

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, 19 June 2025

## ICCAT CIRCULAR # 05973/ 2025

**SUBJECT: MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH AND STATISTICS (SCRS)**  
*(hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 29 September to 3 October 2025)*

On behalf of the Chair 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 2025 meeting in hybrid format, from 29 September to 3 October 2025. 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 and the SCRS Vice Chair.

In order to carry out the preparatory work, the Subcommittee on Statistics (SC-STATS) and the Species Groups will also meet in a hybrid format, during the preceding week in Madrid, at the [Hotel Chamartín The One](#) (22-27 September 2025). Interpretation will be provided for the meetings of the Subcommittee on Statistics and Sharks, Tropical Tunas and Billfishes Species Groups.

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 29 September 2025.

Please note that our mailing distribution list is limited. Therefore, I should like to ask that you to circulate this announcement to potential delegates. The 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 (8 August)** for the Species Groups and Subcommittee on Statistics, and **15 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(s)** and how it relates to the meeting objectives. These latter documents should be sent to [ICCAT-Travel@iccat.int](mailto: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 **5 September 2025**. Any late submission of the official delegation may cause delay in providing access to the meeting and the related documents to participants. Participants must also register for the meetings by **12 September 2025**, at the latest, using the [online registration form](#) which will shortly be available on the current meetings page of our website.



Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

*Executive Secretary*

Camille Jean Pierre Manel

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- **Commission Officers:**

<b>Commission Chair:</b> E. Penas Lado	<b>COC Chair:</b> D. Campbell
<b>First Vice Chair:</b> Z. Driouich	<b>PWG Chair:</b> N. Ansell
<b>Second Vice Chair:</b> R. Chong	<b>STACFAD Chair:</b> D. Warner-Kramer
<b>Chairs Panels 1-4</b>	
<b>SCRS Chair:</b> C. Brown	<b>SCRS Vice Chair:</b> L.G. Cardoso
- **Head Delegates / Head Scientists**
- **Cooperating Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities**
- **SCRS Officers**
- **Observers, FAO/DOALOS, RFMOs**

**Attachments:** SCRS Chair and Vice Chair letter. Tentative Agenda for the SCRS Plenary meeting (SCI\_01/2025). Tentative agendas and schedule for the Subcommittee on Statistics and the Species Groups meetings. Call for Scientific Papers.



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Dear colleagues,

As you know, I have had the valuable help this year of our new SCRS Vice Chair, Luis Gustavo Cardoso. He and I both will be joining the Species Groups meeting in September and the SCRS Plenary meeting that follows. We are looking forward to working with you all, both those participating in person and those joining online. I'd like to take this opportunity to highlight for your awareness several aspects of these meetings.

We will once again have the benefit of interpretation during the Species Groups week, covering selected groups and specific days. This will greatly facilitate the engagement of scientists in the important upcoming discussions. Please check the Species Groups week schedule to see which sessions will have interpretation available. Unfortunately, for those groups that have interpretation, most will not have it for all sessions. This reflects the need to balance the limitations on interpretation while ensuring that the groups prioritized for interpretation have at least some sessions with this support. We encourage these groups to take this into account when scheduling topics to be covered during their meetings.

Also, remember that the posted agendas often do not reflect the exact order in which items will be covered during the meetings. During each Species Group meeting, the order may be adjusted based on the availability of the Secretariat Statistics Department staff to present the current data (since up to three meetings will be held simultaneously each day) and other logistical factors. The Chair of each meeting will need to maintain the flexibility to address these situations. So, particularly if you will be participating online or moving between meetings, please take this into account.

Please be aware that the SCRS adopted, and the Commission approved, a new Executive Summary format for species/stocks. This new format calls for shorter main body text, focused on the topics most critical for Commissioners to be informed about. There is also the option to include appendices for any additional information considered important. Although the meaningful content of Executive Summaries for stocks that have not been assessed or otherwise have new management advice based on new SCRS work (e.g. implementation of management procedures) should remain effectively unchanged, all Executive Summaries will be updated this year to conform to the new format. Please support the Species Group Rapporteurs in this transition, helping them to ensure that converting the Executive Summaries to the new format results in clear and consistent advice and information; overlong discussions should be avoided, as we will have limited time for each Species Group to meet and cover all its tasks. Of course, for those stocks that have been assessed this year, it is expected that the content of their Executive Summaries may change accordingly.

The SCRS Plenary agenda follows the structure of the SCRS Annual Report. But we will be taking the same approach as we have for the last two years in scheduling when topics will be covered. Each Species Group and Subcommittee will be assigned an initial block of time 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 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.

In preparation for the SCRS Plenary meeting, it is important to review the documents that are posted in advance of the meeting. Although many documents are not available until adopted by the species groups and the Sub-Committee on Statistics during the week before the Plenary, many important documents will be available beforehand. For example, it is important to be familiar with the intersessional meeting reports for our discussions to be efficient and productive.

Among the documents that should be reviewed thoroughly will be the new SCRS Science Strategic Plan for 2026-2031. This document will have been developed by a process, following on from initial development in 2024, that will have included wide participation of SCRS scientists in online collaboration, a review and feedback from Commissioners at the Meeting of the Standing Working Group on Dialogue between Fisheries Scientists and Managers (SWGSM), and a review at the SCRS Science Strategic Plan Meeting. The intention is to review and adopt this document this year. There will not be much time for discussion at the SCRS



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Plenary, so if you have any strong concerns about the document, please be prepared to bring those to the floor, with specific recommendations for change. Of course, if you are interested in the new Science Strategic Plan, it would be best if you took advantage of any of the previously listed opportunities to participate in the development process so that any concerns you have would be addressed well before the SCRS Plenary.

We have taken on difficult work this year, and have faced some unexpected setbacks, but I have been pleased and impressed by those individuals who have stepped up to shoulder the unexpected burden and by the steadfast diligence of SCRS scientists broadly, who together have kept us on track so that the SCRS intersessional work can be carried out in support of our meetings in September. Gustavo and I are looking forward to reviewing this outstanding intersessional work with you all in September, and to your participation in the finalization of the scientific advice to the Commission.

Best regards,

Dr Craig Brown

*SCRS Chair*

(written in consultation with the SCRS Vice Chair, Dr Luis Gustavo Cardoso)

### 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
9. SCRS Science Strategic Plan
10. Report of the Intersessional Meeting of the Subcommittee on Ecosystems and Bycatch
11. Report of the Meeting of the Subcommittee on Statistics
12. Discussions at the Intersessional Meetings of the Commission relevant to the SCRS
  - 12.1 Intersessional Meeting of Panel 2
  - 12.2 Intersessional Meetings of the Working Group on Electronic Monitoring Systems (WG EMS)
  - 12.3 18th Meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Monitoring Measures (IMM)
13. Executive Summaries on species:
  - 13.1 YFT - Yellowfin
  - 13.2 BET - Bigeye
  - 13.3 SKJ - Skipjack
  - 13.4 ALB-AT - Atlantic albacore
  - 13.5 ALB-MD - Mediterranean albacore
  - 13.6 BFT-E - Eastern bluefin
  - 13.7 BFT-W - Western bluefin
  - 13.8 SBF - Southern bluefin
  - 13.9 BUM - Blue marlin
  - 13.10 WHM - White marlin
  - 13.11 SAI - Sailfish

- 13.12 SWO-AT - Atlantic swordfish
- 13.13 SWO-MD - Mediterranean swordfish
- 13.14 SMT - Small tunas
- 13.15 BSH - Blue shark
- 13.16 SMA - Shortfin mako
- 13.17 POR - Porbeagle
- 14. ICCAT Research Programmes
  - 14.1 Atlantic-Wide Research Programme for Bluefin Tuna (GBYP)
  - 14.2 Small Tunas Year Programme (SMTYP)
  - 14.3 Shark Research and Data Collection Programme (SRDCP)
  - 14.4 Enhanced Programme for Billfish Research (EPBR)
  - 14.5 Albacore Year Programme (ALBYP)
  - 14.6 Swordfish Year Programme (SWOYP)
  - 14.7 Tropical Tuna Research and Data Collection Program (TTRaD)
  - 14.8 Subcommittee on Ecosystems and Bycatch Research Programme
- 15. Progress related to work developed on MSE
  - 15.1 Work conducted for northern albacore
  - 15.2 Work conducted for southern albacore
  - 15.3 Work conducted for bluefin tuna
  - 15.4 Work conducted for northern swordfish
  - 15.5 Work conducted for western skipjack
  - 15.6 Work conducted for tropical tunas multi-stock MSE
  - 15.7 Work conducted for blue shark
  - 15.8 Review of the Roadmap for the ICCAT MSE processes adopted by the Commission in 2024
- 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 2026
- 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. Other matters

20.1 Review the [Rules and Procedures for the protection, access to, and dissemination of data compiled by ICCAT](#)

20.2 Deadline for the submission of SCRS documents and presentation to SCRS meetings

20.3 New guidelines for the submission of documents to be published in the ICCAT Col. Vol. Sci. Pap.

20.4 Role of the SCRS in the implementation of biodiversity conservation instruments

21. Adoption of the report and meeting closure



### **2025 Tentative Agenda of Billfishes Species Group Meeting**

*(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 22-23 September 2025 (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 white marlin stock status and management advice
4. Billfishes Executive Summaries (SAI, BUM, and WHM/RSP)
5. Responses to the Commission
6. Workplan for 2026
7. Terms of reference for the 2026 contracts within EPBR
8. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
9. Other matters

### **2025 Tentative Agenda of Swordfish Species Group Meeting**

*(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 22-23 September 2025 (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 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 adopted by the COM in 2024
4. Swordfish Executive Summaries
5. Responses to the Commission
6. Workplan for 2026
7. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
8. Terms of reference for the 2026 contracts within SWOYP
9. Other matters

### **2025 Tentative Agenda of Tropical Tunas Species Group Meeting**

*(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 22-24 September 2025 (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 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 adopted by the COM in 2024
4. Bigeye tuna stock status and management advice
5. Tropical Tunas Executive Summaries (BET, YFT and SKJ)
6. Responses to the Commission
7. Workplan for 2026
8. Recommendations for 2026 (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
9. Tropical Tuna Research and Data Collection Program (TTRaD)
10. Terms of reference for the 2026 contracts within TTRaD
11. Other matters

### **2025 Tentative Agenda of Small Tunas Species Group Meeting**

*(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 24 September 2025 (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 2026
5. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
6. Terms of reference for the 2026 contracts within SMTYP
7. Other matters

### **2025 Tentative Agenda of Bluefin Tuna Species Group Meeting**

*(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 24-26 September 2025 (09:00-13:00 - 14:30-18:00 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 adopted by the COM in 2024
3. Review of new scientific documents for bluefin tuna
4. Review the work conducted under the ICCAT GBYP
5. Bluefin Tuna Executive Summaries
6. Responses to the Commission
7. Workplan for 2026
8. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
9. Terms of reference for the 2026 contracts within GBYP
10. Other matters

### **2025 Tentative Agenda of Albacore Species Group Meeting**

*(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 25-26 September 2025 (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 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 adopted by the Commission in 2024
4. Mediterranean and Atlantic Albacore Executive Summaries
5. Responses to the Commission
6. Workplan for 2026
7. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
8. Terms of reference for the 2026 contracts within ALBYP
9. Other matters

## **2025 Tentative Agenda of Sharks Species Group Meeting**

*(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 25-26 September 2025 (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. Update on the Blue shark MSE feasibility study, cost and options for developing an MSE framework
4. Sharks Executive Summaries (BSH, SMA and POR)
5. Responses to the Commission
6. Workplan (including extending the ongoing studies/activities under the SRDCP) for 2026
7. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
8. Terms of reference for the 2026 contracts within SRDCP
9. Other matters

## **2025 Tentative Agenda of Subcommittee on Statistics Meeting**

*(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 27 September 2025 (09:00-13:00 - 14:30-18:00 hours))*

1. Opening, adoption of agenda and meeting arrangements
2. Summary of fisheries and biological data submitted during 2025 (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
9. Workplan for 2026
10. Review and update of the *Rules and Procedures for the protection, access to, and dissemination of data compiled by ICCAT*
11. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
12. Other matters
13. Adoption of the report

## Tentative timetable

### 2025 Species Groups and Subcommittee on Statistics

*(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín the One, Madrid, Spain, 22-27 September 2025; 9:00-13:00 14:30-18:00 hours)*

	MON 22		TUE 23		WED 24		THU 25		FRI 26		SAT 27	
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
BIL	*	*										
SWO												
TT			*	*	*	*						
SMT												
BFT												
ALB												
SHK							*	*	*	*		
SC-STATS											*	*
Officers meeting (18:00-19:30)												

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

**2025 Species Groups and Subcommittee on Statistics Meetings, and Plenary Meeting of the  
Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS)**

*(hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 22 September to 3 October 2025)*

**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](mailto: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, might 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.