

## A PLAN FOR THE PLAN

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### SUMMARY

*Considering the outcomes of the 2011 Working Group on the Organization of the SCRS, the Resolution on Best Available Science [Res. 11-17] and the necessity for provision of appropriate advice to present and future requests from the Commission, strategic planning is proposed to develop a structured approach to guide the future workings of the SCRS. This document is intended to motivate discussion within the SCRS around definition of components for and creating a roadmap for a 2015-2020 SCRS Strategic Plan.*

### RÉSUMÉ

*Compte tenu des résultats obtenus par le Groupe de travail sur l'organisation du SCRS en 2011, la Résolution sur la meilleure science disponible (Rés. 11-17) et la nécessité de formuler un avis adéquat aux requêtes actuelles et futures de la Commission, un plan stratégique est proposé en vue d'élaborer une approche structurée pour orienter les futurs travaux du SCRS. Le présent document vise à encourager les débats au sein du SCRS autour de la définition des composantes d'un plan stratégique du SCRS 2015-2020 et de la création d'une feuille de route pour ce plan.*

### RESUMEN

*Considerando los resultados de la reunión de 2011 del Grupo de trabajo sobre organización del SCRS, la Resolución sobre la mejor ciencia disponible [Res. 11-17] y la necesidad de proporcionar un adecuado asesoramiento científico frente a solicitudes actuales y futuras de la Comisión, se propone el desarrollo de un plan estratégico para elaborar un enfoque estructurado para orientar el trabajo futuro del SCRS. Este documento pretende fomentar las discusiones dentro del SCRS sobre la definición de los componentes y la creación de una hoja de ruta para un plan estratégico del SCRS para 2015-2020.*

### KEYWORDS

*Best science, Strategic planning, Transparency,  
Best practice, Quality of scientific advice*

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## What is Strategic Planning?

There are several definitions of Strategic Planning. According to Wikipedia, Strategic Planning is an organization's process of defining its strategy, or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy. In order to determine the direction of the organization, it is necessary to understand its current position and the possible avenues through which it can pursue a particular course of action.

Generally, strategic planning deals with at least one of three key questions:

1. "What do we do?"
2. "For whom do we do it?"
3. "How do we excel?"

The key components of 'strategic planning' include an understanding of the organization's mission (the organization's purpose), vision (the organization's future direction), values, goals and strategies.

A strategic plan identifies the long-term or overall objective and outlines the steps to achieve the desired future outcomes of the organization. According to the experts working group of the EU 7th framework project TXOTX, all Regional Fishery Regional Organization, and those using the results of fisheries research, should develop strategic research plans which will allow them prioritizing research in line with clearly defined objectives. Each objective should be listed alongside a responsible party and potential collaborators including specified deliverables with deadlines, levels of funding and resources needed, and where possible identifying funding sources (De Bruyn *et al.*, 2011). The plan thus identify objectives and provide the organization a management tool to prioritize research, focus the energy, resources, and to align all the efforts/time of the organization in the same direction.

## Does the SCRS need a Strategic Plan?

The Rules of Procedure of the ICCAT Convention described the mandate of the SCRS, "*on which each member of the Commission may be represented, is responsible for developing and recommending to the Commission all policy and procedures for the collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of fishery statistics. It is the SCRS' task to ensure that the Commission has available at all times the most complete and current statistics concerning fishing activities in the Convention area as well as biological information on the stocks that are fished. The SCRS also coordinates various national research activities, develops plans for special international cooperative research programs, carries out stock assessments, and advises the Commission on the need for specific conservation and management measures.*"

The report of the independent review panel (Hurry *et al.*, 2008), stated that the SCRS has regularly reviewed its mode of operation and adapted to meet the new challenges and the needs of the Commission. The current arrangement has evolved to meet the needs and resources of ICCAT (Hurry *et al.*, 2008). In this respect, several SCRS initiatives to adapt to increased demands (in quantity and quality) of the Commission have been regularly put in place; but without a clear systematic development.

Considering the increase in demand for more scientific advice from the Commission, the 2011 meeting of the Working Group on the Organization of the SCRS (Anon., 2012) identified a set of priorities regarding Research & Development investments, participation of CPC national scientists, capacity building, quality assurance and transparency. And during the 2011 ICCAT Commission meeting in Istanbul, reaffirming the necessity that any conservation and management measure is based on the best possible scientific advice, the Commission adopted the Resolution on Best Available Science [Res. 2011-17]. The Resolution proposes a set of actions affecting to the different links in the chain of the development of the scientific advice (Santiago *et al.*, 2013). Most of the actions are related to quality assurance, including aspects in the sphere of collection of data, research, participation and capacity building, dialog with the SCRS and, very particularly, quality control of the stock assessments and advice (**Figure 1**).

The necessity for providing appropriate and best scientific advice on current and future requests, the development of a strategic research plan appears the best way to provide timely, appropriate and best responses in a structured manner. An agreed research plan will also allow effectively adapting and adjusting the SCRS activities to funding sources, anticipating changes and necessities as well as preparing for them. Planning also

should contribute towards a more efficient functioning and a better utilization of the always limited existing assets, resources and capabilities of the SCRS and the Secretariat. In addition, at the KOBE II Joint tuna-RFMO meeting held in Barcelona in 2010, during the presentation of point 9 of the agenda “Enhanced cooperation among tuna RFMOs” the presenter recommended that all tuna RFMOs develop strategic research plans in order to identify research priorities, joint collaborative effort and funding resources globally (Anon 2010).

Therefore the SCRS proposed, starting in 2013, to develop a draft Strategic Science Plan which will be considered at an *ad hoc* meeting of the SCRS during 2014. This will be peer reviewed before approval by SCRS and adoption by the Commission.

It is the purpose of this document to stimulate discussion around the definition of the components and the creation of a roadmap for the elaboration of the 2015-2020 SCRS Strategic Plan.

### Components of the SCRS Strategic Plan

The purpose of the SCRS Strategic Plan is to provide the overall framework and goals for development and coordination of science and science-related activities needed to support provision of sound scientific advice as the centerpiece for the conservation and management of tuna and tuna-like species in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.

The Plan will contemplate the period 2015-2020 and will include the following components:

- **Mission:** Outline the purpose of the SCRS, in line with the Rules of Procedure defined in the ICCAT Convention, its values and the necessities of the Commission. In other words, define “*what business are we in?*”
- **Vision:** A statement describing where the SCRS desires to be in 2020; the target around which we pursue to focus the attention and energies of the SCRS.
- **Values:** The guiding principles of the SCRS, including the elaboration of a code of conduct. Some examples of values to promote and defend include: independence, objectivity transparency, honesty, and cooperation.
- **Goals:** The goals are broad priorities for the SCRS. Most strategic plans include few carefully selected goals relevant to stakeholder needs and available resources. Goals should be “SMART”: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. Goals are not likely to change from year to year if they are correctly identified in the strategic plan (but the strategies to achieve goals will change with new ideas and initiatives).

Goals could be classified within Thematic Areas: examples are Data Collection, Research Priorities, Stock Assessments and Advice, Participation and Capacity Building, and Dialog and Communication.

For example a goal for the SCRS within the Theme “Participation and Capacity Building” could be defined as “Improving the science capabilities of the SCRS”

- **Strategies:** Within each goal should be strategies, initiatives, projects and priorities that will advance the goal. For example, the goal “Improving the science capabilities of the SCRS” may include strategies such as “Supporting visiting opportunities for developing economy scientists at national laboratories creating grants to support 4-5 pre- or post-doctoral stays”, “elaborating 3 curricula designs of stock assessment modeling approaches for different levels of knowledge”,... Strategies will of course influence the allocation of resources, but also reflect available resources.
- **Tactics, Performance measures:** To accomplish the goals applying strategies identified the plan should include accountability and performance measures. Identify who (i.e. SCRS, Secretariat, CPCs and Commission) is responsible for which elements, how success will be measured and by when (interim dates and deadlines).

## Roadmap for Elaboration of the 2015-2020 SCRS Strategic Plan

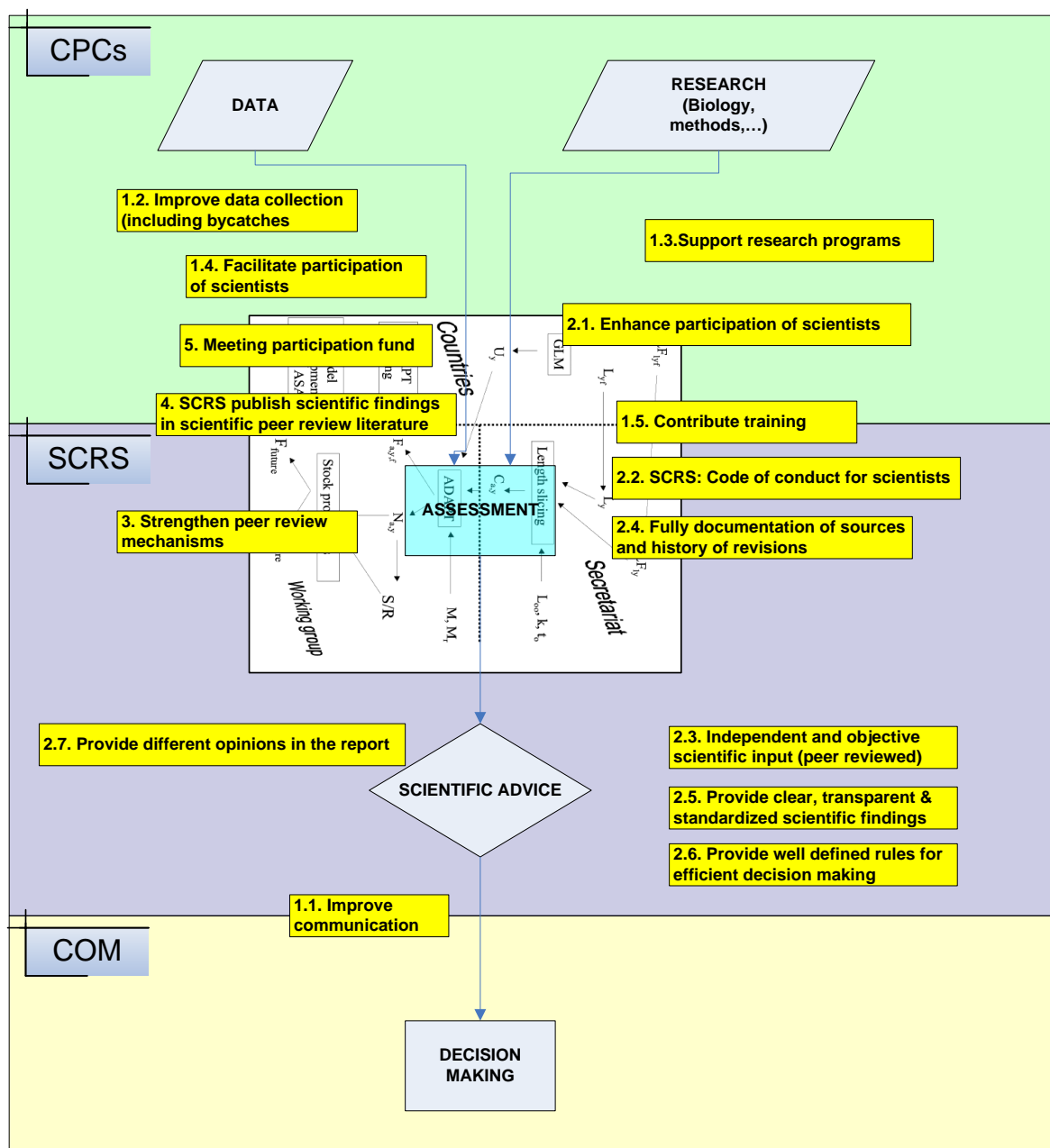
The 2015-2020 SCRS Strategic Plan will be coordinated by the SCRS Chair and will be elaborated following the following phases (**Figure 2**):

Phase	What	Who	When
1	Assess the situation: gaps and needs, identify goals and strategies	SCRS (rapporteurs, conveners and chair) & Secretariat	02-08/2013
2	Validate goals and strategies; agree on mission, vision and values	SCRS plenary	10/2013
3	Elaborate 1st draft	SCRS (rapporteurs, conveners and chair) & Secretariat	11/2013 – 04/2014
4	Completion of the Plan	SCRS (ad-hoc meeting)	05/2014
5	External peer-review	External experts	06-07/2014
6	Approval of the Plan	ICCAT Commission	11/2014

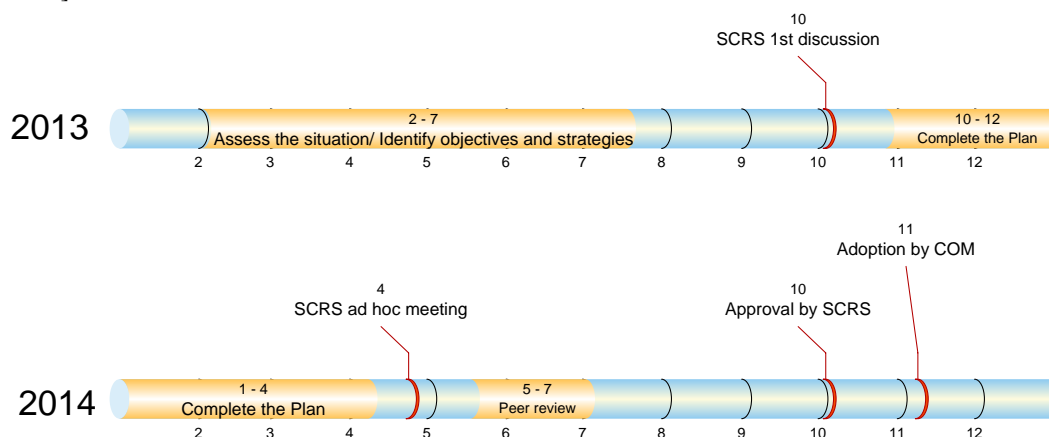
As part of the first three planning phases, specialized technical assistance will be hired to help identifying and adapting the necessary methodology of strategic planning to ICCAT specificities. Based on the specific method agreed, they will stimulate and advise the SCRS in the development of the Strategic Plan. The first and third phase will be conducted mainly electronically.

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**Figure 1.** Diagram showing the main actions identified under *Resolution by ICCAT on Best Available Science* [Res. 11-17].



**Figure 2.** Timeline of the elaboration of the 2015-2020 SCRS Strategic Plan.