

RESOLUTION 15/05

ON CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR STRIPED MARLIN, BLACK MARLIN AND BLUE MARLIN

Keywords: striped marlin; black marlin; blue marlin; catch trends; bycatch; discards.

The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC),

RECOGNISING [Resolution 12/01](#) *On the implementation of the precautionary approach* calls on IOTC Contracting Parties (Members) and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (collectively CPCs) to apply the precautionary approach in accordance with Article V of the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement;

CONCERNED by the continued failure of IOTC CPCs to submit complete, accurate and timely catch records in accordance with existing IOTC Resolutions;

CONSIDERING scientific advice provided by the IOTC Scientific Committee as the cornerstone for establishing an effective management framework for stocks and fisheries under the purview of the IOTC;

FURTHER CONSIDERING the recommendations made in the 2014 sessions of Working Party on Billfish and the Scientific Committee on the status of some billfish stocks indicating that fishing pressure or catches should decrease;

RECALLING the recommendations adopted in accordance with the KOBE II workshop on bycatch in 2010 that regional fisheries management organisations should consider adopting binding measures or strengthen existing mitigation measures, including the development of mandatory reporting requirements;

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

1. Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs) are encouraged to make any possible effort to reduce in 2016 the level of catches of their vessels for the following species: striped marlin (*Tetrapturus audax*), black marlin (*Makaira indica*), and blue marlin (*Makaira nigricans*). The baseline of the reduction of catches shall be the average catches for the period between 2009 and 2014. For the calculation of average catches, only the years for which data is available will be taken into consideration.
2. CPCs are encouraged to request their operators/fishing vessels to release any billfish which belongs to any of the three above mentioned marlin species brought alive onboard or alongside for taking onboard the vessel.
3. The IOTC Scientific Committee shall request that the Working Party on Billfish continue their work on assessing and monitoring the status of the above mentioned species until such time as comprehensive assessments are possible. The IOTC Scientific Committee shall also evaluate the catch trends of the mentioned species and recommend Conservation and Management Measures as appropriate.
4. CPCs, in particular those employing gillnet fisheries, for which very few data exists on catch and effort, length frequencies and bycatch/discards, shall collect and report such data to the IOTC Secretariat.
5. The Scientific Committee shall annually review the information reported by CPCs on these species and, as necessary, provide recommendations to the Commission on ways to strengthen the conservation and management of these species.
6. The Commission shall consider appropriate assistance to developing CPCs for the collection of data on the above mentioned species.

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