Report of the
18th Session of the Standing Committee on Administration & Finance

By Videoconference, 2 June 2021
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**HOW TO INTERPRET TERMINOLOGY CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT**

The following report has been written using the following terms and associated definitions so as to remove ambiguity surrounding how particular paragraphs should be interpreted.

**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.

**Level 3:** General terms to be used for consistency:

- **AGREED:** Any point of discussion from a meeting which the IOTC body considers to be an agreed course of action covered by its mandate, which has not already been dealt with under Level 1 or level 2 above; a general point of agreement among delegations/participants of a meeting which does not need to be considered/adopted by the next level in the Commission’s structure.

- **NOTED/NOTING:** Any point of discussion from a meeting which the IOTC body considers to be important enough to record in a meeting report for future reference.

*Any other term:* Any other term may be used in addition to the Level 3 terms to highlight to the reader of an IOTC report, the importance of the relevant paragraph. However, other terms used are considered for explanatory/informational purposes only and shall have no higher rating within the reporting terminology hierarchy than Level 3, described above (e.g. **CONSIDERED; URGED; ACKNOWLEDGED**).
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Executive summary

The 18th Session of the Standing Committee on Administration and Finance (SCAF) of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) was held by videoconference on 2 June 2021. Credentials were received for 204 delegates, from 24 Contracting Parties (Members), 8 Observers and invited experts. The meeting was Chaired by the SCAF Chairperson, Mr Hussain Sinan (Maldives).

The following requests were made by the SCAF.

The SCAF NOTED the increased levels of participation in IOTC meetings in 2020 due to the use of videoconference platforms. The SCAF REQUESTED the Secretariat to explore the use of videoconference platforms for extending participation in meetings and capacity development activities in the future (para 7).

The SCAF REQUESTED Bangladesh, Mozambique, Somalia and Tanzania to provide an update to the Commission on the status of their respective contribution payments (para 23).

The SCAF REQUESTED the Secretariat to obtain legal advice from FAO regarding the implications of omitting Members that are not engaging with the Commission from the IOTC Schedule of contributions and provide advice on this matter to SCAF19 (para 25).

The European Union informed the SCAF that it intends to make a voluntary contribution of the order of magnitude of at least €500,000 towards the Science Committee’s workplan and capacity building activities in 2022. The SCAF welcomed this generous offer and REQUESTED the EU to work with the Secretariat to develop a project compatible with the Commission’s objectives (para 36).

The SCAF made the following recommendations to the Commission.

The SCAF NOTED the tremendous effort made by the Secretariat in obtaining the contributions of ex-members in recent years. The SCAF RECOMMENDED that due to the lack of success by the Secretariat, the Commission cease pursuing the outstanding contributions of ex-Members: Belize, Guinea, Vanuatu and Sierra Leone, but ensure that the debt be maintained and reported annually in a separate ‘outstanding contributions’ table (para 26).

The SCAF RECOMMENDED that any ex-Member must pay all outstanding debts before re-joining the Commission. The SCAF also RECOMMENDED that the above actions relating to ex-Members should not set a precedent for Members (para 27).

On the Programme of Work and Budget Estimates for 2022 and tentatively for 2023

The SCAF RECOMMENDED that the Commission adopt the Programme of Work and Budget and the scheme of contributions for 2022 and 2023 (indicative) as outlined in Appendix 4 and Appendix 5, respectively, while NOTING that the Program of Work for the IOTC Secretariat is based on the assumption that the nature and extent of the activities undertaken by the IOTC Secretariat will remain within the current scope. Any new activities agreed to during the 25th Session of the Commission that have budgetary consequences, will require an amendment of the figures (para 38).

On the finalisation of the IOTC Financial Regulations (2019)

The SCAF RECOMMENDED to the Commission that the latest date contributions should be paid in each budget year should be 30 June and the date, in a budget year, when un-paid contributions will be in ‘arrears’ should be 1 July, and forthwith these dates be included in the IOTC Financial Regulations (para 41).

The SCAF RECOMMENDED to the Commission that Member States be urged to pay the contributions as early as possible to maintain financial stability of the IOTC, preferably prior to the annual SCAF meeting. Members who have difficulties in meeting the deadline due to differences in financial years or other means shall inform the SCAF about any possible delays (para 42).

On the election of the SCAF Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

The SCAF unanimously re-elected Mr. Hussain Sinan (Maldives) as Chairperson and Mr Muhammad Farhan Khan (Pakistan) as the Vice Chairperson of the SCAF for the next biennium. The SCAF RECOMMENDED that the Commission endorse the nominations of these Officers for the next biennium (para 43).
1. **Opening of the Session**

1. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the 18th Session of the Standing Committee on Administration and Finance (SCAF18) of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) was held by videoconference. The meeting was opened and chaired by the SCAF Chairperson, Mr Hussain Sinan (Maldives).

2. **Credentials and Admission of observers**

2. Letters of Credentials were received from 24 Contracting Parties present at the meeting.

3. Pursuant to Article VII of the Agreement establishing the IOTC and Rule XIV of the IOTC Rules of Procedure, the Commission admitted the following observers:

   - **Members and Associate Members of the FAO that are not Members of the Commission.**
     - United States of America
   - **Intergovernmental organizations having special competence in the field of activity of the Commission.**
     - International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
   - **Non-governmental organizations having special competence in the field of activity of the Commission.**
     - Global Tuna Alliance
     - International Pole and Line Foundation
     - International Seafood Sustainability Foundation
     - PEW Charitable Trusts
     - SHARK Project
     - Sustainable Fisheries Partnership
   - **Invited consultants and experts.**
     - Taiwan, Province of China.

4. The list of participants is provided in Appendix 1.

3. **Adoption of the Agenda**

5. The SCAF ADOPTED the Agenda provided in Appendix 2. The documents presented to the SCAF are listed in Appendix 3.

4. **Report of the IOTC Secretariat on 2020**

6. The SCAF NOTED document IOTC–2021–SCAF18–03 which outlined the activities of the Secretariat in 2020 that covered its support to scientific and compliance activities; communications, support to meetings; information technology; and administration.

7. The SCAF NOTED the increased levels of participation in IOTC meetings in 2020 due to the use of videoconference platforms. The SCAF REQUESTED the Secretariat to explore the use of videoconference platforms for extending participation in meetings and capacity development activities in the future.

8. The SCAF COMMENDED the work of the Secretariat in 2020 which was a particularly challenging year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

5. **Financial Statements**

5.1 **Financial statement: Fiscal year 2020**


10. The SCAF NOTED the total of contributions due in 2020 for the 2020 budget was (US)$4,367,285, and that as of 31 December 2020, a total of $3,730,858 had been received. The SCAF further NOTED the total of
Contributions received in 2020 also included outstanding contributions due from years prior to 2020. Therefore, there was a significant difference between the amount of the contributions due for the 2020 budget year and the contributions received ($636,427).

11. The SCAF NOTED that out of the total budget of $4,367,285 the Commission spent (actuals) $3,023,638. The level of under expenditure from the budget amounted to a total of $1,343,647 and was mainly due to a reduction in activities caused by the COVID-19 restrictions.

12. The SCAF NOTED that the unspent budget in 2020 was allocated to the Working Capital Fund.

13. The SCAF NOTED that extra-budgetary funds continue to be an important part of the overall budget and thanked those member States that provided extra-budgetary funds in 2020. The Commission received extra-budgetary contributions from Australia ($13,414), China ($18,000) and the European Union (approx. $246,998). Australia also provided an additional $207,855 to carry out a Management Strategy Evaluation for bigeye, yellowfin and albacore tunas.

5.1.1 On FAO Employer Contributions

14. The SCAF NOTED document IOTC-2021-SCAF18-09 which provided the SCAF with explanatory information on employer contributions and the results of an analysis of recent employer contribution costs.

15. The SCAF NOTED that the costs of employer contributions, proportional to salaries, have been relatively stable since 2017.

5.2 Contributions Outstanding


17. The SCAF NOTED the cumulative total of outstanding contribution payments has increased by around 20%, from $3,162,341 as of 31 December 2019, to $3,798,769 as of 31 December 2020.

18. The SCAF NOTED that no contributions were received from nine Members in 2020, namely Eritrea, India, I.R. Iran, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Yemen. The contributions from Comoros and Pakistan did not cover the full amount due for the year.

19. The SCAF also NOTED that as of 31 December 2020, 12 Members had outstanding contributions totalling $3,569,560 (excluding ex-Members).

20. Pakistan informed the SCAF that its contribution payment is currently being processed and can be expected to be paid in June 2021. Korea informed the SCAF that due to internal processes, the payment of its contribution is delayed and is expected to be finalised by the end July. Comoros informed the SCAF that it faces continual hardship and it has been difficult to pay the full amount of IOTC contributions in recent years. The SCAF NOTED Comoros commitment to do the best it can to clear all outstanding contributions. China informed the SCAF that its contribution payment is currently being processed.

21. The SCAF NOTED that the I.R. of Iran was responsible for around 45% of the total outstanding contributions ($1,696,909). Iran informed the SCAF that due to financial sanctions, payments of contributions have not been possible in recent years; however, Iran is confident of paying most of its arrears in 2021. The SCAF invited the Secretariat to continue working bilaterally with the Republic of Iran to facilitate this process.

22. The SCAF NOTED the range of difficulties being faced by some Members regarding payment of their contributions. However, the SCAF stressed the importance of timely payment of contributions to ensure the effective functioning of the Commission and encouraged Members to consider working with FAO and the Secretariat to pay the outstanding contributions on a pre-arranged schedule.

23. The SCAF REQUESTED Bangladesh, Mozambique, Somalia and Tanzania to provide an update to the Commission on the status of their respective contribution payments.

24. The SCAF NOTED the long-term lack of engagement of Eritrea, Sudan and Yemen with the Commission and that these Members have continued to default on their obligations. The SCAF NOTED the negative impact on the IOTC budget due to Eritrea, Sudan and Yemen not paying their contributions (around $77,000 per year).
25. The SCAF REQUESTED the Secretariat to obtain legal advice from FAO regarding the implications of omitting Members that are not engaging with the Commission from the IOTC Schedule of contributions and provide advice on this matter to SCAF19.

26. The SCAF NOTED the tremendous effort made by the Secretariat in obtaining the contributions of ex-members in recent years. The SCAF RECOMMENDED that due to the lack of success by the Secretariat, the Commission cease pursuing the outstanding contributions of ex-Members: Belize, Guinea, Vanuatu and Sierra Leone, but ensure that the debt be maintained and reported annually in a separate ‘outstanding contributions’ table.

27. The SCAF RECOMMENDED that any ex-Member must pay all outstanding debts before re-joining the Commission. The SCAF also RECOMMENDED that the above actions relating to ex-Members should not set a precedent for Members.

5.3 IOTC Meeting Participation Fund

28. The SCAF NOTED document IOTC–2021–SCAF18–06 which provides past and present details of the IOTC Meeting Participation Fund (MPF).

29. The SCAF NOTED the importance of extra-budgetary contributions in meeting the current demand for the MPF and ACKNOWLEDGED the extra contributions to the MPF received from China ($18,000) and Australia ($13,414) in 2020.

30. The SCAF NOTED that any unused funds in the MPF will remain within the MPF.

31. The SCAF NOTED that the demand on the MPF was much lower than expected due to COVID-19 travel restrictions and therefore the 2021 and proposed 2022 budgets have been reduced accordingly.

5.4 Mid-term financial report 2021

32. The SCAF NOTED the mid-term financial report 2021 provided in document IOTC-2021-SCAF18-07-REV1.

6. Programme of Work and Budget Estimates for 2022 and tentatively for 2023

6.1 Programme of Work and Budget

33. The SCAF NOTED document IOTC–2021–SCAF18–08 which outlined the budget estimates for the IOTC Secretariat’s Program of Work for the financial period 1 January to 31 December 2022, together with indicative figures for the 2023 financial period.

34. The SCAF NOTED that the overall budget amount proposed for the Administrative Budget for 2022 is US$ 4,071,765 and is based on IOTC’s normal operations and any updated instructions from the Commission. The SCAF NOTED that the Secretariat will be operating with a full complement of staff in 2022. The SCAF also NOTED the proposed 2022 budget represents a 4% decrease from the corresponding 2021 budget.

35. The SCAF AGREED on an Administrative Budget for 2022 of US$ 4,071,765 (Appendix 4). The SCAF also AGREED on the corresponding revised table of contributions (Appendix 5).

36. The European Union informed the SCAF that it intends to make a voluntary contribution of the order of magnitude of at least €500,000 towards the Science Committee’s workplan and capacity building activities in 2022. The SCAF welcomed this generous offer and REQUESTED the EU to work with the Secretariat to develop a project compatible with the Commission’s objectives.

37. The United Kingdom informed the SCAF that its catch history for 2017 to 2019 required a revision to reverse the UK catches reported to the IOTC by the European Union back to the United Kingdom. The Secretariat updated the catch information as required and provided a revised Scheme of Contributions table.

38. The SCAF RECOMMENDED that the Commission adopt the Programme of Work and Budget and the scheme of contributions for 2022 and 2023 (indicative) as outlined in Appendix 4 and Appendix 5, respectively, while NOTING that the Program of Work for the IOTC Secretariat is based on the assumption that the nature and extent of the activities undertaken by the IOTC Secretariat will remain within the current scope. Any new
activities agreed to during the 25th Session of the Commission (S25) that have budgetary consequences, will require an amendment of the figures.


39. The SCAF was tasked to recommend two dates to be included in Annex Reg. 5 of the IOTC Financial Regulations, namely: the latest date contributions should be paid in each budget year; and the date, in a budget year, when un-paid contributions will be in ‘arrears’.

40. The SCAF NOTED document IOTC-2021-SCAF18-10 which provided background information about the revision of the IOTC Financial regulations and the results of a survey conducted by the Secretariat to gather information from Members on preferred dates.

41. The SCAF RECOMMENDED to the Commission that the latest date contributions should be paid in each budget year should be 30 June and the date, in a budget year, when un-paid contributions will be in ‘arrears’ should be 1 July, and forthwith these dates be included in the IOTC Financial Regulations.

42. The SCAF RECOMMENDED to the Commission that Member States be urged to pay the contributions as early as possible to maintain financial stability of the IOTC, preferably prior to the annual SCAF meeting. Members who have difficulties in meeting the deadline due to differences in financial years or other means shall inform the SCAF about any possible delays.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 Election of the SCAF Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

43. The SCAF unanimously re-elected Mr. Hussain Sinan (Maldives) as Chairperson and Mr Muhammad Farhan Khan (Pakistan) as the Vice Chairperson of the SCAF for the next biennium. The SCAF RECOMMENDED that the Commission endorse the nominations of these Officers for the next biennium.

44. The SCAF NOTED that both officers will be serving their second terms in their respective roles for the SCAF and the SCAF THANKED Mr Sinan and Mr Khan for their willingness to continue providing their services to the SCAF.

9. Adoption of the report

45. The report of the 18th Session of the IOTC Standing Committee on Administration and Finance (IOTC–2021–SCAF18–R) was ADOPTED on 3 June 2021.
APPENDIX 1
AGENDA FOR 17TH SESSION STANDING COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

2. LETTERS OF CREDENTIALS / ADMISSION OF OBSERVERS

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (IOTC-2021-SCAF18-01, IOTC-2021-SCAF18-02)

4. REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT: 2020 (IOTC-2021-SCAF18-03)

5. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

5.1 Financial Statement: Fiscal Year 2020 (IOTC-2021-SCAF18-04)

5.1.1 On FAO Employer Contributions (IOTC-2021-SCAF18-09)
In 2020, the Commission requested the Secretariat to provide more information about how IOTC staff Employer Contributions are calculated by FAO. This document provides the SCAF with explanatory information on employer contributions and the results of an analysis of recent employer contribution costs.

5.2 Contributions Outstanding (IOTC-2021-SCAF18-05)
Note, it is proposed that the SCAF consider writing-off the outstanding contributions of ex-Members and omitting Eritrea, Sudan and Yemen from the schedule of annual contributions until such time that they, respectively, re-engage with the Commission.

5.3 IOTC Meeting Participation Fund (IOTC-2021-SCAF18-06)

5.4 Mid-term financial report 2021 (IOTC-2021-SCAF18-07)

6. PROGRAMME OF WORK AND BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR 2022 AND TENTATIVELY FOR 2023

6.1 Programme of work and budget (IOTC-2021-SCAF18-08)

7. FINALISATION OF THE AMENDMENTS TO THE IOTC FINANCIAL REGULATIONS (IOTC-2021-SCAF18-10)
Notwithstanding the 2019 adoption of the IOTC Financial Regulations by the Commission, two clauses related to the payment of contributions (Annex, Reg 5) remain to be confirmed by the Commission. This paper contains the results of a survey that asked Members their opinion on the latest date contributions should be paid and the date when contributions would be in ‘Arrears’.

8. OTHER BUSINESS
8.1 Election of the SCAF Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.
The first terms of both the current Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson finish at the conclusion of SCAF18.

9. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF SCAF18 (3 June)
## APPENDIX 2
### LIST OF DOCUMENTS

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## APPENDIX 4
### PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2022 AND INDICATIVE BUDGET FOR 2023 (IN US$)

<table>
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<th>Actuals 2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2023</th>
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<td>145,473</td>
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<td>127,083</td>
<td>129,624</td>
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<td>96,944</td>
<td>98,883</td>
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<td>Compliance Manager (P5)</td>
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<td>140,197</td>
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<td>143,004</td>
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<td>Data Coordinator (P4)</td>
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<td>717,435</td>
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-4% 6.9%
## APPENDIX 5

**SCALE OF CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2022 (in US$)**

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