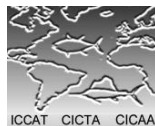


INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE  
CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS



COMMISSION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA  
CONSERVATION DES THONIDES DE L'ATLANTIQUE

COMISIÓN INTERNACIONAL PARA LA  
CONSERVACIÓN DEL ATÚN ATLÁNTICO

Madrid, 3 March 2021

## ICCAT CIRCULAR # 1443/2021

**SUBJECT: 2021 INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF THE BLUEFIN TUNA SPECIES GROUP (INCLUDING W-BFT DATA PREPARATORY) (Online, 5 - 13 April 2021)**

I would like to inform you that the 2021 Intersessional Meeting of the Bluefin Tuna Species Group (including W-BFT data preparatory) will be held online between 5 and 13 April 2021.

Attached please find 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 website.

In order to organize the online meeting in advance of the session, in particular, regarding the number of participants, you are kindly requested to send to the Secretariat a list of delegates who will participate in the meeting by **26 March 2021**. Participants must also register for the meeting using the online registration form available on the [current meetings page](#) of our website by **29 March 2021**.

Please receive the assurances of my highest consideration.

*Executive Secretary*



Camille Jean Pierre Manel

### **DISTRIBUTION:**

- |                               |             |                  |             |
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- **Cooperating Parties, Entities, or Fishing Entities**

**Attachment:** Tentative Agenda and information for participants.

## **2021 INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF THE BLUEFIN TUNA SPECIES GROUP (INCLUDING W-BFT DATA PREPARATORY)**

### **Objectives and Background**

The SCRS gives priority to the MSE process in 2021 but also recommends focused research efforts from specified Technical Sub-groups to address key uncertainties identified in the 2020 update assessments. At this meeting, the BFT Species Group will discuss the on-going OM and CMP development, the updated indicators and data used in the MSE to 2019, the result of poll for OM weighting, as well as the progress of the Sub-groups.

Key events planned for this meeting are: Plausibility weighting of OMs; Adoption of the Reference grid; and drafting of the terms of reference for the MSE code review. Regarding any changes to the indicators used for the MSE or the W-BFT assessment, the BFT SG will need to either adopt the changes, choose to exclude the index or the previous index will remain.

Since a stock assessment for the western BFT in 2021 has been requested by the Commission, the BFT SG will review available data and indices for this assessment to 2019, and also draft ToRs for the assessment at this meeting. Indices used for the assessment and the MSE are undergoing revision, as noted above. Given the timing, the assessment will only be able to entertain limited changes to other input data and model structure. We do not anticipate deviating from the current model advice framework of stock synthesis and VPA.

### **Tentative Agenda**

1. Opening, adoption of agenda and meeting arrangements
2. Brief summary of Panel 2 meeting
3. MSE
  - 3.1 Review of the data for OM reconditioning
  - 3.2 Update from CMP developers on progress
  - 3.3 Discussion of poll results and plausibility weighting of OMs
  - 3.4 Reference Grid finalization and adoption
  - 3.5 Finalization of input data for reconditioning
  - 3.6 TOR for MSE code review
4. Progress of Technical Sub-groups
  - 4.1 Technical Sub-group on Abundance Indices
  - 4.2 Technical Sub-group on Assessment models
  - 4.3 Technical Sub-group on Growth in Farms
5. Preparation for the W-BFT assessment
  - 5.1 Biology and age data
  - 5.2 Size and age composition
  - 5.3 Catch Estimates
    - 5.3.1 Task I Nominal Catches
    - 5.3.2 Catches for 2020 and 2021 assumptions for projections
  - 5.4 Indices of abundance
  - 5.5 Stock assessment models and its specification
  - 5.6 ToRs for W-BFT stock assessment
6. GBYP matters
  - 6.1 Aerial survey review
  - 6.2 Intersessional workshops
    - 6.2.1 Report from Close-Kin Workshop
    - 6.2.2 Report from Electronic Tagging Workshop
7. Other matters
8. Adoption of the report and closure

## Additional information for participants

### 1. Date and venue

The meeting will be held online between 5 and 13 April 2021. Meeting hours will be from **12:00 - 16:30 CET (UTC +1)** to account for time zone differences. Sunday (11 April) has been scheduled as a free day, but subject to confirmation.

### 2. Contact information

Chairs of Bluefin Tuna Species Group:

Dr Enrique Rodríguez-Marín ([enrique.rmarin@ieo.es](mailto:enrique.rmarin@ieo.es))  
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NOAA Fisheries, Southeast Fisheries Center,  
Sustainable Fisheries Division,  
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Secretariat contact: Dr Ai Kimoto ([ai.kimoto@iccat.int](mailto:ai.kimoto@iccat.int))  
International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)  
C/ Corazón de María 8, 6th floor, Madrid 28002, Spain  
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, Spanish or French.

### 4. Call for scientific papers and presentations

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 and 2019 the SCRS "proposed that a new deadline for the submission of SCRS documents and presentations should be implemented; these documents/presentations 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 and presentations for this meeting should be provided to [info@iccat.int](mailto:info@iccat.int) or [ai.kimoto@iccat.int](mailto:ai.kimoto@iccat.int) by **29 March 2021**. Documents and presentations provided after the latter deadline will not be accepted unless previously authorized by the Chair. 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

In view of the western bluefin stock assessment, CPCs are requested to submit Task 1 and Task 2 data (until the year 2019 and if possible 2020, two weeks before the beginning of the meeting (**19 March 2021**).

## 6. Registration

Participants are kindly requested to register for the meeting by **29 March 2021** at the latest. Early registration is essential for the Secretariat to ensure the setting up of the online platform. **Online registration** must be completed through the ICCAT [current meetings page](#) or [Registration form](#). All delegates from CPCs wishing to attend the meeting must notify in advance their Head Delegate or Head Scientist to ensure that they are included in the official list that must be sent to the Secretariat by **26 March 2021**.

## 7. Online settings

The Secretariat is using the Zoom application for the online meetings. You can find the hardware requirements to join an online meeting at the following link: [Zoom 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: [Zoom-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**.