



Madrid – June 16, 2011

ICCAT CIRCULAR # 2701 / 2011

**SUBJECT: TERMS OF REFERENCE – CALL FOR TENDERS – GBYP 08/2011
TAGGING PROGRAM 2011 (ICCAT/GBYP PHASE 2)**

I have the honour to transmit to you the attached Terms of Reference – Call for Tenders GBYP 08/2011 for “Tagging Program 2011” of the ICCAT Atlantic-Wide Research Programme on Bluefin Tuna (GBYP Phase 2), reopening the terms of the previous Call for Tenders GBYP 07/2011.

This information has been translated to French and Spanish by the ICCAT Secretariat.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Driss Meski
Executive Secretary

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Attachments: Terms of Reference GBYP 08/2011 / Call for Tenders – Tagging Program 2011

TERMS OF REFERENCE - CALL FOR TENDERS – GBYP 08/2011 TAGGING PROGRAMME 2011

ATLANTIC-WIDE RESEARCH PROGRAMME ON BLUEFIN TUNA (ICCAT/GBYP – PHASE 2)

One of the major research tasks under the ICCAT Atlantic-Wide Bluefin Tuna Research Programme (GBYP) is a large, wide and intensive scientific tagging program to address several important biological and ecological topics regarding Atlantic bluefin tuna. This particular call is for carrying out the field tagging activities in 2011 according to the GBYP tagging design approved by the GBYP Steering Committee after the recommendations of the design of tagging experiment(s) that would address several specific objectives. The scientific tagging program is scheduled to start in 2011 and to be possibly active for 3 to 5 years, with wide geographic distribution in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea, while a parallel programme will be possibly active in the western North Atlantic and in the Gulf of Mexico. The program should target the main areas and size-classes identified by the Tagging Design. Tagging in 2011 shall include only conventional tags, because PITs were temporarily excluded due to the Japanese food health regulation in place..

The specific objectives of the tagging activity on the medium term (according to the GBYP Tagging Design) are:

- a) Validation of the current stock status definitions for populations of bluefin tuna in the Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea. If the hypothesis of two stock units (eastern and western stocks) holds, the tags should provide estimates of mixing rates between stock units by area and time strata (ICCAT main area definitions and quarter at least). It is also important to consider possible sub-stock units and their mixing or population biomass exchange, particularly in the Mediterranean Sea.
- b) Estimate the natural mortality rates (M) of bluefin tuna populations by age or age-groups and/or total mortality (Z).
- c) Estimate tagging reporting rates for conventional tags, by major fishery and area, also using the observer programs currently deployed in the Mediterranean fisheries (ICCAT ROP-BFT).
- d) Evaluate habitat utilization and large-scale movement patterns (spatio-temporal) of both the juveniles and the spawners.
- e) Estimate the retention rate of various tag types, due to contrasting experiences in various oceans.

Background and objectives

The main objectives of the ICCAT Atlantic-Wide Bluefin Tuna Research Programme (GBYP) are to improve (a) the understanding of key biological and ecological processes, (b) current assessment methodology, and (c) the management procedures and (d) advice.

Key tasks are to reduce uncertainty in stock assessment and to provide robust management advice. This requires improved knowledge of key biological processes and parameters. However, currently almost all the data used in stock assessments are obtained from the fisheries-dependent data. It is therefore important to obtain data from alternative sources, such as tagging studies, in order to verify the assumptions made when conducting the assessments.

Many assumptions used in the previous assessments, such as stock structure and natural mortality, have been called into question by recent studies, e.g. Carlsson *et al.* (2003) who suggest that bluefin have a complex population structure with genetic differences within the Mediterranean and central North Atlantic. The GBYP also includes an Aerial Survey and therefore knowledge about behavior that influences sighting probability, such as vertical habitat utilisation and movement between survey areas, is important when deriving indices of abundance. As well as mixing between the bluefin tuna management units, the existence of a meta-populations is an important issue to be considered. A well-designed tagging programme, developed over several years schedule and with a progressive methodological approach, will therefore be important in improving our understanding of bluefin tuna ecology and ethology and for developing better stock assessment methods.

To date, PIT tags have never been used for Atlantic bluefin tuna, but this may be an additional method to consider for a separate pilot project, particularly if tuna fattening cages can be equipped with detectors and if the issues concerning food health regulations can be positively defined.

Several tagging options have been considered by the tagging design, but for the first year of activity it was planned to carry out only the conventional tagging, particularly on juvenile bluefin tuna, particularly taking into account the budget and operational constraints. The single-barb spaghetti tags shall be used in all fish to be tagged, while double-barb spaghetti tags (small for small-medium tuna and large for medium-large tuna) shall be used as second tag on 40% of the fish to be tagged, with the purpose to comparatively study the retention rate according to the tag type.

The Report of the GBYP Operational Meeting on Tagging provides additional background elements (http://www.iccat.int/Documents/Meetings/Docs/2011_GBYP_WORKSHOPS_ENG.pdf). The ICCAT/GBYP Tagging Design, product of an earlier call, providing the optimal distribution of tagging activities among the various fisheries as well as the ICCAT/GBYP Tagging Manual are available at: <http://www.iccat.int/GBYP/en/Products.htm>. Both documents are provided in the original language only, as delivered to ICCAT.

The costs and benefits of alternative strategies in meeting the objectives of the tagging programme should be evaluated and provided by the Tenders in order to allow research priorities to be identified.

Scientific institutes, *ad hoc* consortium, and public or private entities are asked to submit tenders for carrying out the tagging programme.

Contractor tasks

The Contractor, who will work in close consultation with the ICCAT/GBYP will conduct the tagging activity in the various areas and on the bluefin tuna age classes according to the GBYP Tagging Design provided in <http://www.iccat.int/GBYP/en/Products.htm>. This involves tagging by area and bluefin size classes, according to the Tagging Design, while changes or adjustment can be made to the Tagging Design under the condition to provide a full justification. For example, a more focused strategy for obtaining a better balance between tagging costs and tagging activity might imply using more local vessels across the area.

The Tender will be responsible for all necessary agreements with local fishermen and industries when carrying out tagging within national regulations. The necessary tags will be provided by ICCAT/GBYP.

The Contractor(s) shall be responsible for the basic data management and for including all data in the ICCAT data base for tagging.

The budget for tagging activity in 2011 is thought sufficient to tag about 5000 specimens, however if costs not included in the original design mean that funding is insufficient then this should be stated in the tender and adjust the tagging activity accordingly.

This contract is for 1 year; however it is likely that in Phase 3 of the GBYP (i.e. in 2012) a second call for tagging will be announced with a level of funding to be defined based on the achievements of Phase 2. The objectives of this second call will be the same as those for the first call and the Tagging Design and analyses will be eventually improved based on those in the current call. Therefore, upon successful completion of work under this call, a second contract may be awarded for 2012 without going through a second bidding process. This will depend on an evaluation of the work to be conducted by the GBYP Steering Committee.

The Tender shall provide a proposal including:

- a) The number of fish to be tagged by area and bluefin size group;
- b) Specification of the tagging strategy (type of vessel and gear by area, origin of the vessel, etc.), including a clear prioritization under the budget.

The Tender should endeavor to ensure full coverage of all areas and bluefin tuna size groups as indicated in the Tagging Design. Therefore, proposals including entities across geographic areas will be preferred. In the case of a Consortium or group of entities, an administrative and a scientific responsible entity should be identified, along with a Scientific Committee on which each entity carrying out a scientific duty will be represented. The Tender(s) can optionally apply for specific task or sub-set of areas/coverage with a detailed description of the modifications and proposal research.

Contractor minimum qualifications

- Documented multi-year experience in bluefin tuna or tuna-species studies; previous experience in large-scale tagging or local multi-year tagging will be preferred.
- Availability of sufficient qualified scientific and technical staff to carry out the duties.
- Availability of the necessary vessels to carry out the duties.
- Availability of at least one specialist in managing tagging databases.
- Excellent working knowledge of one of the three official languages of ICCAT (English, French and Spanish). A high level of knowledge of English is highly desirable.

Request for bids

Interested entities should submit an offer to the attention of Mr. Driss Meski, the Executive Secretary of ICCAT, at the following address: driss.meski@iccat.int and, in copy, to gbyp@iccat.int by **June 26, 2011**, including:

- a) Acknowledgment of this Call for Tenders;
- b) A detailed offer, based on the Tagging Design, describing the strata where the tagging will be conducted, the minimum number and size of bluefin tuna to be tagged, the protocols to be adopted, and the structure of the data bank, sub-area (for the interim report and the date for the final report). Departures from the Tagging Design may be made with justification.
- c) The curricula of the scientific staff;
- d) The Curriculum of the institution(s) or entity(ies) applying for the GBYP tagging activity 2011, with any documented experience in these fields, to include recent and relevant contracts for the same or similar items and other references (including contract numbers, points of contact with telephone numbers and other relevant information);
- e) A preliminary estimated budget for the tagging activity and for including the data into the ICCAT tagging data base, to be detailed by individual components (e.g., tagging staff, organization staff including the time for data input, vessel rent, operational costs, travels, consumables, etc.), and any discount terms (overhead to cover administrative and general costs could be admitted within a maximum limit of 10% of the personnel costs).
- f) The name, address, and telephone number of the tendering body;
- g) The bank account of the tendering body, (bank name, bank account number, IBAN and SWIFT codes), and the IVA=VAT identification code;
- h) The institutional and administrative background of the tendering body (e.g., statutes, type of institution, annual budget, budget control procedures, etc.).
- i) A detailed list of any subcontracting activities;
- j) The declaration that the offering Institution will follow the ICCAT/GBYP Tagging Design and the ICCAT/GBYP Tagging Manual provided by the ICCAT/GBYP along with the present Call for Tenders, and/or approved modifications agreed upon, and the administrative rules specified in the contract;
- k) A declaration that all the comments eventually made on the draft final report will be incorporated in the final report prior for submission to the ICCAT SCRS.
- l) A declaration that the staff and all the subcontracted staff will be covered by full insurance for the tagging activities to be carried out according to the Call for Tenders, excluding ICCAT from all the responsibilities concerning the job to be done by each offering institution;
- m) A statement specifying the extent of agreement with all terms, conditions, and provisions herein included, particularly specifying the date for the preliminary interim report and the date for the draft final report (**November 21, 2011** at the latest).

The ICCAT Secretariat will make a selection of the offers in consultation with the ICCAT/GBYP Steering Committee. The ICCAT Secretariat will notify the result of the selection process by July 6, 2011, at the latest.

Offers that fail to furnish the required documentation or information, or that reject the terms and conditions of the Call for Tenders will not be considered.

Contractors can be either research institution, such as government or private laboratories, universities, or private consultancy firms, or individual scientists or other entities having the qualifications required.

The Contractor should be available to report to any meeting requested by ICCAT.

Deliverables

- 1) A short preliminary report on tagging activities, including all protocols for tagging and the vessel renting agreements, to be submitted at the latest by **July 30, 2011**, including the description of the work carried out up to that date;
- 2) An update of the short report on the tagging activities to be submitted at the latest by **September 17, 2011**, including the description of the work carried out up to that date and the number of tagged tunas in the various areas;
- 3) A PowerPoint presentation of the main results at the date, to be provided by **September 17, 2011**;
- 4) A very short report for updating the number of tagged tunas in the various areas by **November 2, 2011**;
- 5) The draft final report to be submitted at the latest by **November 21, 2011**, including:
 - a) Full description of the work carried out for the tagging activities in the various areas, with the total number of tagged tunas and the specification of the double tagged tuna;
 - b) Detailed description of the methodology and protocols (short description, particularly if tagging was carried out strictly according to the GBYP Tagging Manual);
 - c) Maps of the areas in which the tagging was carried out, according to the GBYP Tagging Design;
 - d) Detailed tables with the definitive number of tagged specimens by area, size composition and type of tag (small double-barb, large double-barb, single barb);
 - e) Copy of the data input worksheets from the ICCAT tagging data base;
 - f) Eventual recommendations for adjusting the tagging strategy for conventional tagging in GBYP Phase 3;
 - g) An Executive Summary for the ICCAT Commission.
- 6) The definitive final report, to be prepared taking into account the eventual comments provided by ICCAT, and the full administrative report including copies of all the administrative documents, and to be submitted by **November 30, 2011**, at the latest.

Payment details

Disbursements will be made according to the following schedule:

1. 30% of the total amount of the contract upon signing of the contract;
2. 25% upon completion and acceptance of the first short preliminary report;
3. 25% upon completion and acceptance of the update of the preliminary report;
4. 20% after the approval of the final report upon incorporation of comments by the ICCAT/GBYP Steering Committee and the approval of the administrative documents.

Logistics

All documents provided by the Contractor must be in MS Word or compatible software; tables must be in Excel format or compatible; figures and pictures must be in JPEG or TIFF format or compatible. Tagging data shall be input in the ICCAT tagging database. All documents submitted must be in English, French or Spanish.

Copyright

All the material produced by the Contractor will remain the property of ICCAT/GBYP, will be kept confidential, and cannot, in any case, be circulated by the Contractor selected. The scientific use of the data by the Contractor shall always be notified to ICCAT in advance for clearance.

For further information concerning this Call for Tenders, please contact the Program Coordinator at the following address: antonio.dinatale@iccat.int.