

**DRAFT RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SPECIAL
MEETING PARTICIPATION FUND**

1. Definitions

Developing ICCAT Contracting Parties are considered to be those Contracting Parties that are classified under Groups B, C or D, in accordance with the criteria used in the contributions calculation (Regulation 4 - Provision of funds, ICCAT Financial Regulations).

2. Eligibility criteria

Applicant criteria

To qualify to receive assistance through the MPF, the following minimum criteria should be met to the greatest extent possible to control costs and minimize administrative burdens, while taking into account Commission needs and interests with respect to the participation of the applicant:

- a. A developing Contracting Party that sends more than four official delegates to a meeting of the Commission or one of its subsidiary bodies through utilization of its own means or financial sources (not including the Special Meeting Participation Fund - MPF) is not eligible to receive travel funding support from the MPF for that meeting, except for the annual meetings of the Commission, which may be attended by up to six official delegates.
- b. Applicants should:
 - i travel using only the most cost-effective economy class fare unless another fare class is available at a lower cost; and
 - ii make their flight itinerary definite no less than 30 days prior to commencement of the meeting.

Participation in ICCAT scientific meetings.

Applicants will be selected in accordance with the protocol established by the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (Addendum 2 to Appendix 7 to the 2011 SCRS Report).

Any eligible scientist from a developing Contracting Party seeking travel funding assistance should submit a completed application by the established deadline, including a detailed description of the applicant's contribution to the meeting. After obtaining the approval of the rapporteurs of the Species Groups involved and/or the SCRS Chair, the Secretariat will carry out the necessary procedures to fund the trip.

Participation in ICCAT non-scientific meetings

All applications shall be made for attendance to a single meeting by one participant per Contracting Party, and shall be subject to the approval of the Commission Chairman, the STACFAD Chair and the Executive Secretary, in addition to the Chair of the meeting for which funding is being sought in the case of subsidiary bodies. Notwithstanding, two official delegation members (one manager and one scientist) are eligible to receive travel funding assistance to attend meetings of the Standing Working Group on Dialogue Between Fisheries Scientists and Managers, subject to the same approval process.

Any official delegate of a developing Contracting Party seeking travel funding assistance shall submit a completed application by the established deadline.

3. Application procedures

1. The Secretariat will publish the travel form by invitation 90 days in advance of commencement of the meeting.
2. MPF applicants shall send the duly completed form 75 days in advance, including:
 - a. An official letter of nomination for the request for assistance signed by the Head of Delegation, together with a list of the official delegates that will attend the meeting. In the event that this list includes more than four delegates, funding will not be provided for the applicant.
 - b. All the candidate's contact details, including personal mobile telephone number.
 - c. A copy of the photo/data page of the person's current passport.
 - d. A copy of the necessary bank details (including name of bank, address of bank, precise name of the account holder, account number, IBAN and SWIFT).
 - e. A request for a *note verbale*, if needed, to apply for a visa and the place where it will be processed.
3. The Secretariat shall review the applications to determine those which meet the eligibility criteria and shall offer a period of 5 additional days to those applicants who have not sent all the information required.
4. The Secretariat will send an invitation to the selected candidates with travel itinerary based on the dates indicated in the form (no less than 60 days prior to the commencement of the meeting).
5. Applicants must apply for and send a copy of the visa together with the verification and acceptance of the itinerary no less than 30 days prior to the commencement of the meeting.
6. If a reply is not received with all the requirements set out above, the Secretariat will send an application rejection notification.

4. Approval of funding

Applications will be approved on a first come first served basis, as received by the Secretariat. Only complete applications that duly meet all the requirements will be considered.

Funding for travel can only be guaranteed if funds are available, irrespective of whether a complete request has been submitted by the established deadline or preapproved.

Once a request that meets all the eligibility criteria stipulated in Section 2 of these rules of procedure has been approved by the Secretariat, no subsequent modification in the lists of participants shall be made by the Contracting Party in a way to exceed the threshold limit of four official delegates as established under paragraph (a) of the Applicant criteria.

5. Management of the fund

The ICCAT Executive Secretary shall establish a process for notifying Contracting Parties annually of the level of available funds in the MPF, and provide a timeline and describe the format for the submission of applications for assistance, as well as the details of the assistance to be made available.

In accordance with point 8 of Recommendation [XX-XX], funds shall be distributed in a manner that ensures balanced distribution between scientific and non-scientific meetings.

The funds will be separated into two six-month periods in order to provide for the participation of scientists and delegates in meetings held later on in the year.