



Madrid, 8 October 2021

## ICCAT CIRCULAR # 7764/2021

**SUBJECT: 2021 ICCAT BILLFISH WORKSHOP ON AGE READING**  
(online, 25-28 October 2021)

I would like to inform you that the 2021 ICCAT Billfish Workshop on age reading will be held online between 25 and 28 October 2021.

Attached please find the objectives, the tentative agenda of the workshop 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 workshop. This announcement will also be published on the [current meetings page](#) of our website.

In order to organize the online workshop, 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 workshop by **21 October 2021**. Any late submission of the official delegation may cause delay in providing access to participants to the meeting and to the related documents. Participants must also register for the workshop using the online registration form available in [current meetings page](#) of our website by **21 October 2021**.

Please receive the assurances of my highest consideration.

*Executive Secretary*

*Camille Jean Pierre Manel*

### **DISTRIBUTION:**

**- Commission Officers:**

Commission Chair:	R. Delgado	COC Chair:	D. Campbell
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**Attachment:** Objectives, Tentative Agenda and Information for participants.



## ICCAT BILLFISH WORKSHOP ON AGE READING

*(Online, 25-28 October 2021)*

### **Background and objectives**

The Billfish Species Group initiated in 2018 in the framework of Enhanced Programme for Billfish Research (EPBR), a biological sample collection programme on hard parts (spines & otoliths) for three of the four main billfish species (blue marlin, white marlin and sailfish), captured in the eastern Atlantic, because no previous billfish aging studies have been conducted in this region. This workshop aims to improve knowledge of age and growth rates for the Atlantic billfish main species.

The major objectives are: i) enhance current expertise in the eastern Atlantic, ii) to standardize processing and reading protocols between laboratories (eastern & western Atlantic). To achieve these goals the respective task coordinators on ageing are urged to have some samples already processed in order to make them available to the Group by the time of the workshop.

### **Tentative Agenda**

1. Opening
2. Adoption of agenda
3. Nomination of the rapporteurs
4. Overview of sampling protocols and data collection database
5. Revision/update of protocols for ageing samples processing and
6. Initial guidelines for age reading including:
  - a. Discussions on age verification and validation
  - b. Methods to correct for spine vascularization.
7. Other matters
8. Workshop report and adoption
9. Closure



## Additional information for participants

### 1. Date and venue

The workshop will be held online between 25 and 28 October 2021. Meeting hours will be from **12:00 - 16:30 CET** to account for time zone differences.

### 2. Contact information

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Secretariat Contact: Mauricio Ortiz ([mauricio.ortiz@iccat.int](mailto:mauricio.ortiz@iccat.int))  
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### 3. Language

The working language for the meeting will be English, as no simultaneous translation can be provided.

### 4. Registration

Participants are kindly requested to register to the workshop by **20 October 2021** at the latest. Earlier registration is essential for the Secretariat to ensure setting the online platform. **Online registration** shall be completed through 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 **20 October 2021**.

### 5. Online settings

All participants duly registered **will receive an e-mail** through the ZOOM online platform **with a link to attend the workshop**.