

OUTCOMES OF THE 22nd SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT¹, 09 NOVEMBER 2018

PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 14th Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics (WPDCS14) of the decisions and requests made by the Commission at its 22nd Session, held from 21 - 25 May 2018, specifically relating to the work of the WPDCS.

BACKGROUND

At the 22nd Session, the Commission **CONSIDERED** and **ADOPTED** 10 proposals as Conservation and Management Measures (consisting of 10 Resolutions and 0 Recommendations), as detailed below:

Resolutions

- Resolution 18/01 *On an interim plan for rebuilding the Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna stock in the IOTC Area of Competence*
- Resolution 18/02 *On management measures for the conservation of blue shark caught in association with IOTC fisheries*
- Resolution 18/03 *On establishing a list of vessels presumed to have carried out illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the IOTC Area of Competence*
- Resolution 18/04 *On bioFAD experimental project*
- Resolution 18/05 *On management measures for the conservation for the conservation of billfish, striped marlin, black marlin, blue marlin and Indo-Pacific sailfish*
- Resolution 18/06 *On establishing a programme for transshipment by large-scale fishing vessels*
- Resolution 18/07 *On measures applicable in case of non-fulfilment of reporting obligations in the IOTC*
- Resolution 18/08 *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 design to reduce the incidence of entanglement of non-target species*
- Resolution 18/09 *On a scoping study of socio-economic indicators of IOTC fisheries*
- Resolution 18/10 *On vessel chartering in the IOTC Area of Competence.*

Pursuant to Article IX.4 of the IOTC Agreement, the above-mentioned Conservation and Management Measures shall become binding on Members, 120 days from the date of the notification communicated by the Secretariat.

DISCUSSION

The Commission also made a number of general comments on the recommendations made by the Scientific Committee in 2017, which have relevance for the WPDCS (IOTC–2018–S22–R):

1. Para. 25. *The Commission **NOTED** that 10 Contracting Parties and 2 Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties did not submit a National Report to the Scientific Committee in 2017, and issues with lack of data and poor quality data persist. The Commission reiterated its concerns about the lack and poor quality of data, and again strongly **RECOMMENDED** that CPCs take immediate steps to review, and where necessary, improve their performance with respect to the provision of data through improved compliance with Resolutions 15/01 On the recording of catch and effort data by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence, and 15/02 Mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties.*
2. Para. 26. *The Commission **NOTED** the stock status summaries for species of tuna and tuna-like species under the IOTC mandate, as well as other species impacted by IOTC fisheries (Appendix 5) and considered the recommendations made by the SC20 in its report that related specifically to the Commission. The Commission **ENDORSED** the SC 2017 list of recommendations as its own, noting the additional activities requested by the Commission at this meeting.*

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Matters related to ecosystems, bycatch and the status of sharks

3. Para. 33. The Commission **NOTED** that IOTC-2018-S21-PropL On the conservation of mobula and manta rays caught in association with fisheries in the IOTC Area of competence was deferred. The Commission also **NOTED** that there is no specific research that indicates an association of mobula and manta rays with surface fisheries. One CPC highlighted the need for data be collected in order for the SC to provide potential management advice on the conservation of this species.
4. Para. 34. The Commission **REQUESTED** the SC to review the status of manta and mobula rays and their interaction with IOTC fisheries and to report this to the Commission in 2020. This work should include an evaluation of data availability and data gaps. Where data is insufficient, the SC should propose options for strengthening data collection.
5. Para. 35. The Commission **NOTED** the high uncertainty of catch history estimates used in the stock assessment of blue shark and the estimation method to derive blue shark catch history accounting for reported zero catches for certain fleets and certain areas
6. Para. 38. The Commission **REQUESTED** the Scientific Committee to identify possible means to improve the submission of complete, accurate and timely catch records for sharks, as well as the collection of species-specific data on catch, biology, discards and trade.

On the status of neritic tunas

7. Para. 46. The Commission **NOTED** that catch of neritic species amounts to around 35% of the total catch of IOTC species, and nearly all the catch of neritic species is taken by coastal States. Furthermore, that around 80% of the catch data available to the Commission on neritic species is estimated i.e. only around 20% of the catch data is derived from catch sampling processes and reported to the IOTC Secretariat.
8. Para. 47. The Commission **NOTED** that neritic tuna are vital resources to the coastal States and **EXPRESSED** its concern that the current nature and extent of management measures applying to the neritic species is much less than that being applied to other IOTC species. The Commission **EXPRESSED** further concern about the overall lack of information on neritic tunas, strongly **ENCOURAGED** the coastal States to improve data collection and reporting, and develop measures to underpin sustainable management of IOTC neritic species. Some CPCs also expressed concern that the concerned coastal States had not tabled conservation and management measures for this stock at this annual meeting in response to the Commission's call to do so at the last annual meeting.

Report of the 2nd Session of the Technical Committee on Management Procedures (TCMP02)

9. Para. 73. The Commission **NOTED** the importance of data quality in developing management procedures and **RECOMMENDED** that the longline CPUE data for swordfish be made available and jointly standardized.

Overview of the CoC15 Report

10. Para. 80. The Commission **NOTED** the marginal improvement in the levels of compliance of some CPCs in 2017, especially with regards to mandatory statistics. The Commission **ENCOURAGED** all CPCs and the IOTC Secretariat of the need to respect the 15 days deadlines set in the IOTC Rules of Procedure (2014) to finalise the Compliance Reports.

The complete report of the 22nd Session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission is available for download from the IOTC website: <http://www.iotc.org/sites/default/files/documents/2018/06/IOTC-2018-S22-RE.pdf>

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the WPDCS:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC-2018-WPDCS14-04 which outlined the **provisional** outcomes of the 22nd 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 10 Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) adopted at the 22nd Session of the Commission (consisting of 10 Resolutions and 0 Recommendations), and in particular Resolution 18/01 *On an interim plan for rebuilding the Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna stock in the IOTC Area of Competence*; and Resolution 18/08 *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 design to reduce the incidence of entanglement of non-target species* which have a direct impacts on the work of the WPDCS.