

15 June 2021

IOTC CIRCULAR 2021-29

Dear Sir/Madam

REPORTING OF FISHERIES STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 2020 TO THE IOTC

This letter provides the first reminder for the reporting of IOTC fisheries statistics according to the provisions in IOTC Resolutions 15/01, 15/02, 12/04, 12/06, 13/04, 13/05, 17/05, 18/02, 18/05, 18/07, 19/01, 19/02 and 19/03. Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs) that have not submitted complete statistics for 2020 are invited to provide this information no later than 30 June 2021.

Note, for all CPCs reporting on longline fisheries the deadline for the submission of final data is no later than 30 December 2021. In addition, other parties having fisheries in the IOTC area of competence are invited to provide the same information, if possible, according to the same time frame.

I would also like to bring to your attention paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 6 of [Resolution 15/02](#) on mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC CPCs:

Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs) shall provide the following information to the IOTC Secretariat according to the timelines specified in paragraph 7:

Paragraph 2: *“Estimates of the total catch by species and gear, if possible quarterly, that shall be submitted annually as referred in paragraph 7 (separated, whenever possible, by retained catches in live weight and by discards in live weight or numbers) for all species under the IOTC mandate as well as the most commonly caught elasmobranch species according to records of catches and incidents as established in [Resolution 15/01](#) on the recording of catch and effort data by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence (or any subsequent superseding Resolution).”*

Paragraph 3: *“Concerning cetaceans, seabirds and marine turtles data should be provided as stated in [Resolution 13/04](#) on Conservation of Cetaceans, [Resolution 12/06](#) on reduction the incidental bycatch of seabirds in longline fisheries and [Resolution 12/04](#) on the conservation of marine turtles (or any subsequent superseding resolutions).”*

Paragraph 4: *“Provisions on catch and effort data, applicable to tuna and tuna-like species, shall also be applicable to the most commonly caught elasmobranch species according to records of catches and incidents as established in [Resolution 15/01](#) on the recording of catch and effort by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence (or any subsequent superseding Resolution).”*

Paragraph 6: *“Given that the activities of purse seine supply vessels and the use of Fish Aggregating Devices (FAD) are an integral part of the fishing effort exerted by the purse seine fleet, the following data shall be provided by CPCs:*

- a) The number and characteristics of purse seine supply vessels: (i) operating under their flag, (ii) assisting purse seine vessels operating under their flag, or (iii) licensed to operate in their exclusive economic zones, and that have been present in the IOTC area of competence;*

Distribution

IOTC Contracting Parties: Australia, Bangladesh, China, Comoros, Eritrea, European Union, France (Territories), India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Rep of), Japan, Kenya, Rep. of Korea, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, United Rep. of Tanzania, Thailand, United Kingdom, Yemen. **Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties:** Liberia, Senegal. **Intergovernmental Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations. Chairperson IOTC. Copy to:** FAO Headquarters, FAO Representatives to CPCs.

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- b) *Number of days at sea by purse seine and purse seine supply vessels by 1° grid area and month to be reported by the flag state of the supply vessel;*
 - c) *The total number set by the purse seine and purse seine supply vessels per quarter, as well as:*
 - i. *The positions, dates at the time of setting, FAD identifier and FAD type (i.e. drifting log or debris, drifting raft or fad with a net, drifting raft or FAD without a net, anchored FADs and other FADs e.g. Payao, dead animal etc.;*
 - ii. *The FAD design characteristics of each FAD (consistent with Annex 1 to [Resolution 15/08](#) [superseded by [Resolution 19/02](#)] Procedures on a fishing aggregating devices (FADs) management Plan, including a limitation on the number of FADS, more detailed specifications of catch reporting from FAD sets, and the development of improved FAD designs to reduce the incidence of entanglement of non-target species)."*

In accordance with paragraph 4 of [Resolution 18/07](#), on measures applicable in case of non-fulfilment of reporting obligations in the IOTC:

Paragraph 4: *"To facilitate the reporting of zero catches as required under paragraph 1 of Annex I of this Resolution, the following procedure shall apply:*

- a) *as part of the IOTC 1RC electronic form used to report nominal catches, the Secretariat shall include a matrix by IOTC species as well as the most commonly caught elasmobranch species according to records of catches and incidents as established in Resolution 15/01 on the recording of catch and effort data by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence (or any subsequent superseding Resolution) and main IOTC gear groups on the basis of the format set out in Annex II of this Resolution;*
- b) *CPCs, as part of their total catch data reporting, shall complete the cells in the matrix with either a value of 'one' (1) to indicate where that CPC had catches (positive catch) for a particular species/gear combination or a value of 'zero' (0) to indicate where that CPC had no catches (zero landings + zero discards) for a particular species/gear combination;*
- c) *The "Catch columns" section of the electronic Form 1RC shall only include reports of positive catches."*

In accordance with paragraph 26 of [Resolution 19/01](#), on an interim plan for rebuilding the Indian ocean yellowfin tuna stock in the IOTC area of competence:

Paragraph 26 *"For the purposes of the implementation of this resolution, CPCs shall submit their catches of yellowfin disaggregated for vessel 24 m overall length and over, and those under 24 m if they fish outside the EEZ as per resolution 15/02."*

In accordance with paragraphs 10 and 11 of [Resolution 19/02](#), on fish aggregating devices (FADs):

Paragraph 10: *"CPCs shall require vessels flying their flag and fishing on DFADs to annually submit the number of operational buoys followed by vessel, lost and transferred (total number of DFADs tagged at sea, by deploying an instrumented buoy on a log or another vessel DFAD already in the water) by 1° by 1° grid area and month strata and DFAD type under the confidentiality rules set by [Resolution 12/02](#) (or any subsequent superseding Resolution)"*

Paragraph 11: *"All CPCs shall ensure that all fishing vessels as referred to in paragraph 2 shall record fishing activities in association with FADs using the specific data elements found in Annex III (DFAD) and Annex IV (AFAD) in the section of the "FAD-logbook."*

In accordance with paragraph 6 of [Resolution 17/05](#), on the conservation of sharks caught in association with fisheries managed by IOTC:

Paragraph 6: *"CPCs shall report data for catches of sharks no later than 30 June of the following year, in accordance with IOTC data reporting requirements and procedures in [Resolution 15/02](#), mandatory statistical requirements for IOTC Members and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs) (or any subsequent*

superseding resolution), including all available historical data, estimates and life status of discards (dead or alive) and size frequencies.”

In accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3, of [Resolution 18/02](#), on conservation measures for blue shark caught in association with IOTC fisheries:

Paragraph 2. *“In order to curb the level of unreported catches, each CPC shall ensure that its vessels catching blue shark in association with IOTC fisheries in the Agreement area record their catch in accordance with the requirements set out in the [Resolution 15/01](#), on the recording of catch and effort data by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence or any Resolution superseding it.”*

Paragraph 3. *“CPCs shall implement data collection programmes that ensure improved reporting of accurate blue shark catch, effort, size and discard data to IOTC in full accordance with the [Resolution 15/02](#) on the Mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs), or any Resolution superseding it*

In accordance with paragraphs 7 and 8, of [Resolution 19/03](#), on conservation measures of mobulid rays caught in association with fisheries in the IOTC area of competence:

Paragraph 7 *“Notwithstanding paragraph 3, in the case of mobulid rays that are unintentionally caught by artisanal fishing, the vessel should report the information on the accidental catch to the responsible governmental authorities, or other competent authority, at the point of landing. Mobulid rays unintentionally caught may only be used for purposes of local consumption. This derogation will expire in 1 January 2022.”*

Paragraph 8 *“CPCs shall report the information and data collected on interactions (i.e. number of discards and releases) with mobulid rays by vessels through logbooks and/or through observer programs. The data shall be provided to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 June of the following year, and according to the timelines specified in [Resolution 15/02](#) (or any subsequent revision).”*

In accordance with paragraphs 7 and 8, of [Resolution 18/05](#), on conservation measures for striped marlin, black marlin and blue marlin:

Paragraph 7: *“CPCs shall ensure that their vessels catching Striped Marlin, Black Marlin, Blue Marlin and Indo-pacific Sailfish in the IOTC Area of Competence record their catch in accordance with the requirements set out in [Resolution 15/01](#), on the recording of catch and effort data by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence or any Resolution superseding it.”*

Paragraph 8: *“CPCs shall implement data collection programmes to ensure accurate reporting of Striped Marlin, Black Marlin, Blue Marlin and Indo-pacific Sailfish catches, released alive and/or discarded, together with effort, size and discard data to IOTC in full accordance with the [Resolution 15/02](#), on the Mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs), or any Resolution superseding it.”*

In accordance with paragraphs 4 and 7, of [Resolution 13/04](#), on the conservation of cetaceans:

Paragraph 4: *“CPCs using other gear types fishing for tuna and tuna-like species associated with cetaceans shall report all interactions with cetaceans to the relevant authority of the flag State and include all the information outlined in paragraph 3b(i–vi).”*

Paragraph 7: *“CPCs shall report the information and data collected under paragraph 3(b) and paragraph 4, through logbooks, or when an observer is onboard through observer programs, and provide to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 June of the following year and according to the timelines specified in [Resolution 10/02](#) [superseded by [Resolution 15/02](#)] (or any subsequent revision).”*

In accordance with paragraphs 4 and 7, of [Resolution 13/05](#), on the conservation of whale sharks:

Paragraph 4 *“CPCs using other gear types fishing for tuna and tuna-like species associated with a whale shark shall Report all interactions with whale sharks to the relevant authority of the flag State and include all the information outlined in paragraph 3b(i–v).”*

Paragraph 7: *“CPCs shall report the information and data collected under paragraph 3(b) and paragraph 4 through logbooks, or when an observer is onboard through observer programs, and provide to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 June of the following year and according to the timelines specified in Resolution 10/02 [superseded by [Resolution 15/02](#)] (or any subsequent revision).”*

Furthermore, following the request to increase the level of detail for the aggregated discard data as reported by CPCs, the IOTC Secretariat has updated Form_1DI to include provisions for *optionally* reporting the reference quarter for each record.

Also, in accordance with the request from the 20th Session of the Scientific Committee (see IOTC-2017-SC20-R[E], paragraph 111) the IOTC Secretariat has updated Form_3FA to also incorporate a specific field to provide FOB ownership details for each record.

In accordance with paragraph 26 of Resolution 19/01, the IOTC Secretariat introduced a new form (Form_1RC- YFT) specifically designed for the reporting of quarterly Yellowfin tuna catches by gear and size / area of operation of the vessels.

The *Forms for the Submission of Fisheries Statistics* to the IOTC simplify the process of entering and submitting the data and are available as MS Excel template forms ([available for downloading here](#)). Forms in this format allow the reporting officer to enter the data directly on the form for later submission by email to the IOTC Secretariat. Please, refer to the document *Notes for the Completion of IOTC Forms* for details on how to use the forms: ([Click here](#))

In order to facilitate the reporting of fisheries data, the IOTC Secretariat has updated the *Guidelines for the reporting of fisheries statistics to the IOTC* to accommodate the new requirements. The Guidelines are based on the existing IOTC Data Requirements ([Click here](#)):

Please do not hesitate to contact the Secretariat should you require any additional information concerning the above.

Yours sincerely



Christopher O'Brien
Executive Secretary

Attachments:

- Nil