

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS



COMMISSION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA
CONSERVATION DES THONIDES DE L'ATLANTIQUE

COMISIÓN INTERNACIONAL PARA LA
CONSERVACIÓN DEL ATÚN ATLÁNTICO

Madrid, 7 April 2020

ICCAT CIRCULAR # 2012 / 2020

SUBJECT: 2020 INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF THE ICCAT BLUEFIN TUNA SPECIES GROUP
(Online, 14 - 22 May 2020)

I would like to inform you that the *2020 Intersessional Meeting of the ICCAT Bluefin Tuna Species Group* has been re-schedule and will be held Online between 14 - 22 May 2020.

Attached, please find the meeting objectives, the tentative agenda of the meeting and other relevant information about their 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 website.

In order to organize the online meeting, in particular, regarding 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 **4 May 2020**. Participants shall also register to the meeting using the online registration form available in the [current meetings page](#) of our website by **7 May 2020**.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Executive Secretary

Camille Jean Pierre Manel

DISTRIBUTION:

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Commission Chair:	R. Delgado	COC Chair:	D. Campbell
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SCRS Chair:	G. Melvin	SCRS Vice Chair:	R. Coelho

- Head Delegates / Head Scientists

- Cooperating Parties, Entities, or Fishing Entities

Attachment: Objectives, Tentative Agendas and Information for participants.

2020 INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF THE ICCAT BLUEFIN TUNA SPECIES GROUP
(Online, 14 – 22 May 2020)

Objectives

1. Review update assessment model set ups and initial diagnostics to ensure that analytical teams can conduct work intersessionally and that we can finalize advice in September;
2. Task a small team to begin to develop the 2020 response to the Commission on growth in farms;
3. Define the reference grid of operating models, the abundance indices for use in CMPs and a method to plausibility weight OMs for the BFT MSE.

The focus of the meetings will be on the Assessment and the MSE. Hence, only papers directly relevant to the assessment and MSE will be scheduled for presentation. Other scientific papers will be accepted but we cannot guarantee that there will be time to present them and they will be presented at the end of the meeting, if time permits. Given scheduling challenges posed by COVID-19, the exact days for each of the topics may need to be adjusted depending upon availability of key personnel.

Tentative Agenda

Day 1. ASSESSMENT focus (4.5 hours from 12:00 and 16:30 CET)

1. Opening, adoption of Agenda and meeting arrangements and assignment of rapporteurs
2. Review of the scientific papers relevant to assessment
3. Presentation of initial model setups for update stock assessment
 - 3.1 Biology and age data
 - 3.2 Size/age composition
 - 3.3 Catch estimates (2019 and 2020 assumptions)
 - 3.4 Indices
4. Review of initial assessment diagnostics
 - 4.1 East (VPA)
 - 4.2 West (VPA and Stock Synthesis)
 - 4.3 Specify sensitivity runs
 - 4.4 Specify projection setting

Day 2. MSE focus (4.5 hours 12:00 and 16:30 CET)

5. Summary of developments
 - 5.1 Matters addressed at February Technical Group meeting
 - 5.2 Results from consequential subsequent work

16-17 May (no meeting) (possible extra model (MSE/assessment) runs)

Day 3. ASSESSMENT focus (4.5 hours 12:00 and 16:30 CET)

6. Assessment initial results, if available
 - 6.1 East (VPA)
 - 6.2 West (VPA and Stock Synthesis)

Day 4. MSE focus (4.5 hours 12:00 and 16:30 CET)

[Complete discussion under item 5]

7. Plans for subsequent work with an updated associated schedule

Day 5. Growth in farms, GBYP, focus (4.5 hours 12:00 and 16:30 CET)

8. Initiation of Working Group on growth in farms (2 hours, approximately)
 - 8.1 Identify team lead
 - 8.2 Draft terms of reference and coordination plan
9. General discussion of GBYP matters (2 hours)
 - 9.1 Aerial survey
 - 9.2 Tagging
 - 9.3 Workshops (tagging, close-kin, larval)
 - 9.4 Progress on other GBYP projects
10. Work plan leading to update assessment and continue MSE process
11. Other matters

Day 6. Report focus (4.5 hours 12:00 and 16:30 CET)

12. First Revision of Report sections
 - 12.1. Assessment (2 hours)
 - 12.2. MSE (2 hours)

Day 7. Report focus (4.5 hours 12:00 and 16:30 CET)

13. Adoption of the report

Additional information for participants

1. Date and venue

The meetings will be held **Online** between 14 and 22 May (Thursday-Friday) 2020. Meeting hours will be approximately from **12:00-16:30 CET** to account for time zone differences.

2. Contact information

Chairs 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 **7 May 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. Registration

Participants are kindly requested to register to the meeting by **7 May 2020** at the latest. Earlier registration is essential for the Secretariat to ensure setting the Online platform. **Online registration** shall be made in the ICCAT [current meetings page](#) or [Registration form](#). All delegates from CPCs willing to attend the meeting shall notify in advance their Head Delegate or Head Scientist to ensure they are included in the official list that shall be sent to the Secretariat by **4 May 2020**.

6. Online settings

The Secretariat is using Microsoft Teams application for the online meetings. You can find the hardware requirements to join an online meeting at the following link: [Teams Hardware requirements](#). We strongly suggest using headphones with a microphone to be able to hear and speak comfortably during the meeting.

A brief and clear introduction of the application can be found at: [Teams-overview](#), if you have further questions, please contact the Secretariat for support. All participants duly registered **will receive an e-mail** through the online platform **with a link to join the meeting**.