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## PREVIOUS DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 7 NOVEMBER 2011

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### PURPOSE

To ensure the Scientific Committee (SC) is aware that in addition to the requests made to the SC by the Commission during its 15<sup>th</sup> Session, there are a number of decisions in the form of previous Resolutions that require a response from the Scientific Committee in 2011.

### BACKGROUND

The Commission has considered and adopted a range of Conservation and Management Measures (CMM) in the past that made clear directions to the Scientific Committee (SC). While the SC has responded to most, several remain outstanding or are ongoing. These are outlined below:

1) **Resolution 05/01 on conservation and management measures for bigeye tuna**

Para. 7. The Scientific Committee be tasked to provide advice, including advice on;

- the effects of different levels of catch on the SSB (in relation to MSY or other appropriate reference point);
- the impact of misreported and illegal catch of bigeye tuna on the stock assessment and required levels of catch reduction; and
- evaluation of the impact of different levels of catch reduction by main gear types.

2) **Resolution 05/05 concerning the conservation of sharks caught in association with fisheries managed by IOTC**

Para 2. In 2006 the Scientific Committee (in collaboration with the Working Party on Bycatch) provide preliminary advice on the stock status of key shark species and propose a research plan and timeline for a comprehensive assessment of these stocks.

3) **Resolution 09/01 on the performance review follow-up**

Para 4. That the Scientific Committee (SC), the Compliance Committee (CoC) and the Standing Committee on Administration and Finance (SCAF) be tasked with producing a work plan, including identifying priorities and a timetable, in accordance with Annex I.

4) **Resolution 09/02 on the implementation of a limitation of fishing capacity of contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties**

Para 4. Within the period of application of this Resolution, CPCs may change the number of their vessels, by gear type, provided that they can either demonstrate to the Commission, under the advice of the Scientific Committee that the change in the number of vessels, by gear type, does not lead to an increase of fishing effort on the fish stocks involved or where they are directly limiting catches using individual transferable quotas under a comprehensive national management plan which has been provided to the Commission.

5) **Resolution 09/06 on marine turtles**

Para 2. Within CPCs shall collect (including through logbooks and observer programs) and provide to the Scientific Committee all data on their vessels' interactions with marine turtles in fisheries targeting the species covered by the IOTC Agreement. CPC shall also furnish available information to the Scientific Committee on successful mitigation measures and other impacts on marine turtles in the IOTC Area, such as the deterioration of nesting sites and swallowing of marine debris.

Para 8. All CPCs are requested to:

- (a) Where appropriate undertake research trials of circle hooks, use of whole finfish for bait, alternative FAD designs, alternative handling techniques, gillnet design and fishing practices and other mitigation methods which may improve the mitigation of adverse effects on turtles;
- (b) Report the results of these trials to the Scientific Committee (SC), at least (60 days) in advance of the annual meetings of the SC.

Para 9. The Scientific Committee shall request the Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch to:

- (a) Develop recommendations on appropriate mitigation measures for gillnet, longline and purse-seine fisheries in the IOTC Area;
- (b) Develop guidelines for the appropriate handling and release of marine turtles that are impacted by fisheries under the purview of the IOTC;
- (c) Develop regional standards covering data collection, data exchange and training;

- (d) Produce a marine turtle identification guide for the Indian Ocean.

The recommendations of the Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch shall be provided to the Scientific Committee for consideration at its annual session in 2010. In developing its recommendations, the Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch shall examine and take into account the information provided by CPCs in accordance with paragraph 8 of this measure, other research available on the effectiveness of various mitigation methods in the IOTC area, mitigation measures and guidelines adopted by other relevant organizations and, in particular, those of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission. The Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch will specifically consider the effects of circle hooks on target species catch rates, marine turtle mortalities and other bycatch species.

Para 16. The Scientific Committee shall annually review the information reported by CPCs pursuant to this measure and, as necessary, provide recommendations to the Commission on ways to strengthen efforts to reduce marine turtle interactions with IOTC fisheries.

6) **Resolution 10/01 for the conservation and management of tropical tunas stocks in the IOTC area of competence**

Para 8. In order to have a more extensive knowledge of the exploitation rate of these species and also the assessment of the feasibility of near real time reporting, the IOTC CPCs agree to implement as soon as possible a pilot project within the framework of the port sampling programme under Resolution 09/04, with a view to enhancing the gathering of catch data related to the activities of the artisanal fishery sector and to establishing a catch reporting system.

The pilot project shall be implemented for a 12 months period by the IOTC Secretariat in collaboration with the CPCs concerned.

The pilot project will contribute relevant information to the work of the Scientific Committee in future revision of stock estimates and in the assessment of the reporting requirements in respect of catch quota reporting, particularly in the artisanal fisheries.

The Scientific Committee will examine the results of the pilot project at its 2011 meeting and provide management advice to the Commission.

Para 9. The Scientific Committee will provide at its 2010 plenary Session any appropriate management options based on the Kobe II matrix (Annex 2) for the consideration of the Commission.

Para 10. The Scientific Committee will provide at its 2011 Plenary session:

- a) an evaluation of the closure area, specifying in its advice if a modification is necessary, its basic scientific rationale with an assessment of the impact of such a closure on the tropical tuna stocks, notably yellowfin and bigeye;
- b) an evaluation of the closure time periods, specifying in its advice if a modification is necessary, its basic scientific rationale with an assessment of the impact of such a closure on the tropical tuna stocks, notably yellowfin and bigeye;
- c) an evaluation of the impact on yellowfin and bigeye tuna stocks by catching juveniles and spawners taken by all fisheries. The Scientific Committee shall also recommend measures to mitigate the impacts on juvenile and spawners;
- d) any other advice on possible different management measures based on the Kobe II matrix, on the main targeted species under the IOTC competence.

7) **Resolution 10/02 mandatory statistical requirements for IOTC members and cooperating non-contracting parties (CPC's)**

Para 4. Size data:

Size data shall be provided for all gears and for all species covered by the IOTC mandate according to the guidelines set out by the IOTC Scientific Committee. Size sampling shall be run under strict and well described random sampling schemes which are necessary to provide unbiased figures of the sizes taken. Sampling coverage shall be set to at least one fish measured by ton caught, by species and type of fishery, with samples being representative of all the periods and areas fished. Alternatively, size data for longline fleets may be provided as part of the Regional Observer Scheme where such fleets have at least 5% observer coverage of all fishing operations. Length data by species, including the total number of fish measured, shall be submitted by a 5° grid area by month, by gear and fishing mode (e.g. free swimming schools or schools in association with floating objects for the purse seiners). Documents covering sampling and raising procedures shall also be provided, by species and type of fishery.

Para 6. Timeliness of data submission to the IOTC Secretariat:

- (a) Longline fleets operating in the high seas shall provide provisional data for the previous year no later than 30 June. Final data shall be submitted no later than 30 December.
- (b) All other fleets (including supply vessels) shall submit their final data for the previous year no later than 30 June.
- (c) In case where the final statistics cannot be submitted by that date, at least preliminary statistics should be provided. Beyond a delay of two years, all revisions of historical data should be formally reported and duly justified. These reports should be made on forms provided by the Secretariat and reviewed by the Scientific Committee. The Scientific Committee will advise the Secretariat if revisions are then accepted for scientific use.

8) **Resolution 10/06 on reducing the incidental bycatch of seabirds in longline fisheries**

Para 7. 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 including details of species where available to enable the Scientific Committee to annually estimate seabird mortality in all fisheries within the IOTC area of competence.

Para 8. The Scientific Committee, based notably on the work of the WPEB and information from CPCs, will analyse the impact of this Resolution on seabird bycatch no later than for the 2011 meeting of the Commission. It shall advise the Commission on any modifications that are required, based on experience to date of the operation of the Resolution and/or further international studies or research on the issue, in order to make the Resolution more effective.

9) **Resolution 10/12 on the conservation of thresher sharks (family Alopiidae) caught in association with fisheries in the IOTC area of competence**

Para 7. The Contracting Parties, Co-operating non-Contracting Parties, especially those directing fishing activities for sharks, shall submit data for sharks, as required by IOTC data reporting procedures (including estimates of dead discard and size frequencies), in advance of the 2011 Scientific Committee meeting.

10) **Resolution 10/13 on the implementation of a ban on discards of skipjack tuna, yellow fin tuna, bigeye tuna and non targeted species caught by purse seiners**

Para 6. The Scientific Committee is encouraged to provide advice at its 2010 session, on the management of discards in both purse seine and longline fisheries.

11) **Resolution 11/04 on a regional observer scheme**

Para 9. 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.

Para 15. The elements of the Observer Scheme, notably those regarding its coverage, are subject to review and revision, as appropriate, for application in 2012 and subsequent years. Basing on the experience of other Tuna RFMOs, the Scientific Committee will elaborate an observer working manual, a template to be used for reporting (including minimum data fields) and a training program.

**DISCUSSION**

The Scientific Committee should address each of the requirements detailed above by providing advice, or alternative commentary for the Commission's consideration at its 16<sup>th</sup> Session to be held in March 2012, in Fremantle, Australia.

**RECOMMENDATION/S**

That the Scientific Committee **NOTE** the requests made by the Commission in each of the Resolutions detailed in this paper, and to develop advice to the Commission in response to each request.