

OUTCOMES OF THE 20th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT¹, 31 OCTOBER 2016

PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 12th Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics (WPDCS12) of the decisions and requests made by the Commission at its 20th Session, held from 23 – 27 May 2016, specifically relating to the work of the WPDCS.

BACKGROUND

At the 20th Session, the Commission **CONSIDERED** and **ADOPTED** 12 proposals as Conservation and Management Measures (consisting of 12 Resolutions and 0 Recommendations), as detailed below:

Resolutions

- Resolution 16/01 *On an interim plan for rebuilding the Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna stock*
- Resolution 16/02 *On harvest control rules for skipjack tuna in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution 16/03 *On the second performance review follow-up*
- Resolution 16/04 *On the implementation of a Pilot Project in view of Promoting the Regional Observer Scheme of IOTC*
- Resolution 16/05 *On vessels without nationality*
- Resolution 16/06 *On measures applicable in case of non-fulfilment of reporting obligations in the IOTC*
- Resolution 16/07 *On the use of artificial lights to attract fish*
- Resolution 16/08 *On the prohibition of the use of aircrafts and unmanned aerial vehicles as fishing aids*
- Resolution 16/09 *On establishing a Technical Committee on Management Procedures*
- Resolution 16/10 *To promote the implementation of IOTC Conservation and Management Measures*
- Resolution 16/11 *On port state measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing*
- Resolution 16/12 *Working Party on the Implementation of Conservation and Management Measures (WPICMM)*

Pursuant to Article IX.4 of the IOTC Agreement, the above mentioned Conservation and Management Measures became binding on Members, 120 days from the date of the notification communicated by the IOTC Secretariat in IOTC Circular 2016–054 (i.e. 27 September 2016).

DISCUSSION

The Commission also made a number of general comments on the recommendations made by the Scientific Committee in 2015, which have relevance for the WPDCS. At the time of writing, the final report has not been approved so all text and paragraph numbers refer to the draft report of the Commission pending final agreement by all parties (IOTC–2016–S20–R):

*Para. 14. The Commission **CONSIDERED** the list of recommendations made by the SC18 (Appendix VI) from its 2015 report (IOTC–2015–SC18–R) that related specifically to the Commission. The Commission **ENDORSED** the list of recommendations as its own, while taking into account the range of issues outlined in this Report (S20)*

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and incorporated within Conservation and Management Measures adopted during the Session and as adopted for implementation as detailed in the approved annual budget and Program of Work.

Para. 15. The Commission **NOTED** some minor improvements in the quantity of fisheries statistics available to the SC and its Working Parties in 2015 but reiterated its concerns about the lack of fisheries data from some gears and fleets for target and bycatch species. Specifically, many fisheries statistics are missing or incomplete for some industrial and artisanal fisheries.

Sharks

Para. 22. The Commission **NOTED** the standing of catch statistics for the main species of sharks, by major fisheries (gears), and **EXPRESSED** concern over the lack of information submitted by CPCs on total catches, discards, catch and effort and size data of sharks in the IOTC database, despite their mandatory reporting status.

Para. 23. The Commission strongly **ENCOURAGED** CPCs comply with IOTC data requirements as requested per Resolution 15/01 and 15/02, given the gaps in available information in the IOTC database and the importance of basic fishery data in order to assess the status of stocks and for the provision of sound management advice.

Summary report on the level of compliance

Para. 32. The Commission **NOTED** that there has been no improvement in the levels of compliance of some CPCs in 2015, and that there are still many CPCs not meeting their obligations to provide information under the various CMMs, especially with regards to mandatory statistics. Some of the required information is not only important to ensure the completeness of datasets, but also to allow the CoC to fully assess the level of compliance of CPCs with the CMMs and to monitor the catch and capacity of fleets actively fishing for tuna and tuna-like species under the mandate of IOTC.

On an Interim Plan for Rebuilding the Indian Ocean Yellowfin Tuna Stock

Para. 109. The Commission **ADOPTED** Resolution 16/01 On an Interim Plan for Rebuilding the Indian Ocean Yellowfin Tuna Stock. This Resolution introduces a scheme for reduction of catches of yellowfin (from 2014 levels), by fishery, for all fishing vessels targeting tuna and tuna like species in the Indian Ocean of 24 meters overall length and over, and those under 24 meters if they fish outside the EEZ of their flag State, within the IOTC area of competence.

On the implementation of a pilot project in view of promoting the Regional Observer Scheme of IOTC

Para. 113. The Commission **ADOPTED** Resolution 16/04 On the implementation of a pilot project in view of promoting the Regional Observer Scheme of IOTC. This Resolution creates a pilot project aiming to enhance the implementation of the Resolution 11/04 on a Regional Observer Scheme and to raise the level of compliance to the implementation of Resolutions 15/01 and 15/02, respectively on the recording of catch and effort data by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence and on mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting parties (CPCs).

On measures applicable in case of non-fulfilment of reporting obligations in the IOTC

Para. 115. The Commission **ADOPTED** Resolution 16/06 On measures applicable in case of non-fulfilment of reporting obligations in the IOTC, which requires CPCs to include information in their Annual Reports (Report of Implementation) on actions taken to implement their reporting obligations for all IOTC fisheries, including shark species caught in association with IOTC fisheries, in particular the steps taken to improve their data collection for direct and incidental catches.

The complete report of the 20th Session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission is not yet available for download from the IOTC website but will be made publically available shortly after the final version has been agreed by correspondence.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the WPDCS:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2016–WPDCS12–04 which outlined the **provisional** outcomes of the 20th Session of the Commission, specifically related to the work of the WPDCS and **AGREE** to consider how best to provide the SC with the information it needs, in order to satisfy the Commission's requests, throughout the course of the current WPDCS meeting.
- 2) **NOTE** the 12 Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) adopted at the 19th Session of the Commission (consisting of 11 Resolutions and 0 Recommendations), and in particular, Resolution 16/01

On an interim plan for rebuilding the Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna stock ; Resolution 16/04 On the implementation of a Pilot Project in view of Promoting the Regional Observer Scheme of IOTC , and Resolution 16/06 On measures applicable in case of non-fulfilment of reporting obligations in the IOTC, which have a direct impacts on the work of the WPDCS.

N.B. Resolutions 16/01, 16/04 and 16/06 are provided as Information Papers 01, 02 and 03 for the WPDCS12