



**AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION 16/01: ON AN INTERIM PLAN FOR REBUILDING THE INDIAN
OCEAN YELLOWFIN TUNA**

SUBMITTED BY: MAURITIUS, 21 APRIL 2017

Explanatory Memorandum

FAD use and the technology associated with it is evolving rapidly. For instance, the use of echo sounders allows vessels to discern the amount of fish under FADs and to fish only on the most productive FADs. Moreover, drifting FADs can be fitted with transmitter beacons so that they can be located thus decreasing the searching time and increasing fishing time for the purse seine vessels. Hence as FAD technology progresses, it is to an increase in effort. Consequently, if the stocks are to be maintained at sustainable levels, a reduction in the number of FADs is necessary.

Moreover, continued use of supply vessels contributes to greater fishing effort as purse seiners will have more fishing time. Consequently, a decrease in the number of supply vessels will decrease the fishing effort and thus will have a positive impact on the stock as the purse seine vessels will have to spend more time with the deployment of FADs. This management measure could contribute in rebuilding the yellowfin tuna stock.

A new approach is being suggested to reduce fishing effort. Instead of reducing the catch for purse seiners, it is proposed to reduce the purse seine fishing time.

RESOLUTION 17/XX**ON INTERIM PLAN FOR REBUILDING THE INDIAN OCEAN YELLOWFIN TUNA STOCK IN THE IOTC AREA OF COMPETENCE**

Keywords: Yellowfin tuna, Kobe Process, MSY, Precautionary Approach, Time-area-closures

The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC),

CONSIDERING the objectives of the Commission to maintain stocks in perpetuity and with high probability, at levels not less than those capable of producing their maximum sustainable yield as qualified by relevant environmental and economic factors including the special requirements of developing States in the IOTC area of competence;

BEING MINDFUL of Article XVI of the IOTC Agreement regarding the rights of Coastal States and of Article 87 and 116 of the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea regarding the right to fish on the high seas;

RECOGNISING the special requirements of the developing states, particularly Small Island developing states in Article 24, 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);

RECALLING that Article 5, of UNFSA entitles the conservation and management of highly migratory fish stocks are based on best scientific evidence available and with special reference to Resolution 15/10 for a stock where the assessed status places it within the red quadrant, and with an aim to end overfishing with a high probability and to rebuild the biomass of the stock in as short time as possible.

FURTHER RECALLING that Article 6, of UNFSA, requires the states to be cautious during the application of precautionary approach when information is uncertain, unreliable or inadequate and this should not be a reason for postponing or failing to take conservation and management measures;

CONSIDERING the recommendations adopted by the KOBE II, held in San Sebastian, Spain, June 23 – July 3 2009; implementing where appropriate a freeze on fishing capacity on a fishery by fishery basis and such a freeze should not constrain the access to, development of, and benefit from sustainable tuna fisheries by developing coastal States.

FURTHER CONSIDERING the recommendations adopted by the KOBE III, held in La Jolla, California, 11- 15 July 2011; considering the status of the stocks, each RFMO should consider a scheme for reduction of over capacity in a way that does not constrain the access to, development of, and benefit from sustainable tuna fisheries, including on the high seas, by developing coastal States, in particular small island developing States, territories, and States with small and vulnerable economies; and Transfer of capacity from developed fishing members to developing coastal fishing members within its area of competence where appropriate.

FURTHER CONSIDERING the report by International Council for the Exploration of Sea and FAO Working Group on Fishing Technology and Fish Behaviour (2006), Gillnets are considered to be one of the least catch controllable and least environmentally sustainable gears;

FURTHER CONSIDERING the recommendations of the 18th Scientific Committee held in Bali, Indonesia, 23 – 27 November 2015 that the catches of yellowfin tuna have to be reduced by 20% of the 2014 levels to recover the stocks to levels above the interim target reference points with 50% probability by 2024.

NOTING THAT supply vessels contribute to the increase in effort and capacity of purse seiners and that the number of supply vessels has increased significantly over the years.

FURTHER CONSIDERING the discussions of the Working Party on Tropical Tuna held in Montpellier, France, 23 – 28 October 2015 on the limitations and the uncertainties in the stock assessment models due to the unavailability of standardized yellowfin tuna CPUE data;

FURTHER CONSIDERING the call by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 70/75 upon the states to increase the reliance on scientific advice in developing, adopting and implementing conservation and management measures and to take into account the special requirements of developing states, including Small Island Developing States (SIDS) as highlighted in the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway;

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

1. This resolution shall apply to all fishing vessels targeting tuna and tuna like species in the Indian Ocean of 24 meters overall length and over, and those under 24 meters if they fish outside the EEZ of their flag State, within the IOTC area of competence.
2. The CPCs will reduce their catch of yellowfin as follows:
3. Purse seine:
 - a. CPCs whose Purse seine catches of yellowfin reported for 2014 were above 5000 MT to reduce their Purse seine ~~catches of yellowfin by 15 % from the 2014 levels~~ fishing time by 10% in 2017 and 2018; this stopping time being taken either in 1 go or cumulated over 4 times.
 - b. The number of Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) as defined in Resolution 15/08, paragraph 7, will be no more than ~~425-350~~ active instrumented buoys and ~~850-700~~ acquired annually instrumented buoys per purse seine vessel.
 - c. Supply vessels: Supply vessels will be gradually reduced from the Indian Ocean over a 3 year period (including 2017). The total number of supply vessels by CPC/Flag State on the IOTC active list for the same year shall not exceed half of the number of Purse seine vessels reported per CPC on the IOTC active list for the same year.:
 - i. In 2017 and 2018: 1 supply vessel for 2 purse seiners, all of them belonging to the same Flag State.
 - ii. In 2019: 1 supply vessel for 3 purse seiners, all of them belonging to the same Flag State.
- ~~e.4.~~ Complementary to Resolution 15/08 on "Procedures on 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" and to Resolution 15/02 "Mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs)", CPC/flag States shall report annually before the 1st of January for the coming year of operations which Purse seiners are served by each Supply vessel. This information will be published on IOTC website so as to be accessible to all CPCs and is mandatory. In the light of assessments made available by the Working Group (WG) on FADs and the Scientific Committee, the Commission shall update, if necessary the above limits in point b) and c).
- ~~4.5.~~ Gillnet: CPCs whose Gillnet catches of yellowfin reported for 2014 were above 2000 MT to reduce their Gillnet catches of yellowfin by 10 % from the 2014 levels.
- ~~5.6.~~ Longline: CPCs whose Longline catches of yellowfin reported for 2014 were above 5000 MT to reduce their Longline catches of yellowfin by 10 % from the 2014 levels
- ~~6.7.~~ CPCs' other gears: CPCs whose catches of yellowfin from other gears reported for 2014 were above 5000 MT to reduce their other gear catches of yellowfin by 5 % from the 2014 levels.



- ~~7.8.~~ Flag States will determine appropriate methods for achieving these catch reductions, which could include capacity reductions, effort limits, *etc.*, and will report to the IOTC Secretariat in their Implementation Report, the measures they have taken ,
- ~~8.9.~~ CPCs shall monitor the yellowfin tuna catches from their vessels in conformity with Resolution 15/01 “*On the recording of catch and effort data by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence*” and Resolution 15/02 “*Mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs)*” and will provide a summary of most-recent yellowfin catches for the consideration of the IOTC Compliance Committee.
- ~~9.10.~~ Each year, the Compliance Committee shall evaluate the level of compliance with the catch limits deriving from this Resolution and shall make recommendations to the Commission accordingly. ~~The Scientific Committee via its Working Party on Tropical Tunas, shall in 2016, conduct a new assessment of the status of the Yellowfin stock using all available data.~~
- ~~10.11.~~ The Scientific Committee via its Working Party on Tropical Tunas shall in 2018 undertake an evaluation of the effectiveness of the measures detailed in this Resolution, taking into account all sources of fishing mortality and possible alternatives aiming at returning and maintaining biomass levels at the Commission’s target level. After consideration of the results of this evaluation, the Commission shall take corrective measures accordingly.
- ~~11.12.~~ The Commission shall, based on the improved artisanal fishery data and the assessment of the state and impact of the artisanal fishery on the yellowfin stocks, take appropriate measures on the management of the artisanal yellowfin tuna fishery, at its Commission meeting in 2018.
- ~~12.13.~~ The amended measures contained within this Resolution shall come into force from 1st January September 2017; it shall be considered as interim measure and will be reviewed by the Commission no later than at its annual Session in 2019.
- ~~13.14.~~ Nothing in this resolution shall pre-empt or prejudice future allocation mechanisms.