

REPORT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF IOTC CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR THE YEAR 2010

Reporting CPC: Australia

Date: February 2011

Part A – Resolutions Adopted at IOTC 14 – 2010

Resolution 10/01 For the Conservation and Management of Tropical Tunas Stocks in the IOTC Area of Competence

All Australian registered fishing vessels, fishing within the IOTC area of competence in 2011 and 2012, shall observe the area and period closure: for longline vessels in each year from 0000 hours on 1 February to 2400 hours on 1 March, and for purse-seine vessels in each year from 0000 hours on 1 November to 2400 hours on 1 December; Area of closure 0 ° - 10° North, 40° and 60° East.

All Australian-flagged fishing vessels operating within Commonwealth managed fisheries, including the IOTC Area of Competence, have been subject to mandatory vessel monitoring system (VMS) monitoring since 1 July 2007 at the latest.

Resolution 10/02 Mandatory Statistical Requirements For IOTC Members and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (CPC's)

Australia has complied with IOTC requirements for data provision, through submission of the "Australia National Report to the Scientific Committee of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission for 2009". Australia's report was provided using the template as requested by the Scientific Committee. Australia submitted its report to the Scientific Committee on 24 September 2010.

Resolution 10/03 Concerning the recording of catch by fishing vessels in the IOTC area

Australia has implemented catch and effort logbooks in its purse-seine and longline tuna fisheries. Australia's Logbook Program collects accurate and timely catch and effort information on a "shot-by-shot" basis. Logbooks record information on fishing operation including; location, time, method of fishing and gear and vessel details as well as the resultant catch and bycatch for each fishing operation. The logbook program is managed by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority, with all data maintained in a central database. Copies of the logbooks can be found on the AFMA website: http://www.afma.gov.au/industry/logbooks/docs/a06_pelagic.pdf

Australia provided an aggregated data set based on the logbook data requirements outlined in Resolution 10/03 to the IOTC on 24 September 2010.

Resolution 10/04 On a Regional observer scheme

There is currently limited effort in the Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery, which has led to variable observer coverage. The overall observer coverage over 2005-2009 inclusive represents 18 per cent of fishing effort for hooks and 17 per cent for all shots.

In 2009, a total of 529 144 longline hooks were deployed in the IOTC Area of Competence by Australian vessels. Of these, 44 790 hooks were observed as part of AFMA's scientific observer program, representing a total of 8.46 per cent coverage. Observers also monitored seven purse seine sets where fish were retained and one set that was aborted, representing 9.0 per cent coverage for sets where fish were retained. This equates to approximately 13.5 per cent of the total catch.

Resolution 10/05 On the Establishment of a Meeting Participation Fund for Developing State Members

Australia is not eligible to utilise the Meeting Participation Fund.

The Procedure for supplying funds to the Meeting Participation Fund is scheduled to be discussed at the 2011 annual IOTC meeting.

Resolution 10/06 On Reducing the Incidental Bycatch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries

Australia has implemented fishing permit conditions aimed at reducing seabird mortality which are consistent with and exceed the minimum requirements as prescribed under IOTC Resolution 10/06. These include:

- All longline operators fishing south of 25° S are required to:
 - deploy a tori line (of specific design requirements compliant with IOTC specifications); and
 - use thawed baits; and
 - either set fishing gear between nautical dusk and nautical dawn; or
 - use a line weighting system and
- All longline operators fishing north of 25° S are required to:
 - carry a tori line.
- In addition, all longline operators are:
 - banned from discharging offal while setting
 - recommended to avoid offal discharge during hauling.

Resolution 10/07 Concerning a Record of Licensed Foreign Vessels Fishing for Tunas and Swordfish in the IOTC Area

Australia does not currently licence any foreign flagged fishing vessels to fish for tuna and tuna-like species in the portion of the Australian exclusive economic zone that falls within the IOTC Area of Competence.

Should Australia do so in the future, it will inform the IOTC Secretariat by 15 February.

Resolution 10/08 Concerning a Record of Active Vessels Fishing for Tunas and Swordfish in the IOTC Area

Australia will provide the IOTC with an updated list of vessels currently authorised to fish for tuna and tuna-like species within the IOTC convention area in the coming weeks.

Resolution 10/09 Concerning the Functions of the Compliance Committee

No specific action is required for this resolution.

Resolution 10/10 Concerning Market Related Measures

All landings into Australia by foreign-flagged vessels are prohibited except where ministerial approval has been granted; no such approval was granted in 2010.

No transshipments were performed by Australian vessels in the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission Area of Competence in 2010.

Resolution 10/11 On Port state measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing

Australia was instrumental in developing the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing and signed the Agreement on 27 April 2010.

The *Fisheries Management Act 1991* establishes a comprehensive port State regime. Any foreign flagged fishing vessels wishing to enter an Australian port are required to apply for prior permission with the following information at least 24 hours in advance: proposed port of entry, ship name, nationality, international radio call sign, registration number in country of origin, IMO number, description of authorization to fish, the name of the master of the ship, and the person or contact point of the company or individual that owns the ship. Vessels must provide port authorities with a copy of the ship's declaration of catch in total weight and number of species for inspection.

All landings into Australia by foreign-flagged vessels are prohibited except where a separate ministerial approval has been granted. Ministerial approval requires the vessel to be compliant with its authorization to fish, including maintaining the operation of the 'Inmarsat C' Vessel Monitoring System and reporting to the Australian Fisheries Management Authority whilst in the Australian exclusive economic zone.

Resolution 10/12 On the Conservation of Thresher Sharks (Family Alopiidae) caught in Association with Fisheries in the IOTC Agreement Area

Australia is signatory to the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and associated instruments including the International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (IPOA-Sharks). In accordance with the IPOA-Sharks, Australia implemented a National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (NPOA-Sharks). The first NPOA-Sharks was released in 2004 and as stipulated in the international guidelines is reviewed every four years. Australia's NPOA-Sharks is currently under review.

Australia follows world's best practice standard for shark conservation and management through the implementation and enforcement of the following management measures for shark fishing:

- A maximum of 20 sharks per vessel fishing within the Australian exclusive economic zone, and upon application, up to 100 pelagic sharks outside the Australian exclusive economic zone (high seas) of which no more than 80 must be blue whaler sharks (*Prionace glauca*) and a maximum of 20 sharks or rays from the species list (crocodile shark (*Psuedocarcharias kamoharai*), silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*), oceanic whitetip shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*), smooth hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna zygaena*), pelagic stingray (*Dasyatis violacea*), shortfin mako (*Isurus oxyrinchus*), porbeagle shark (*Lamna nasus*) and thresher shark (*Alopias vulpinus*).
 - Only one vessel was granted this condition in 2009.
- Australia enforces a ban on the use of wire traces on longlines in the Western and Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fisheries. This minimises shark retention, incidental catch of all sharks and the number of sharks that die on the longline.
- Australian regulations allow for sharks to be landed processed (trunked – headed and gutted), but must have their dorsal, pectoral and caudal (tail) fins attached to the carcass. The caudal lobe must be left attached.

As at 10 February 2011, Australia reports no Thresher sharks have been interacted with by commercial fishers. Australia wishes to report two interactions with Thresher sharks in the game fishing industry with both interactions resulting in the shark being tagged and released alive.

Recommendation 10/13 On the implementation of a Ban on Discards of Skipjack Tuna, Yellow Fin Tuna, Bigeye Tuna and Non Targeted Species Caught by Purse Seiners

Australian operators use purse seine nets to capture surface schools of pelagic fish such as southern bluefin tuna and skipjack tuna. Australian permit conditions in the Skipjack Tuna Fisheries require purse seiners to “retain on board and then land all skipjack, bigeye and yellowfin tuna taken.” In the Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery, the take of any other species is prohibited under the Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery Management Plan. Some bycatch of skipjack tuna has occurred in southern bluefin tuna operations and is recorded in logbooks and observer data (3,325 kilograms since 2003).

Skipjack tuna purse seine operations have logbook records of small catches of jack mackerel, blue mackerel, yellowfin tuna, bigeye tuna, frigate mackerel, eastern little tuna and striped marlin. These species are managed as by-product under their respective management arrangements.

Australia implemented the Tuna Purse Seine Fisheries Bycatch Action Plan in 2005.

Existing Resolutions Adopted by IOTC

Resolution 09/01 On the Performance review follow-up

Australia adopts world’s best practice for fisheries management, utilising the precautionary approach and ecosystem based fisheries management. Australia’s Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy defines the decision rules for

fisheries management and sustainable harvest levels. Australia's domestic fisheries management practices currently exceed the requirements of most IOTC resolutions. Australia supports ongoing efforts to address the recommendations from the IOTC performance review.

Resolution 09/02 On the implementation of a limitation of fishing capacity of Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties

In accordance with paragraph 1 of Resolution 09/02, please find attached a list of Australian flagged fishing vessels which fished for tropical tunas during 2009 (Attachment 1). Australia has verified the presence and fishing activity of all its vessels in the IOTC Area of Competence, as required under paragraph 2, including through mandatory VMS monitoring.

In accordance with Paragraph 4 of the Resolution, Australian fishers fishing within the IOTC Area of Competence (e.g. Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery (WTBF)) targeting swordfish and albacore under IOTC's mandate are managed as a limited entry fishery. Operators are able to use pelagic longline, minor line (includes poling, trolling, handline and rod and reel) and purse seine fishing methods in the fishery to target tuna and billfish species. In July 2010 Australia placed catch limits on its vessels in the WTBF, through an individual transferable quota system under a comprehensive national management plan. A total allowable commercial catch (TACC) has been set for the fishery's four key target species (yellowfin tuna, bigeye tuna, broadbill swordfish and striped marlin). The initial quota season is 19 months, but subsequent seasons will be annual seasons commencing on 1 February.

Resolution 09/03 On establishing a list of vessels presumed to have carried out illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing (IUU) in the IOTC area

Australia has not nominated any vessels for the IUU list.

Resolution 09/05 To prohibit the use of Large-scale Driftnets on the high seas in the IOTC area

All Australian flagged vessels are prohibited from utilising large-scale driftnets on the high seas in the Convention Areas of all the regional fisheries management organisations of which Australia is a Member and within the Australian exclusive economic zone.

Resolution 09/06 On Marine Turtles

In 2009 Australian fisheries observers, cross checked with fishing logbooks, recorded seven (7) interactions with marine turtles, all turtles were released alive within the Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery. The turtle species included one loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*), two hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricate*) and four leatherback turtles (*Derochelys coriaca*).

The Australian Tuna and Billfish Longline Fisheries Bycatch and Discarding Workplan presents a number of mitigation measures for bycatch species and an analysis of methods to reduce risks to turtles. Mitigation measures in the workplan

include quantifying the catch rates of turtles from circle hooks in the Australian tuna and billfish longline fisheries; making the carriage of line cutters and dehookers compulsory; providing a weather-proof bycatch recording device to all vessels; and investigating the difference between “deep-setting” and “shallow-setting” of lines for bycatch. The long-term goals of the workplan are to determine the patterns in bycatch within the Australian Tuna and Billfish Longline Fishery and any possible management responses, such as move on provisions, which may be available due to these patterns.

Resolution 08/02 On establishing a programme for Transshipment by Large-Scale Fishing Vessels

Australia’s tuna fishing industry in the Indian Ocean did not tranship in 2010, either at sea or in port. Three Australian vessels are authorised for transshipment in the WTBF.

Resolution 07/01 To promote compliance by nationals of contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties with IOTC conservation and management measures

Australia has amended the *Fisheries Management Act (FMA) 1991* to allow Australia to give effect to measures to control Australian nationals operating in RFMOs to which Australia is a Member. The amendments make it an offence for an Australian national using a boat to contravene a resolution as prescribed in regulation under the FMA.

Attachment 1

VESSEL NAME	NATIONAL REGISTRATION SYMBOL	FLAG COUNTRY	FISHING GEAR	LOA	GRT	BHP	YEAR BUILT	HULL MATERIAL	HOME PORT
DISCOVERY III	O733	AUSTRALIAN	INDUSTRIAL LONGLINE	24.5	150	500	1999	STEEL	FREMANTLE
OCEAN WILD II	O664	AUSTRALIAN	INDUSTRIAL LONGLINE	35	138	510	1985	STEEL	FREMANTLE
TAISEI MARU	O644	AUSTRALIAN	INDUSTRIAL LONGLINE	34.5	119	650	1991	STEEL	FREMANTLE

Note: all three vessels actively fished for albacore, yellowfin tuna, bigeye tuna and broadbill swordfish in the IOTC area in 2009.

Source: Australian Fisheries Management Authority daily logbook database 2010.