

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS



COMMISSION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA
CONSERVATION DES THONIDES DE L'ATLANTIQUE

COMISIÓN INTERNACIONAL PARA LA
CONSERVACIÓN DEL ATÚN ATLÁNTICO

Madrid, 27 August 2020

ICCAT CIRCULAR # 5924 / 2020

SUBJECT: CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN REGARDING AN UPDATE ON PROCEDURES FOR COMMISSION DECISIONS IN 2020

Further to ICCAT Circular #4379 and #4686, on the way forward after cancellation of the 2020 SCRS and Commission annual meetings, please find attached correspondence from the Commission Chairman including an update on procedures for Commission decisions in 2020.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Executive Secretary

Camille Jean Pierre Manel

DISTRIBUTION:

- Commission Officers:

Commission Chair:	R. Delgado	COC Chair:	D. Campbell
First Vice Chair:	S. Depypere	PWG Chair:	N. Ansell
Second Vice Chair:	Z. Driouich	STACFAD Chair:	H.A Elekon
Panel 1-4 Chairs			
SCRS Chair:	G. Melvin	SCRS Vice Chair:	R. Coelho

- Head Delegates

- Cooperating Parties, Entities, or Fishing Entities

Attachment: Correspondence from the Commission Chairman



27 August 2020

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON PROCEDURES FOR COMMISSION DECISIONS IN 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Opinions of CPCs on the Chairs' proposals were sought through ICCAT Circulars 4379 and 4686, and eleven responses were received within the deadline. I understand that lack of response from other CPCs indicates agreement with the proposed way forward. Of the responses received, five simply expressed agreement with the proposed way forward (Belize, Norway, Russia, UKOT and Chinese Taipei). Six CPCs expressed general agreement but had some specific comments and questions on various issues, which were circulated to all CPCs.¹ I have tried to summarise the input received below:

GENERAL: Several CPCs requested more details on the logistics associated with the 2020 ICCAT decision making process. One CPC was of the view that online meetings should take place. It is not my intention to hold online meetings of the Commission this year due to the extraordinary logistical difficulties for several of our CPCs, including restrictions on platforms to be used due to security reasons; difficulties with stable access to the internet; power discontinuity; time schedule of meetings, etc.

Given the inherent difficulties for such a large and diverse organization in making decisions solely by correspondence, as set forth in Circular #4379, I recommended, in consultation with ICCAT Officers, that our efforts be targeted towards those few key issues that can brook no delay and that, as far as possible, expiring conservation and management measures be rolled over for one year unless new SCRS advice indicates urgent action is necessary. No objection to this approach was presented. Therefore, in line with my previous correspondence, species-related proposals that can be tabled by CPCs in 2020 for consideration through correspondence will be limited to the following two categories:

1. Proposals to address matters that have been identified by CPCs in their responses to Circulars #4379 and #4686, to the extent that these CPCs maintain an interest in tabling such proposals this year; and
2. Proposals to address expiring measures in cases where the 2020 SCRS advice indicates an urgent situation and something other than a one-year rollover of the current Recommendation may need to be considered.

Note that the deadline has passed for proposals other than those that depend on SCRS advice, and no such proposals were submitted prior to the deadline.

The following procedures will govern the correspondence process for all species related proposals:

Following the publication of the SCRS report, I will request the Chairs of Panels 1-4 to initiate the correspondence process for their issues by providing the Commission with their initial views of:

- (1) those stocks/species whose conservation and management may be sufficiently addressed by continuance of existing management measures (whether through a one-year rollover of a measure set to expire, or non-amendment of a measure not set to expire), and;
- (2) those stocks/species for which consideration of amendments to existing measures may be warranted given new SCRS advice indicating an urgent situation.

¹ Canada ICCAT Circular #5382/20; El Salvador #5149/20; EU #5353/20; Morocco #5197/20; Senegal #5354/20; USA #5384/20.

For those species determined by a Panel Chair to be appropriately addressed by a rollover, the Panel Chair will, at the same time, circulate a proposal for a one-year extension of the existing measure that is as short and simple as possible². CPCs will have two weeks (14 calendar days) from the time the initial proposal is circulated to review it and provide any feedback. Absent objection by the deadline, the proposed rollover will be considered adopted by the Commission. If an objection is raised before the deadline, the Panel Chair will work with concerned CPCs to address the concerns, and where appropriate circulate a proposal no later than **15 October 2020**. After each subsequent circulation of a proposal, CPCs will have no more than 14 calendar days for review.

In the case of stocks/species determined by the Panel Chair as warranting consideration of amendments to existing measures in light of new SCRS advice, CPCs have an opportunity to provide input on possible amendments, including through submission of proposals no later than 15 October 2020. Alternatively, the Panel Chair can produce and circulate a draft recommendation. The review/comment timeframes for such proposals is the same as for proposals addressed in the preceding paragraph.

In the case of new proposals or significant revisions to existing measures, I urge CPCs to be aware that adoption through correspondence will be extremely challenging; hence, CPCs should avoid making proposals which are unlikely to be accepted relatively quickly, and preferably on no more than two rounds of review.

If, after three iterations of this process, the relevant Chair determines that consensus will not be possible on a proposal, the Panel Chair will close debate on the specific proposal and, where the proposal relates to a management measure that is expiring, initiate a discussion on possible next steps. In the case of lack of consensus on proposals to amend measures that do not expire, the debate will simply be closed and the existing measures will continue to apply in 2021.

Note that, for those stocks with expiring measures, lack of agreement on at least a rollover proposal would mean important management controls would lapse in 2021. I would urge you all to reflect on the serious implications of this. While understanding the legitimate concerns of some CPCs on the current measures, I would ask all parties to recognise the exceptional and unforeseen circumstances in which we now find ourselves. Given that, I would ask for your patience and maximum flexibility as we undertake this unique process this year—a year in which it will simply not be possible to fully address every issue as originally hoped. Nevertheless, to ensure we can get through this extraordinary time and successfully meet at least a minimum of our responsibilities, we must work together through the correspondence process to find consensus on the urgent matters requiring our attention in 2020.

Bilateral/multilateral consultation as well as coordination with the Panel Chairs is encouraged, where appropriate, in order to increase the possibility of reaching consensus as quickly as possible during the correspondence period. In any event, all measures adopted in 2020 will be subject to review, as required, in 2021.

Before the start of the correspondence process, the Executive Secretary will ensure that the appropriate contact details for each CPC's official correspondents are available and up to date. If CPCs agree (depending on their confidentiality requirements), these contact details will be made available to all CPCs to facilitate bilateral/multilateral consultation. Additionally, the Executive Secretary will give CPCs an opportunity to provide specific points of contact for the various subsidiary bodies of ICCAT, for those CPCs that may wish to designate different focal points for different issues.

Any proposal made will be available in all three official ICCAT languages. Any proposed changes will also be translated before a proposal is recirculated.

² The simplest version is "All the measures contained in Rec. XX-YY that are in effect in 2020 shall be applied for 2021." If this is not suitable, another option could be to pick up only paragraphs subject to change rather than to produce an entire draft recommendation indicating which parts are subject to change.

For those stocks/species that may be subject to a temporary rollover, I would urge the Chairs of the relevant Panels to start intersessional work as early as possible in order to develop, in advance of the 2021 meeting, coherent proposals that will meet the approval, as far as possible, of the members of each Panel. Moreover, I believe that physical intersessional meetings will be required as soon as the world conditions allow and would therefore ask each Panel Chair to put forward a workplan for 2021, including the possible need for intersessional meetings.

In addition to the circulation of specific proposals, the usual Commission document site will be maintained with the background documents, Secretariat Reports, statements, etc. The numbering system and structure will be the same as previous years. This will be open access and CPCs will be informed when it is activated.

PANEL 1: Of those commenting, three CPCs are in favour of a carry-over of the current measure, to allow for the intersessional development of a new proposal for 2021, but one CPC has indicated that this would not be acceptable. I would ask the Panel 1 Chair to work with El Salvador, and any other CPCs as appropriate, in order for them to put forward a concrete proposal and / or accept a temporary postponement of discussions on this issue.

PANEL 2: One party believes that 16-06 and 17-04 should be merged this year, while one other believes that this should be postponed until 2021. One party also requests update of the TAC for N-ALB based on this year's stock assessment, in which case how to handle allocation is not clear. I would ask the Panel 2 Chair to work with the Panel 2 members to see if they wish to put forward a proposal for 2020, or whether they could agree to a postponement until 2021 as well as how to deal with the TAC and allocations. The other outstanding issue for Panel 2 is the allocation of the reserve for the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean BFT; I believe there are some expectations by Namibia and Russia for consideration, but EU have indicated that they do not believe that this issue could be considered in the current circumstances. I defer the decision on whether or not to discuss this issue via correspondence this year to the Panel 2 Chair.

PANEL 3: No issues raised

PANEL 4: Two issues have been raised for Panel 4; shortfin mako and Mediterranean swordfish. There does not seem to be full consensus on the deferral of discussion on mako until 2021, as Canada has indicated they wish to put forward a proposal. I would ask the Panel 4 Chair to discuss this with Canada to see if they could wait until 2021; but of course, if they wish to put forward a proposal for 2020 they may do so.

The views expressed by two CPCs regarding Mediterranean swordfish seem to conflict. One suggests that a rollover of the current Recommendation is acceptable, and the other indicates a review may be needed. I would ask the Panel 4 Chair to work with EU once the SCRS advice is available to determine whether a revision is urgent or whether revision could be postponed until 2021.

COC: One CPC has inquired about becoming a member of the Friends of the Chair group, while another CPC questioned the utility and feasibility of convening this body in 2020 given the nature of the work to be undertaken this year and the process for doing so via correspondence. The COC Chair intends to address this matter as well as to propose procedures for carrying out efficient and effective discussion by correspondence of the COC issues identified in Circulars #4379 and #4686, as requested by some of the CPCs in their responses. The COC Chair will provide information which will include, among other things, when the correspondence process will begin and end, and how decisions will be taken. Morocco has specifically requested clarification on the process for implementing *no data no fish* (Rec. 11-15) this year, which the COC Chair, with the assistance of the Secretariat as necessary, intends to address as part of the procedures to be circulated on the operation of the COC.

PWG: No specific issues were raised, except the need to discuss in 2021 those items pending which should have been discussed at the 2020 intersessional meeting. With respect to the development and adoption of the IUU list, which was identified in Circular #4379 as a matter for the PWG to consider by correspondence in 2020, I have requested that the PWG Chair work with the Secretariat to circulate more information on the procedure for this task.

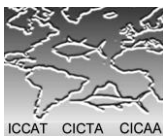
STACFAD and Commission-level issues: One CPC noted that some work is ongoing in the two virtual Working Groups (VWGs) but, with the possible exception of arrears and elections, it is unclear if any output from these groups is of a high enough priority to require action by the Commission this year. Any proposals that may be developed and agreed by these groups before the end of the correspondence process and that are determined by the Commission Chair to be essential matters could be tabled for consideration. In addition, Circular #4379 identifies for consideration by correspondence in 2020 the possible adoption of two MOUs, one with WECAFC and one with GFCM, as well as certain budgetary matters. The process for reviewing and potentially adopting these draft MOUs and for considering the identified budget matters will be circulated in due course.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Commission Chair



Raul Delgado



Madrid, 16 June 2020

ICCAT CIRCULAR # 4068/ 2020

SUBJECT: CANCELLATION OF THE 2020 SCRS AND COMMISSION ANNUAL MEETINGS

Please find attached correspondence from the Commission Chairman regarding the cancellation of the 2020 SCRS and Commission annual meetings.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Executive Secretary

Camille Jean Pierre Manel

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Commission Chair:	R. Delgado	COC Chair:	D. Campbell
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Chairs Panels 1 to 4			

- Head Delegates/Head Scientists

- Cooperating Parties, Entities, or Fishing Entities

Attachment: Correspondence from Commission Chairman.



16 June 2020

SUBJECT: CANCELLATION OF THE 2020 SCRS AND COMMISSION ANNUAL MEETINGS

Dear Colleagues,

Further to my letter of 5 June 2020 distributed as ICCAT Circular #3776/ 2020, and taking into account the responses received and the absence of any objections by the CPCs, I confirm that the SCRS plenary meeting scheduled to be held September to October, as well as the 2020 Commission meeting scheduled to be held in November, have been cancelled. The next Regular meeting of the Commission will be held in November 2021.

Nonetheless, several CPCs have expressed their concerns, which I echo, regarding the need for new measures in relation to some species, most importantly, but not limited to, tropical tuna species.

I would propose therefore that CPCs start working on these issues now. I will remind each Chair of the Commission subsidiary bodies to provide a list of measures which, if there is agreement, can be carried over for one year, and a list of those measures for which redrafting is considered vital. For these cases, the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies will also put forward proposed procedures for the discussion and adoption of new measures. This list should be as short as possible, while ensuring the continued and sustained management of ICCAT species. I will also request the SCRS Chair to provide the workplan/schedule for the SCRS from now until October, in addition to the procedure for providing advice and responses to the Commission.

For those measures requiring amendment, the Chair of each subsidiary body should work with the members of that body to ensure that a first draft for each species is submitted for circulation no later than:

- a) **31 July 2020 for measures not awaiting advice from SCRS** (i.e. where assessment has been carried out in 2019 or early 2020, or the measures are not dependent on new scientific advice;
- b) **15 October 2020 in the case of species awaiting advice from SCRS.**

This first draft will serve as a basis for electronic discussion and I sincerely hope that all measures can be adopted by consensus.

I will get back to you as soon as possible with the proposed lists mentioned above.

Yours sincerely,

Commission Chairman

Raul Delgado