

## IOTC-OFCF Project activities in 2012: Progress Report

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### INTRODUCTION

The Memorandum of Understanding between the IOTC and the Overseas Fishery Cooperation Foundation of Japan (OFCF) was initiated in April 2002, with providing technical guidance for Projects to assist developing countries in the Indian Ocean region to improve the data collection and quality of fisheries statistics. Phases I (April 2002 - March 2007) and II (June 2007 - March 2010) of the Project ran for eight consecutive years. At the end of Phase II of the Project, the IOTC and the OFCF considered the implementation of a new Phase with the objective of addressing the concerns of the Commission regarding the quality of the data available for some of the important artisanal fisheries in the Region. Following consideration of the proposal, the OFCF agreed to initiate Phase III of the Project and allocate funds at a similar level to those of Phase II of the Project. The Terms of Reference of Phase III focus on support of IOTC coastal countries in the strengthening of activities related to the Regional Observer Scheme, specially focusing on artisanal fisheries in IOTC Resolution 11/04.

*4. The number of the artisanal fishing vessels landings shall also be monitored at the landing place by field samplers. The indicative level of the coverage of the artisanal fishing vessels should progressively increase towards 5% of the total levels of vessel activity (i.e. total number of vessel trips or total number of vessels active).*

In addition to the activities undertaken by the IOTC-OFCF Project, the IOTC Secretariat provided additional assistance to countries in the region, as requested by the Commission in paragraph 7 of IOTC Resolution 11/04:

*7. The sampling scheme referred in paragraph 4 will be covered by the Commission's accumulated funds and voluntary contribution on a provisional basis. The Commission will consider an alternative for the financing of this scheme*

A new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the IOTC and the OFCF was signed in June 2010, along the lines of those previously existing, including the provision of funds and detachment of an OFCF Expert to the IOTC Secretariat to coordinate the activities of the Project, along with the IOTC Data Coordinator and other staff from the Secretariat, as required. The duration of Phase III of the Project is three years, until March 2013, with funds committed for each year and extension of the Project agreed through exchange of letters between the IOTC and the OFCF.

The Project keeps the following three main principles since 2002:

- The activities undertaken under the Project follow the recommendations of the Commission and its relevant subsidiary bodies: the Working Parties and the Scientific Committee.
- There will be no direct financial implications for IOTC Member countries.
- The activities of the Project should be directed towards reinforcing the statistical systems of developing countries from the region.

The current report covers activities on the second and third years (January 2012 - March 2013)<sup>1</sup>. A summary of all the activities undertaken by the Project since its inception in 2002 is also presented also in Table 1 and in Annex 1. Activities during Phase III indicted in blue.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the Project will terminate in March 2013. This year is the final year of Phase III of the Project. Any extension of existing activities or possibility of new activities will be discussed at the next IOTC-OFCE Joint Committee Meeting, to be held in December 2012.

### **Progress during January 2012 to Up o Now**

**Iran:** In response to a recommendation from the IOTC Scientific Committee, concerning the status of fisheries statistics in Iran, the Fisheries Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran (SHILAT) requested assistance from the IOTC-OFCE Project to strengthen data collection and management in Iran. Fisheries data in Iran are collected and computerized at the landing place, with electronic files transferred to the Provincial Offices on a regular basis. Data from the Provincial Offices are then transferred to the Head of the Department of Statistics in Tehran, at the end of each quarter. Port sampling and management in Iran are among the best in the region. However, the existing database needs to be upgraded to accommodate new information collected from the fisheries, in particular operational data collected through a new logbook system, recently implemented in Iran, and size frequency data, currently stored in a separate database. In addition the upgrade work will focus on additional functionality, including the generation of routines to extract the data in the format required by national and international organizations, such as the IOTC. Following the discussions in Iran, SHILAT requested assistance and technical advice from the IOTC-OFCE Project in the expanding of the database, to be carried out by IT officers working at SHILAT and an external IT consultant hired to assist SHILAT in this work last year. To this purpose, the IOTC-OFCE Project and SHILAT signed a technical agreement in November 2011, activities carrying out until March 2012. The Project assisted SHILAT financially to facilitate purchasing of additional hardware and software, as required for this work. As a result of this support, the database was upgraded to MS-SQL 2008, modules of catch and effort data from fisheries logbook from gillnet and purse fisheries, and length frequency were developed, and internet connectivity or procedures from the landing places to the provinces and SHILAT have also been improved. Due to provision of callipers, collection of size data is also improved. Proposed tasks under the Technical Agreement are still ongoing by the SHILAT.

**Indonesia:** Indonesia has one of the largest artisanal fisheries in the world with catches over 200,000 t (Indian and Pacific oceans), and catches of the medium-scale vessel component estimated to be over 250,000 tons. In the Indian Ocean, excluding the longline component, catches of tuna were over 170,000t in 2009. However, these figures are thought to be conservative estimates at best.. Several reports have pointed to flaws in the sampling system, and in particular the underestimation of catches (e.g., WWF's "Off the Hook Report"), as well as and catches not fully reported by gear and species, especially in the case of small tunas. In order to address these issues, the Directorate General of Capture Fisheries of Indonesia (DGCF) and the IOTC-OFCE Project agreed to conduct a Catch Estimation Workshop for the Fisheries of Indonesia, with focus on small and medium-scale fisheries. The workshop was held in March 13-15, 2012 with participation from DGCF, RCCF (Research Center For Capture Fisheries), RIMF (Research Institution for Marine Fisheries), the IOTC and OFCE. CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research organization of Australia), NRIFSF (National Research Institute of Far Seas Fisheries in Japan) and WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) have also participated in the meeting. The objective of the Workshop was to review the current data collection and estimation procedures in Indonesia and revision of current and past catch figures, as required.

The Workshop identified several issues concerning the status of data collection, processing, and dissemination for the fisheries catching IOTC species in Indonesia including, inappropriate sampling design, inconsistency in the data collection procedures, inadequate training and supervision of

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<sup>1</sup> Note that this refers to the Japanese fiscal year, which runs from April to March of the Julian calendar.

enumerators, issues with the data management and validation due to the lack of a centralized database system, and conflicting estimates of catches by gear and species.

The Workshop noted that the above issues compromise the quality of estimates of catch, effort, and size data for Indonesian fisheries, and make it impossible for Indonesia to comply with international data requirements - in particular those agreed by the IOTC. The Workshop identified a range of actions that could be implemented to address the issues identified, including a proposed time frame and sequence of events, as agreed by the Workshop, and recommended that DGCF considers implementing such a scheme.

The reports of the workshop have been published in October, in both English and Indonesian. Digital versions of the report are also available at IOTC or DGCF.

**Comoros:** During January-March 2011, the project implemented a frame survey in three Comorian Islands (Anjouan, Grande Comore, and Moheli) to identify landing sites of fishing vessels and record the number of fishing units operating in the country. The activities were implemented through support to the 'Direction Generale des Ressources Halieutiques (DGRH)' in parallel with a sampling program initiated with the assistance of accumulated funds from the Commission, channelled through the IOTC Secretariat. The sampling activity was completed in January 2012.

The census recorded a total of 5,323 Comorian artisanal fishing vessels, in contrast with the 3,946 units recorded in the latest census conducted in 1994. Higher numbers of motorized vessels were registered in the 2011 census, and indicate an increase in the mechanization of the Comoros fleet since 1994.

The Project conducted a training course on catch estimation in May 2012, inviting two officers from Comoros to Seychelles, using the data collected through the census and sampling activities.

Since February 2012, EU funding has been used to continue the sampling program, with a second frame survey carried out between July to September 2012, and the collected data is now being processed.

Final results of the catch estimation have not been released, as the data have are still in the process on being finalised.

**Sri Lanka:** Following a request for assistance to improve the data collection and processing systems, made by the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development of Sri Lanka (MFARD), the IOTC-OFCF Project sent a mission to Sri Lanka in September 2010. During the mission the IOTC-OFCF Project focused on assessing the status of data collection and management in Sri Lanka and proposed a series of actions to improve the current status, including: 1) strengthening of the existing sampling scheme for coastal and offshore fisheries; 2) development of a Centralized database system; and 3) assistance in the implementation of a logbook system for the fisheries in Sri Lanka. Following consideration of the three proposals the IOTC-OFCF Project and the MFARD agreed that the Development of a Centralized Database Management System (CDMS) that should contain in the following components: (1) Vessel, catch, effort, and size frequency data as collected by the National Aquatic Resources Research and Development Agency of Sri Lanka (NARA) and stored in Access database format (PELAGOS); (2) Vessel record data, including details of individual fishing vessels, fishers, licensing, and related information, as recorded by the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DFAR), in the database it maintains; (3) Landing Permits, granted to foreign vessels that unload fish in ports in Sri Lanka, as stored by the DFAR; (4) Logbook data, as collected by DFAR, (5) catches unloaded by foreign fishing vessels to processing plants in Sri Lankan harbours, as collected by the Ceylon Fisheries Harbour Cooperation (CFHC) and the Ceylon Fisheries Cooperation (CFC) , (6) catch and effort information from the coastal fisheries, which the Statistical Unit of the MFARD is planning to collect in the near future; and (7) export and import information, as collected by the Sri Lankan Customs.

The Project exchanged a Memorandum of Understanding with MFARD on September 30, 2011, including the provision of funding for the MFARD to hire a private IT Company to work in the development of CDMS for a period of six months. The new system (except components of NARA database Pelagos and logbook) were fully in place by March 2012.

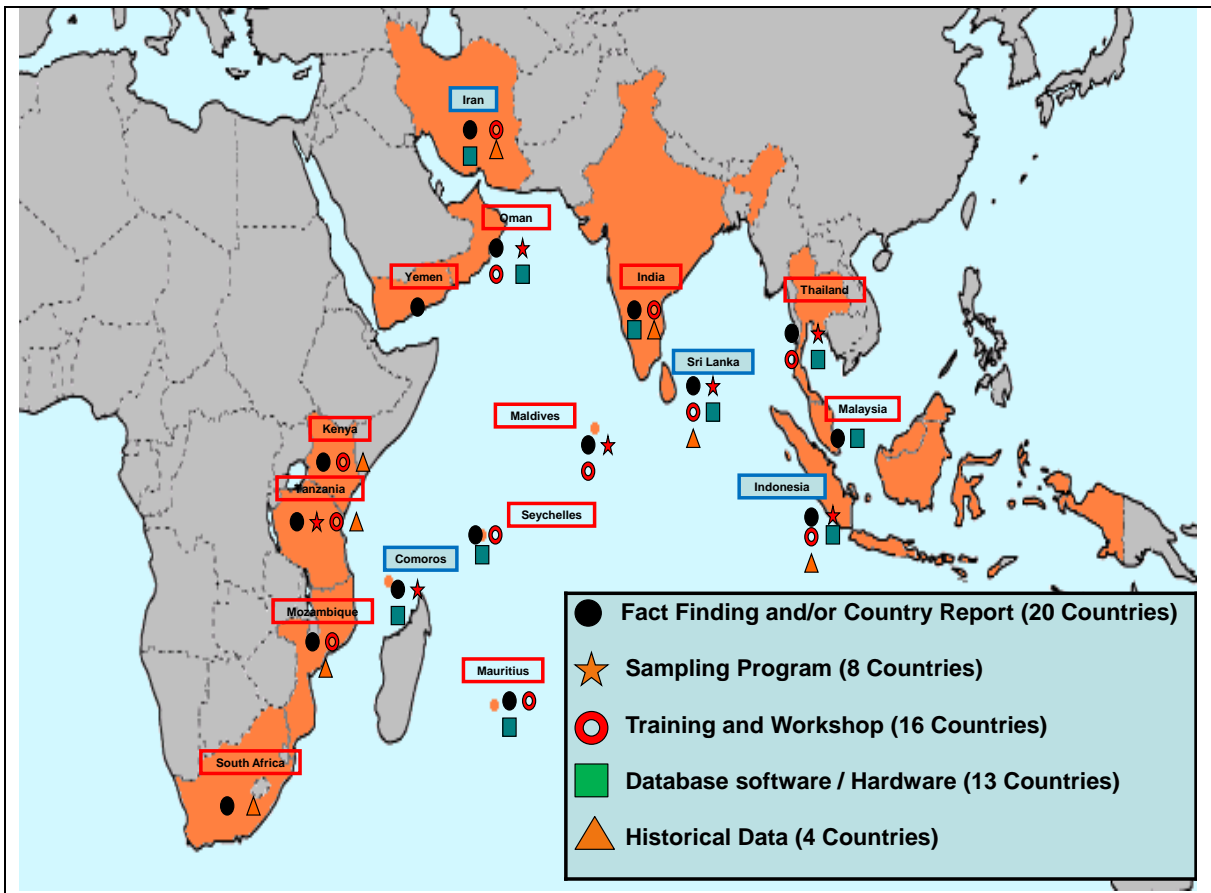
After finishing the assistance of CDMS in March, MFARD requested a proposal to strengthen the existing sampling scheme for coastal and offshore fisheries by NARA (National Aquatic ~~and~~ Resources Research and Development Agency) samplers and Fisheries Inspectors under Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DFAR). MFARD and the IOTC-OFCF reached agreement, and the Project exchanged a Memorandum of Understanding with MFARD on October 22, 2012, with activities planned until February 2013 before termination of the IOTC-OFCF Project in March. MFRAD organized training course for samplers from NARA and DFAR has been organized for 14-16 November, after which full sampling activities will commence.

**Other matters of interest:** Between October 16 and November 22, 2012, participants from Comoros, India, Indonesia, Iran, Madagascar, and Seychelles from IOTC area and Senegal from ICCAT area, one per country, attended the “Leadership Training Course on Fishery Resources Management (LTCFRM)”, sponsored and organised by the OFCF.

### **Planned Future Plan after April 2013**

The IOTC-OFCF Joint Committee Meeting will be held in Seychelles on December 17, 2012. During the meeting the Project will focus on reviewing all activities undertaken during the Phase III, and discuss possible activities for cooperation for the following year from April 2013.

Annex 1.



Activities of the IOTC-OFCF Project from Phase I to III.

Blue rectangles are used for activities implemented during Phase III of the Project, currently ongoing.

**Table 1.** Summary of the activities implemented during Phases I, II and III of the IOTC-OFCF Project

Country-Fleet	Activities implemented			Fact-finding	Country report	Sampling activities	Training/ Workshop	Hardware/ Software/ Database	Historical data	Recommendations addressed
	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III							
India	Yes			Yes	Yes		Yes			No
Indonesia-FLL	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Indonesia-ART	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes			Yes
Iran	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		No
Kenya	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Malaysia	Yes			Yes			Yes	Yes		No
Maldives	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes
Mauritius	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes
Mozambique	Yes			Yes	Yes		Yes			No
Oman	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			No
Seychelles	Yes			Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes
South Africa	Yes				Yes					Yes
Sri Lanka-G/L	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Sri Lanka-ART	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Tanzania	Yes			Yes.	Yes			Yes		No
Thailand-FLL	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Thailand-PSS	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Thailand-PS		Yes		Yes				Yes		Yes
Yemen		Yes		Yes,					Yes	No
Comoros		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes

Note: FLL: Fresh tuna longline; ART: Artisanal fishing vessel; G/L: Gillnet with longline; PSS: Small purse seine;

PS: Industrial purse seine.

Red font is used for activities implemented during Phase III of the Project, currently ongoing.