



Madrid, 22 January 2019

ICCAT CIRCULAR # 0391/ 2019

SUBJECT: 2019 WHITE MARLIN DATA PREPARATORY MEETING (MADRID, SPAIN, 12-15 MARCH 2019)

I have the honour to inform you that the 2019 White Marlin Data Preparatory Meeting will be held from 12-15 March 2019, at the ICCAT Secretariat 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 could distribute this announcement to scientists who may contribute by participating in the meeting. This announcement will also be published on the current meetings page of 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 **1 March 2019**.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Executive Secretary

Camille Jean Pierre Manel



– 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
SCRS Chair:	G. Melvin	SCRS Vice Chair:	R. Coelho

– Head Delegates / Head Scientists

– Cooperating Parties, Entities, or Fishing Entities

Attachment: Objectives, Tentative Agenda and Information for participants.



2019 WHITE MARLIN DATA PREPARATORY MEETING

(Madrid, Spain – 12-15 March 2019)

Objectives

The most recent assessment for white marlin was conducted in 2012 through a process that included a data preparatory meeting in April 2011 (Anon., 2012) and an assessment meeting held in May 2012 (Anon., 2013). The last year of fishery data used in the assessment was 2010. During the stock assessment, two models were used, including ASPIC, Bayesian Surplus Production model, and Stock Synthesis configured as age-structured production model.

The Billfish Species Group recognizes that important white marlin catches occur in the tropical and subtropical central Atlantic where they are caught by commercial (as bycatch) and artisanal fisheries. Thus, obtaining standardized indices of abundance from these fisheries is essential. In past assessments, the quality and completeness of Task I and II data have been of concern. Therefore, all countries catching billfishes (directed or by-catch) should report species-specific catch, catch-at-size, and fishing effort statistics by as small time-area strata as possible, and CPUE standardized series. Participation in recent meeting of the Billfish Species Group has been poor, with CPCs directly involved in the by-catch of white marlin not attending the meetings. This made it difficult to evaluate indices of abundance from important fleets. Therefore, the Group requested that CPCs that can make valuable contributions to the assessments make the necessary arrangements to ensure the participation of their national scientists in the upcoming white marlin data preparatory meeting.

In 2019, the Billfish Species Group will perform a stock assessment for Atlantic white marlin stock. The methods to be used include surplus production models, and an integrated stock synthesis model. The data preparatory meeting will define the catch and size data, as well indices of abundance and other relevant biological and fisheries information to the assessment.

References

- Anonymous. 2012. Report of the 2011 Blue Marlin Stock Assessment and White Marlin Data Preparatory Meeting (*Madrid, Spain – April 25 to 29, 2011*). ICCAT Collect. Vol. Sci. Pap. 68(4): 1273-1386.
- Anonymous. 2013. Report of the 2012 White Marlin Stock Assessment Meeting (*Madrid, Spain – May 21-25, 2012*). ICCAT Collect. Vol. Sci. Pap. 69(3): 1085-1183.

Tentative Agenda

1. Opening, adoption of the Agenda and meeting arrangements
2. Review of available data for the assessment
 - 2.1 Biology
 - 2.2 Task I and II catch data
 - 2.3 Task II effort and size data
 - 2.4 Tagging data
3. Review of relative indices of abundance (CPUEs)
4. Discussion on models to be used during the assessment and their assumptions
5. Other data relevant for stock assessment and remaining issues in preparation for the June stock assessment meeting
6. Enhanced Program for Billfish Research (EPBR)
7. Other matters
8. Recommendations
9. Adoption of the report and closure



Additional information for participants

1. Date and venue of the meeting

The meeting will be held from 12 March (Tuesday) to 15 March (Friday) 2019. (Registration starts at 08:30, 12 March). 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.

2. Contact information

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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 sent to info@iccat.int or miguel.santos@iccat.int by **5 March 2019**. 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

Parties should submit relevant information such as catch, size and index of abundance information up to 2017, as well as all possible information for 2018 for white marlin, by **28 February 2019**, one and a half weeks prior to the 2019 data preparatory 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 to 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. However, due to the late announcement of the meeting, the deadline for the request of funding assistance will be **2 February 2019**. Requests for financial assistance cannot be accepted after that date.

All the information related to the ICCAT special funds for participation in ICCAT meetings and capacity building is available on the ICCAT web site ([here](#)). 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](#) has been uploaded to the ICCAT website.