

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, 26 December 2025

## ICCAT CIRCULAR # 12143/ 2025

**SUBJECT: SWORDFISH DATA PREPARATORY MEETING**  
(Hybrid / Madrid, Spain, 23-27 March 2026)

Following the adoption by the Commission of the SCRS meetings scheduled for 2026, I should like to inform you that the 2026 Swordfish Data Preparatory Meeting is scheduled from 23 to 27 March 2026 in Madrid (Spain), in hybrid format. I am pleased to provide you the tentative agenda of the meeting (attached herewith) and other relevant information about the meeting 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 shortly on the ICCAT [meetings webpage](#).

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 ICCAT Secretariat a list of delegates who will participate in the meeting by **13 March 2026**. Any late submission of the official delegation may cause a delay in providing access to participants to the meeting and the related documents. All participants must also register for the meeting by **13 March 2026** using the online registration form which will be available shortly on the [current meetings page](#) of our website.

Funding is available to cover travel and subsistence expenses for a limited number of national scientists from developing States that are Contracting Parties. According to the [Rules of Procedure for the Administration of the Special Meeting Participation Fund](#) adopted at the 2023 Commission meeting, requests should be sent to [ICCAT-Travel@iccat.int](mailto:ICCAT-Travel@iccat.int) at least **45 days** in advance of the start of the meeting (**6 February 2026**). Requests for financial assistance cannot be accepted after that date. All the information related to the [ICCAT special funds for participation in ICCAT meetings and capacity building](#) is available on the ICCAT website. It is highly recommended to visit this webpage in advance and to strictly follow the protocols. In particular, it is necessary to fully complete the invitation form. 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.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

*Executive Secretary*

Camille Jean Pierre Manel

**DISTRIBUTION:**

**– Commission Officers:**

**Commission Chair:** E. Penas Lado  
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**COC Chair:** D. Campbell  
**PWG Chair:** N. Ansell  
**STACFAD Chair:** D. Warner-Kramer  
**SCRS Vice Chair:** L.G. Cardoso

**– Head Delegates and Head Scientists**

**– Cooperating Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities**

**– Observers**

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



**Swordfish Data Preparatory Meeting**  
*(Hybrid / Madrid, Spain, 23-27 March 2026)*

**Objectives**

The objective of this meeting is to review data inputs and decide on model specifications for the 2026 Atlantic and Mediterranean swordfish assessments. The meeting will review new biological information, catch and fisheries statistics (including discards), indices of abundance, and auxiliary information for the assessment models. In addition, relevant matters related to new gear types (trap line), discarding estimation, Swordfish Year Program (SWOYP) results, and the North Atlantic swordfish Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) development will be discussed.

**Tentative Agenda**

1. Opening, adoption of the Agenda and meeting arrangements
  - 1.1. Updates from the SCRS and the Commission
2. Review of fishery statistics
  - 2.1. Task 1 catches data and their spatial distribution
  - 2.2. Task 2 catch, effort and size
  - 2.3. Tagging data
  - 2.4. Results from trap line gear studies
  - 2.5. Plan for intersessional work on data improvements
3. Review of new and historical information on biology
  - 3.1. SWOYP updates and new results
  - 3.2. Updates to biological parameters
4. Review of available indices of relative abundance
  - 4.1. Mediterranean stock
  - 4.2. South Atlantic stock
5. Review of potential assessment models, specifications of data inputs, and modeling options
  - 5.1. Mediterranean stock
  - 5.2. South Atlantic stock
  - 5.3. Plan for intersessional work on assessment models
6. Review of discard estimation plans
7. MSE matters
  - 7.1. Robustness testing results
  - 7.2. Minimum size limit results
  - 7.3. Exceptional circumstances
8. Recommendations and workplan
9. Other matters
10. Adoption of the report and closure



## Additional information for participants

### 1. Date and venue

The meeting will be held in a hybrid format between 23 to 27 March 2026. The in-person meeting will be held at the ICCAT Secretariat. The meeting hours will be from **9:00 - 18:00 CEST (GMT+1)**.

### 2. Contact information

Chair of Swordfish Species Group:

[Dr. Kyle Gillespie](#)

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125 Marine Science Drive, St. Andrews, NB, E5B 0E4  
Tel: +1 506 529 5725

ICCAT Secretariat contact:

[Dr. Nathan Taylor](#)

International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)  
C/ Corazón de María 8  
28002 Madrid, Spain  
Tel: +34 91 416 5600

### 3. Language

Following the recommendations from the SCRS and the decision of the Commission in 2025, language interpretation will be provided during the meeting. Participants are encouraged to take advantage of native language opportunities and use video during interventions to facilitate the interpreter's task.

### 4. Call for scientific papers and presentations

Participants are encouraged to submit relevant scientific papers/presentations. In advance of submitting those, authors shall request the SCRS reference to the meeting Chair, Kyle Gillespie and the ICCAT Secretariat contact. After clearance from the meeting Chair, the ICCAT Secretariat will assign a specific SCRS reference and inform the author(s).

Following the latest SCRS deadlines for the submission of SCRS documents and presentations, for this meeting, they should be provided to [info@iccat.int](mailto:info@iccat.int) and/or [nathan.taylor@iccat.int](mailto:nathan.taylor@iccat.int) by **13 March 2026**. Documents and presentations provided after the latter deadline will not be accepted unless specifically authorized by the Chair. Authors are reminded to closely follow the **new 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

CPCs are requested to submit updates of Task 1 and Task 2 data already reported (up to the year 2024) at least two weeks before the start of the meeting (**6 March 2026**).

Individual standardized catch per unit effort (CPUE) indices until 2024 should be provided for the southern Atlantic and Mediterranean stocks. Since the Working Group on Stock Assessment Methods (WGSAM), established standard criteria to evaluate standardized catch rates, it is recommended that authors of documents on standardized CPUEs follow the instructions defined by the WGSAM describing the information required to facilitate the appropriate construction and evaluation of CPUE series.



## 6. Registration

Participants are kindly requested to register for the meeting by **13 March 2026** at the latest. Early registration is essential for the ICCAT Secretariat to ensure the setting up of the online platform. **Online registration** must be completed through the [ICCAT meetings page](#) or the 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 **13 March 2026**.

## 7. Online settings

The ICCAT Secretariat is using the Zoom application for the online meeting. 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 in [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**.