kryc, Ph.D.
U.S. Commissioner to ICCAT

Revised ICCAT Plan of Action on Climate Change

(Explanatory Note from the Chair of the Meeting of the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change in consultation with the SCRS Chair)

The draft ICCAT Plan of Action on Climate Change was last considered at the 2023 ICCAT Annual Meeting. The document is intended to serve as the workplan, called for in the [Resolution by ICCAT on Climate Change \(Rec. 22-13\)](#) to guide the Commission and the SCRS's future work on relevant issues associated with climate change. The Plan of Action is designed to be a living document that is continually reviewed and revised by the Commission and the SCRS as ICCAT builds upon this line of work.

The [Resolution by ICCAT on next steps of the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change in 2024 \(Res. 23-19\)](#) indicated that the 2024 Meeting of the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change would include a presentation and discussion of a "stock-take" review of relevant ongoing ICCAT work that relates to, or is impacted by, climate change. Then, discussion of the results of the "stock-take" and any other priority areas of climate change work may be accounted for in a revised draft Plan of Action for consideration first by the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change and then the full Commission in November.

Accordingly, I have worked with the Chair of the SCRS to revise the draft Plan of Action based on the results of the "stock-take." The revised draft Plan of Action follows a similar structure to previous versions and reflects much of the input provided by CPCs at the Annual Meeting. However, there are elements that have been refined to reflect the input provided by the Commission and the SCRS Officers as part of the "stock-take" exercise.

As reflected in the agenda, the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change will have an opportunity to further refine this draft, in line with [Res. 22-13](#), as a key next step to organizing and prioritizing ICCAT's future climate-related work. Adopting an initial Plan of Action will serve as an important tool for ICCAT to focus its resources both internally and externally with other RFMOs and/or international organizations pursuing similar goals of climate-adaptive fisheries management strategies.

Revised ICCAT Plan of Action on Climate Change

(presented by the Climate Change Expert Meeting Chair in consultation with the SCRS Chair and edited during the 2nd Meeting of the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change)

With a view to advancing the implementation of the [Resolution by ICCAT on Climate Change \(Res. 22-13\)](#) and the [Resolution by ICCAT on next steps of the Joint Expert Group on Climate Change in 2024 \(Res. 23-19\)](#), the Commission endorses the following Plan of Action on Climate Change, noting that it is intended to be a living document of priority Commission and SCRS actions that should be reviewed and revised, as appropriate, as new information becomes available:

2024

Commission and SCRS

- *“Stock-take” exercise:* As called for in [Res. 23-19](#), the Chair of the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change, working with the SCRS, its Officers, Commission Officers, and Chairs of Ad Hoc Working Groups as necessary, will prepare and circulate in advance, a ‘stock-take’ review of relevant ongoing ICCAT work which relates to, or is impacted by, Climate Change.
- *Second Meeting of the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change:* As called for in [Res. 23-19](#), convene a Second Meeting of the Joint Experts Group in order to build upon initial discussions held at the 2023 two-day Climate Change Experts Meeting and at the 2023 ICCAT Annual Meeting to explore new or identify existing pathways for the SCRS to further consider and advise the Commission on the issues specified in [Res. 22-13](#), including the opportunity to consider, revise, and aim to agree on the draft ICCAT Plan of Action on Climate Change.
- *[Climate Change Experts Group:* Establish a Standing Joint Experts Group on Climate Change (SJEG-CC) at the 2024 ICCAT Annual Meeting to provide a dedicated forum to further consider and advise the Commission on the issues specified in [Resolution by ICCAT on Climate Change \(Res. 22-13\)](#), to ensure continued close coordination between the SCRS and Commission, and to guide cooperation with the FAO and other RFMOs.]

2025

SCRS

Organization and structure

- Include climate change as a(n) [standing] agenda item for SCRS subsidiary bodies, as appropriate, to provide a dedicated time to discuss how the ongoing climate science can benefit the ICCAT management and scientific processes.
- Include climate change as a(n) [standing] agenda item for the SCRS Plenary meeting to promote coordination and information exchange among SCRS subsidiary bodies and external groups with expertise in the field. As part of the SCRS annual report and other SCRS meeting reports, include a section on climate change considerations and updates related to the execution of this Plan of Action.
- As the SCRS continues work to update the SCRS Strategic Plan, identify opportunities for incorporating climate change considerations in the scientific work of ICCAT, including prioritizing needed scientific research and data collection and specifying associated time frames and resource needs, where possible.

Research, data collection, and scientific tools and approaches

- As outlined by the 2024 stock-take exercise, the SCRS should identify and provide to the Commission for review a draft list of proposed climate-related management questions that the SCRS can use to continue integrating, as appropriate, climate considerations into management advice to the Commission. These questions should consider the areas of interest already identified by Commission Officers in the stock-take exercise, such as productivity, recruitment, growth, and species distribution (as shown in the **Annex**). [Questions in the **Annex** can be used for reference, but need not dictate the scope or content of the SCRS's work, to begin this collaborative process between the Commission and the SCRS.]
- In addition to developing these questions, the SCRS should continue advancing work related to climate as indicated in the 2024 stock-take exercise. This work includes CPUE standardization and incorporation of relevant oceanographic and environmental changes into the stock assessment process, continue incorporating climate-related considerations into MSEs and Management Procedure (MP) development, and continuing to develop an Ecosystems Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM) framework for ICCAT and an ecosystem report card.
- [Develop a workplan to explore dynamic reference points and better elucidate and prioritize climate initiatives.]

Commission and SCRS

- Engage in a correspondence process ahead of the SC-ECO meeting to begin drafting the climate-related management questions and again ahead of the SCRS plenary meeting with a goal of the SCRS and Commission endorsing the questions at their respective annual meetings.

Commission

- *Commission Agenda:* Starting in 2025, include "Matters pertaining to incorporating Climate Change considerations into the work of the Commission" as a standing item on the Commission's Plenary agenda for the Annual Meeting to review this Plan of Action as needed and consider other relevant issues related to climate change each year, including climate change impacts, mitigation, and adaptation.
- Review, provide feedback, and, if appropriate, endorse the proposed climate-related management questions drafted by the SCRS.
- Provide feedback to the SCRS on matters stemming from the tasks outlined above.
- *Panel Agendas:* Starting in 2025, incorporate the issue of climate change into appropriate items of the Panel agendas, particularly those agenda items related to conservation and management measures and research.

2026

Commission and SCRS

- [Hold a Third Meeting of the Joint Experts Group on Climate Change][Hold a meeting of the Standing Joint Experts Group on Climate Change (SJEG-CC)][to review execution of this Plan of Action and coordinate and review, if not adopted in 2025, the draft list of climate-related management questions for cooperative development of the questions with the SCRS.]

- *Resource needs analysis:* Working with the ICCAT Secretariat and STACFAD Chair, consider if current human and financial resources are sufficient to undertake research and data collection/evaluation related to climate change in terms of the climate-related management questions developed in cooperation between the SCRS and Commission. The resource needs analysis should include consideration of existing databases and collaboration with other organisations. Based on this analysis, seek supplementary funds and/or other resources through STACFAD and/or other means, as appropriate.

SCRS

- *Organization and structure:* Following any updates to the Plan of Action, consider if the SCRS meeting structure or operations should be revised to provide scientific advice taking into account climate change impacts on ICCAT target stocks, non-target species, related ecosystems, and other scientific aspects included in [Res. 22-13](#).
- *Research, data collection, and scientific tools and approaches:* The SCRS should continue its work to incorporate climatic effects into scientific processes with the goal of providing advice that is more robust to climate change and supports climate resilient fishery management in ICCAT.
- *Plan of Action review:* Review this Plan of Action and, as appropriate, suggest revisions and/or provide other relevant feedback to the Commission.

Commission

Standing Committee on Finance and Administration (STACFAD)

- Consider, if appropriate, possible additional approaches to reduce the organization's environmental and climate impacts, including those related to its headquarters operation and meetings.
- Consider and prioritize any SCRS/ICCAT Secretariat requests for supplementary funds or other resources needed to carry out expanded scientific work associated with climate change.

Topics related to the provision of Climate-informed scientific advice

To enhance ICCAT's ability to address climate change impacts, the following topics may be of interest to the Commission:

- Long-term projections of climate change effects on marine ecosystems, particularly those affecting stock distribution, abundance, recruitment, and productivity;
- Improved methods for integrating environmental variables and climate change indicators into stock assessments, management procedures, or abundance indices;
- Guidance on adaptive management strategies that can help mitigate the effects of climate change on fish stocks and fisheries;
- Tools and models that can detect and analyze long-term trends related to climate change, rather than just short-term environmental conditions;
- Exploring if dynamic reference points may better account for climate variability while ensuring that stocks are maintained at sustainable levels;
- Practical guidelines for adaptive management strategies that can be implemented as climate conditions evolve, ensuring sustainable fisheries management in the face of uncertainty;
- Enhanced collaboration with climate scientists to integrate the latest climate projections and data into our fisheries management frameworks;
- Improved systems for ongoing monitoring and reporting of climate-related changes in marine ecosystems, enabling timely adjustments to management strategies;
- Effective tools, approaches, and/or techniques which are available to assist in the consideration of climate change impacts in the formulation of scientific advice.