



Madrid, 28 May 2018

**ICCAT GBYP CIRCULAR # 0492/ 2018**

**SUBJECT: TERMS OF REFERENCE – CALL FOR TENDERS – ICCAT/GBYP (07/2018)  
TAGGING PROGRAMME ON BLUEFIN TUNA (ICCAT/GBYP PHASE 8)**

I have the honour to transmit to you the attached Call for Tenders ICCAT GBYP 07/2018 for “Tagging Programme on Bluefin Tuna” of the ICCAT GBYP Atlantic-Wide Research Programme on Bluefin Tuna.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.



*Driss Meski*  
Executive Secretary

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**Attachment:** Call for Tenders ICCAT GBYP 07/2018.

**CALL FOR TENDERS ICCAT GBYP 07/2018**  
**TAGGING PROGRAMME 2018**  
**ATLANTIC-WIDE RESEARCH PROGRAMME ON BLUEFIN TUNA**  
**(ICCAT GBYP – PHASE 8)**

**Background and objectives of the ICCAT GBYP Tagging Programme**

The main objectives of the ICCAT Atlantic-Wide Research Programme for Bluefin Tuna (ICCAT GBYP) are to improve: (a) the understanding of key biological and ecological processes, (b) the current assessment methodology, (c) the management procedures, and (d) the advice. The achievement of these objectives requires the generation and analysis of huge amounts of data, both from fisheries-dependent and fisheries independent sources, and because of that GBYP main activities are oriented to this end.

Among the main knowledge gaps detected at the beginning of the ICCAT GBYP Programme, those on stock structure and natural mortality can be pointed out, which are crucial for conducting a reliable stock assessment, since many assumptions on these issues used in previous bluefin tuna stock assessments had been called into question by studies showing that the mixing between the bluefin tuna management units and the hypothetical existence of meta-populations were important issues to be considered.

Consequently, it was decided that one of the major research tasks under the ICCAT GBYP would be to implement a large, wide and intensive scientific tagging program to address several important biological and ecological topics regarding Atlantic bluefin tuna, aiming at improving the knowledge on its populations structure and spatial patterns, as well as providing independent estimates of abundance and/or mortality rates.

The stated objectives of the ICCAT GBYP tagging activity in the medium term (according to the ICCAT GBYP Tagging Design) were:

- a) Validation of the current stock status definitions for populations of bluefin tuna in the Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea. If the hypothesis of two stock units (western and eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean stocks) holds, the data collected by the tags should allow estimating mixing rates between stock units by area and time strata (ICCAT main area definitions and quarter at least). It is also important to consider possible sub-stock units and their mixing or population biomass exchange, particularly in the Mediterranean Sea.
- b) Estimation of biological parameters such as growth, natural mortality rates (M) of bluefin tuna populations by age or age-groups, possibly provide fishery independent estimates of abundance, etc.
- c) Estimation of tagging reporting rates for conventional tags, by major fishery and area, also using the observer programmes currently deployed in the Mediterranean fisheries (ICCAT ROP-BFT).
- d) Evaluation of habitat utilization and large-scale movement patterns (spatio-temporal) of both juveniles and spawners.
- e) Estimation of the retention rate of various tag types, due to contrasting experiences in various oceans.
- f) Estimation of the feasibility of tagging bluefin tunas in traps and purse seiners by divers obtaining at the same time reliable size estimates.

**Specific objectives and characteristics of ICCAT GBYP Phase 8 electronic tagging activities**

Considering the current needs of the MSE modelling process, the information provided by tagging activities carried out in previous ICCAT GBYP Phases, ICCAT GBYP budget availability for ICCAT GBYP Phase 8 tagging activities, as well the recommendations of the ICCAT GBYP Steering Committee as a result of the ICCAT GBYP Steering Committee meetings held in February and April 2018, the main specific objective of ICCAT GBYP electronic tags deployment activities within ICCAT GBYP Phase 8 is to improve the estimations of the degree of mixing of western and eastern Atlantic bluefin tuna stocks in the different statistical areas over the year cycle.

To this end, the tagging activities to be carried out in 2018 within the framework of this Call shall include deployment of a total of about 40 miniPATs, to be implanted in two areas of the eastern Atlantic: the North Sea and/or Celtic Sea, and waters off southern Portuguese coasts. The exact number by area will be decided by the ICCAT GBYP. Ideally biological samples of the tagged tunas shall be collected during the tagging activities, to help genetic characterization of the fish tagged in the various areas. An experienced coordinator shall be assigned in each offer. These coordinators will maintain close communication with the ICCAT GBYP Coordination team. They shall coordinate all the activities within the same offer, such as selecting and training the tagging teams, monitoring the related field activities, i.e., supervising the teams involved, as well the operating tasks of the fishing vessels/traps and their crews, and supervise data handling and processing. Ultimately, the coordinators will be responsible for providing all the tagging data for input to the ICCAT tagging database, and the collection and delivery of the biological samples taken during the tagging activities to the designated lab as directed by the ICCAT GBYP Coordinator.

In-kind contribution provided by the tenderer can be used to partially offset the cost of the tagging programme.

Any fish incidentally dying during the ICCAT GBYP tagging operations will be covered by ICCAT Rec. 11-06 and shall be officially declared on the RMA forms.

Scientific institutes, *ad hoc* consortia, and public or private entities are asked to submit tenders for carrying out the 2018 Tagging Programme envisaged in this Call. Each tenderer can bid for one or all areas.

### **Contractor tasks**

The Contractor(s), who will work in close consultation with the ICCAT GBYP Coordination, shall conduct the tagging activity in the specified geographical areas and on adult bluefin tuna only.

ICCAT Rec. 11-06 provides the means to ensure that coastal countries, all of which are ICCAT CPCs, facilitate tagging activities within the waters of their national jurisdiction and in international waters. The Contractor will be responsible for all necessary permits and agreements with the appropriate authorities, when carrying out tagging within national jurisdictions. The necessary electronic tags will be provided by the ICCAT GBYP to the awarded tenderer(s).

The Contractor(s) shall be responsible for basic data management and for submitting all data to be included in the ICCAT tagging database, using the forms provided by ICCAT. If any previously tagged fish are recaptured during tagging operations, they shall be reported to ICCAT on the appropriate tagging forms.

The ICCAT GBYP budget available for the tagging activity planned to be carried out under this Call in 2018 is considered sufficient to support the release of about 40 miniPATs on the basis of the tagging designs previously implemented by ICCAT. In the case that the cost of the selected tenders exceeds those budgeted, ICCAT GBYP may negotiate a smaller number of tag releases with the proponent of the tender.

This contract shall run to December 2018, even though it is intended that almost all activities will be completed well before the end of the year in all areas.

### **Further details on the areas and numbers of fish to be tagged and released in each area**

The Contractor(s) shall provide one or more proposals to achieve the ICCAT GBYP objectives for Phase 8, for each of the following areas:

- A) *Electronic tagging of adult bluefin tunas by sport fishery or hand lines in the North Sea and/or the Celtic Sea***
- B) *Electronic tagging of adult bluefin tunas by trap in southern Portugal area***

Offers for ICCAT GBYP Tagging 07/2018, shall ensure the following:

- a) A minimum of 10 and up to a maximum of 20 miniPATs shall be implanted in the North Sea/Celtic Sea area and a minimum of 20 and up to a maximum of 30 miniPATs shall be implanted in southern Portugal waters, on adult bluefin tunas; the applicators and the miniPATs will be provided by the ICCAT GBYP, along with precise instructions.
- b) The tenderer shall specify the period in which the tagging activity will be carried out.
- c) Rod and reel or hand line shall be the fishing gear to be used for tagging in the North Sea/Celtic Sea area. The vessel time available for this tagging activity shall be specified. Any in-kind vessel time provided should be clearly mentioned in the offer. Tuna traps shall be the fishing gear to be used for tagging in the southern Portugal area, and the number of days needed shall be specified.
- d) In the North Sea/Celtic Sea area adult tunas shall be tagged on board or alongside the boat by expert taggers, possibly removing the hook which was used for fishing them. In the southern Portugal area, half of the adult tunas shall be tagged on board or using a platform in the water, while the other half should be tagged underwater with a pool as done in previous years. These tagging operations shall be carried out following the methodology reported in the ICCAT GBYP Tagging Manual. The sequence of tags, pictures and size measures of the fish (SFL, Total Straight Fork Length) shall be properly recorded for future uses and controls, while the number of each tag and the length shall be properly recorded on the ICCAT forms.
- e) A conventional tag shall be implanted on the dorsal part of each fish tagged with electronic tags; conventional tags will be provided by the ICCAT GBYP.
- f) Biological sampling, consisting in recording size measurements of the fish and gathering tissue samples for genetic analysis, will be carried out during the tagging activities. Such biological sampling shall be conducted according to the protocols for biological and genetic sampling that will be provided by the ICCAT GBYP; the samples shall be shipped to the laboratory in charge of analysis indicated by the ICCAT GBYP.
- g) A coordinator for tagging activities who has specific experience in electronic tagging on tunas; this Tagging Coordinator could be hired under a short-term contract. The Tagging Coordinator, who would work in close, constant contact with the ICCAT GBYP Coordination Team, shall be responsible for directly managing all field activities, the scientific team on board, and their training and monitoring (due to the key relevance of this figure, the Terms of Reference for this position are provided in **Annex 1**).
- h) A tagging team. Each team should possibly include at least an electronic tagging specialist. The team shall take care of registering all tags and necessary data on the ICCAT forms. The total time at sea should be an average minimum of two (2) weeks per person.
- i) All necessary permits for accessing and operating in the waters under the jurisdiction of each CPC concerned.

The Tenderer should endeavor to follow the tagging guidelines indicated in the ICCAT GBYP Tagging Manual as they relate to the Task(s) included in the offer. In the case of a consortium or group of entities, an administrative and a scientific responsible entity should be identified; if the consortium includes more than five entities, then a Scientific Committee shall be included on which each entity carrying out a scientific duty will be represented. Each proposed modification of any of the terms of the Tagging Programme shall be justified.

Sub-contracts can be admitted up to a limit of 40% of the total budget and they shall be detailed in the proposal.

#### **Contractor minimum qualifications**

- Documented multi-year experience in bluefin tuna or tuna-species studies; previous experience in large-scale tagging or local multi-year tagging will be preferred.
- Availability of sufficient qualified scientific and technical staff to carry out the duties.
- Availability of the necessary vessel(s) and/or infrastructures to carry out the duties.
- Availability of at least one specialist in managing tagging databases.

- Excellent working knowledge of one of the three official languages of ICCAT (English, French, Spanish). A high level of knowledge of English is highly desirable.

### **Request for bids**

Interested entities should submit an offer **exclusively** to the attention of Mr. Driss Meski, the Executive Secretary of ICCAT, at the following address: [driss.meski@iccat.int](mailto:driss.meski@iccat.int) by **18 June 2018**, including:

- a) Acknowledgment of this Call for Tenders (**ICCAT GBYP 07/2018**).
- b) A detailed offer, based on the objectives of this Call for Tenders, clearly specifying the area(s) for which the tender is submitted, the minimum number of bluefin tuna to be tagged, the protocols to be adopted, and the structure of the data bank, for the purpose of the draft final report.
- c) The curricula of the scientific staff.
- d) The curriculum of the institution(s) or entity(ies) applying for the ICCAT GBYP tagging activity 2018, with any documented experience in these fields, to include recent and relevant contracts for the same or similar items and other references (including contract numbers, points of contact with telephone numbers and other relevant information).
- e) An estimated budget for the tagging activity, considering the two options regarding the number of tags to be deployed in each area, as stated in the section above (*Further details on the areas and numbers of fish to be tagged and released in each area*); the budget shall also include all components of the work and be detailed by individual components (e.g., tagging staff, organization staff including the time for data input, vessel rent, trap costs, operational costs, travels, consumables, etc.) and any discount terms (overhead to cover administrative and general costs could be admitted within a maximum limit of 10% of the personnel costs).
- f) The name, address, and telephone number of the tendering body.
- g) The bank account of the tendering body (bank name, account number, IBAN and SWIFT codes), and the VAT identification code.
- h) The institutional and administrative background of the tendering body (e.g., statutes, type of institution, annual budget, budget control procedures, etc.).
- i) A detailed list of any sub-contracting activities.
- j) A declaration that the offering institution will follow the *Tagging Manual* as well as this Call for Tenders, and/or approved modifications agreed upon, and the administrative rules specified in the contract.
- k) A declaration that all the comments eventually made on the draft final report (**Deliverable #3**) will be incorporated in the final report (**Deliverable #4**).
- l) A declaration that the staff and all the subcontracted staff will be covered by full insurance for the tagging activities to be carried out according to the Call for Tenders, excluding ICCAT from all responsibility concerning the work to be carried out by each offering institution.
- m) A statement specifying the extent of agreement with all terms, conditions, and provisions herein included, particularly specifying the date for the draft final report (**Deliverable #3**) and the date for the final report (**Deliverable #4**).

The ICCAT Secretariat will make a selection of the offers in consultation with the ICCAT GBYP Steering Committee. The ICCAT Secretariat will notify the result of the selection process as soon as possible.

Offers that fail to furnish the required documentation or information, or that reject the terms and conditions of the Call for Tenders will not be considered.

Contractors can be either scientific institutes, *ad hoc* consortia, public or private entities having the qualifications required.

The Contractor should be available to report to any meeting requested by ICCAT.

## Deliverables

- #1** A short report on tagging activities, including the identification of the Tagging Coordinator, all protocols for tagging, the vessel chartering agreements in the case of the tagging activities carried out in the North Sea/Celtic Sea area and a short description of the work carried out up to that date, to be submitted at the latest **30 days after signature of the contract**;
- #2** An update of the short report on activities to be submitted at the latest **one week after the beginning of the tagging activity**, including a description of the work carried out up to that date, the number of tagged tunas in the various areas by tag type, the number of biological samples collected at the date;
- #3** The draft final report to be submitted at the latest by **26 November 2018**, including comments on:
- I. The scientific report, taking into account the relevant scientific literature, containing:
    - a) Full description of the work carried out for the tagging activities, with the total number of tagged tunas in each area and specification of any double tagged tuna;
    - b) Detailed description of the methodology and protocols;
    - c) Maps of the areas in which the tagging was carried out;
    - d) Detailed tables with the definitive number of tagged specimens by area, size composition and type of tag (miniPATs + conventional spaghetti tag);
    - e) Copy of the data input worksheets from the ICCAT tagging database;
    - f) Any possible recommendations for adjusting the tagging strategy for tagging in future Phases of ICCAT GBYP;
    - g) An Executive Summary.
  - II. A PowerPoint presentation of the main results.
- #4** The final report, to be prepared taking into account any comments provided by ICCAT, and the full administrative report including copies of all the administrative documents, to be submitted by **4 December 2018**, at the latest.

## Payment details

Disbursements will be made according to the following schedule:

1. 30% of the total amount of the contract upon **signing of the contract**;
2. 25% upon completion and acceptance of **Deliverable #1**;
3. 25% upon completion and acceptance of **Deliverable #2**;
4. 20% after the approval of **Deliverable #4** upon incorporation of comments by the ICCAT GBYP and the approval of the administrative documents.

## Logistics

All documents provided by the Contractor must be in MS Word or compatible software; tables must be in Excel format or compatible; figures and pictures must be in JPEG or TIFF format or compatible. Tagging data shall be input to the ICCAT tagging database. All documents submitted must be in English, French or Spanish.

## Copyright

All the material produced by the Contractor will remain the property of the ICCAT GBYP, will be kept confidential, and cannot, in any case, be circulated by the Contractor selected. Scientific use of the data by the Contractor shall always be notified to ICCAT in advance for clearance.

For further information concerning this Call for Tenders, please contact the ICCAT GBYP Coordinator at the following address: [francisco.alemany@iccat.int](mailto:francisco.alemany@iccat.int).

**Duties and Responsibilities of the Tagging Coordinator**

The duties and responsibilities of the Tagging Coordinator for each tender shall be as follows:

- Be the liaison officer between the Contractor and the ICCAT GBYP for all practical issues concerning the tagging activities;
- Selection and training of the staff engaged in the tagging programme at sea, organising the necessary training course;
- Implement the logistical and operational components of the tag release activities, including cruise planning, tagger training and supervision of all aspects of the operational releases;
- Participate in tagging cruises, acting as cruise leader;
- Ensure that all data collected as part of the release activities of tags under the ICCAT GBYP are properly recorded, transcribed in electronic form and provided to GBYP and to the ICCAT tagging data manager;
- Ensure the collection of all biological samples requested by the contract (only for those samples to be collected during the tagging activities) and ensure their delivery to the team (s) in charge of the biological studies, according to the sampling protocols specified;
- In the case of the North Sea/Celtic Sea area, support the Contractor for vessel chartering, contracting staff for tagging operations and while purchasing any of the gears required to implement properly the tagging programme;
- Prepare written reports, as required, summarizing all tag release and recovery activities and also, in strict cooperation with the ICCAT GBYP Coordination Team, draft articles describing the GBYP Tagging Programme for promotional purposes (a preliminary draft shall be sent to ICCAT for clearance);
- Possibly support the Contractor in preparing all necessary documents for requesting the permits for accessing the national waters under the jurisdiction of each CPC concerned (to be formally requested by the Contractor), informing the ICCAT GBYP Coordination Team of any need for assistance and/or support;
- In collaboration with the ICCAT GBYP Coordination Team, implement tag promotional and recovery activities including those specifically recommended by the GBYP Steering Committee. This will possibly entail extensive travel to major bluefin landing ports and direct liaison with fishing industry and scientist involved with bluefin fisheries;
- Other activities, as required, to ensure the successful implementation of the ICCAT/GBYP Tagging Programme;
- Work in constant, close cooperation with the ICCAT/GBYP Coordination Team, keeping them informed of all the details, any possible difficulties, and progress made.