

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE  
CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS



COMMISSION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA  
CONSERVATION DES THONIDES DE L'ATLANTIQUE

COMISION INTERNACIONAL PARA LA  
CONSERVACION DEL ATUN ATLANTICO

Madrid, 15 April 2025

## ICCAT CIRCULAR # 03183 / 2025

**SUBJECT: SECOND ICCAT WORKSHOP ON THE USE OF THE BYCATCH ESTIMATION TOOL (BYET)**  
(Panama City, Panama, 21-23 July 2025)

Over the past few years the ICCAT SCRS Working Group on Stock Assessment Methods (WGSAM) has developed a Bycatch Estimation Tool (BYET) that uses model-based and design-based procedures in a semi-automated process of estimating total annual bycatch by expanding the data from an observer programme to the total effort from logbooks or landings records. In addition to bycatch estimation, this toolkit can also be used to estimate an annual index of abundance, calculated only from the observer data. This toolkit has previously been subject to simulation testing and application to actual data to examine its efficacy and its utility for use for bycatch estimation in ICCAT CPC fisheries. The SCRS acknowledges that the general and proper use of the BYET will be greatly increased by providing a user-oriented workshop on the R package.

In 2024, ICCAT organized the *First Workshop on the Use of the Bycatch Estimation Tool*. Following the SCRS workplan for 2025, I am pleased to announce that the *Second Workshop on the Use of the Bycatch Estimation Tool* (BYET) has been scheduled for **21-23 July 2025** in Ciudad de Panama (Panama). Due to its nature, only a limited number of selected participants may attend this workshop. ICCAT will fund participants' attendance at the workshop, by supporting their travel and subsistence. This time **priority will be given to participants from the Caribbean (Western Atlantic) region**. Accordingly, interested participants shall submit their applications to the [ICCAT Secretariat](#) (and [Ms. Stasa Tensek](#)) by **25 April 2025 at the latest**, including a brief description of their motivation and Curriculum Vitae, noting the criteria listed below for the selection of candidates.

An Evaluation Panel, composed by the SCRS Chair, the WGSAM Chair, the instructor(s) and the Secretariat, will evaluate the applications and select the candidates according to the following criteria:

1. The qualifying participant shall be from an ICCAT CPC that has a significant amount of bycatch but has not reported its methodology to report this bycatch according to ICCAT [Rec. 19-05](#).
2. The qualifying participant shall be the scientist responsible for estimation of bycatch and discards from the CPC they represent.
3. The qualifying participant shall have a demonstrated working knowledge of the R programming language and general linear models.
4. The qualifying participant shall have access to and be able to bring with him/her the data necessary to conduct estimates of bycatch (e.g. observer data, logbook data, etc.). Note: these data will not be shared with other workshop participants, the instructors, or otherwise retained upon completion of the workshop.



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I would be grateful if you could distribute this announcement to qualified individuals who might be interested.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

*Executive Secretary*



Camille Jean Pierre Manel

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**Attachment:** Other relevant information, including timetable and agenda for the *Second Workshop on the Use of the Bycatch Estimation Tool* (BYET).



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## Second ICCAT Workshop on the use of the Bycatch Estimation Tool (BYET)

**Date and Time:** 21, 22 and 23 July 2025. 09:00 am EST to 18:00 pm

**Location:** Hotel Aloft Panama, Via Israel & Calle 76 Este, Panama City, Panama

**Contacts:**

[Dr. Miguel Santos](#)

[Ms. Stasa Tensek](#)

**Facilitators (instructors):**

[Dr. Beth Babcock](#)

[Dr. Ana Adao](#)

### Workshop objectives

ICCAT is supporting investigation into estimation methodologies for bycatch of non-targeted species. As part of this commitment, a statistical toolkit has been developed for semi-automated estimation of dead and live discards using model-based and design-based estimators<sup>1</sup>. Led by Dr. Beth Babcock, this toolkit has been developed as an R package called [Bycatch Estimator \(BYET\)](#)<sup>2</sup>; A workshop was conducted in 2023 that allowed invited experts that were already familiar with the BYET to engage in beta-testing and provide recommendations for technical improvements of the toolkit and training materials<sup>3</sup>. A training workshop was held in 2024 with the aim of providing CPC scientists responsible for bycatch and discard reporting with the tools and skills they need to expand observer data to the total fishery and provide discard estimates<sup>4</sup>.

During this three-day workshop, attendees will have the opportunity to receive training on the use of BYET from the developers and apply estimation methodologies to their own data sets with the help of the developers. Note that translation services will not be available during the workshop.

### Workshop expectations

- Attendees will be expected to participate in a pre-workshop planning call to explain data formatting requirements for use with the BYET and identify suitable data sets.
- Data confidentiality will be strictly respected. Attendees will be expected to run the BYET R package from their own laptops on their own data.
- The objective of the workshop is to train scientists in the use of the estimator and improve scientific methodologies for bycatch estimation, not to produce or report bycatch estimates.

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<sup>1</sup> Babcock, E.A., Harford, W.J., Gedamke, T., Soto, D., Goodyear, C.P. 2022. Efficacy of a bycatch estimation tool. [Collect. Vol. Sci. Pap. ICCAT, 79\(5\): 304-339 \(2022\).](#)

<sup>2</sup> <https://ebabcock.github.io/BycatchEstimator/>

<sup>3</sup> Babcock, E.A., W. J. Harford, A. Adao and T. Gedamke. 2024. Expert-driven testing and proposed improvements to a bycatch estimator toolkit. [Collect. Vol. Sci. Pap. ICCAT, 81\(6\), SCRS/2024/018: 1-7.](#)

<sup>4</sup> Babcock, E.A., W. J. Harford and A. Adao. 2025. Training workshop on the bycatch estimator toolkit. [Collect. Vol. Sci. Pap. ICCAT, 82\(1\), SCRS/2025/018: 1-7.](#)



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## Timetable and Agenda

Coffee breaks: 10:30 – 11:00 am, 16:00 – 16:30 pm (Panama time)

Lunch: 13:00 – 14:30 pm (Panama time)

<i><b>Time</b></i>	<i><b>Agenda topic</b></i>
<b>Day #1</b>	
09:00 am	Welcome and introductions
	Presentation: Overview of Bycatch Estimator R package
	R Tutorial 1: Overview of Bycatch Estimator
	Presentation: Design-based estimation
	R Tutorial 2: Design-based estimation
	<i>Lunch</i>
	Presentation: Model-based estimation
	Presentation: Model diagnostics & model comparison
	R Tutorial 3: Model-based estimation & diagnostics
18:00 pm	Conclude for the day
<b>Day #2</b>	
09:00 am	Presentation: Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) standardization
	R Tutorial 4: CPUE standardization
	Presentation: Data cleaning and formatting
	Participant sharing of challenges & needs
	<i>Lunch</i>
	Break-out groups, supported by workshop facilitators, applying the tool to their own data
18:00 pm	Conclude for the day
<b>Day #3</b>	
09:00 am	Continue break-out groups
	<i>Lunch</i>
	Discussion & feedback
	Demonstration: Running the Bycatch Estimator using the RShiny App (provisional session)
18:00 pm	Concluding remarks

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