



**ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE USE OF AIRCRAFTS AND UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLES AS FISHING AIDS**

**SUBMITTED BY: MAURITIUS, 13 APRIL 2016**

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*Explanatory Memorandum*

The scientific committee in 2015 analyzed and classified the yellowfin stock as overfished and subject to overfishing. Following this, classification it has become imperative to avoid any increase in the fishing effort which could impact negatively on the stocks.

The use of aircrafts as well as the development of unmanned aerial vehicles as fishing aids, needs to be prohibited at a time where there is already a concern about the sustainability of the resource.



**RESOLUTION 16/XX**

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**Keywords:** Helicopters, drones, aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicle, fishing, searching, fishing aid, supply vessel, support vessel, fishing vessel.

**The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC),**

RECALLING that Article 5, paragraph c, of the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea of December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (UNFSA), establishes the application of the precautionary approach as a general principle for sound fisheries management;

NOTING that recommendations 37 and 38 of the Performance Review Panel, adopted by the Commission as Resolution 09/01, indicate that pending the amendment or replacement of the IOTC Agreement to incorporate modern fisheries management principles, the Commission should implement the precautionary approach as set forth in the UNFSA;

RECOGNISING the need to ensure the sustainability of fisheries for tunas and tuna-like species for food security, livelihoods, economic development, multispecies interactions and environmental impacts in its decisions;

CONSIDERING the resolution 12/01 on the implementation of the precautionary approach, in accordance with relevant internationally agreed standards, in particular with the guidelines set forth in the UNFSA, and to ensure the sustainable utilization of fisheries resources as set forth in article V of the IOTC agreement;

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;

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

GIVEN that “Aircraft” means a contrivance used for navigation of, or flight in the air and specifically includes, but is not limited to, planes, helicopters, and any other device that allows a person to fly or hover above the ground. “Unmanned aerial vehicle” means any device capable of flying in the air which is remotely, automatically or otherwise piloted without an occupant, including but not limited to drones;

RECOGNISING that the use of aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicle as fishing/searching aids significantly contribute to the fishing effort of tuna fishing vessels by increasing their fish detection capacity;

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

1. Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Party (collectively CPCs) shall prohibit their flagged fishing vessels, support and supply vessels from using aircrafts and unmanned aerial vehicles as fishing aids.
2. Any occurrence of a fishing operation undertaken with the aid of aircraft or any unmanned aerial vehicle in the IOTC area of competence shall be reported to the flag state and the IOTC Executive Secretary, for communication to the Compliance Committee.