Improving the data collection system for tuna and bycatch species in Iran

Duration of project: 2 years**; Location of project:** Konarak port, Gulf of Oman

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Partners of the project: IOTC, IRD (Pelagic Ecosystem Observatory), Iran Fisheries Organization

1 – **Objectives of the project**

Large pelagic species have a significant role in catching and earning money for the fishing community and for the food security in the Iran. In fact, a heavy demand for seafood in Iranian domestic market underlines the need for increasing the marine fish production in the Iran EEZ. Catch trends highlight that the production from the coastal fisheries is almost stagnant and point towards the need for harvesting tuna and tuna-like stocks offshore and in the high seas. One of the long-term policies and plans of the Iranian Fisheries Organization is to gradually replace the gillnet fleet by longliners. This issue is in line with the objectives and recommendations of the IOTC, but despite the ongoing efforts, the share of gillnet is still high. Small-scale tuna longline and gillnet fisheries and the respective associated bycatch have received relatively little attention and no work has been carried out to obtain a local overview in the Gulf of Oman. Specific objective of this project is to set up a high-resolution data collection framework regarding these two fisheries in the Gulf of Oman. These data include information on fishery strategy, list of species caught catch rate as well as biometrical information collected on individuals.

2- **Methodology**

Two types of information will be collected; collection by scientific observers onboard and self-reporting information with volunteer fishermen. Biometrical information is collected only by scientific observers onboard. Data collection frequency of scientific observers and volunteer fishermen from both fisheries will be five and eight daily fishing operations per month respectively. Following data will be collected from each set of both gears: setting longitude and latitude, hauling longitude and latitude, setting date and time, hauling date and time, gears material and specification, and number, length, and weight of caught individuals in terms of target and bycatch.

3- **Expected impacts of the project**

- Consolidated data series on spatio-temporal catch rate for both target and bycatch species for two fisheries.
- Length frequency data for the IOTC species interest.
- Characteristics the main derivers of sensitive bycatch species for both longline and gillnet fisheries.

4- **Budgets proposal**

	Year 1	Year 2	Total
Post doc salary (€)	24000	24000	48000
Student (€)	6000	6000	12000
Material (caliper, scale, TDR)	12000		12000
Travels on field (12*2)	7000	7000	14000
		Total	86000

5- **Gantt chart**

	2020												2021											
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
Fishing operations monitored by onboard observer (number)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Fishing operations monitored by volunteer fishermen (number)	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Data preparatory																								
Data analysis, draft and submission (tuna and bycatch data)																								
Quarterly report to IOTC																								
Final report submission to IOTC																								