



Madrid, 5 August 2016

ICCAT GBYP CIRCULAR # 1037 / 16

**SUBJECT: CALL FOR TENDERS – ICCAT GBYP 11/2016
BIOLOGICAL STUDIES (AGEING) OF THE ATLANTIC-WIDE RESEARCH PROGRAMME ON
BLUEFIN TUNA (ICCAT GBYP – PHASE 6)**

I have the honour to transmit to you the attached Call for Tenders – ICCAT GBYP 11/2016 – Biological Studies (Ageing) of the Atlantic-wide Research Programme on Bluefin Tuna (ICCAT GBYP – Phase 6).

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.



Driss Meski
Executive Secretary

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Attachment: Call for Tenders GBYP 11/2016.

CALL FOR TENDERS ICCAT GBYP 11/2016
BIOLOGICAL STUDIES (AGEING)
ATLANTIC-WIDE RESEARCH PROGRAMME ON BLUEFIN TUNA
(ICCAT GBYP – PHASE 6)

1. ICCAT GBYP Background and objectives

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

This Call for tenders concerns an improvement of one of the main activities to be carried out in Phase 6 (2016-February 2017): Biological Studies.

BIOLOGICAL STUDIES (ICCAT GBYP 11/2016)
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2. Background and objectives

One of the main objectives of the ICCAT GBYP is to improve the understanding of key biological and ecological processes for Atlantic bluefin tuna. As part of this Programme, biological sampling of the main bluefin fisheries already started in 2011. This concerned the collection of data on age, length, weight, sex, maturity, fecundity, otoliths shape and tissue samples for genetic and micro-chemical analyses for identification of sub-populations. The work to be carried out in Phase 6 will be basically the same (excluding maturity and fecundity studies), extending sampling also to areas and fisheries not covered or poorly covered in previous Phases, according to the ICCAT GBYP sampling design. A first Call was issued for covering these needs, while further contracts were released for sampling adult spawners from the main four spawning areas in the Mediterranean Sea. According to the recommendation of the GBYP Steering Committee on July 2016, an additional effort shall be devoted for reading and ageing most of the otoliths collected so far, under the condition to use these otoliths preserving them for additional micro-chemical studies.

The results of these additional age readings should be available for the SCRS Bluefin Tuna Species Group at the Bluefin Data Preparatory meeting in 2017.

As part of this Programme, scientific institutes and public or private entities are requested to submit tenders to carry out the study.

3. Contractor tasks

The tenderer will work in close consultation with the ICCAT GBYP to conduct the additional ageing studies requested for the last part of Phase 6.

A preliminary catalogue of available otolith samples already collected under ICCAT GBYP in previous Phases for the various strata is available (see Appendix). All samples are currently stored in the ICCAT GBYP biological storage, maintained at the AZTI Foundation (*Fundación AZTI*) in Spain.

The Contractor(s) shall be responsible for the following tasks:

- i) initial selection of the necessary otolith samples, according to the list of available samples (see Appendix), in order to provide the specific request for delivering these samples.
- ii) preparation of the 2,000 otolith samples for ageing, according to the most advanced systems and techniques, taking into account the absolute need to preserve the samples for later micro-chemical analyses.
- iii) document each otolith with annotated pictures, taken according to the methodology used for the GBYP ageing calibration available at:
www.iccat.int/GBYP/Documents/BIOLOGICAL%20STUDIES/PHASE%204/_GBYP_Biological_studies_Final_Report_2014.pdf (pages 86-96)
- iv) carry out the age reading of each sample, according to the best available methodology, providing the detailed tables and aggregated tables for ages and fork length classes (10 cm), by area and sub-area strata and by year of catch.
- v) provide a comprehensive report of the study, for SCRS uses.

This contract is for the period up to 31 January 2017.

The Tenderer(s) shall provide a proposal including the following:

- a) Number of otolith samples by stratum and length class to be extracted from the ICCAT GBYP sample and tissue storage for a total of 2,000 samples (see item 3(i) above).
- b) Protocols for the methodology that will be used for the ageing analyses (with multiple readers, preferably 3) and the requested individual documentation of each sample. The protocol shall also include the parts concerning the return of the samples to the storage for later analyses.
- c) A comprehensive comparison ageing analysis between multiple readers (preferably 3), including comparative readings for each sample (calibration) and between areas by year.

The Tenderer(s) should endeavor to ensure the full coverage of all strata, depending on the availability of already collected otolith samples (see Appendix). The Tenderer(s) shall also clearly identify the availability for the scientific staff to participate to any ICCAT GBYP Operational Meeting on short notice. In the case of a consortium or group of entities, an administrative and a scientific responsible entity should be identified.

4. Contractor minimum qualifications

- Documented multi-year experience in tuna biological studies; previous experience in ageing studies, particularly for large pelagic species in general and bluefin tuna, in particular, will be preferential.
- Availability of sufficient qualified scientific staff to carry out the duties in duly time.
- Excellent working knowledge of one of the three official languages of ICCAT (English, French, Spanish). A high level of knowledge of English is highly desirable.

5. Request for bids

Interested entities should submit an offer to the ICCAT Executive Secretary (driss.meski@iccat.int) by **31 August 2016**, including:

- a) The detailed offer shall take into account the availability of otolith samples by areas and sub-area strata per year and the recommendations of the GBYP Steering Committee, taking into account that the analysis shall include 2,000 otolith samples. The proposal shall consider the expected variance associated to the strata and the number (2,000) of readings to be conducted and the protocols to be adopted for the purpose of the draft final report (**Deliverable #2**) and the final report (**Deliverable #3**). Departures from any ICCAT GBYP Steering Committee recommendations or other departure may be made with justification.
- b) The *curricula* of the scientific staff.

- c) The curriculum of the institution(s) or entity(ies) applying for this Call for tenders, with any documented experience in this field, including recent and relevant contracts or activities for the same or similar items and other references.
- d) The preliminary estimated budget for the entire work to be carried out for ageing, detailed by individual components, should include: personnel costs, consumables, travel, and any sub-contracted activity. Shipping costs for the reception of the samples and for their delivery back to AZTI (Spain), should also be included. Costs should also include analyses and photos and any other related costs required for this work and any discount terms; overhead to cover administrative and general costs could be admitted within a maximum limit of 10% of the personnel costs, while subcontracts can be allowed up to a maximum of 40% of the budget and must be fully detailed in the proposal.
- e) The name, address, and telephone number of the tendering body, along with the details of the bank account.
- f) The institutional and administrative background of the tendering body (e.g., statutes, type of institution, annual budget, budget control procedures, etc.).
- g) A detailed list of any sub-contracting activities.
- h) A declaration that the offering institution will follow the structure of the area and sub-area strata (see Appendix), the agreed methodologies for ageing, and the administrative rules specified in the contract.
- i) A declaration that all the comments eventually made on the draft final report (**Deliverable #2**) will be incorporated in the final report (**Deliverable #3**) prior to submission to the ICCAT.
- j) A declaration that the staff and all the sub-contract staff will be covered by a full insurance for the sampling activities and the laboratory work 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.
- k) Acknowledgment of this Call for tenders (if applicable) (**ICCAT GBYP 11/2016**).
- l) A statement specifying the extent of agreement with all terms, conditions, and provisions included herein.

Offers that fail to furnish the required documentation or information, or reject the terms and conditions of the Call for tenders may be excluded from consideration.

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

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

The ICCAT Secretariat will make a selection of the offers and will decide the contract(s) to be awarded.

6. Deliverables

#1 A short report on the initial activities, including all definitive protocols for the ageing analyses (including the photographic documentation specifications), the number of samples by year and stratum to be received or that have already been requested to the AZTI Foundation (keeper of the biological and tissue storage), including the description of the work carried out up to that date, to be submitted at the latest 30 days after the signature of the contract.

#2 A draft final report to be submitted at the latest by **15 January 2017**, including comments on:

- i) The scientific report, taking into account relevant scientific literature, containing:
 - a) A full description of the work carried out for ageing the samples.
 - b) A detailed description of the methodology and protocols.
 - c) Detailed tables with the definitive number of readings by year, area and sub-area strata and length class, with the related statistical analysis.

- d) A detailed description of the analysis carried out, including comparative readings for the same otolith by different readers (preferably 3, aiming calibration) and of the results achieved as regards comparison between areas by year. The individual readings shall be presented also in the Excel file, following the format and the codes that are currently used for the ICCAT GBYP biological database (see Appendix).
 - e) A full copy of all annotated electronic photographs of the otolith samples, along with an Excel file detailing the samples.
 - f) An Executive Summary of the final report.
- ii) An updated PowerPoint presentation of the main results.
- #3** The final report, to be prepared taking into account any comments provided by ICCAT, and the full administrative report including copies of all the administrative documents, to be submitted by **31 January 2017**, at the latest.

To facilitate the reporting requirements, the ICCAT GBYP could possibly provide a template for the reports.

7. 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. 20% upon completion and acceptance of **Deliverable #1**.
3. 50% after the approval of the final report (**Deliverable #3**), upon incorporation of comments by the ICCAT GBYP and the approval of the administrative documents.

8. 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. The format of the data bank shall be agreed with the ICCAT Secretariat. All documents submitted must be in English, French or Spanish.

9. Copyright

All of the material produced by the Contractor will remain the property of ICCAT GBYP and it must be kept confidential.

For further information concerning this Call for tenders, please contact the ICCAT GBYP Coordinator at the following address: **antonio.dinatale@iccat.int**