



DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSION RELATED TO FADS

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT¹, 31 MARCH 2017

PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 1st ad hoc Working Group on FADs (WGFAD01) of the decisions and requests made by the Commission at its previous sessions, specifically relating to FAD fisheries.

BACKGROUND

This paper outlines the main points of all currently active Resolutions agreed by the Commission relating to FADs.

Data collection and reporting related to FADs

Detailed data collection requirements for FAD fisheries are described in Resolution 15/01². This includes the collection of the total number of FADs deployed per trip by purse seine vessels. There is also set level information required, including the type of event (fishing set or deployment of a new FAD), FAD type (e.g. log or other natural object, drifting FAD, anchored FAD, etc.). For pole and line vessels, the type of school on which the set takes place (FAD associated and/or free school) must be recorded. For handline and trolling operations, the type of school (Anchored or drifting FAD, marine mammal, free, other) fished must be recorded.

Detailed data reporting requirements relating to FADs are described in para. 6 of Resolution 15/02:³

6. "Given that the activities of purse seine supply vessels and the use of Fish Aggregating Devices (FAD) are an integral part of the fishing effort exerted by the purse seine fleet, the following data shall be provided by CPCs:
- a) *The number and characteristics of purse seine supply vessels: (i) operating under their flag, (ii) assisting purse seine vessels operating under their flag, or (iii) licensed to operate in their exclusive economic zones, and that have been present in the IOTC area of competence;*
 - b) *Number of days at sea by purse seine and purse seine supply vessels by 1° grid area and month to be reported by the flag state of the supply vessel;*
 - c) *The total number set by the purse seine and purse seine supply vessels per quarter, as well as:*
 - i. *The positions, dates at the time of setting, FAD identifier and FAD type (i.e. drifting log or debris, drifting raft or fad with a net, drifting raft or FAD without a net, anchored FADs and other FADs e.g. Payao, dead animal etc.);*
 - ii. *The FAD design characteristics of each FAD (consistent with Annex 1 to [Resolution 15/08](#) Procedures on a fishing aggregating devices (FADs) management Plan, including a limitation on the number of FADS, more detailed specifications of catch reporting from FAD sets, and the development of improved FAD designs to reduce the incidence of entanglement of non-target species).*

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² Resolution 15/01 *On the recording of catch and effort data by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence*

³ Resolution 15/02 *On mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs)*



These data would be for the exclusive use of IOTC Scientific Committee and its Working Parties, subject to the approval of the data owners and in accordance with [Resolution 12/02](#) Data confidentiality policy and procedures, and should be provided in a timely fashion”.⁴

Resolution 15/08 states further that the data elements prescribed in Annex I and II shall also be reported to the Commission⁵, consistent with the IOTC standards for the provision of catch and effort data. These include details on DFAD construction and specific information about each visit to a FAD, including the results if a set is made.

FAD Management plans

FAD management plans must be submitted to the Commission annually by CPCs with vessels fishing on FADs. These will be reviewed by the Compliance Committee. The Management Plans shall include initiatives or surveys to investigate, and to the extent possible minimise the capture of small Bigeye tuna and Yellowfin tuna and non-target species associated with fishing on FADs. Management Plans shall also include guidelines to prevent, to the extent possible, the loss or abandonment of FADs. To reduce the entanglement of sharks, marine turtles or any other species, the design and deployment of FADs shall be based on the principles set out in Annex III (Resolution 15/08):

1. *“The surface structure of the FAD should not be covered, or only covered with non-meshed material.*
2. *If a sub-surface component is used, it should not be made from netting but from non-meshed materials such as ropes or canvas sheets.*
3. *To reduce the amount of synthetic marine debris, the use of natural or biodegradable materials (such as hessian canvas, hemp ropes, etc.) for drifting FADs should be promoted”.*

Resolution 12/04 further requests CPCs to undertake research trials to develop improved FAD designs to reduce the incidence of entanglement of marine turtles, according to international standards, including the use of biodegradable materials and shall encourage purse seine vessels to adopt these⁶.

Reports on the progress of the management plans of FADs, including reviews of the initially submitted Management Plans will also be submitted annually.

Limits on numbers of FADs

All buoys other than instrumented buoys (a buoy with a clearly marked reference number allowing its identification and equipped with a satellite tracking system to monitor its position) will be phased out by 1 January 2017⁷.

⁴ Resolution 15/02 *On mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs)*

⁵ Resolution 15/08 *Procedures on a fish aggregating devices (FADs) management plan, including a limitation on the number of FADs, more detailed specifications of catch reporting from FAD sets, and the development of improved FAD designs to reduce the incidence of entanglement of non-target species*

⁶ Resolution 12/04 *On the conservation of marine turtles* (para. 9b)

⁷ Resolution 15/08 *Procedures on a fish aggregating devices (FADs) management plan, including a limitation on the number of FADs, more detailed specifications of catch reporting from FAD sets, and the development of improved FAD designs to reduce the incidence of entanglement of non-target species*



Resolution 16/01 states that the current limit to the number of FADs is “no more than 425 active instrumented buoys and 850 acquired annually instrumented buoys per purse seine vessel”⁸. This supersedes the initial limits set out in 2015⁹ and the Resolution further notes that these numbers may be updated in the light of assessments made available by the Working Group (WG) on FADs and the Scientific Committee.

Prohibition of lights on FADs

Resolution 16/07¹⁰ prohibits the use of lights on DFADs, as well as intentionally conducting fishing activities around or near a vessel or DFAD equipped with lights and encourages the removal of DFADs with lights that are encountered.

DISCUSSION

At its 20th Session in 2016:

*“The Commission **CONSIDERED** a proposal on limiting the maximum number of instrumented buoys active and followed by any purse seine vessel (IOTC–2016–S20–Prop M and IOTC-2016-S20-Prop L merged), but agreement could not be reached and the proposal was withdrawn. Some CPCs expressed concern that the proposal lacked scientific evidence, and felt that the proposal should first be discussed by the Working Party on FADs, and then by the Scientific Committee. However, the limitation of the number of FADs was included in the adopted Resolution 16/01” (para. 147 IOTC–2016–S20–R).*

⁸ Resolution 16/01 *On an Interim Plan for Rebuilding the Indian Ocean Yellowfin Tuna Stock (para. 1b).*

⁹ Resolution 15/08 *Procedures on a fish aggregating devices (FADs) management plan, including a limitation on the number of FADs, more detailed specifications of catch reporting from FAD sets, and the development of improved FAD designs to reduce the incidence of entanglement of non-target species*

¹⁰ Resolution 16/07 *On the use of artificial lights to attract fish*