

PROGRESS MADE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF WPTT21

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 1 JUNE 2020

PURPOSE

To provide participants at the 22nd WPTT with an update on the progress made in implementing those recommendations from the previous Working Party on Tropical Tunas (WPTT) meeting which were endorsed by the Scientific Committee (SC), and to provide alternative recommendations for the consideration and potential endorsement by participants as appropriate given any progress.

BACKGROUND

At the 21st Session of the WPTT, participants agreed on a series of actions to be taken by participants, CPCs, and the IOTC Secretariat on a range of issues. The subsequent table developed and agreed to by the WPTT was provided to the SC for its endorsement at its December 2019 meeting.

DISCUSSION

The Rules of Procedure of the Scientific Committee include the following seven core tasks, which are to be supported by the various Working Parties.

- a) recommend policies and procedures for the collection, processing, dissemination and analysis of fishery data;
- b) facilitate the exchange and critical review among scientists of information on research and operation of fisheries of relevance to the Commission;
- c) develop and coordinate cooperative research programmes involving Members of the Commission in support of fisheries management;
- d) assess and report to the Commission on the status of stocks of relevance to the Commission and the likely effects of further fishing and of different fishing patterns and intensities;
- e) formulate and report to the sub-commission, as appropriate, on recommendations concerning conservation, fisheries management and research, including consensus, majority and minority views;
- f) consider any matter referred to by the Commission;
- g) carry out other technical activities of relevance to the Commission.

Recalling that the SC, at its 16th Session adopted a set of reporting terminology SC16.07 (para. 23), which was subsequently endorsed by the Commission at its 18th Session in 2014 (S18, para 10), to further improve the clarity of information sharing from, and among the science bodies, the following two term levels should be noted when interpreting the Reports and [Appendix I](#) to this paper:

Level 1: From a subsidiary body of the Commission to the next level in the structure of the Commission:

RECOMMENDED, RECOMMENDATION: Any conclusion or request for an action to be undertaken, from a subsidiary body of the Commission (Committee or Working Party), which is to be formally provided to the next level in the structure of the Commission for its consideration/endorsement (e.g. from a Working Party to the Scientific Committee; from a Committee to the Commission). The intention is that the higher body will consider the recommended action for endorsement under its own mandate, if the subsidiary body does not already have the required mandate. Ideally this should be task specific and contain a timeframe for completion.

Level 2: From a subsidiary body of the Commission to a CPC, the IOTC Secretariat, or other body (not the Commission) to carry out a specified task:

REQUESTED: This term should only be used by a subsidiary body of the Commission if it does not wish to have the request formally adopted/endorsed by the next level in the structure of the Commission. For example, if a Committee wishes to seek additional input from a CPC on a particular topic, but does not wish to formalise the request beyond the mandate of the Committee, it may request that a set action be undertaken. Ideally this should be task specific and contain a timeframe for the completion.

In addition to the Recommendations endorsed by the SC at its 20th Session, the SC also made several requests which, although are not passed to the Commission for its endorsement, are considered actions which the Scientific Committee has the mandate to issue. The revised recommendations are contained in [Appendix I](#) for the consideration and potential endorsement by the WPTT22(DP).

RECOMMENDATION

That the WPTT:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2020–WPTT22(DP)–06 which detailed the progress made in implementing the recommendations of the WPTT21, and the requests of the 22nd Session of the Scientific Committee (SC22), taking into consideration the recommendations from the SC and decisions of the Commission;
- 2) **AGREE** to consider and revise as necessary, the recommendations, and for these to be combined with any new recommendations arising from the WPTT21(DP), noting that these will be provided to the SC for its endorsement.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Progress made on the Recommendations and Requests of WPTT21

APPENDIX I

Progress made on the recommendations of WPTT20

WPTT21 Rec. No.		SC22 Rec. No.	Recommendation adopted by the SC22	Endorsed at S24	Commission response / suggestions for consideration at WPTT22
WPTT21.01 (para. 13)	Outcomes of the 3rd Technical Committee on Management Procedures The WPTT NOTED that the work of the TCAC and TCMP are related; in particular, the outcomes of the deliberations of the TCAC, in relation to the distribution of allocated catches among gear types, will directly influence the predicted performance of management procedures being evaluated by the TCMP. As such the WPTT RECOMMENDED that the Commission ensure that these two Technical Committees are well coordinated and that communication between them is assured.		No discussion took place on this issue during the Scientific Committee meeting.	N/A	Due to the Commission meeting being delayed until November 2020, no SC Recommendations have been reviewed to date.
WPTT21.02 (para. 158)	Review of the statistical data available for skipjack tuna The WPTT EXPRESSED CONCERN over this consistent increase in FAD associated catch, in particular rapid increase in catches of juvenile yellowfin and bigeye which may hinder the rebuilding of exploited species and RECOMMENDED further evaluation of this issue and, where necessary, the identification of which alternative options could be implemented to avoid such adverse impacts on the stock.	Para 76	Review of the statistical data available for skipjack tuna The SC NOTED that total catches in 2018 (607,701 t) were 30% higher than the catch limit generated by the Harvest Control Rule (470,029 t) which applies to the years 2018–2020, and that catches have increased over the past 3 years. The SC reiterated its RECOMMENDATION that the Commission urgently consider the need to monitor catches of skipjack in the 2019–2020 period to ensure catches do not exceed the limit	N/A	
WPTT21.03 (para. 218)	Preliminary Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna stock assessment using SS3 An extra preparatory meeting may be required well in advance of the assessment, In this context, WPTT ACKNOWLEDGED that the procedure of how assessment are conducted needs to be restructured. WPTT	Para. 78	WPTT priorities and Program of Work Acknowledging that holding data preparatory meetings prior to stock assessments is generally considered to be best practice and in view of the success of the albacore tuna data preparatory meeting in 2019, the SC AGREED to	N/A	

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	RECOMMENDED that a data preparation meeting is scheduled well in advance of the assessment meeting so that the assessment meeting can focus on model configuration, diagnostics and advice only, and that data issues should not be reopened at the assessment meeting. This will also allow intersessional work between the data meeting and the assessment meeting to be conducted.		explore the possibility of holding data preparatory meetings in addition to stock assessment meetings for the major IOTC species in 2020.		
WPTT21.04 (para. 219)	The WPTT NOTED that there is some model sensitivity to the choice of method used for weighting different data series and the time period in which the recruitment deviates are active. An investigation was undertaken during the WPTT, but the results were insufficiently conclusive to change the structure of the models included in the assessment grid. However, the WPTT RECOMMENDED that more intersessional work should be conducted, especially after the revision of the length compositions.	Para. 68	Yellowfin tuna assessment update The SC commended the yellowfin workplan steering committee and the assessment scientist for their efforts and excellent contributions to reduce the uncertainty of the yellowfin assessment model. The SC WELCOMED the future developments identified by the WPTT that are expected to improve the yellowfin assessment through intersessional work. The SC also NOTED that opportunities exist to further reduce data and parameter uncertainty, and to improve modelling choices, through internal IOTC projects (e.g. the EU funded projects on tag modelling and longline size review) and external workshops (e.g. 2020 Spatial Stock Assessment Methods workshop and CAPAM workshop on natural mortality). However, given the difficulty and scope of the work, there is no guarantee that a satisfactory full assessment can be achieved by 2020.	N/A	
WPTT21.05 (para. 261)	Outcomes of the 2nd joint tuna RFMO FAD Working Group meeting The WPTT NOTED that there was little time to discuss FAD issues comprehensively during the WPTT meeting, but these issues are recognised as being of critical importance to the Commission (as acknowledged by the adoption of Rec 19/02). The WPTT therefore RECOMMENDED that the IOTC FAD Working Group, which to date has met only	Para. 75	Joint tuna RFMO FAD working party meeting The SC NOTED that a primary concern for the IOTC is the definitions and terminology related to FAD fishing activities, and to work with other tRFMOs on a similar terminology for reporting purposes and to allow inter-ocean comparative analyses. The SC therefore RECALLED the recommendation made by the WPTT21 that the IOTC	N/A	

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	once, be reactivated with a clear mandate to discuss IOTC FAD issues.		FAD Working Group, which to date has met only once, be reactivated with a clear mandate to discuss these and other IOTC FAD issues.		
WPTT21.06 (para 266)	Revision of the WPTT Program of Work (2020–2024) The WPTT RECOMMENDED that the SC consider and endorse the WPTT Program of Work (2020–2024), as provided at Appendix IX .	(paras. 219-220)	Program of Work (2020–2024) and assessment schedule The SC noted IOTC–2019–SC22–09 which provided the Scientific Committee (SC) with a proposed Program of Work for each of its Working Parties (WP), including prioritisation of the elements requested by each WP. The SC noted the proposed Program of Work and priorities for the Scientific Committee and each of the Working Parties and AGREED to a consolidated Program of Work as outlined in Appendix 35a-g. The Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of each working party shall ensure that the efforts of their working party are focused on the core areas contained within the appendix, taking into account any new research priorities identified by the Commission at its next Session..	N/A	
WPTT21.07 (para. 273)	Review of the draft, and adoption of the Report of the 21st Session of the WPTT The WPTT RECOMMENDED that the Scientific Committee consider the consolidated set of recommendations arising from WPTT21, provided at Appendix XI , as well as the management advice provided in the draft resource stock status summary for each of the three tropical tuna species under the IOTC mandate, and the combined Kobe plot for the three species assigned a stock status in 2019 (Fig. 14): <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Bigeye tuna (<i>Thunnus obesus</i>) – Appendix VI○ Skipjack tuna (<i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i>) – Appendix VII	SC22.01 (para. 197)	Tuna – Highly migratory species The SC RECOMMENDED that the Commission note the management advice developed for each tropical and temperate tuna species as provided in the Executive Summary for each species, and the combined Kobe plot for the four species assigned a stock status in 2019 (Fig.1): <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Albacore (<i>Thunnus alalunga</i>) – Appendix 8○ Bigeye tuna (<i>Thunnus obesus</i>) – Appendix 9○ Skipjack tuna (<i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i>) – Appendix 10○ Yellowfin tuna (<i>Thunnus albacares</i>) – Appendix 11	N/A	



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	o Yellowfin tuna (<i>Thunnus albacares</i>) – Appendix VIII				

WPTT21 Report	WPTT21 REQUESTS	Update/Progress
Para. 50	<i>Tropical tuna fisheries in Pakistan</i> The WPTT NOTED the effort of the Pakistan fleet to change from surface to sub-surface gillnets which is expected to reduce the bycatch of sensitive species without decreasing the target tuna catch as suggested in Resolution 19/01. However, the completeness of this move to a new setting strategy is not known and the WPTT REQUESTED Pakistan to provide details in future meetings.	Update: In progress. Pakistan to provide updates.
Para. 61	<i>Tropical tuna catch and effort: Mauritius</i> The WPTT NOTED the large increase of yellowfin from 2014 to 2018 by Mauritius longliners and purse seiners and that the spatial distribution of FAD catches is showing sets in the eastern Indian Ocean while official nominal catch has not been reported for this region. The WPTT REQUESTED Mauritius to work with the IOTC Secretariat to clarify this matter	Update: In progress. Mauritius to provide updates.
Para. 103	<i>Review of the statistical data available for bigeye tuna</i> As these characteristics are not present in the data reported by other purse seine fleets during the same year, and are not in the data reported by the EU purse seine fleet in years prior to 2018, the WPTT NOTED that this feature of the catch might be due to errors or changes related to the estimation of the species composition for catches reported by the EU purse seine fleet in 2018, and REQUESTED the EU to clarify the matter and report back to the Scientific Committee in 2019	Update: In progress. EU to provide updates.
Para. 111	The WPTT REQUESTED that the revised catch series for 2018 (PS LS fisheries) be used for assessment and MSE purposes as well as for management advice	Update: Ongoing. The external consultant conducting the work will provide an update to the WPTT22.
Para. 150	<i>Update on Management Strategy Evaluation Progress</i> The WPTT REQUESTED the addition of a “recruitment shock” robustness test by reducing future recruitment (e.g. by half for 2 years as in YFT) in the Management Procedure (MP)	Update: Ongoing. The external consultant conducting the work will provide an update to the WPTT22.

	testing, acknowledging that this kind of robustness scenario has commonly been considered in other RFMOs such as CCSBT and IWC	
Para. 152	The WPTT NOTED that the relative contribution of fleets to the total catch has been changing over time (e.g. the increasing trend in the proportions of PS catches), and this has implications for MP evaluations. This relates to a Commission request about alternative allocations. The WPTT recognized that allocations are a political decision and therefore REQUESTED guidance from the TCMP on specific scenarios to be tested in the MP evaluations	Update: Ongoing. The TCMP was cancelled in 2020. This advice will only be possible in 2021.
Para. 155	The WPTT REQUESTED five bigeye tuna robustness scenarios (all of which assume the reference set OM conditioning): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happens if there is a two year recruitment failure (55% of expected + usual stochastic error, as defined for yellowfin tuna) • What happens if the (annualized aggregate) longline CPUE observation error CV is increased to 30% (auto-correlation 0.5) in projections? • What happens if there is a consistent 10% future over-catch (accurately reported), equally distributed among fleets? • What happens if there is a 10% future over-catch (unreported), equally distributed among fleets? • What happens if the longline CPUE catchability trend is 2% per year going forward (but remains as in the reference scenario for conditioning)? 	Update: Ongoing. The external consultant conducting the work will provide an update to the WPTT22.
Para. 163	Review of the statistical data available for skipjack tuna The WPTT REQUESTED Pakistan to further examine these data and, in particular document where there are marked differences in Pakistan's catches compared to those from similar fisheries reported by neighbouring CPCs.	Update: In progress. Pakistan to provide updates.
Para. 165	For this reason, the WPTT REQUESTED the IOTC Secretariat that action be taken with scientists from I.R. Iran and work towards obtaining the data at the expected level of resolution (1cm size bins).	Update: In progress. Iran to provide updates.
Para. 174	Development of management advice for skipjack tuna The WPTT ADOPTED the management advice developed for skipjack tuna as provided in the draft stock status summary and REQUESTED that the chair, with assistance from the IOTC Secretariat update the draft stock status summary for skipjack tuna with the latest 2018 catch data (if necessary), and for the summary to be provided to the SC as part of the draft Executive Summary, for its consideration: Skipjack tuna (<i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i>) – Appendix VII	Update: Completed

Para. 185	<p>Review of the statistical data available for yellowfin tuna</p> <p>The WPTT NOTED that the information presented in relation to the progress and effectiveness on implementation of Resolution 18/01 was informative and REQUESTED the Secretariat to present this information at future WPTT and SC meetings</p>	Update: In progress. The secretariat will present this information as requested.
Para. 222	<p>Preliminary Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna stock assessment using SS3</p> <p>The WPTT NOTED the substantial work conducted to address the yellowfin tuna workplan, but that there was still work to be completed. As such the WPTT REQUESTED that the authors fully document the work conducted prior to, during as well as the work still to be addressed after the meeting, in an information document to be provided to the SC in 2019. This work will be coordinated by the chair of the WPTT</p>	Update: Completed.
Para. 227	<p>Selection of Stock Status indicators for yellowfin tuna</p> <p>The WPTT NOTED that the approach provides a visual representation of uncertainty within and among models that appears to describe the expected covariance among stock status indicators. The WPTT REQUESTED that the approach be used for the usual IOTC summary plots, if future assessments are based on a coarse grid of point estimates that cannot describe management outcome probabilities adequately.</p>	Update: Ongoing. The modellors conducting the work will provide an update to the WPTT22.
Para. 229	<p>Development of management advice for yellowfin tuna</p> <p>The WPTT ADOPTED the draft resource stock status summary and REQUESTED that the IOTC Secretariat update the draft stock status summary for the yellowfin tuna with the latest 2018 catch data (if necessary), and for the summary to be provided to the SC as part of the draft Executive Summary, for its consideration: Yellowfin tuna (<i>Thunnus albacares</i>) – Appendix VIII</p>	Update: Completed
Para. 263	<p>FAD category definitions and terminology</p> <p>The WPTT NOTED that several presentations were made (eg. IOTC-2019-WPTT21-53, IOTC-2018-WPDCS14-39) with regards to definitions related to FAD fishing and that these definitions are critical to monitoring the fishery as well as facilitating data provision on this sector. Clear definitions have yet to be adopted by the IOTC and so the WPTT REQUESTED that this be done under the reactivated IOTC FAD WG.</p>	Update: Ongoing. The group has yet to be reactivated due to the postponement of the Commission meeting.
Para 266	<p>Revision of the WPTT Program of Work (2020–2024)</p> <p>The WPTT REQUESTED that the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the WPTT, in consultation with the IOTC Secretariat, develop Terms of Reference (TOR) for each of the high priority projects that are yet to be funded, for circulation to potential funding sources.</p>	Update: Ongoing. Several priority projects have been endorsed by the SC and will be funded under EU grants and from the IOTC regular budget
	<p>Date and place of the 22nd and 23rd Sessions of the WPTT</p>	Update: Ongoing. Discussions to host meetings have been impossible at this stage due to the global Covid-19 pandemic.

	<p>NOTING the discussion on who would host the 22nd and 23rd Sessions of the WPTT in 2020 and 2021 respectively, the WPTT REQUESTED that the IOTC Secretariat liaise with CPCs to determine if they would be able to host the 22nd and 23rd sessions of the WPTT respectively (Table 11).</p>	
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