



PROGRESS MADE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF WPDCS15

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, LAST UPDATED: 12TH NOVEMBER 2020

Purpose

To provide participants at the 16th Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics (WPDCS16) with an update on the progress made in implementing the recommendations from the previous WPDCS, which were endorsed by the Scientific Committee (SC), and to provide alternative recommendations for the consideration and potential endorsement by participants.

Background

At the 15th Session of the WPDCS, 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 WPDCS was provided to the SC for its endorsement at its 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) to carry out other technical activities of relevance to the Commission.

Noting the core tasks of the SC, and hence the WPDCS, participants are reminded that any recommendations developed during a Session, must be carefully constructed so that each contains the following elements:

- 1) a specific action to be undertaken (deliverable);
- 2) clear responsibility for the action to be undertaken (i.e. a specific CPC of the IOTC, the Secretariat, another subsidiary body of the Commission or the Commission itself);
- 3) a desired time from for delivery of the action (i.e. by the next working party meeting, or other date).

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 A 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 A](#) for the consideration and potential endorsement by the WPDCS15.

Recommendation

That the WPDCS:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2020–WPDCS16–06 which detailed the progress made in implementing the recommendations of the WPDCS16, 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 WPDCS16, noting that these will be provided to the SC for their endorsement.

Appendices

Appendix A: Progress made on the recommendations of WPDCS15

Appendix A

Progress made on the recommendations of WPDCS15

WPDCS15 Rec. no.		SC22 Rec. no.	Recommendation adopted / agreed by the SC22	Endorsed at S24	Commission response / suggestions for consideration at WPDCS16
WPDCS15.01 (para. 61)	Alternative approaches to the revision of official species composition for the Spanish log-associated catch-and-effort data for tropical tuna species in 2018 The WPDCS RECOMMENDED that a data preparatory meeting be organized prior to the Working Party on Tropical Tunas in order to ensure sufficient time is dedicated to resolving issues with the quality and preparation of the input data for the stocks assessments	SC22.17 (para. 97)	NOTING that the WPDCS highlighted several issues still affecting the quality of the information available for stock assessment purposes of tropical tunas, the SC RECOMMENDED that a data preparatory meeting be held prior to the Working Party on Tropical Tunas.	[Pending]	
WPDCS15.02 (para. 182)	Revision of the WPDCS Program of work (2020–2024) The WPDCS RECOMMENDED that the Scientific Committee consider and endorse the WPDCS Program of Work (2020–2024), as provided at Appendix V.	Page 190	The SC ADOPTED the WPDCS PoW in Appendix 35F.	[Pending]	

WPDCS15 Report	WPDCS15 REQUESTS	Update / Progress
<i>IOTC Secretariat Report</i>		
Para. 37	The WPDCS NOTED that provisions of FAD-related data for some CPCs in 2018 have been made difficult by the lack of clarity in the categories of FOB activities and FOB types and further REQUESTED that the importance of adopting clearer definitions and (possibly) a new nomenclature for FADs be conveyed to the ad-hoc FAD Working Group once re-activated.	Updates: [pending] A request to re-activate the ad-hoc FAD working group was endorsed by the SC in 2019: pending the official approval from the Commission, a dedicated meeting might be scheduled in 2021 that will, <i>inter alia</i> , address this specific issue.
Para. 39	The WPDCS NOTED that, as per Resolution 15/02, discards-at-sea are a component of the total catch and may have an impact on indices of abundances estimated from CPUE data for longline fisheries used in stock assessment models, and that systems should be put in place to collect information on discards which cannot be assessed from sampling at landing sites.	Updates: [pending]
<i>Alternative approaches to the revision of official species composition for the Spanish log-associated catch-and-effort data for tropical tuna species in 2018</i>		
Para. 49	Given the situation, the WPDCS URGED EU,Spain to provide a corrected version of its time-area catches data for 2018, considering that the use of this information is of particular importance for several IOTC bodies.	Updates: [pending] EU,Spain has not officially provided a corrected version of either their nominal catches or their time-area catches for 2018. The European Union during the WPTT(AS) and the Commission meeting has re-iterated their continuing efforts in solving this issue, and that unless further information becomes available (as it is expected at the end of a comprehensive revision process to be started in Q4 2020) the original catches from EU,Spain 2018 are to be considered official.
Para. 52	The WPDCS AGREED that the alternative estimates produced for EU,Spain for the year 2018 shall be considered preliminary, until the new system is properly documented and the final datasets endorsed at a future meeting of the WPDCS or WPTT.	Updates: [pending] See above.
Para. 59	The WPDCS REQUESTED the EU and Seychelles to collaboratively work on the size samples collected at unloading in Victoria, Seychelles, and compare the species and size composition of the catch in spatio-temporal strata to investigate the differences observed between the outputs of the T3 processing system and the new methodology adopted by EU,Spain.	Updates: [pending]

<i>Review of Pakistan's reconstructed catch series for tuna and tuna-like species</i>		
Para. 63	The WPDCS ACKNOWLEDGED the efforts of the Government of Pakistan and WWF-Pakistan to improve the status of fisheries data collection in Pakistan in recent years and efforts to comply with IOTC's mandatory data reporting obligations, and REQUESTED that the Government of Pakistan to provide funds to ensure the continuation of WWF's crew based observer program.	Updates: [pending]
Para. 65	The WPDCS further NOTED that lack of access to alternative data, such as logbooks or port sampling, to validate the results of the reconstructed catches was a common issue during the review, but that photographic reports and debriefings with the skippers were generally in good agreement with the self-reported data, and that results from future experiment with Electronic Monitoring (including CCTV cameras) could further contribute to its validation.	Updates: [pending] Pakistan to provide details on the implementation of EM trials in their fisheries, if any.
Para. 67-68	The WPDCS NOTED that the fisheries in the Arabian sea are usually subject to marked changes in abundance for tropical tunas and other stocks from year to year, and the fact that this might compromise estimates based on short time series such as the ones used in this review. For this reason, the WPDCS SUGGESTED that future reviews of these time series take into consideration this fact and consider the use of trends in catch by species for alternative fleets that operate in the same areas, such as Iranian gillnets.	Updates: [pending]
Para. 69	The WPDCS REQUESTED that the reconstructed catches be incorporated in the IOTC nominal catch database; also that information on time-area catches and fishing effort, and size frequency data also collected by WWF's crew based data collection program be officially submitted to the IOTC Secretariat by the Government of Pakistan.	Updates: [completed] The revised catch series for Pakistan (1987-2018) have been officially incorporated in the IOTC databases in December 2019 and used for stock assessment purposes during the WPTT22(AS) in October 2020.
Para. 70	The WPDCS further NOTED that, related to improvements in the accuracy of fisheries statistics in the region, a number of gillnet vessels may be 'double registered' to Pakistan and I.R. Iran and REQUESTED that Pakistan and I.R. Iran, with facilitation provided by the IOTC Secretariat, take any possible measure (including the definition of a plan of action) to rectify this issue to avoid the possibility of double-counting of vessels and landed catches by these vessels, and to provide an update for the next WPDCS meeting.	Updates: [pending] The issue was re-iterated during the WPTT22(AS) but no practical actions have yet been taken by involved CPCs.

Updates on data-related requests from other Working Parties

Para. 73	The WPDCS RECALLED that having length-weight and other biological data hosted in a common, openly accessible database is one of the priority activities considered by this Working Party, and that the ROS Regional Database can only partially fulfil this requirement as it would be unable – for instance – to accommodate for other sources of information such as biological data collected from canneries.	<p>Updates: [pending]</p> <p>WPDCS to continue discussing about the way forward for the implementation of a biological data repository.</p>
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Actions taken by Iran to improve catch & effort data in 2018

Para. 89-90	<p>The WPDCS NOTED the ≈30% increase in catches in Iran's gillnet fisheries between 2013 – 2018, despite a 20% decrease in fishing effort over the same period (from 916,000 days in 2013 to 734,000 days in 2018).</p> <p>The WPDCS REQUESTED I.R. Iran to clarify the reasons for the apparent inverse relationship between declining fishing effort and increasing gillnet catches in recent years and to provide an update for the next WPDCS meeting – specifically whether the increase in catches is related to improvements in the processing and reporting (such as the estimation of disaggregation of catches between tuna and non-tuna like species), or alternatively the impact of fuel subsidies or changes in fishing grounds.</p>	<p>Updates: [pending]</p>
Para. 93-94	<p>Finally, the WPDCS NOTED with interest a project proposal drafted by IFO (Iran fisheries Organization) in combination with IRD (Pelagic Ecosystem Observatory) for a scoping study to set up a high-resolution data collection framework for small-scale gillnet and longline tuna vessels in the Gulf of Oman (IOTC-2019-WPDCS15-INF07).</p> <p>ACKNOWLEDGING the potential of this project, the WPDCS AGREED that discussion on the prioritization of the activity as well as a feasible timeline for its possible implementation will be conducted during the review of the WPDCS program of work.</p>	<p>Updates: [pending]</p> <p>I.R. Iran / IRD to provide updates on the project and the WPDCS to further discuss its support, if required.</p>

Fisheries data collection and recent fisheries statistics in Thai waters: a case of Andaman Sea

Para. 104	The WPDCS NOTED that no catch of tropical tunas was reported in the nominal catches of coastal purse seiners fishing in the Andaman Sea, despite reports of length frequencies for skipjack tunas by Thailand to IOTC, and REQUESTED that Thailand provide an update on the catch of coastal purse seiners at the next WPDCS meeting	Updates: [pending]
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Issues with data collection of tuna and tuna-like species in Pakistan and introduction of logbook system for small scale fisheries

Para. 112	The WPDCS further NOTED that Pakistan is in the process of developing a National Fisheries Strategy that includes proposals to improve the fisheries management systems of all Pakistan's capture fisheries, and REQUESTED that the Government of Pakistan collaborate with WWF-Pakistan, FAO-Pakistan, and the IOTC Secretariat for assistance and technical support as necessary.	Updates: [pending]
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Collecting information on the pelagic phase of marine turtles from at-sea observations: the case of purse seine fisheries in the Indian Ocean

Para. 126	Finally, the WPDCS ACKNOWLEDGED that the Seychelles have collected some valuable information on bycatch and discards from the observer program, including on turtles, and REQUESTED Seychelles to provide data on discards to the Secretariat as per the IOTC form 1DI.	Updates: [pending]
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Species composition, abundance and preliminary Spawning Potential Ratio (SPR) assessment for tuna and tuna like species: some results from application of mobile phone Catch Assessment Survey, Kenya

Para. 132	The WPDCS SUGGESTED that Kenya liaise with FAO Kenya and/or the IOTC Secretariat to explore the possibility of future support and technical assistance regarding improvements in the Kenya's fisheries data collection and reporting systems, validation of the results of the Catch Assessment Survey for 2019, and revisions to the historical catches as required to minimise discontinuities in the catch series as result of changes in the data collection system.	Updates: [pending]
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Resolution 15/02 Mandatory statistical requirements for IOTC Members and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs)		
Para. 139-141	<p>The WPDCS NOTED that the results of the genomic analysis might be due to the cold upwelling that isolates the individuals in the South from those in the North, suggesting that the entire population of the South African coast is in reality entirely sourced from the Indian Ocean.</p> <p>The WPDCS NOTED that if these findings are confirmed, then all Yellowfin tuna reported by South Africa to ICCAT should be reported to IOTC as well.</p> <p>For this reason, the WPDCS REQUESTED the IOTC Secretariat to liaise with ICCAT to regularly receive this information in view of using the data for future stock assessments of the Indian Ocean Yellowfin tuna.</p>	Updates: [pending]
Para. 142	In light of these results from South Africa, the WPDCS REQUESTED that similar projects are implemented for fleets that operate in the South-eastern waters of the Atlantic ocean to assess the extent of distribution of the stock.	Updates: [pending]
Proposed metadata standards for the fisheries domain		
Para. 179	The WPDCS AGREED that the adoption of standard metadata would be particularly useful to enable proper referencing of all IOTC scientific assets, and that the harmonization of keywords to describe the asset contents would benefit from the results of similar exercises already performed by other RFMOs	Updates: [pending]
Date and place of the 16th and 17th sessions of the WPDCS: 2020 & 2021		
Para. 185	The WPDCS REQUESTED that the IOTC Secretariat liaise with CPCs to determine the host country for the 16 th and 17 th sessions of the WPDCS respectively.	<p>Updates: [pending]</p> <p>Due to the insurgence of the CoViD-19 pandemic and the subsequent introduction of travel restrictions at global level, the 16th session of the WPDCS (2020) is going to be held remotely. Considering that the 17th session of the WPDCS is scheduled for late November 2021, and in light of a possible lift of the travel restrictions and health measures by that date, it might be worth to at least preliminarily identify possible hosts for the 17th session of the Working Party.</p>