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## PROGRESS MADE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF WPEB15 AND SC22

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### PURPOSE

To provide participants at the 16<sup>th</sup> WPEB with an update on the progress made in implementing those recommendations from the previous Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch (WPEB) 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 15<sup>th</sup> Session of the WPEB, 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 WPEB was provided to the SC for its endorsement at its December 2019 meeting. This paper provides a summary of the progress made on this list of requests so that the working party can evaluate progress made and to agree on the next steps to be taken for each issue.

### 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 16<sup>th</sup> Session adopted a set of reporting terminology SC16.07 (para. 23), which was subsequently endorsed by the Commission at its 18<sup>th</sup> 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

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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 22<sup>nd</sup> 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 WPEB16.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the WPEB **NOTE** the progress made in implementing the recommendations and requests of the 15<sup>th</sup> Session of the WPEB, and consider whether revised recommendations need to be sent to the SC for its consideration.

#### **APPENDICES**

**Appendix I:** Progress made on the Recommendations and Requests of WPEB15

## APPENDIX I

### Progress made on the recommendations and requests of WPEB15 and SC22

WPEB15 Rec. No.	Recommendation from WPEB15	SC22 Rec. No.	Recommendation adopted by the SC22	Endorsed at S24	Progress/Comments
WPEB15.0 1 (para. 14)	The WPEB <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that several initiatives be implemented to address this problem [paucity of data on sharks], including: (i) holding regional workshops to improve shark species identification, shark data sampling and collection (fisheries and biological) and IOTC data reporting requirements; (ii) data mining to fill historical data gaps; (iii) develop alternative tools to improve species identification (genetic analyses, machine learning, and artificial intelligence).	SC22.13 (para. 54)	The SC <b>ENDORSED</b> the advice of the WPEB regarding the need to improve data collection and reporting for shark species. To this end, the SC <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that several initiatives be implemented, including: (i) holding regional workshops to improve shark species identification, shark data sampling and collection (fisheries and biological) and IOTC data reporting requirements; (ii) data mining to fill historical data gaps; (iii) developing alternative tools to improve species identification (e.g. genetic analyses, machine learning, and artificial intelligence).	N/A	Due to the Commission meeting being delayed until November 2020, no SC Recommendations have been reviewed to date.
WPEB15.0 2 (para 221)	The WPEB <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the SC consider and endorse the WPEB Program of Work (2020–2024), as provided in Appendix XIX	SC22 (para 138)	The SC <b>NOTED</b> the proposed Program of Work and priorities for the SC and each of the working parties and <b>AGREED</b> to a consolidated Program of Work as outlined in <a href="#">Appendix 35a-g</a> . The Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of each working party will ensure that the efforts of their respective working party is 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	





		SC22.07 (para. 124)	<p><b>Marine Mammals</b></p> <p>The SC <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the Commission note the management advice developed for cetaceans, as provided in the newly developed Executive Summary encompassing all species commonly interacting with IOTC fisheries for tuna and tuna-like species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cetaceans – <a href="#">Appendix 32</a></li></ul>		
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WPEB15 Report	WPEB REQUESTS	Update/Progress
WPEB15 Para. 20	The WPEB <b>REQUESTED</b> that the IOTC Secretariat continue to prepare a paper on the progress of the recommendations arising from the previous WPEB, incorporating the final recommendations adopted by the Scientific Committee and endorsed by the Commission, as well as any updates and requests.	Update: IOTC-2020-WPEB16-06
WPEB15 Para. 23	<p><b><i>Review of the statistical data available for ecosystems and bycatch species</i></b></p> <p>The WPEB also <b>NOTED</b> that data for all bycatch species (including raised catches and discards, time-area catches and size-frequency data) is often incomplete or not reported according to IOTC standards, and has an impact on the ability of this group to undertake its work, and <b>REQUESTED</b> the IOTC Compliance Committee to take this in due consideration.</p>	Update: <b>[Ongoing]</b> The secretariat notes that this should be a Recommendation. As per definition on page 1 of this document “ <i>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).</i> ”
WPEB15 Para. 39	<p><b><i>Updated status of development and implementation of National Plans of Action for seabirds and sharks, and the implementation of the FAO guidelines to reduce marine turtle mortality in fishing operations (CPCs).</i></b></p> <p>The WPEB <b>NOTED</b> that no requests were received by the IOTC Secretariat since the last SC meeting to apply a status of ‘Not applicable (n.a.)’ for an NPOA, in the ‘Table of progress in implementing NPOA-sharks, NPOA-seabirds and the FAO guidelines to reduce sea turtle mortality in fishing operations’. The Scientific Committee recently revoked two statuses of ‘not applicable’ due to insufficient evidence provided, so the WPEB <b>REQUESTED</b> CPCs to continue to review their status periodically and either update this or provide additional supporting information as necessary.</p>	Update: <b>[Ongoing]</b> No new applications for n.a. have been received by the secretariat since the last meeting of the WPEB.
WPEB15 Para. 40	The WPEB <b>REQUESTED</b> that all CPCs without an NPOA-Sharks and/or NPOA-Seabirds expedite the development and implementation of a NPOA, and to report progress to the WPEB and SC in 2017, <b>NOTING</b> that NPOAs are a framework that should facilitate estimation of shark catches, seabird interactions, and development and implementation of appropriate management measures, which should also enhance the collection of bycatch data and compliance with IOTC Resolutions.	Update: <b>[Ongoing]</b> Any new NPOAs brought to the attention of the secretariat have been included in document IOTC-2020-WPEB16-09
WPEB15 Para. 41	The WPEB <b>REQUESTED</b> that the IOTC Secretariat continue to periodically revise the table summarising progress towards the development of NPOA-Sharks, NPOA-Seabirds, and the implementation of the FAO guidelines to reduce marine turtle mortality in fishing operations, with information provided by each CPC for the	Update: <b>[Ongoing]</b> Any new NPOAs brought to the attention of the secretariat have been included in document IOTC-2020-WPEB16-09

<p>WPEB15 Para. 42</p>	<p>consideration at the WPEB and SC meetings. The current status is provided in Appendix VIII.</p> <p>The WPEB <b>NOTED</b> that the NPOA portal on the IOTC website (<a href="http://iote.org/science/status-of-national-plans-of-action-and-fao-guidelines">http://iote.org/science/status-of-national-plans-of-action-and-fao-guidelines</a>) provides details of the most recent updated table of progress in implementing NPOA-Sharks, NPOA-Seabirds and the FAO Guidelines to Reduce Sea Turtle Mortality in Fishing Operations. It also provides other information in support of CPCs wishing to develop their own NPOAs, such as the guidelines and NPOA documents from all CPCs who have submitted their NPOAs. The WPEB <b>REQUESTED</b> the secretariat provide links from the portal to the actual Plan documents so that the detailed information in the plans can be accessed.</p>	<p>Update: <b>[Ongoing]</b> The Secretariat are collecting NPOA documents from CPCs to upload to the NPOA Portal</p>
<p>WPEB15 Para. 68</p>	<p><b>Review of new information on the status of sharks: IOTC BTH PRM project</b></p> <p><b>NOTING</b> the high mortality rate for bigeye thresher at-haulback, the WPEB <b>REQUESTED</b> the authors to examine the effect of factors such as longline soaking time and hooking position on the animal.</p>	<p>Update: <b>[Ongoing]</b> The authors will provide an update to the WPEB16</p>
<p>WPEB15 Para. 92</p>	<p><b>Taiwanese CPUE</b></p> <p>The WPEB <b>ENCOURAGED</b> Taiwan to present a CPUE data including early years of fisheries if such data are available and <b>REQUESTED</b> that the Secretariat contact the authors to determine the discrepancy between the values for the nominal and standardised CPUE series provided in the document figures and the tables.</p>	<p>Update: <b>[Pending]</b></p>
<p>WPEB15 Para. 100</p>	<p><b>Taiwanese catch rate</b></p> <p>The WPEB <b>NOTED</b> significant differences in the data presented in the Table 3 and Fig. 5 and <b>REQUESTED</b> Taiwan,China to explain these differences.</p>	<p>Update: <b>[Ongoing]</b> Taiwan,China to provide an update on this request</p>
<p>WPEB15 Para. 115</p>	<p><b>Report of the ecoregions workshop</b></p> <p>The WPEB <b>REQUESTED</b> that other IOTC WPs review and comment on the draft ecoregions for future development as a tool to progress towards EAF.</p>	<p>Update: <b>[Ongoing]</b> The ecoregion report has been presented to several other IOTC WPs and comments have been received. This is expected to continue in 2020.</p>
<p>WPEB15 Para. 148</p>	<p><b>Ecosystem report card summary and future work</b></p> <p><b>ACKNOWLEDGING</b> that the group did not want to lose momentum, the WPEB <b>REQUESTED</b> that another workshop be held to continue the work on ecoregion classification.</p>	<p>Update: <b>[Ongoing]</b> Due to the covid-19 situation, no physical workshops have been possible in 2020. This will be reviewed again in 2021</p>

	<p><b><i>Review new information on marine mammal biology, ecology, fisheries interactions and bycatch mitigation measures</i></b></p>	
<p>WPEB15 Para. 207</p>	<p>The WPEB <b>REQUESTED</b> the authors to clarify if improved animal welfare translates into decreased post-release mortality, as the latter is important to fisheries.</p>	<p>Update: <b>[Ongoing]</b> The authors have not yet provided this clarification</p>
<p>WPEB15 Para. 208</p>	<p>The WPEB <b>REQUESTED</b> that CPCs help facilitate the distribution of this document to fishers so that they can provide feedback of the practicality of the guidelines.</p>	<p>Update: <b>[Ongoing]</b> The secretariat sent out a reminder in July 2020 for CPCs to review the guidelines. To date, no comments have been received</p>