



ON THE USE OF LIGHTS TO ATTRACT FISH TO DFADS AND VESSELS SUPPORTING PURSE-SEINING OPERATIONS

SUBMITTED BY: MAURITIUS, 27 MARCH 2015

Explanatory Memorandum

Lights, both above the sea surface and submerged, are frequently used to attract fish. Their effectiveness for holding both tuna and associated species has been demonstrated by the light-vessels anchored on the Coco-de-Mer seamount and during the Regional Tuna Tagging Programme. Advances in technology such as low-consumption LED lights, more effective solar panels and batteries now permit the use of light attraction on drifting FADs.

It is feared that the use of lights on DFADs would cancel the reduction of fishing effort sought through the proposed limitation on the number of DFADs permitted [PropL], as well as significantly increasing the catch of non-target and dependent species (bycatch).

RESOLUTION 15/XX

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Keywords: DFADs; Purse seine; Supply vessel; Lights; Non-target, associated or dependent species (NTADs).

The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC),

AWARE that the Commission is committed to adopt Conservation and Management Measures to reduce juvenile bigeye tuna and yellowfin tuna mortalities from fishing effort on Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs);

RECALLING that the objective of the IOTC Agreement is to ensure, through appropriate management, the conservation and optimum utilisation of stocks covered by the mentioned Agreement and encouraging sustainable development of fisheries based on such stocks and minimising the level of by catch;

RECOGNISING that all gears deployed to target resources under the competence of IOTC should be managed to ensure the sustainability of fishing operations;

MINDFUL of the call upon States, either individually, collectively or through regional fisheries management organisations and arrangements in the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 67/79 on Sustainable fisheries to collect the necessary data in order to evaluate and closely monitor the use of large-scale fish aggregating devices and others, as appropriate, and their effects on tuna resources and tuna behaviour and associated and dependent species, to improve management procedures to monitor the number, type and use of such devices and to mitigate possible negative effects on the ecosystem, including on juveniles and the incidental bycatch of non-target species, particularly sharks and marine turtles;

CONCERNED about the morally unacceptable waste and the impact of unsustainable fishing practices upon the oceanic environment, represented by the discarding of tunas and non-target species in the purse seine fishery for tunas in the Indian Ocean;

RECALLING that The Rome Consensus on World Fisheries adopted by the FAO Ministerial Conference on Fisheries, Rome, 14–15 March 1995, provides that “States should...reduce bycatches, fish discards...”;

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

1. Fishing Vessels flying the flag of an IOTC Contracting Parties or Cooperating Non-Contracting Party (collectively CPCs) are prohibited from installing or operating surface or submerged lights for the purpose of aggregating tuna and tuna-like species or non-target, associated or dependent species (NTADs) on:
 - a) drifting fish aggregating devices (DFADs); or
 - b) drifting or anchored supply or support vessels.
2. CPCs shall prohibit their flagged vessels from intentionally setting a purse seine net around a DFAD, supply or support vessel having operated surface or submerged lights for the purpose of aggregated tuna and tuna-like species or NTADs in the IOTC area of competence.