



Madrid, 5 February 2018

ICCAT CIRCULAR # 0622 / 2018

SUBJECT: 2018 ICCAT BIGEYE TUNA DATA PREPARATORY MEETING
(Madrid, Spain – 23-27 April 2018)

I have the honour to inform you that the 2018 ICCAT Bigeye Tuna Data Preparatory Meeting will be held on 23-27 April 2018, in Madrid, Spain.

Attached please find the objectives, the tentative agenda of the meeting and other relevant information about the organization. I would appreciate it very much if you distribute this announcement to scientists who may contribute by participating in the meeting. This announcement will also be published on our web site.

In order to have an estimation of the number of participants in advance of the session I would also appreciate if you could send to the Secretariat a list of delegates who will participate in the meeting by **13 April 2018**.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.



Driss Meski
Executive Secretary

- **Commission Officers:**

Commission Chair:	R. Delgado	COC Chair:	D. Campbell
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- **Head Delegates/Head Scientists**
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Attachment: Objectives, Tentative Agenda and Information for participants.

2018 ICCAT BIGEYE TUNA DATA PREPARATORY MEETING (Madrid, Spain – 23-27 April 2018)

Objectives

Paragraph 44 of Recommendation [16-01] requested the SCRS to conduct a new stock assessment for bigeye tuna in 2018. This is consistent with the strategic research plan of the SCRS and is considered a priority because: 1) the last assessment was conducted in 2015 2) the overexploited status of the stock requires a close monitoring of the population, 3) the TAC agreed for 2016 had been overshoot, 4) since the last assessment there have been significant changes to the historical fishery data, and 5) new information from the AOTTP Programme is available to inform the stock assessment.

Accordingly, in 2017 the SCRS elaborated a work plan for 2018 which included a stock assessment of bigeye tuna and a data preparatory meeting to collate and analyze all existing information required for stock assessment.

Details on the preparatory work, responsibilities and deadlines for the provision of data and documents, for this meeting are included in the Tropical Tunas Species Group work plan for 2018, which includes the following:

- Update bigeye catches (T1NC: nominal catches, T2CE: catch and effort, T2SZ: size frequency) for all CPCs and fleets up until the year 2017.
- Improving ICCAT Task I and II data, including the completion of the re-estimation of the historic Ghanaian statistics for bigeye (yellowfin and skipjack) up to 2017.
- The combined historical “FIS” fishery (FRA+CIV+SEN, before 1991) be split in Task II (T2CE and T2SZ/CAS) and allocated to the respective CPC in the line of what was made in Task I catches in the past. The same break down is required (T2CE and CAS) for the combined tropical ETRO fisheries (NEI-ETRO combined fleet) affecting mainly purse seine before 2006 (1991 to 2005).
- Estimations of *faux poisson* to be provided up to 2017.
- Preparation of a preliminary bigeye CAS/CAA for discussion during the Data Preparatory meeting.
- Update of standardized bigeye CPUE indices until 2017 for the Brazil, Chinese Taipei, Japan, Morocco, United States and Uruguay, and longline fleets. Note that indices for fleets that have wide spatial coverage have to also be provided by area (North, Equatorial and South) as agreed in the last assessment and ideally by year/quarter.
- Update of standardized bigeye CPUE indices until 2017 for the European baitboat fishery (Canary Islands, Azores and the fleet operating in Dakar) and purse seine fleets separated by fishing mode (FAD and free) by year/quarter.
- Update tagging information about movements using most recent results of the AOTTP.
- Update biological information:
 - AOTTP data and other sources could be reviewed to infer the most appropriate mortality vector for use in the assessment. Different mortality vectors should be used as sensitivity cases in the assessment.
 - Uncertainties in bigeye growth could also affect the stock assessment. AOTTP data would be very valuable to infer the most appropriate growth curve for bigeye for the Atlantic Ocean. Different growth curves should be used as sensitivity cases in the assessment.
 - Develop a bigeye tuna maturity ogive based on histological analysis.

Tentative Agenda

1. Opening, adoption of Agenda and meeting arrangements
2. Review of historical and new data on bigeye biology
 - 2.1 Age and growth
 - 2.2 Natural mortality
 - 2.3 Reproduction
3. Review of fishery statistics
 - 3.1 Task I (catches) data
 - 3.2 Task II (catch-effort and size samples) data
 - 3.3 Improvements to Ghana statistics (Task I and II, 2006-2017)
 - 3.4 Improvements to “*faux poissons*” estimations (Task I)
 - 3.5 Progress made on Task II FIS “break down”
 - 3.6 Other information (tagging)
4. Review and update of CAS/CAA
 - 4.1 Preliminary estimations
 - 4.2 Improvements needed for a final CAS estimation
5. Review of fishery indicators
6. Review of available indices of relative abundances by fleet and estimation of combined indices

Note: To permit examination of more complex model structures, all indices should consider as factors: year, quarter and area.
7. Identification of data inputs and specifications for the different assessment models and advice framework (ASPIC, VPA2-Box, BSP, SS3, Others)
8. Review of the progress of AOTTP
9. Recommendations
10. Other matters
11. Adoption of the report and closure

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

1. Venue and location

The meeting will be held from 23 April (Monday) to 27 April (Friday) 2018 (registration starts at 08:30 am, 2 April). Meeting hours will be approximately from 09:00 to 18:00.

The meeting will be held at the ICCAT Secretariat: C/Corazón de María 8, Madrid, Spain. For a map with the Secretariat's location and information about Madrid please consult [here](#).

2. Contact information

Chair of meeting: Hilario Murua (hmurua@azti.es)
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Itsas Ikerketa Saila, Herrera Kaia Portualde z/g
20110 Pasaia Gipuzkoa, Spain
Tel: +34 667 174 433

Secretariat contact: Miguel Neves dos Santos (miguel.santos@iccat.int)
International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)
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Tel: +34 91 416 5600; Fax: +34 91 415 2612

3. Language

The working language for the meeting will be English, as no simultaneous translation can be provided. Scientific documents can be written in English, French or Spanish.

4. Call for scientific papers

Participants are encouraged to submit relevant scientific papers. In order to better organize the meetings, in 2014 the SCRS established deadlines for submitting documents, which were revised in 2015. These deadlines provide the rapporteurs with valuable information to better fit the meeting timetable as well as allow the Secretariat to make the documents available to participants in advance of the meeting. In 2015 the SCRS "proposed that a new deadline for the submission of SCRS documents should be implemented; these documents should be provided in their entirety at least one week before the meeting in which they are to be presented to facilitate their review by participating scientists prior to these meetings". As such the full documents for this meeting should be provided to info@iccat.int or miguel.santos@iccat.int by **15 April 2018**. Authors are reminded to closely follow the [Guidelines for Authors of Scientific Documents](#) for the ICCAT SCRS and [Collective Volume Series](#). Furthermore, the original documents (text, tables and figures) should be prepared in WORD or compatible software.

5. Provision of data

CPCs are requested to submit Task I or Task II data (including completing the re-estimation of the historic Ghanaian statistics and estimations of *faux poisson*) up until the year 2017, one week before the beginning of the meeting.

Main longline and surface fleets are requested to update standardized bigeye CPUS indices until 2017. Since the Working Group on Stock Assessment Methods (WGSAM), established standard criteria to evaluate standardized catch rates, it is recommended that authors of documents on standardized CPUEs follow the instructions defined by the WGSAM describing the information required to facilitate the appropriate construction and evaluation of CPUE series. Parties should submit the indices of abundance one week before the meeting. In this way the authors of CPUEs together with the Chair and the Secretariat will prepare a tentative CPUE evaluation table in advance to the meeting.

6. Funding

Funding is available to cover travel and subsistence expenses for a scientist from each ICCAT developing Contracting Party who can provide information relevant to the meeting objectives, particularly in reference to provision of data.

According with the Rules of Procedure for the Administration of the Special Meeting Participation Fund adopted at the 2014 Commission meeting, requests should be received **45 days** in advance, i.e. **9 March 2018**. Requests for financial assistance cannot be accepted after that date.

All the information related with the [ICCAT special funds for participation in ICCAT meeting and capacity building](#) is available in the ICCAT web site. It is highly recommended to visit this web page 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 and how it relates to the meeting objectives.

7. Hotel information

A list of recommended hotels is available on the ICCAT website ([here](#)).