

## PREVIOUS DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 13 NOVEMBER 2013

### PURPOSE

To ensure the Scientific Committee (SC) is aware that in addition to the requests made to the SC by the Commission during its 17<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 2013.

### BACKGROUND

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

#### **Resolution 13/04 On the conservation of cetaceans**

(para. 6) The Commission requests that the IOTC Scientific Committee develop best practice guidelines for the safe release and handling of encircled cetaceans, taking into account those developed in other Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, including the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, and that these guidelines be submitted to the 2014 Commission meeting for endorsement.

#### **Resolution 13/05 On the conservation of whale sharks (*Rhincodon typus*)**

(para. 6) The Commission requests that the IOTC Scientific Committee develop best practice guidelines for the safe release and handling of encircled whale sharks, taking into account those developed in other regional fisheries management organisations including the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, and that these guidelines be submitted to the 2014 Commission meeting for endorsement.

#### **Resolution 12/04 On the conservation of marine turtles**

(para. 11) The IOTC Scientific Committee shall request the IOTC Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch to:

- Develop recommendations on appropriate mitigation measures for gillnet, longline and purse seine fisheries in the IOTC area;
- Develop regional standards covering data collection, data exchange and training;
- Develop improved FAD designs to reduce the incidence of entanglement of marine turtles, including the use of biodegradable materials.

The recommendations of the IOTC Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch shall be provided to the IOTC Scientific Committee for consideration at its annual session in 2012. In developing its recommendations, the IOTC Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch shall examine and take into account the information provided by CPCs in accordance with paragraph 10 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 IOTC 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. 17) The IOTC 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.

#### **Resolution 12/09 On the conservation of thresher sharks (Family Alopiidae) caught in association with fisheries in the IOTC area of competence**

(para. 7) Scientific observers shall be allowed to collect biological samples (vertebrae, tissues, reproductive tracts, stomachs, skin samples, spiral valves, jaws, whole and skeletonised specimens for taxonomic works and museum collections) from thresher sharks that are dead at haulback, provided that the samples are part of the research project approved by the IOTC Scientific Committee (or IOTC Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch (WPEB)). In order to obtain the approval, a detailed document outlining the purpose of the work, number and type of samples intended to be collected and the spatio-temporal distribution of the

sampling work must be included in the proposal. Annual progress of the work and a final report on completion of the project shall be presented to the IOTC WPEB and the IOTC Scientific Committee.

**Resolution 12/13 For the conservation and management of tropical tunas stocks in the IOTC area of competence**

(para. 10) The IOTC Scientific Committee will provide at its 2011, 2012 and 2013 Plenary sessions:

- 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 tuna and bigeye tuna;
- 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 tuna and bigeye tuna;
- c) an evaluation of the impact on yellowfin tuna and bigeye tuna stocks by catching juveniles and spawners taken by all fisheries. The IOTC 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.

**Resolution 11/04 On a regional observer scheme**

(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 IOTC Scientific Committee will elaborate an observer working manual, a template to be used for reporting (including minimum data fields) and a training program.

**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.

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

(para. 2) In 2006 the IOTC Scientific Committee (in collaboration with the IOTC Working Party on Ecosystems and 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.

(para. 5) The ratio of fin-to-body weight of sharks described in paragraph 4 shall be reviewed by the IOTC Scientific Committee and reported back to the Commission in 2006 for revision, if necessary.

**Resolution 05/01 On Conservation and Management Measures for bigeye tuna**

(para. 7) The IOTC 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.

## **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 18<sup>th</sup> Session to be held in May 2014, in Sri Lanka.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

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