

Report of Implementation for the year 2012

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF THE REPORT 7 MARCH 2013

Reporting CPC: SOUTH AFRICA

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Please NOTE: this document is composed of 3 sections to report on the implementation of IOTC resolutions

Part A. *Describe the actions taken, under national legislation, in the previous year to implement conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission at its sixteenth Session.*

1. Resolution 12-01 On The Implementation Of The Precautionary Approach

South Africa is fully supportive of the Precautionary Approach, and as a signatory to the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries South Africa has included the Precautionary Approach as a principle in managing its fisheries, including its tuna fisheries. For example given the concerns of declining swordfish CPUE trends in its EEZ South Africa has unilaterally decided to cap its swordfish longline effort in 2005 and has been the only country to divide its longline effort between a directed tuna and swordfish fishery. Furthermore, South Africa has also capped its tuna pole effort limits based on the concerns of albacore and yellowfin in both the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

2. Resolution 12-02 Data Confidentiality Policy And Procedures

For the public to obtain catch and effort data from the longline and tuna pole fisheries, a formal Request for Information has to be submitted to the national Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Branch: Fisheries. The Request contains the description of the research project, including the objectives, methodology and intentions for publication. The identity of the vessel, permit holder or Rights Holder is not released with the catch and effort logbook data or Observer data. This applies for data grouped by 5° latitude by 5° longitude and 1° latitude by 1° longitude. At finer scale stratifications South Africa will request permission from the IOTC Executive Secretary to provide this data.

3. Resolution 12-03 On The Recording Of Catch And Effort By Fishing Vessels In The IOTC Area Of Competence

All longline, pole and line vessels carry bound logbooks on board and are required to record all catch information and submit to the Department: Fisheries by the 15th of the following month of fishing. All longline and pole and line vessels (> and < 24m) record information laid out in Annexure I and II of Resolution 12/03 (Appendix XVII of the 16th Commission Report) when fishing in South Africa's EEZ. The logbook data from South Africa was submitted after the 30th June 2012 to the IOTC for catch data from the previous year, 2011.

4. Resolution 12-04 On The Conservation Of Marine Turtles (Including in accordance with Article X of the IOTC Agreement, their progress of implementation of the FAO Guidelines and this Resolution)

Through the onboard scientific observer programme which was established in 1998 all interactions with turtles in the domestic longline and charter longline fishery is recorded and reported to IOTC. Furthermore, through permit conditions skippers of longline vessels are encouraged to use circle hooks. Furthermore, it is mandatory for the vessel to have on board dehooking equipment. dehooking procedures for turtles are also included in the permit conditions.

5. Resolution 12-05 On Establishing A Programme For Transshipment By Large-Scale Fishing Vessels

South Africa does not permit transshipment at sea and has no reefers flagged to South Africa that are engaged in receiving transshipments. Transshipment in ports are allowed subject to a permit being applied for. The permit application form makes provision for all the information pertinent to the transshipment.

6. Resolution 12-06 On Reducing The Incidental Bycatch Of Seabirds In Longline Fisheries
In force in July 2014

7. Resolution 12-07 Concerning A Record Of Licensed Foreign Vessels Fishing For IOTC Species In The IOTC Area Of Competence And Access Agreement Information

South Africa has terminated all tuna fishing access agreements in 2002. There currently no access agreements in place for foreign vessels to fish inside South Africa's EEZ. South Africa does however allow foreign vessels to fish under charter agreement for South African fishing companies under ICCAT Rec [02-21].

8. Resolution 12-08 Procedures On A Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs) Management Plan

South Africa does not support the use of fish aggregating devices and no fishing company has been authorised to use FADs.

9. Resolution 12-09 On The Conservation Of Thresher Sharks (Family Alopiidae) Caught In Association With Fisheries In The IOTC Area Of Competence

The landing of all thresher sharks are banned. All threshers caught have to be returned to the sea and fishers are encouraged to release them alive. All incidental catches of thresher sharks are recorded by the scientific on board observer programme.

10. Resolution 12-10 To Promote Implementation Of Conservation And Management Measures Already Adopted By IOTC

The intention to streamline resolutions is noted.

11. Resolution 12-11 On The Implementation Of A Limitation Of Fishing Capacity Of Contracting Parties And Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties

South Africa has provided a fleet development plan for its longline vessels and has subsequently updated the plan in last year. The current plan is valid until 2019.

12. Resolution 12-12 To Prohibit The Use Of Large-Scale Driftnets On The High Seas In The IOTC Area (Including a summary of monitoring, control, and surveillance actions related to large-scale driftnet fishing on the high seas in the IOTC Area of Competence)

South Africa does not have any vessels operating on the high seas that uses driftnets. Furthermore, driftnets can only be authorised through the issuing of a permit. The Department is aware on the UN ban of large-scale high seas driftnets and in the process of amending the Marine Living Resources Act the UN ban shall be explicitly stated.

13. Resolution 12-13 For The Conservation And Management Of Tropical Tuna Stocks In The IOTC Area Of Competence (Including a summary of VMS records related to their fleet operation in the previous year for the consideration of the Compliance Committee)

It is a mandatory requirement that all tuna and swordfish longline vessels, irrespective of vessel length, carry onboard a functional VMS that reports to the Departments base station. Vessels fishing in the South African tuna fishery generally fish within South Africa's EEZ. Vessels that occasionally fish on the high seas only fish in adjacent waters to South Africa. Hence, none of the vessels operating in the South African fishery fishes in close proximity to the closed area. Nonetheless, the co-ordinates have been forwarded to our base station to include the closed area co-ordinates as a no go area and to ensure that necessary automated notifications are sent to our Department should a longline vessel enter the closed area. South Africa does not have any tuna purse seine vessels on its register and hence, the closed area for purse seiners is not applicable.

14. Recommendation 12/15 On The Best Available Science

The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Branch: Fisheries strives to base its research on the interests and information needs of the Scientific Committee and the Commission and to contribute this research towards Working Party and Scientific Committee meetings. Through the Observer programme and the bound logbooks, we are working on collecting as much data as possible on bycatch. Due to administrative challenges, South Africa has not sent scientists to participate in the Scientific Committee meetings for the last few years. We are trying our utmost best to overcome these challenges. South Africa hosting the Working Party on Billfish and the Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch in 2012 enabled the participation of South African scientists.

Part B. *Describe the actions taken, under national legislation, to implement conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission in previous Sessions, and which have not been reported previously.*

The national legislation is in the process of being amended taking into account Port State Measures Agreement; prosecution of nationals on foreign vessels involved in IUU, defining IUU; making the import of marine product that has contravened other states laws an offence; and improving the wording related to South Africa's responsibilities in terms of Regional Fisheries Management organisations.

Part C. Data and information reporting requirements for CPCs to be included in this report (please refer to the *section March 2013 of the Guide on data and information reporting requirements for Members and Cooperating Non-contracting Parties*).

- Resolution 01/06 *Concerning the IOTC bigeye tuna statistical document programme*

CPCs which export bigeye tuna shall examine export data upon receiving the import data from the Secretary, and report the results to the Commission annually.

South Africa exports bigeye tuna subject to the necessary issuing of statistical documents. All information is kept on record. South Africa does not import bigeye tuna, hence records have been sent to IOTC.

- Recommendation 05/07 *Concerning a management standard for the tuna fishing vessels*

The CPC flag states which issues licenses to their AFVs should report annually to the Commission all measures taken to meet the minimum management standards when they issue fishing licenses to their “authorised fishing vessels”.

All tuna vessels are required to have on board catch logbooks which need to be completed on a daily basis. All vessels are required to have a functional VMS unit fitted. The Department has established an observer programme which have placed observers on board charter and local longline vessels. The current coverage is 100% for charter vessels. The contract for the domestic part of the programme has expired in 2011 and the Department is in the process of re-establishing this part of the programme. All vessels are required to land their catches in port in the presence of a Fishery Control Officer or Fishery Monitor. No transshipment at sea are allowed. All vessels have to apply on an annual basis for a catching permit. Permit conditions are attached to the permit, which takes into account all the relevant RFMO measures.

- Resolution 10/06 *On Reducing the Incidental Bycatch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries*

CPCs shall provide to the Commission, as part of their annual reports, information on how they are implementing this measure and all available information on interactions with seabirds, including bycatch by fishing vessels carrying their flag or authorised to fish by them. This is to include details of species where available to enable the Scientific Committee to annually estimate seabird mortality in all fisheries within the IOTC Area of Competence.

South Africa has made great strides in mitigating seabird mortality in its tuna/swordfish longline fishery. Seabird mortality was recognised as being too high and a NPOA-seabirds was published in 2008 to prescribe that seabird mortality should be reduced to below 0.05 seabirds per 1000 hooks. Various mitigation measures were included in permit conditions and they were strictly enforced. These included the flying of tori lines, night setting, and line weighting as well as implementing seabird limits per vessel. Through many engagements with industry and through good collaboration seabird mortality has been decreasing in recent years. Last year was the first year in which seabird mortality reached the objective of the NPOA-seabirds. Seabird mortality are recorded by on board scientific observers and reported to the respective RFMOs.

- Resolution 10/10 Concerning market related measures

For CPCs that import tuna and tuna-like fish products, or in whose ports those products are landed or transhipped, should report, a range of information (e.g. information on vessels / owners, product data (species, weight), point of export) annually.

Not applicable to South Africa as it does not import tuna species.

- Resolution 11/04 On a Regional observer scheme

CPCs shall provide to the Executive Secretary and the Scientific Committee annually a report of the number of vessels monitored and the coverage achieved by gear type in accordance with the provisions of this Resolution.

The observer program was established in 1998, at the start of the experimental phase of the pelagic longline fishery, and a minimum 20% observer coverage was stipulated. The Offshore Resources Observer Programme (OROP) began in March 2002 and requires 100% observer coverage on foreign-flagged vessels. The funding for an observer program for the coverage of national (local-flagged) vessels was halted in March 2011. The overall tuna/swordfish longline observer coverage in the IOTC region for 2012 was:

- ☐ 50% of all longline sets made in the IOTC region- foreign-flagged vessels under charter
- ☐ 11 vessels
- ☐ 10 trips (each trip between 3 and 5 months long)

Considering the coverage achieved on the charter vessels then the minimum coverage for this region was met.

There were 13 observers actively observing on the tuna/swordfish longline vessels in 2012.

There are no observers stationed on pole and line vessels; and since the national observer program ended in March 2011 there has not been sampling at port by observers either. The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries have been sending their staff to ports and freezer factories to conduct two length frequency measurements (200 fish per measure) of albacore (and yellowfin tuna) a month. These are tunas from the pole and line vessels.

Capricorn Fisheries Monitoring CC (Capfish) is the company responsible for the training and deployment of observers on to foreign-flagged longline vessels. The company ensures that

- ☐ Observers are able to perform their duties in a competent and safe manner
- ☐ Observers alternate vessels between deployments.
- ☐ Observers are provided with suitable food and lodging.

☐ A briefing meeting is held before every trip with the vessel's master and the observer. The observer's duties are discussed before a trip to ensure that the observer receives co-operation from the vessel's master and crew.

The cost of having an observer onboard a foreign-flagged vessel is covered by the vessel rights holder. Observers are not placed on national (local-flagged) vessels since the funding for this observer scheme has not been allocated by the South African government since March 2011. During the latter half of 2012 the South African government prioritised funding to restart the observer programme, including observers for the national longline vessels and observers to cover port sampling of pole and line vessels. The tender process to find suitable companies to run the observer programme is still underway. The IOTC will be kept updated on the progress of re-establishing the observer programme in South Africa.

Observers are fulfilling the requirements/duties outlined in Paragraph 10 of Resolution 11/04 in the Collection of Active Conservation and Management Measures from the IOTC. The full complement of observer trip reports for 2012 is in the process of being compiled. The completed reports will be sent to the IOTC shortly.