

## NATIONAL REPORTS ON THE PROGRESS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES

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### IMPLEMENTATION OF IOTC CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES

#### *Resolutions adopted at the 12<sup>th</sup> session of the IOTC (2008)*

##### Res 08/01: Mandatory statistical requirements for CPCs

South Africa has complied with the reporting of nominal catch, effort and size frequency statistics for its tuna and swordfish longline fishery since the inception of the fishery in 1997. These statistics have also been reported for shark by-catch species in the tuna and swordfish longline fishery. Nominal catch and effort, but not size frequency statistics, have been provided for the smaller shark longline fishery and commercial linefish fishery in the Indian Ocean. South Africa has collected data on seabird mortality and turtle mortality in the tuna and swordfish longline fishery through its scientific observer programme. This information will be made formally available to the Bycatch Working Group.

##### Res 08/02: On establishing a programme for transshipment by large-scale fishing vessels

No transshipment at sea is allowed in South Africa's EEZ. This applies to all domestic vessels and foreign vessels seeking access to South African ports. Transshipments in port are only allowed on the authority of a permit issued by Marine and Coastal Management.

##### Res 08/03: On reducing incidental by-catch of seabirds in longline fisheries

In 2008 South Africa published its National Plan of Action to Reduce Seabird Mortality, and the objective of this plan is to reduce seabird mortality to  $< 0.05$  birds.1000 hooks<sup>-1</sup>.

Various mandatory permit conditions were introduced to achieve this objective, including:

- 1) all tuna and swordfish longline vessels are required to fly a tori line according to strict specifications;
- 2) appropriate dehooking devices shall be on board the vessel;
- 3) tuna longline vessels shall only set between nautical dusk and nautical dawn;
- 4) swordfish vessels shall only use thawed baits, and
- 5) swordfish vessels shall not discard offal on the same side as where hauling is taking place.

In addition, vessels which exceeded the mortality of 25 seabirds were requested to comply to the following more stringent permit conditions:

- 1) line sink rates in excess of 0.3 m/sec, or;

- 2) no fishing for 3 days around full moon.

Through the strict management measures adopted by South Africa seabird mortality was reduced 10-fold in comparing mortality figures between 2008 and 2007.

#### Res 08/04: Concerning the recording of catch by longline fishing vessels in the IOTC

South Africa has implemented a more detailed logbook for its longline fishery than that prescribed by the IOTC. The SA logbook captures the following info: vessel name, start of trip, end of trip, date and time of set, date and time of end of set, geographic co-ordinates for start of each set, number of hooks set, sea surface temperature, drift of line, percentage bait type used, reason for setting, number of lightsticks used, catch by weight per species per set, number per species per set caught, number of mauled fish. The currentl amended logbook has been implemented since 2004. All mandatory catch and effort statistics are summarized from the logbooks and submitted to the IOTC.

#### ***Existing resolutions adopted by IOTC***

#### Res 07/01: To promote compliance by nationals of contracting parties and co-operating non-contracting parties with IOTC conservation and management measures

South Africa is currently in the process of amending the Marine Living Resources Act (1998) and has identified the need to include a provision in the Act in order to prosecute South African nationals engaged in any IUU fishing activity.

#### Res 07/02: Concerning the establishment of an IOTC record of vessels authorised to fish in the IOTC area

South Africa provides IOTC with its authorized vessel list on an annual basis. Furthermore, no foreign tuna vessels are permitted into South Africa's port unless the vessel appears on the relevant RFMO authorised vessel list.

#### Res 07/05 (03/01, 05/01): Limitation of fishing capacity of IOTC CPCs in terms of number of longline vessels targeting swordfish and albacore (bigeye)

In developing South Africa's tuna/swordfish longline fishery, which operates in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, South Africa has allocated a maximum of 50 long-term large pelagic fishing rights. As specified in the large pelagics rights allocation policy this translates to 20 swordfish-directed longline vessels and 30 tuna-directed longline vessels. A bigeye tuna fleet development plan was submitted to the IOTC in 2007, which is in line with South Africa's large pelagics rights allocation policy.

#### Res 06/03: On establishing a vessel monitoring system programme

Since the start of South Africa's large pelagic fishery in 1997 it was mandatory for all longline vessels to be equipped with functional VMS. The VMS requirement was subsequently expanded to cover all commercial fisheries in South Africa. Marine and Coastal Management is directly responsible for managing this system.

#### Res 05/03: Report on port inspections

South Africa conducts inspections of foreign vessels in port on a random basis and where suspicious activity is observed. Contraventions are reported to the relevant flag state and RFMO. South Africa has high traffic volumes of foreign fishing vessels, however due to staff capacity issues inspection rates have generally been less than 3%. South Africa is looking at improving its inspection rate and to provide better reporting of the inspections. South Africa has provided a list of all foreign tuna vessels, including species declarations, which have accessed South African ports in recent years.

#### Res 05/05: Concerning the conservation of sharks caught in association with fisheries managed by IOTC

South Africa has banned the practice of shark finning in its fishery. South Africa strictly enforces the 5% fin to trunk ratio for all foreign vessels accessing its ports. As a result of preliminary research South Africa has adopted a 8% fin to trunk ratio for its longline fisheries. In addition, shark by-catch in the tuna and swordfish fishery is not allowed to exceed 10% of the total targeted species by weight. Since 2005 South Africa has been in the process of terminating its directed pelagic shark fishery which will finally be terminated in this year. Thereafter South Africa will impose a self-declared quota for sharks in its longline fishery. Fishers have also been educated on responsible fishing practices through various workshops.

#### Res 05/08: On sea turtles

A scientific observer programme was established since 1998 for the tuna and swordfish longline fisheries. Observer coverage is aimed at 20% coverage for domestic vessels and 100% for foreign vessels fishing under charter agreements with South African right holders. The results of the observer reports have been analysed for turtle interactions. Turtle interaction in the South African fishery is rare, with most turtles hooked being released alive. The ability to release the turtles alive is due to the branch lines being longer than the buoy lines thereby allowing the turtle to reach the surface to breathe. It is also a permit condition that the appropriate dehooking devices are on board all longline vessels. Fishers are also encouraged through permit conditions and various workshops to use circle hooks.

#### Res 01/01: National observer programmes

South Africa established an on board scientific observer programme for its vessels in 1998. The primary aim of the programme is to collect length frequencies, biological samples and fisheries data for target and by-catch species. The observer coverage is aimed at 20% of domestic vessel trips and 100% coverage of all foreign vessel trips fishing under charter agreement. The observer programme has also reported on non-compliance such as flying of tori lines, and shark finning.

#### Res 01/06: Bigeye tuna statistical document programme

The statistical document programme was implemented in South Africa in 2003 and was subsequently improved upon in 2007 with the development of a specialized unit to deal with management of large pelagics. Despite improvements in the administration of this process there are still challenges on how to submit the statistical documents with the consignments. Currently, statistical documents are issued after the consignments have been exported.