

OUTCOMES OF THE 19th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT¹, 1 OCTOBER 2015

PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 17th Working Party on Tropical Tunas (WPTT17) of the decisions and requests made by the Commission at its 19th Session, held from 27 April to 1 May 2015, specifically relating to the work of the WPTT.

BACKGROUND

At the 19th Session, the Commission **CONSIDERED** and **ADOPTED** 11 proposals as Conservation and Management Measures (consisting of 11 Resolutions and 0 Recommendations), as detailed below:

Resolutions

- Resolution 15/01 *On the recording of catch and effort data by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution 15/02 *On mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs)*
- Resolution 15/03 *On the vessel monitoring system (VMS) programme*
- Resolution 15/04 *Concerning the IOTC record of vessels authorised to operate in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution 15/05 *On conservation measures for striped marlin, black marlin and blue marlin*
- Resolution 15/06 *On a ban on discards of bigeye tuna, skipjack tuna, yellowfin tuna, and a recommendation for non-targeted species caught by purse seine vessels in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution 15/07 *On the use of artificial lights to attract fish to drifting fish aggregating devices*
- Resolution 15/08 *Procedures on a fish aggregating devices (FADs) management plan, including a limitation on the number of FADs, more detailed specifications of catch reporting from FAD sets, and the development of improved FAD designs to reduce the incidence of entanglement of non-target species*
- Resolution 15/09 *On a fish aggregating devices (FADs) working group*
- Resolution 15/10 *On target and limit reference points and a decision framework*
- Resolution 15/11 *On the implementation of a limitation of fishing capacity of Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties*

Pursuant to Article IX.4 of the IOTC Agreement, the above mentioned Conservation and Management Measures became binding on Members, 120 days from the date of the notification communicated by the IOTC Secretariat in IOTC Circular 2015-049 (i.e. **10 September 2015**).

DISCUSSION

The Commission also made a number of general comments on the recommendations made by the Scientific Committee in 2014, which have relevance for the WPTT as follows (paragraph numbers refer to the report of the Commission (IOTC-2015-S19-R):

Para. 10. *The Commission **CONSIDERED** the list of recommendations made by the SC17 (Appendix VI) from its 2014 report (IOTC-2014-SC17-R) that related specifically to the Commission. The Commission **ENDORSED** the list of recommendations as its own, while taking into account the range of issues outlined in this Report (S19) and*

¹ secretariat@iotc.org, David Wilson (dw@iotc.org)

incorporated within Conservation and Management Measures adopted during the Session and as adopted for implementation as detailed in the approved annual budget and Program of Work.

Yellowfin tuna

Para. 24. *The Commission **NOTED** that although no new stock assessment was carried out for yellowfin tuna in 2014, previous estimates Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) for the whole Indian Ocean was 344,000 t with a range between 290,000–453,000 t. Management advice from the SC indicated that annual catches of yellowfin tuna should not exceed the lower range of MSY (300,000 t) in order to ensure that stock biomass levels could sustain catches at the MSY level in the long term. Catches have exceeded this level in 2011, 2012 and 2013 (402,084 t).*

Para 25. *The Commission **NOTED** that no proposals for yellowfin tuna Conservation and Management Measures were tabled for the Session.*

Meeting Participation Fund

Para. 37. *The Commission **NOTED** that the MPF was used to fund the participation of a reduced number of national scientists to the Working Parties in 2014 (49 in 2014; 58 in 2013; 42 in 2012), all of which were required to submit and present a working paper at the meeting.*

Para. 38. *The Commission **NOTED** that at its 2014 meeting, the Scientific Committee had recommended that the Meeting Participation fund be maintained into the future and increased back to its original allocation of \$200,000 per year (see recommendations SC17.34, para. 119). As per the IOTC Rules of Procedure (2014), the SC had reminded the IOTC Secretariat that the MPF budget should be spent at the ratio of 75:25 (science: non-science meetings) which would equate to US\$150,000 science: US\$50,000 non-science meeting.*

Para. 39. *The Commission **AGREED** that the MPF budget remains important and therefore provisions according to the estimated needs will be integrated into the budget.*

Consultants

Para. 40. ***NOTING** the Scientific Committee's attempts to prioritise the various projects and consultancies which it had requested funding for in 2016, in particular, that the High priority projects were those which it felt must be undertaken in 2016, the Commission **REQUESTED** that only those High priority projects listed in the Scientific Committee budget be funded by the Commission's regular budget, with exceptions detailed in other areas of the S19 report.*

The complete report of the 19th Session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission is available for download from the IOTC website:

- English: www.iotc.org/documents/report-19th-session-indian-ocean-tuna-commission
- French: www.iotc.org/fr/documents/rapport-de-la-19e-session-de-la-commission-des-thons-de-1%E2%80%99oc%C3%A9an-indien

RECOMMENDATION

That the WPTT

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2015–WPTT17–04 which outlined the main outcomes of the 19th Session of the Commission, specifically related to the work of the WPTT and **AGREE** to consider how best to provide the SC with the information it needs, in order to satisfy the Commission's requests, throughout the course of the current WPTT meeting.
- 2) **NOTE** the 11 Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) adopted at the 19th Session of the Commission (consisting of 11 Resolutions and 0 Recommendations), and in particular those Resolutions which have a direct impact on the work of the WPTT.