

## Report of Implementation - Maldives

### Reporting CPC: Maldives

Date: 6/3/2011

**Part 1 A.** *Describe the actions taken, under national legislation, in the previous year to implement conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission at the last Session.*

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

In order to limit the longline fishing effort for yellowfin and bigeye tuna, Maldivian Government has stopped issuing foreign licenses to fish in the outer EEZ (> 75 miles) of the Maldives. This is effective from March 2009.

As a long term strategy to rationalize the pole-and-line fishing fleet and its fishing effort, the Government is planning to enforce boat building code. The code is draft final form and is being finalized. Once implementation starts the size of vessels are expected to be smaller and uniform allowing estimating the fishing capacity and limiting of fishing effort.

To facilitate the management and conservation of tropical tuna, the Government of Maldives in collaboration with the IOTC has taken an initiative to strengthen its fisheries data collection and reporting framework. The logbook system has already been implemented and the electronic data management software is in its testing phase.

Maldives is actively collaborating with the IOTC on analyses of the tag release and recovery data. The analyses planned for skipjack is expected to shed new light on the stock dynamics and help to improve the stock assessment of skipjack. Maldives is also engaged with IOTC in standardizing its valuable time series of pole-and-line catch/effort data to facilitate the stock assessment in 2011 as recommended by the SC in 2010.

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

Maldives has complied with IOTC requirements for data provision, through the submission of the "Maldives National Report" to the scientific committee of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission for 2009. Maldives has been providing the necessary data required by the IOTC even though Maldives did not have a status in the IOTC until 2010.

Maldives has provided size frequency data for 2004 – 2009 for major tuna species (skipjack, yellowfin, kawakawa and frigate).

#### **Resolution 10/03 concerning the recording of catch by fishing vessels in the IOTC area**

Maldives has ceased issuing licenses for the foreign longline fleet that operating in the outer EEZ (> 75 miles). However, the Government intends to introduce longline fishing by local fishermen in the outer EEZ of the Maldives. New logbooks are designed based on the data requirements of the IOTC. The data collection and analysis will be prepared by the Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture. The logbooks for longline vessels will be finalized based on the advice from the IOTC technical expertise.

#### **Resolution 10/04: On a Regional Observer Scheme**

Legislative framework to establish an observer scheme came into force at the beginning of December 2010. Currently, the government is organizing the necessary procedures to facilitate the observer scheme. However, 12 field samplers have been working in the islands to gather the tuna size data for scientific research purposes. 32 fisheries inspectors and 7 fisheries enforcement officers have been working in the islands to strengthen the monitoring, control and surveillance measures from 2010.

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

Maldivian delegate was able to participate in the 2011 WPTT, 2010 Scientific Committee and Technical Meeting 2011 and 2011 Compliance and Committee meeting is supported by the fund.

#### **Resolution 10/06: on reducing the Incidental by-catch of Seabirds in Long-line Fisheries**

The new “Regulation on fishing and export of large yellowfin tuna” effective from December 2010 provides the necessary provisions for reducing the incidental by-catch of seabirds and other marine species in long-line fishing. These measures exceed the minimum requirement as prescribed under IOTC Resolution 10/06. These measures include:

- Night setting with minimum deck lighting.
- Bird-scaring lines
- Weighted branch lines
- Blue-dyed squid bait
- Offal discharge control
- Line shooting device

Furthermore, the regulation also has provisions to minimize the incidental by-catch of marine turtles and shark species.

It should be noted that Maldives currently does not have any longline vessels operating in the IOTC area.

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

Maldives do not license any foreign flagged fishing vessels to fish for tuna and tuna-like species in the Maldives EEZ from March 2009. The Government does not have any plans to issue licenses for foreign flagged fishing vessels.

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

Maldives provide the necessary data of its active vessels to IOTC on a regular basis. The database of IOTC contains all the active fishing vessels exceeding 24m.

**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**

Maldives neither land nor import any tuna or tuna like species caught foreign vessel elsewhere outside of the Maldivian EEZ. At sea transshipments are prohibited under the fisheries laws and regulations of the Maldives.

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

Maldives fully comply and adhere to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing.

The Fisheries Law, 1987 and the necessary regulations establish the necessary framework to adhere the Port State measures. The recent “Regulation for the fishing and export of Yellowfin Tuna” and “Regulation on licensing for fishing and processing for export and aquaculture” establish a comprehensive regime for port state measures.

The Fisheries Law is currently been revised and the Government is hopeful to submit it to the Parliament within the third quarter of 2011. The revised law would establish a comprehensive regime for the implementation of port state measures.

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

Maldives have implemented a blanket-ban on shark fishery from March 2010. However, the recent plans by the Government to introduce long-line fishery would have possible by-catch of shark species. However, measures have been taken in place to minimize these incidental catches to its lowest. These include:

- Prompt release of live sharks unharmed.
- Dead sharks should be reported to fisheries inspectors or enforcement officers in ports.
- All sharks species caught in long-line fishing shall be reported whether it's live or dead.
- Any kind of commercial use of shark species is prohibited under the Export and Import Law.

**Resolution 10/13: on the Implementation of a Ban on Discards of Skipjack Tuna, Yellowfin Tuna, Bigeye Tuna and Non Targeted Species Caught by Purse Seiners**

Maldives do not license any purse-seine fishing vessel and the Government does not have any plans to issue licenses in the future. The current fishing methods practiced in the Maldives do not have any discards of tuna or tuna like species.

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

As per paragraph 1 of the IOTC Resolution 09/02, please find attached in Annex 1, the detailed list of vessels, by gear, by fishing method for 2006 and 2007.

Maldivian vessels do not fish outside the EEZ and hence, a VMS scheme was not adapted for it in the last year. World Bank funded a small scale pilot project for the installation of GPS/VMS equipment in 12 fishing vessels in 2009. Based on the feedback, a revised VMS scheme has been designed for the entire fishing fleet. The project is scheduled to commence in the second quarter of 2011.

As per paragraph 6 of the IOTC Resolution 09/02, please find attached in Annex 2, the fleet development plan highlighting the size, gear, type and origin of the vessel.

**Resolution 09/03: On establishing a list of vessels presumed to have carried out illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing (IUU) in the IO T C area.**

The Maldives have reported to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission regarding the vessels apprehended by the coast guard in the Maldivian waters

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

Any form of purse seine and/or large-scale driftnets are prohibited in Maldives.

**Resolution 09/06: on Marine Turtles**

The fishing methods practiced in the Maldives have not recorded any incidental catch of marine turtles. Under fisheries regulation of the Maldives, a 10 year ban was implemented from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006 for the harvest, killing and capture of marine turtles in the Maldives. Egg harvesting is also banned from selected 13 uninhabited islands.

Under the “regulation for the fishing and export of Yellowfin tuna” a special provision has been dedicated to the mitigation of capture of marine turtles in long-line fishery based on the IOTC Resolution 09/06.

From 2010, Maldives is also a signatory to IOSEA Memorandum.

**Part 1 B.** *Describe the actions taken, under national legislation, to implement conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission in previous Sessions, and which have not been reported previously.*

Access to fishing grounds under Maldives EEZ jurisdiction is strictly prohibited for foreign vessels. Fishing for tuna and tuna like species are open for whole year and it could still be considered as an open fishery, but required to have a valid fishing license. Licenses fees are charged annually based on the size of the fishing vessels.

Government of Maldives is in the process of revising the existing fisheries law and regulations. The new law would be fully complying on the best practices which fall under the World Food and Agriculture (FAO)’s Code of Conduct and Port State measures. However, new regulations have come in to force recently which includes the following:

- Licensing scheme for the fishing vessels
- Changes in the data reporting mechanism
- Fisheries Inspectors and enforcement officers
- On board observer scheme
- Prohibiting at sea transshipment operations

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