

REVIEW OF CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES RELATING TO BILLFISH

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 29 AUGUST 2013
Dr. David Wilson

PURPOSE

To encourage participants at the Working Party on Billfish (WPB11) to review the existing Conservation and Management Measures (CMM) relating to Billfish, noting the CMMs contained in document IOTC–2013–WPB11–04; and as necessary to 1) provide recommendations to the Scientific Committee on whether modifications may be required; and 2) recommend whether other CMMs may be required.

BACKGROUND

In addition to the CMMs outlined in document IOTC–2013–WPB11–04, billfish in the Indian Ocean are currently subject to two other CMMs adopted by the Commission:

Resolution 10/02 mandatory statistical requirements for IOTC Members and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (CPC's). This resolution sets out mandatory minimum requirements for the annual submission of fisheries statistics to the IOTC Secretariat. This resolution applies to all tuna and tuna-like species, including all billfish species ([Appendix A](#)).

Resolution 10/08 concerning a record of active vessels fishing for tunas and swordfish in the IOTC area. This resolution makes provision for a mandatory annual submission by all CPCs to the IOTC Secretariat of a list of their respective vessels fishing for tunas and swordfish in the IOTC area that were active during the previous year. The resolution applies to vessel larger than 24 meters in length overall or vessel under 24 meters fishing outside the EEZ of their flag State ([Appendix B](#)).

DISCUSSION

As part of best practice, the WPB is obliged to review existing CMMs and consider whether their science-based components need to be updated. If this is the case, then the WPB should provide clear, science-based recommendations for the Scientific Committee's consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

That the WPB NOTE paper IOTC–2013–WPB11–05 which aimed to encourage the WPB to review the existing Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) relating to billfish, and as necessary to 1) provide recommendations to the Scientific Committee on whether modifications may be required; and 2) recommend whether other CMMs may be required.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: [Resolution 10/02 mandatory statistical requirements for IOTC Members and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties \(CPC's\)](#)

Appendix B: [Resolution 10/08 concerning a record of active vessels fishing for tunas and swordfish in the IOTC area](#)

APPENDIX A

RESOLUTION 10/02 MANDATORY STATISTICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR IOTC MEMBERS AND COOPERATING NON- CONTRACTING PARTIES (CPC'S)

The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)

GIVEN that the Agreement for the implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (UNFSA) encourages coastal States and fishing States on the high seas to collect and share, in a timely manner, complete and accurate data concerning fishing activities on, inter alia, vessel position, catch of target and non-target species and fishing effort;

NOTING that the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing provides that States should compile fishery-related and other supporting scientific data relating to fish stocks covered by subregional or regional fisheries management organisations and provide them in a timely manner to the organization;

RECALLING the commitment made by Members under Article V of the IOTC Agreement to keep under review the conditions and trends of the stocks and to gather, analyse and disseminate scientific information, catch and effort statistics and other data relevant to the conservation and management of the stocks and to fisheries based on the stocks covered by the Agreement;

COGNISANT that the above commitment can only be achieved when Members meet the requirements of Article XI of the IOTC Agreement i.e. to provide statistical and other data and information to minimum specifications and in a timely manner;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the IOTC Scientific Committee has repeatedly stressed the importance of the timeliness of data submissions;

GIVEN that the activities of supply vessels and the use of Fish Aggregating Devices (FAD) are an integral part of the fishing effort exerted by the purse seine fleet;

CONSIDERING the provisions set forth in Resolution 08/01 [superseded by [Resolution 10/02](#)] on *mandatory statistical requirements for IOTC Members and Cooperating Non-Contracting parties (CPCs)*, adopted by the Commission in 2008;

CONSIDERING the deliberations of the 12th Session of the IOTC Scientific Committee held in Victoria, Seychelles from 30 November to 4 December 2009;

ADOPTS, in accordance with the provisions of Article IX, paragraph 1 of the IOTC Agreement, the following:

1. CPC's shall provide the following information to the IOTC Secretariat according to the timelines specified in paragraph 6:
2. **Nominal catch data:**
Estimates of the total annual catch by species and gear for all species under the IOTC mandate.
3. **Catch and effort data:**
 - a) **For surface fisheries:** catch weight by species and fishing effort shall be provided by 1° grid area and month strata. Purse seine fishery data shall be stratified by fishing mode (e.g. free swimming schools or schools in association with floating objects). The data shall be extrapolated to the total national monthly catches for each gear. Documents describing the extrapolation procedures (including raising factors corresponding to the logbook coverage) shall also be submitted routinely.
 - b) **Longline fisheries:** catch by species, in numbers or weight, and effort as the number of hooks deployed shall be provided by 5° grid area and month strata. Documents describing the extrapolation procedures

(including raising factors corresponding to the logbook coverage) shall also be submitted routinely. For the work of relevant working parties under the IOTC Scientific Committee, longline data should be of a resolution of 1° grid area and month or finer. These data would be for the exclusive use of IOTC scientists, subject to the approval of the data owners and IOTC Resolution 98/02 [superseded by [Resolution 12/02](#)] *Data confidentiality policy and procedures*, and should be provided for scientific use in a timely fashion.

- c) **For coastal fisheries:** available catch by species, fishing gear and fishing effort shall be submitted frequently and may be provided using an alternative geographical area if it better represents the fishery concerned.

These provisions, applicable to tuna and tuna-like species, shall also be applicable to the most commonly caught shark species and, where possible, to the less common shark species. CPC's are also encouraged to record and provide data on species other than sharks and tunas taken as bycatch.

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.

5. Given that the activities of 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:

- a) The number and characteristics of 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;
- b) Number of days at sea by supply vessels by 1° grid area and month to be reported by the flag state of the supply vessel;
- c) The total number and type of FADs set by the supply vessel and purse seine fleet per quarter. Types of FADs are defined as 1) drifting log or debris, 2) drifting raft or fad with a net, 3) drifting raft or fad without a net, 4) other (e.g. Payao, dead animal etc). All types monitored by a tracking system.

These data would be for the exclusive use of IOTC scientists, subject to the approval of the data owners and Resolution 98/02 [superseded by [Resolution 12/02](#)] *Data confidentiality policy and procedures*, and should be provided in a timely fashion.

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 IOTC Secretariat and reviewed by the IOTC Scientific Committee. The IOTC Scientific Committee will advise the IOTC Secretariat if revisions are then accepted for scientific use.

7. This Resolution supersedes Resolution 08/01 on *Mandatory statistical requirements for IOTC Members and Cooperating Non-Contracting parties (CPCs)*.

APPENDIX B**RESOLUTION 10/08****CONCERNING A RECORD OF ACTIVE VESSELS FISHING FOR TUNAS AND SWORDFISH IN THE IOTC AREA****The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC),**

CONSCIOUS of the duties of every State to exercise effectively its jurisdiction and control over vessels flying its flag;

RECALLING the responsibilities incumbent on States whose vessels fish for highly migratory fish stocks on the high seas;

NOTING that the information about the size of active fleets for implementing the limitation of fishing capacity as set forth in Resolution 09/02 *[superseded by [Resolution 12/11](#)]* *On the implementation of a limitation of fishing capacity of Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties*;

MINDFUL of the recommendation 17 of the Performance Review Panel, as listed in [Resolution 09/01](#) *On the performance review follow-up*, that the obligation incumbent to a flag State to report data for its vessels be included in a separate Resolution from the obligation incumbent on Members to report data on the vessels of third countries they licence to fish in their exclusive economic zones (EEZs);

ADOPTS, in accordance with the provisions of Article IX, paragraph 1 of the IOTC Agreement, the following:

1. All IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs) with vessels fishing for tunas and swordfish in the IOTC area of competence (hereinafter referred to as “the Area”), shall submit to the IOTC Executive Secretary by 15 February every year a list of their respective vessels that were active in the Area during the previous year and that are:
 - a) larger than 24 metres in length overall; or
 - b) in case of vessels less than 24m, those operating in waters outside the economic exclusive zone of the flag state.
2. These lists shall contain the following information for each vessel:
 - The IOTC number;
 - Name and registration number;
 - IMO number, if available;
 - Previous flag (if any);
 - International radio call sign (if any);
 - Vessel type, length, and gross tonnage (GT);
 - Name and address of owner, and/or charterer, and/or operator;
 - Main target species,
 - Period of authorisation
3. The IOTC Executive Secretary shall maintain the IOTC Record of Active Vessels, and take any measure to ensure publicity of the Record and through electronic means, including placing it on the IOTC website, in a manner consistent with confidentiality requirements noted by CPCs.
4. The IOTC Executive Secretary shall compile, for consideration by the IOTC Compliance Committee, a report on the information submitted by CPCs.

5. The objective of the report shall be to provide the IOTC Compliance Committee with an independent evaluation of the level of compliance to this Resolution, and other pertinent IOTC Resolution(s), by the concerned CPCs.
6. The IOTC Compliance Committee shall after its evaluation of the IOTC Executive Secretary's report, make appropriate recommendations to the Commission on actions that should be pursued against the non-complying CPCs. These should include, *inter alia*, taking actions under [Resolution 10/10](#).
7. IOTC Resolution 07/04 *Concerning registration and exchange of information on vessels fishing for tunas and swordfish in the IOTC Area* is superseded by this Resolution.