
OUTCOMES OF THE 21st SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 04 NOVEMBER 2019

PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 15th Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics (WPDCS15) of the recommendations arising from the 21st Session of the Scientific Committee (SC21) held from 3 - 7 December 2018, specifically relating to the work of the WPDCS.

BACKGROUND

At the 21st Session of the SC, the SC noted and considered the recommendations made by the WPDCS in 2018 that included modifications to national statistical systems.

Based on the recommendations arising from the WPDCS14, the SC21 adopted a set of recommendations, provided in [Appendix A](#) of this paper.

The recommendations contained in [Appendix A](#) were provided to the Commission for consideration at its 23rd Session held in June 2019. A separate paper, IOTC–2019–WPDCS15–04 addresses the responses and actions of the Commission.

In addition, the SC21 reviewed and endorsed a Program of Work for the WPDCS. A separate paper (IOTC–2019–WPDCS15–09) will outline the review and further development of a *Program of Work* for the WPDCS for the next five years.

DISCUSSION

In addition to the recommendations outlined in [Appendix A](#), the following extracts from the SC21 Report (IOTC–2018–SC21–R) are provided here for the consideration and action of the WPDCS15:

(Para 165) The SC noted a number of issues that may prevent observers from collecting data on all fishing operations. Specifically, the SC noted that it is not possible for some CPCs to check hook by hook information for catch and bycatch.

Electronic monitoring systems

(Para 167) The SC noted results presented to WPDCS14 on tools such as EM that can be used to collect and verify catch data.

Regional Observer Scheme Minimum Standard Data Fields

(Para 170) The SC noted that there is a lack of data for small-scale fisheries that are currently unable to deploy human observers and other means of data collection are required. The SC **REQUESTED** the WPDCS to continue to evaluate the validity of alternative data collection tools to onboard human observers (such as the use of crew as observers (i.e. self-sampling), electronic monitoring (e.g. cameras) and port sampling), and combinations of these, as potential alternatives to onboard human observer coverage for the collection of the minimum standard data fields for small-scale fisheries. The SC acknowledged that the results of the ROS should inform this evaluation.

Species of special interest

(Para 171) For the purpose of improving the voluntary collection of information on the post release mortality of discarded species of special interest, the SC considered and **ENDORSED** the list of species considered of special interest as proposed by the expert workshop and reported in Appendix VIII of the WPDCS14 report, noting that the SC agreed to simplify the list according to [Appendix 6b](#).

(Para 172) The Secretariat clarified that these fields for species of special interest are voluntary and are for encouraging better reporting where this is possible.

ROS draft programme standards

(Para 173) The SC noted the *draft Programme Standards and Guidelines* developed by the ROS Expert Workshop and that there was insufficient time during the meeting as well as a lack of appropriate expertise to fully review these standards. Therefore, the SC **REQUESTED** that the Secretariat work with CPCs and the Compliance Committee to consolidate feedback on scientific and operational aspects of the *draft programme standards*.

FAD data

(Para 175) The SC noted concerns around the ongoing paucity of FAD data being requested from CPCs and urged that progress is made towards this issue. The SC further noted that the WPTT20 recommended the harmonisation of FAD category definitions. It was noted that there is a meeting between different RFMOs on FADs which would discuss terminology differences used in different RFMOs. IOTC will participate in this meeting and the outputs from this will help inform harmonisation. The SC further noted that ICCAT has already accepted standard definition terms. The SC suggested that the IOTC Secretariat provide additional resources to CPCs looking to provide FAD data

RECOMMENDATION

That the WPDCS:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2019–WPDCS15–03 which outlined the main outcomes of the 21st Session of the Scientific Committee, specifically related to the work of the WPDCS.
- 2) **CONSIDER** how best to progress these issues at the present meeting.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Consolidated set of recommendations of the 21st Session of the Scientific Committee (3 - 7 December 2018) to the Commission, relevant to the Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics.

APPENDIX A

CONSOLIDATED SET OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 21ST SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE (3 - 7 DECEMBER 2018) TO THE COMMISSION RELEVANT TO THE WORKING PARTY ON DATA COLLECTION AND STATISTICS

Extract of the Report of the 21st Session of the Scientific Committee

(IOTC-2018-SC21-R; Appendix 40, PAGES 244-250)

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSION

Report of the 14th Session of the Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics (WPDCS14)

SC21.25 (para. 166) The SC noted that there has been an increase in participation and submission of documents to the WPDCS in recent years. The SC acknowledged that the current duration of the meeting (3 days) is not sufficient to facilitate the presentation and discussion of these documents. The SC therefore **RECOMMENDED** that future sessions of the WPDCS be extended to four days.

Electronic monitoring systems

SC21.26 (para. 168) The SC **RECOMMENDED** the development of minimum standards for EMS (including, for example, cameras) for IOTC. The SC noted that the WCPFC are currently drafting standards on EM and acknowledged that it would be pertinent for the IOTC to follow this process and utilise the outcomes where relevant.

Regional Observer Scheme Minimum Standard Data Fields

SC21.27 (para. 169) The SC **RECOMMENDED** that the ROS *Minimum Standard Data Fields* in [Appendix 6a](#) are adopted by the Commission.

ROS draft programme standards

SC21.28 (para. 174) Noting concerns with the overlap between scientific, compliance and legal issues in relation to the *draft programme standards*, the SC **RECOMMENDED** that the Commission form an ad hoc technical committee representing the breadth of mandates to specifically address this issue to ensure the relevant expertise is available to discuss scientific and operational aspects of the *draft Programme Standards and Guidelines* to be presented to the SC and Compliance Committee before it is provided to the Commission for endorsement.

Summary discussion of matters common to Working Parties (capacity building activities – stock assessment course; connecting science and management, etc.)

Invited Expert(s) at the WP meetings

SC21.29 (para. 177) Given the importance of external peer review for working party meetings, the SC **RECOMMENDED** that the Commission continues to allocate sufficient budget for an invited expert to be regularly invited to all scientific WP meetings.

Meeting participation fund

SC21.30 (para. 178) The SC reiterated its **RECOMMENDATION** that the IOTC Rules of Procedure (2014), for the administration of the Meeting Participation Fund be modified so that applications are due not later than 60 days, and that the full Draft paper be submitted no later than 45 days before the start of the relevant meeting. The aim is to allow the Selection Panel to review the full paper rather than just the abstract, and provide guidance on areas for improvement, as well as the suitability of the application to receive funding using the IOTC MPF. The earlier submission dates would also assist with visa application procedures for candidates.

IOTC species identification guides: Tuna and tuna-like species

SC21.31 (para. 179) The SC reiterated its **RECOMMENDATION** that the Commission allocates budget towards continuing the translation and printing of the IOTC species ID guides so that hard copies of the identification cards can continue to be printed as many CPCs scientific observers, both on board and port, still do not have smart phone technology/hardware access and need to have hard copies on board.

IOTC Secretariat staffing

SC21.32 (para. 180) Noting the very heavy workload at the IOTC Secretariat and the ever increasing demands by the Commission and the Scientific Committee, and also the capacity to respond to requests for assistance by countries, the SC **RECOMMENDED** that the recommendation from the Performance Review PRIOTC02.07(g) is implemented, and that permanent staff of the IOTC Data and Science Section be increased by two (2) (1 x P4 and 1 x P3 level positions), supplemented by additional short-term consultants. Funding for these new positions should come from both the IOTC regular budget and from external sources to reduce the financial burden on the IOTC membership.

Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the SC and its subsidiary bodies

SC21.33 (para. 181) The SC **RECOMMENDED** that the Commission note and endorse the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons for the SC and its subsidiary bodies for the coming years, as provided in [Appendix 7](#).