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# **REPUBLIC OF KOREA'S POSITIONS ON SOME OF THE ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED IN THE 23<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL SESSION OF INDIAN OCEAN TUNA COMMISSION**

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**Submitted by: Republic of Korea**

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Korea would like to share its positions on some of the issues to be discussed in the upcoming annual session of the Commission with all CPCs in advance so that there will be fruitful discussions on these issues and the Commission may make sensible decisions.

## **1. Conservation and Management Measures for Yellowfin Tuna**

Until 2016, there had been no output control of fisheries or catch limit for yellowfin tuna in Indian Ocean and the only regulatory measure was a limitation on fishing capacity. Resolution 16/01 was the first attempt to limit the amount of catch and it evolved into the current measure, Resolution 18/01. Although it is premature to evaluate the effectiveness of the measure now because only 2017 catches are available at this point, it is clear from the report of the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the Scientific Committee that the Commission failed to achieve the objective of the measure in 2017 at least and Korea is greatly concerned that there remains the risk of the same failure. To get rid of the risk and achieve the objective, the Commission should raise the level of overall compliance with the measure and ensure all CPCs' participations in the conservation and management efforts. For these purposes, penalties or sanctions such as pay back for the non-compliance with catch reduction requirements and upper limits for CPCs with gillnet and other coastal fisheries are essential.

Korea submitted a proposal to amend Resolution 18/01 based on these observations and it would be very difficult for Korea to support any proposal for yellowfin tuna which lacks these two important elements, i.e. corrective action against non-compliance and participations of Small Island Developing States and Least Developed States because any measure without the two elements will be ineffective and only create unreasonable additional burden over and over again onto CPCs which have already made much sacrifice.

As CPCs may recall, Korea was the only CPC that did not join the consensus when the Commission adopted Resolution 16/01 as the measure required too much sacrifice from Korea. Nevertheless, Korea did not lodge an objection and fully complied with the provisions of the Resolution anyway in the spirit of cooperation and with a view to contributing to the recovery of yellowfin tuna resource. Following the entry into force of Resolution 16/01, Korea had to reduce the number of its active purse seine vessels from 5 to 2 in order to keep its yellowfin tuna catch under the catch limit specified in the Resolution. This means 60% reduction in terms of fishing capacity or fishing effort and Korea believes that it has made more concession or sacrifice than any other CPCs have done. The Commission should give a due consideration to this particular circumstance in adopting any new measures or amending the existing measure.

## **2. Conservation and Management Measures for Skipjack Tuna**

The total catches of skipjack tuna in 2017(524,282t) were 12% larger than the catch limit generated by the HCR(470,029t) and the Scientific Committee advised that the Commission

needs to ensure that catches of skipjack in the 2018-2020 period do not exceed the agreed limit. As such, Korea expects that the Commission will consider this advice and take necessary actions as appropriate, in the upcoming annual session of the Commission

Considering the inseparability of purse seine skipjack tuna fisheries and purse seine yellowfin tuna fisheries, and due to the above-mentioned particular circumstance, Korea is not in a position to accept any further reduction in purse seine catch or fishing effort. If the Commission is not going to reward Korea for what Korea has done, it must ensure that Korea's current level of fishing activities is maintained, at least. In the meantime, Korea believes that the Commission will be able to keep skipjack tuna catch under control if the main fleets mentioned in the page 129 of the report of 21<sup>st</sup> Session of Scientific Committee reduce their catches or fishing efforts to some extent from 2017 levels and the other fleets that have a small number of vessels maintain their fishing efforts at 2017 levels.

### **3. Allocation Criteria**

Considering the wide gap between the diverging views expressed in TCAC05 and in the absence of any subsequent discussion thereafter, Korea does not believe that it is a good idea to have an in-depth discussion on allocation criteria itself in the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Session of the Commission. Instead, the Commission may wish to have a general discussion in relation to the future work plan of TCAC or possible way forward.