

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, 5 June 2026

ICCAT CIRCULAR # 04697/ 2026

SUBJECT: MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH AND STATISTICS (SCRS) AND ACCESS TO PLENARY DOCUMENTS (*hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 21-25 September 2026*)

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 2026 meeting in hybrid format, from 21-25 September 2026. 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](#) (14-19 September 2026). Interpretation will be provided for the meetings of the Subcommittee on Statistics and Sharks, Tropical Tunas and Swordfish 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 **Head Delegates** meeting is scheduled at **8:30 (Madrid time) on 21 September 2026**.

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](#).

The ICCAT Secretariat is pleased to inform you that further developments have been made to the webpage of the SCRS Plenary Meeting documents, which is very similar to that usually prepared for the Annual Meeting of the Commission. This webpage is designed to facilitate delegate's document access and search. However, since access to SCRS meeting documents is restricted to the authorized participants in the meeting, for the ICCAT Secretariat to grant access to this dedicated [SCRS Plenary documents webpage](#), **it is necessary that all delegates register in the platform**. To facilitate the registration process, the ICCAT Secretariat has prepared a brief manual with instructions including the steps to be followed. This manual is available [here](#), and is also available on the [ICCAT current meeting webpage](#) (SCRS Plenary meeting) under Access to documents.

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 meetings 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 (31 July 2026** for the Species Groups and Subcommittee on Statistics, and **7 August 2026** 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.



COMISION INTERNACIONAL PARA LA
CONSERVACION DEL ATUN ATLANTICO

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 **31 August 2026**. 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 **1 September 2026**, 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

DISTRIBUTION:

– **Commission Officers:**

Commission Chair:	Z. Driouich	COC Chair:	D. Campbell
First Vice Chair:	R. Chong	COC Vice Chair:	Y. Vergara
Second Vice Chair:	E. Penas Lado	PWG Chair:	N. Ansell
Chairs and Vice Chairs Panels 1-4		PWG Vice Chair:	M.D. King
SCRS Chair:	C. Brown	STACFAD Chair:	L. Marot
SCRS Vice Chair	L.G. Cardoso	STACFAD Vice Chair:	B. Chavarría

– **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 (PLE-SCRS_01/2026). 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,

The SCRS Vice Chair and I are looking forward to working with you during the Species Groups meetings in September and the subsequent SCRS Plenary meeting, whether you are participating in person or online. I would like to highlight several important administrative and logistical aspects of these upcoming sessions.

We will once again have the benefit of interpretation during the Species Groups week, covering certain groups and specific days. This will greatly facilitate the engagement of scientists in our discussions. Please check the Species Groups week schedule to see which sessions will have interpretation available. Unfortunately, interpretation cannot be provided for all sessions within those designated groups. This reflects the need to balance limitations on interpretation availability while ensuring that the groups prioritized have some sessions with this support. We encourage these groups to take this into account when scheduling topics.

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

As in previous years, many participants will be joining remotely. We encourage meeting Chairs and participants to remain mindful of the need to facilitate effective engagement from both in-person and online attendees. Ensuring that discussions, presentations, and decisions remain accessible to all participants is essential for maintaining the collaborative and inclusive nature of SCRS work.

Please be aware that all Executive Summaries will once again be reviewed and updated this year. Following the recent adoption of the revised Executive Summary format, our objective is to ensure that the information presented remains current, concise, and consistent across species and stocks. For stocks that have not undergone new assessments or generated new management advice this year, only limited updates should normally be required. However, each Species Group should carefully review all Executive Summaries to ensure that key information, management advice, stock status descriptions, and references to recent SCRS work remain accurate and up to date. We encourage participants to support Rapporteurs in this process while keeping discussions focused and efficient, recognizing the limited time available during the Species Groups meetings. For stocks assessed this year, the Executive Summaries should, of course, be updated to reflect the latest scientific results and advice.

The SCRS Plenary agenda follows the structure of the SCRS Annual Report and does not reflect the order in which agenda items will be discussed. We will follow the same approach as in recent years for 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 Plenary, revised schedules may be posted 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 posted in advance. Although many documents cannot be finalized until they are adopted by the species groups and the Subcommittee on Statistics during the week before the Plenary, many important documents will be available beforehand. For example, it is essential to familiarize yourself with the intersessional meeting reports for our discussions to be efficient and productive.

The future development of an SCRS Science Strategic Plan will remain an important topic for discussion. Following the development of an initial draft in 2024-2025 through a process of consultation involving both the SCRS and the Commission, the SCRS did not adopt a strategic plan at its 2025 Annual Meeting and decided not to advance the work during 2026. I intend to present a Chair's proposal regarding a way



COMISION INTERNACIONAL PARA LA
CONSERVACION DEL ATUN ATLANTICO

forward, to facilitate discussions during the SCRS Plenary that will focus on identifying the most appropriate process and timeline for the further development of a future Strategic Plan. Given time constraints, any such discussion will need to be limited and is intended to guide future work rather than to finalize a strategic planning document during this year's meeting.

I remind you that the election of the SCRS Chair will be held this year. Interested candidates should inform the ICCAT Executive Secretary, the SCRS Vice Chair, and/or myself - preferably in advance of the SCRS Plenary meeting - as the number of interested candidates will inform the process and time allocation for the election.

While our agenda this year remains as demanding as ever, we have been deeply impressed by the steadfast diligence of our SCRS scientists. Together, we have successfully navigated an intense intersessional schedule, including vital data preparations for the upcoming assessments of North Atlantic shortfin mako, South Atlantic albacore and South Atlantic and Mediterranean swordfish stocks as well as the status check for bluefin tuna, alongside our ongoing advancements in Management Strategy Evaluation, bycatch/discard estimation, ecosystems considerations and other research. This immense collective effort has kept us firmly on track for our critical meetings in Madrid this September. Gustavo and I are very much looking forward to reviewing this outstanding work with you all, and to your active participation as we finalize our 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. Report of the Meeting of the Subcommittee on Ecosystems and Bycatch
10. Report of the Meetings of the Subcommittee on Statistics
11. Discussions at the Intersessional Meetings of the Commission relevant to the SCRS
 - 11.1 Intersessional Meetings of Panel 1
 - 11.2 Intersessional Meeting of Panel 2
 - 11.3 Intersessional Meeting of Panel 4
 - 11.4 Meeting of the Electronic Monitoring Systems Working Group (EMS WG)
 - 11.5 19th Meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Monitoring Measures (IMM)
 - 11.6 Meeting of the Standing Working Group on Dialogue between Fisheries Scientists and Managers (SWGSM)
 - 11.7 Meetings of the Virtual Working Group on Sustainable Financial Position for ICCAT (VWG-SF)
12. Executive Summaries on species
 - 12.1 YFT - Yellowfin
 - 12.2 BET - Bigeye
 - 12.3 SKJ - Skipjack
 - 12.4 ALB-AT - Atlantic albacore
 - 12.5 ALB-MD - Mediterranean albacore
 - 12.6 BFT - Atlantic bluefin tuna
 - 12.7 SBF - Southern bluefin

- 12.8 BUM - Blue marlin
- 12.9 WHM - White marlin
- 12.10 SAF - Sailfish
- 12.11 SWO-AT - Atlantic swordfish
- 12.12 SWO-MD - Mediterranean swordfish
- 12.13 SMT - Small tunas
- 12.14 BSH - Blue shark
- 12.15 SMA - Shortfin mako
- 12.16 POR - Porbeagle
- 13. ICCAT Research Programmes
 - 13.1 Atlantic-Wide Research Programme for Bluefin Tuna (GBYP)
 - 13.2 Small Tunas Year Programme (SMTYP)
 - 13.3 Shark Research and Data Collection Programme (SRDCP)
 - 13.4 Enhanced Programme for Billfish Research (EPBR)
 - 13.5 Albacore Year Programme (ALBYP)
 - 13.6 Swordfish Year Programme (SWOYP)
 - 13.7 Tropical Tuna Research and Data Collection Program (TTRaD)
 - 13.8 Subcommittee on Ecosystems and Bycatch Research Programme
- 14. Progress related to work developed on Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE)
 - 14.1 Work conducted for northern albacore
 - 14.2 Work conducted for southern albacore
 - 14.3 Work conducted for bluefin tuna
 - 14.4 Work conducted for northern swordfish
 - 14.5 Work conducted for western skipjack
 - 14.6 Work conducted for tropical tunas multi-stock MSE
 - 14.7 Work conducted for blue shark
 - 14.8 Review of the Roadmap for the ICCAT MSE processes adopted by the Commission in 2025
- 15. SCRS Science Strategic Plan: way forward
- 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 2027

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 Chapter 5 of the ICCAT Manual: Types of data that are not usually collected for scientific purposes (although they can sometimes be used to complement scientific estimates)
 - 20.2 Deadline for the submission of SCRS documents and presentations to SCRS meetings
 - 20.3 Update of the ICCAT webpage
- 21. Election of the SCRS Chair
- 22. Adoption of the report and meeting closure

2026 Tentative Agenda of Billfishes Species Group Meeting

(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 14 September 2026 (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. Billfishes Executive Summaries (SFA, BUM, and WHM/RSP)
4. Responses to the Commission (Rec. 16-14, paragraph 4b and Rec. 19-05, paragraphs 16, 17, and 21)
5. Workplan for 2027
6. Terms of reference for the 2027 contracts within EPBR
7. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
8. Other matters

2026 Tentative Agenda of Swordfish Species Group Meeting

(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 14-16 September 2026 (09:00-13:00 - 14:30-18:00 hours))

1. Review of fisheries statistics (Tasks 1, 2 and 3)
2. Mediterranean and South Atlantic stock status and management advice
3. Update on the ongoing work regarding the swordfish MSE process
 - a. Northern Atlantic swordfish
 - b. Revision of the MSE roadmap
4. Review of new scientific documents for swordfish (including ongoing research activities on biology and tagging conducted under the Swordfish Year Programme (SWOYP))
5. Swordfish Executive Summaries
6. Responses to the Commission
7. Workplan for 2027
8. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
9. Terms of reference for the 2027 contracts within SWOYP
10. Other matters

2026 Tentative Agenda of Tropical Tunas Species Group Meeting

(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 14-16 September 2026 (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 tropical tunas MSE process
 - a) Multi-stock TT MSE
 - b) SKJ-W MSE
 - c) Revision of the MSE Roadmap adopted by the Commission in 2025
3. Review the work conducted under the ICCAT Tropical Tuna Research and Data Collection Programme (TTRaD)
 - a) ITUNNES/ICCAT workshop updates
 - b) Other
4. Review of new scientific documents for tropical tunas
5. Tropical Tunas Executive Summaries (BET, YFT and SKJ)
6. Responses to the Commission
 - a) Rec. 25-02 para 8 & 9
 - b) Rec. 25-01 para 8
 - c) Res. 24-02 para 2, 3, 4 & 6
 - d) Rec. 24-01 para 27, 31, 34, 36, 42, 51, 67, 73, 75, 79a, & 79b
 - e) Rec. 17-01 para 4
 - f) Rec. 16-14 para 4b
7. Workplan for 2027
8. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
9. Terms of reference for the 2027 contracts within TTRaD
10. Other matters

2026 Tentative Agenda of Small Tunas Species Group Meeting

(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 15 September 2026 (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. Preliminary work for a SMT stock assessment
4. Small Tunas Executive Summary
5. Workplan for 2027
6. Responses to the Commission (Rec. 16-14, para 4b)
7. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
8. Terms of reference for the 2027 contracts within SMTYP
9. Other matters

2026 Tentative Agenda of Bluefin Tuna Species Group Meeting

(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 16-18 September 2026 (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. Mediterranean and South Atlantic stock status and management advice
3. Update on the ongoing work regarding bluefin tuna MSE process
 - a) Evaluation of exceptional circumstances for Atlantic bluefin tuna
 - b) Progress on the MSE roadmap adopted by the Commission in 2025
4. Review of new scientific documents for bluefin tuna
5. Review of the work conducted under the ICCAT GBYP
6. Bluefin Tuna Executive Summaries
7. Responses to the Commission
 - a) SCRS to provide scientific guidance on the exceptional circumstances protocol for the BFT MP, Rec. 22-09 para 12
 - b) Rec. 16-14 para 4b
8. Workplan for 2027
9. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
10. Terms of reference for the 2027 contracts within GBYP
 - a) Biological sampling
 - b) MSE review
 - c) Tagging
11. Other matters

2026 Tentative Agenda of Sharks Species Group Meeting

(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 16-18 September 2026 (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. Blue shark MSE advances
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 2027
7. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
8. Terms of reference for the 2027 contracts within SRDCP
9. Other matters

2026 Tentative Agenda of Albacore Species Group Meeting

(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 17-18 September 2026 (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 Atlantic albacore MSE processes
 - a) North:
 - i. Candidate Management Procedures (CMPs) and Total Allowable Catch (TAC) advice (Rec. 21-04 para 18)
 - ii. Evaluation of exceptional circumstances (Rec. 21-04 para 4)
 - b) South
 - c) Revision of the MSE Roadmap
4. Mediterranean and Atlantic Albacore Executive Summaries
5. Responses to the Commission
 - a) Rec. 16-14 para 4b
 - b) Rec. 21-04 para 4 and 18
 - c) Rec. 24-09 para 2
6. Workplan for 2027
7. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
8. Terms of reference for the 2027 contracts within ALBYP
9. Other matters

2026 Tentative Agenda of Subcommittee on Statistics Meeting

(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín The One, Madrid, Spain; 19 September 2026 (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 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. Provisional proposal to split the sampling areas in the Mediterranean
8. Revision of the outcome/progress from the ad hoc intersessional groups: 1) Standardization of T1NC tables included in the Executive Summaries; 2) Review and update of the ICCAT Rules & Procedures on data protection; 3) Standardized procedure for addressing reporting gaps via estimates ("carryovers"); 4) Modification of form ST09 to include a minimum feasible subset on the bycatch of sea turtles; 5) Refine the Secretariat's CSV flat-file proposal
9. Responses to the Commission
10. "The SCRS will advise the Commission on the suitability of the alternative approach proposed by CPCs, Rec. 16-14 para 4b"
11. Workplan for 2027
12. Recommendations (with special emphasis on those with financial implications)
13. Other matters
14. Adoption of the report

Tentative timetable

2026 Species Groups and Subcommittee on Statistics

(hybrid, Hotel Chamartín the One, Madrid, Spain, 14-19 September 2026; 9:00-13:00 14:30-18:00 hours)

Species Groups	MON 14		TUE 15		WED 16		THU 17		FRI 18		SAT 19	
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
BIL	*	*										
SWO												
TROP			*	*	*	*						
SMT												
BFT												
SHK							*	*	*	*		
ALB												
SC-STAT											*	*
Officers meeting (18:00-19:30)												

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

2026 September Species Groups and Subcommittee on Statistics Meetings

(hybrid/Madrid, Spain, 14-19 September 2026)

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](#) 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 **accepted documents and presentations 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 the next year** for discussion. Authors are reminded to closely follow the [New 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.