



Madrid, 31 August 2018

## ICCAT GBYP CIRCULAR # 0814/2018

**SUBJECT: ANNOUNCEMENT GBYP WORKSHOP ON ATLANTIC BLUEFIN TUNA REPRODUCTIVE BIOLOGY - ATLANTIC-WIDE RESEARCH PROGRAMME FOR BLUEFIN TUNA (ICCAT GBYP - PHASE 8) BIOLOGICAL STUDIES**

I should like to inform you that within the framework of Phase 8 of the ICCAT GBYP, a workshop on Atlantic bluefin tuna reproductive biology will be held from 26-28 November 2018, at the ICCAT headquarters in Madrid.

Please find attached information regarding the registration process, the structure and objectives of the workshop, along with the tentative agenda.

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

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration



Camille Jean Pierre Manel  
*Executive Secretary*

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**Attachment:** Announcement of GBYP Workshop on Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Reproductive Biology.

**ICCAT GBYP WORKSHOP ON BLUEFIN TUNA REPRODUCTIVE BIOLOGY**  
(26-28 November 2018)

ICCAT Secretariat  
Library, 7th floor  
Calle Corazón de Maria 8, 28002 Madrid (Spain)

## **1. Background and objectives**

Given the uncertainties identified in the bluefin tuna stock assessment carried out in 2017 the SCRS agreed, within the 2018 Bluefin Tuna Work Plan, to engage in research to address key uncertainties in the assessment. Specifically, among other actions, it proposed to hold a workshop to investigate the spawning behaviour of bluefin tuna, in particular the fraction of each age class that effectively contributed to spawning each year. Consequently, as a first step, the GBYP Steering Committee decided that a preparatory meeting aiming at defining the objectives and drafting the agenda of a wider workshop on BFT reproductive biology should be held within GBYP phase 7 and that the GBYP phase 8 proposal should include a specific budget to organize and fund such a Workshop. This preparatory meeting, involving a group of experts composed of GBYP SC members, GBYP coordination team and several recognized specialists in BFT reproductive biology (hereinafter referred to as the "Group"), was held at the ICCAT headquarters in February 2018. The report of the meeting is attached as **Appendix 1**.

During this preparatory meeting it was agreed that the aims of the workshop on BFT reproductive biology to be held within GBYP phase 8 should be:

- 1) affirming or rejecting the hypothesis of substantial differences in bluefin tuna reproductive biology between the eastern and western stocks
- 2) identifying methods and related feasibility for estimation of the percentage of individuals contributing to spawning by age and area
- 3) planning of the further activities in this field to be carried out within the GBYP biological studies in next GBYP Phases

Moreover, the Group recommended that independent reviewers, preferably having a broad knowledge on bluefin reproductive biology and fisheries, elaborate a report reviewing the available information on east/west reproductive differences in order to provide insights about the causes of the current discrepancies in the assumption about the age at maturity (first maturity, 50% and 100%) and hopefully facilitate a global agreement on this important issue.

Finally, the Group identified a series of topics that should be addressed, and proposed key speakers to give reference talks about each one of these topics (see Workshop tentative agenda below).

Consequently, following these recommendations, GBYP SC and Coordination team have initiated the preparatory tasks to organize the aforementioned Workshop on BFT reproductive issues, inviting and confirming the attendance of the proposed key speakers and contracting two independent experts, Drs Jessica Farley and Seiji Oshimo, who are elaborating a reference report providing recommendations on the most appropriate methods for 1) defining size at maturity and 2) defining spawning fraction for assessment purposes, whose final version will be presented during the Workshop.

## **2. Structure of the workshop, registration procedures and funding opportunities**

The workshop will be open to any scientist interested in this topic. It will be focused on the three specific objectives listed in the previous point. It will discuss, and hopefully reach agreements, on the hypothesis of substantial differences in bluefin tuna reproductive biology between the eastern and western stocks, the methods for estimation of the percentage of individuals contributing to spawning by age and area and the planning of further activities in this field to be carried out within the GBYP biological studies in the next GBYP Phases.

In principle it will be structured in eight working sessions, lasting two days, focused on each one of the topics proposed by the specialists Group within the preparatory meeting, plus two sessions on the third day dedicated to held a general final discussion and drafting the workshop report, respectively. The first eight sessions will consist of one or more talks given by invited key speakers (duration about 30 minutes, or around 20 minutes where there is more than one key speaker on a topic), which should inform on the state of art of methodologies and studies in relation with the topic and provide comments on the reviewer's report from his/her own area of expertise, followed by specific open discussion sessions. In some cases, whenever it be considered relevant for achievement of the objectives, additional short talks (preferably less than 10 minutes) from other speakers addressing any of the programmed topics will be accepted. The selection of these additional talks will be made by an ad hoc evaluation committee.

Due to budget limitations only the attendance of GBYP Steering Committee members and invited key speakers will be totally funded by GBYP, in any case under specific request. However, depending on budget availability, the travel costs and/or per diems of some of the other attendants, preferentially those whose proposals for presenting additional talks be accepted, could be also totally or partially funded by GBYP, under specific request, but this cannot be guaranteed a priori. Other participants should cover their own expenses.

All the invited key speakers or GBYP SC members who have confirmed his/her availability to participate in the workshop will be contacted shortly for initiating the administrative procedures. The rest of the attendants should send an email to [gbyp@iccat.int](mailto:gbyp@iccat.int) informing the GBYP coordination team about their interest in joining the Workshop, before October 15. Those who want to give any additional talk and, eventually, request GBYP support for covering totally or partially their travel costs, should also submit a summary of their presentation and a short CV.

## TENTATIVE AGENDA

### November 26

- 09:00-09:40 Opening, adoption of the agenda and meeting arrangements. Appointment of the Chairman and sessions rapporteurs.
- 09:40-11:30 Report of the independent reviewers on the discrepancies in eastern/western reproductive parameters. Open discussion.  
*Key note speakers: Seiji Oshimo, Jessica Farley*
- 11:30-12:00 Coffee break
- 12:00-13:15 Larval ecology (Contribution to and validation of spawning habitat models). Additional talks. Open discussion.  
*Key note speaker: Patricia Reglero*
- 13:15-14:45 Lunch break
- 14:45-16:45 Reproductive physiology (Endocrinology: Behaviour vs endocrine profile; Hormonal and social basis of skipped spawning). Additional talks. Open discussion.  
*Key note speakers: Antonio Medina, Aldo Corriero, Hanna Rosenfeld*
- 16:45-17:15 Coffee break
- 17:15-18:30 Tuna aquaculture/reproduction (Factors contributing to spawning success -age at maturity, egg fitness; Hormonal profile of spawners; Spawning frequency; Fecundity; Parental contribution). Additional talks. Open discussion.  
*Key note speaker: Aurelio Ortega*

### November 27

- 09:00-10:45 Spawning habitat modelling Definition of potential spawning areas from knowledge on larval ecology and data on spawners distribution during reproductive period. Additional talks. Open discussion.  
*Key note speakers: Dave Richardson, Diego Alvarez Berastegui*
- 10:45 -11:15 Coffee break
- 11:15 -13:00 Electronic tagging (Contribution to spawning habitat model). Additional talks. Open discussion.  
*Key note speakers: Molly Lutcavage, Barbara Block*
- 13:00-14:30 Lunch break
- 14:30-16:15 ABFT fisheries (Feasibility of sampling, temporal changes in the exploitation, factors that can influence our ability to understand spawning structure/dynamics). Additional talks. Open discussion.  
*Key note speakers: Antonio Di Natale, David Macias*
- 16:15 -16:45 Coffee break
- 16:45-18:00 Implications on MSE/assessment (Alternative hypothesis considered in current assessment OMs).  
*Key note speaker: Matt Lauretta*

### November 28

- Morning session: General discussion (including coffee break).
- Evening session: Report drafting (including coffee break). Close of meeting.