



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Agriculture,  
Water and the Environment**

Ref: D22/174376

Dr Chris O'Brien  
Executive Secretary, Indian Ocean Tuna Commission  
PO Box 1011  
VICTORIA SEYCHELLES

Dear Dr O'Brien

I refer to Ms Kim Jung-re's letter of 17 June 2021 about Australia's compliance issues in the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC). Australia considers strengthening compliance with IOTC conservation and management measures fundamental for effective fisheries management and the integrity of the IOTC. Australia's responses to the matters set out in the letter are as follows:

Resolution 17/05 Submission of data regarding sharks – size frequency

Australia received a non-Compliant rating on its submission of data regarding shark size frequency. As per previous advice, due to very low levels of effort in Australia's relevant fisheries, sampling is undertaken upon landing and is primarily focused on achieving effective sampling coverage for target species. Sharks are not a target species in these fisheries and Australia has a very low retained catch of sharks (many species cannot be landed and all live sharks must be released). Further, it is not practical to obtain size measurements of released sharks, as best practice guidelines for their release are to not remove them from the water. As a result, Australia is unable to meet the relevant sampling coverage and is unable to provide size frequency data for sharks. We also note that CoC18 recommended further consideration of this measure as it applies to CPCs who do not have a shark fishery or have banned the landing of sharks in national legislation.

Resolution 18/07 Zero catch matrix

Australia received a Partial Compliant rating on its zero catch matrix. Australia's data reporting team is looking into how Australia's submission can be improved for future years to ensure any discrepancy in data is reduced or removed. Currently, the Australian Government is undertaking a number of processes to update and modernise a number of its fisheries data management and IT systems. This process represents a major transition in data systems and will be ongoing through 2022.

Resolution 17/05 Catch & Effort data on sharks for coastal fisheries

Australia received a Partial Compliance on the submission of its Catch & Effort data on sharks for coastal fisheries. Australia's coastal fisheries do not target IOTC species or sharks. Similar to the Partial Compliance on the zero catch matrix, Australia is looking into how Australia's submission can be improved for future years to ensure any discrepancy in data is reduced or removed.

My sincere thanks to you, as well as the Compliance Committee Chair and members, for your ongoing efforts to strengthen compliance with IOTC measures.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Day". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

George Day  
Assistant Secretary  
Fisheries Branch  
17 March 2022