



Madrid, 4 February 2020

ICCAT CIRCULAR # 0691 / 2020

SUBJECT: 2020 INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF THE ICCAT BLUEFIN TUNA SPECIES GROUP
(Madrid, Spain, 20 – 24 April 2020)

I would like to inform you that the 2020 Interseasonal Meeting of the ICCAT Bluefin Tuna Species Group will be held on 20 - 24 April 2020, at the ICCAT Secretariat, in Madrid, Spain.

Attached, please find the meeting objectives, the tentative agenda of the meeting and other relevant information about its 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 our [current meetings webpage](#).

In order to have an estimate 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 **10 April 2020**.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

P'
Executive Secretary

M. Neves
Assistant Executive Secretary

Dr Miguel Neves dos Santos



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Attachment: Objectives, Tentative Agenda and Information for participants.

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Objectives

1. Review update assessment model set ups and initial diagnostics to ensure that analytical team can conduct work intersessionally and that the Bluefin Tuna Species Group can finalize the advice at the September Species Group meeting.
2. Task a small team to begin to develop the response to the Commission on growth in farms.
3. Adopt a reference grid of Operating Models (OMs), recommend abundance indices for use in Candidate Management Procedures (CMPs) and select a method to plausibility weight OMs for the BFT MSE

TENTATIVE AGENDA

1. Opening, adoption of agenda and meeting arrangements
2. Review of the scientific papers relevant to assessment
3. Initiation of working group on growth in farms
 - 3.1 Identify team lead
 - 3.2 Draft terms of reference and workplan
4. Presentation of initial model setups for update stock assessment
 - 4.1 Biology and age data
 - 4.2 Catch estimates (including 2019 and 2020 assumptions)
 - 4.3 Relative abundance estimates and CPUE
5. Review of initial assessment diagnostics
 - 5.1 East (VPA)
 - 5.2 West (VPA and Stock Synthesis)
 - 5.3 Specify sensitivity runs
 - 5.4 Specify projection settings
6. Summary of development since the September 2019 Bluefin Tuna Species Group meeting
7. Summary of outcomes from the 24-28 February meeting of the BFT MSE Technical Group
 - 7.1 Review of results for conditioning of OMs for interim grid, and associated robustness tests available at that stage
 - 7.2 Review of code and Trial Specifications Document modifications
8. Key decision points for adoption
 - 8.1 Final reference grid and major robustness trials
 - 8.2 Abundance indices for CMPs
 - 8.3 Process to plausibility weight OMs
9. Work plan (July MSE Technical Group meeting, update assessment in September)
10. GBYP activities
 - 10.1 Report from Tagging Workshop and planning for Close-kin Scoping Workshop
 - 10.2 Progress on GBYP projects
11. Other scientific papers
12. Other matters
13. Adoption of the report

Additional information for participants

1. Date and venue

The meeting will be held from 20-24 April (Monday to Friday) 2020 (registration starts at 08:30 am, on 20 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.

2. Contact information

Rapporteur of Bluefin Tuna Species Group:

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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 provided to info@iccat.int or ai.kimoto@iccat.int by **13 April 2020**. 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. 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, i.e. **6 March 2020**. 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 on the ICCAT [website](#). 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.

6. Hotel information

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