

IOTC-2022-CoC19-04a [E]

REPORT ON TRANSHIPMENT RESOLUTION 21/02

Prepared by IOTC Secretariat, 23 April 2022

The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) Resolution 21/02 *On Establishing a Programme for Transhipment by Large-Scale Fishing Vessels* calls for all transhipment operations of tuna and tuna like species and sharks species in the IOTC Area to take place in port, except under special conditions. In accordance with this Resolution, at sea transhipments will be monitored by IOTC observers. This applies initially to large-scale tuna longline fishing vessels and to carrier vessels authorised to receive transhipments from these vessels at sea.

Paragraph 4. The Commission hereby establishes a programme to monitor transhipment at sea which applies initially to large-scale tuna longline fishing vessels (hereafter referred to as the "LSTLVs") and to carrier vessels authorised to receive transhipments from these vessels at sea. [...]

Executing the at-sea Transhipment Programme

The Consortium of Marine Resource Assessment Group and Capricorn Fisheries is responsible for executing work under the IOTC at-sea transhipment programme. The responsibilities of the Consortium include the training and provision of qualified observers, managing the logistics for the deployment of observers and their repatriation at the end of the deployment and maintaining the IOTC at-sea transhipment programme database. The Consortium is also tasked with providing the IOTC Secretariat with five-day reports, which summarise the activities undertaken by the programme every five days. A report for each deployment is also submitted to the IOTC Secretariat at the end of each deployment. In line with the agreed confidentiality rules, these reports are subsequently edited by the IOTC Secretariat and forwarded to the concerned fleets whose vessels have transhipped under the deployment for which the report covers. Additionally, the reports for deployments where Southern Bluefin tuna (SBT) have been transhipped are also forwarded to the Secretariat of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT), as per the Letter of Understanding (LOU) signed between the IOTC and CCSBT. This arrangement has the benefit of minimising costs to the fleets that catches and tranships SBT in the IOTC Area.

Fleets currently participating in the at-sea Transhipment Programme

The following fleets have participated in the at-sea Transhipment Programme in 2021: China, Taiwan China, Japan, Korea (Republic of), Malaysia, Oman and Seychelles.

Paragraph 5. The CPCs that flag LSTLVs shall determine whether or not to authorise their LSTLVs to tranship at sea. [...]

Table 1, below, list the fleets with number of Large-Scale Tuna Longline Vessels (LSTLVs) currently authorised to operate in the IOTC Area and indicates which fleets have participated in the Programme in 2021.

Table 1. Number of Large-Scale Tuna Longline Vessels (LSTLVs) authorised to operate in the IOTC Area, and remarks on participation in the Transhipment Programme.

Fleets	No LSTLVs.	Remarks
Australia	4	Not transhipping at sea.
Bangladesh		N/A
China	126	Participated in the at-sea Transhipment Programme.
Taiwan, China	258	Participated in the at-sea Transhipment Programme.
Comoros		N/A
European Union	51	Not transhipping at sea.
Eritrea		N/A
France (O. T.)		N/A
India	4	Not transhipping at sea
Indonesia	248	The Commission agreed in 2019 for Indonesia to operate a national transhipment pilot programme.
Iran	5	Not transhipping at sea
Japan	172	Participated in the at-sea Transhipment Programme.
Kenya	6	Did not tranship at sea in 2021.
Korea, Republic of	65	Participated in the at-sea Transhipment Programme.
Madagascar		N/A
Malaysia	20	Participated in the at-sea Transhipment Programme.
Maldives	1	The Commission agreed in 2019 for Maldives to operate a national programme between its collector vessels and pole and line fishing vessels.
Mauritius	1	Not transhipping at sea.
Mozambique	1	Not transhipping at sea.
Oman	4	Participated in the at-sea Transhipment Programme.
Pakistan		N/A
Philippines	7	Not transhipping at sea.
Seychelles	56	Participated in the at-sea Transhipment Programme.
Somalia		N/A
South Africa	10	Not transhipping at sea.
Sri Lanka	22	Not transhipping at sea.
Sudan		N/A
Tanzania	1	Not transhipping at sea.
Thailand		N/A.
UK		N/A
Yemen		N/A
Senegal		N/A

N/A (not applicable) Fleets without Large Scale Tuna Longline Vessels (LSTLVs) in the IOTC Record of Authorized vessels

Submission of carrier vessels list

Paragraph 7. Each CPC shall submit, electronically where possible, to the IOTC Executive Secretary the list of carrier vessels that are authorised to receive at-sea transhipments from its LSTLVs in the IOTC area of competence. [...]

All fleets which participated in the at-sea Transhipment Programme during 2021 have submitted information on carrier vessels which they have authorised to receive at-sea transhipments from their LSTLVs. This represents a total of 117 carrier vessels that have been expressly authorised to receive at-sea transhipments from the fleets which participated in the programme; it should be noted that a carrier vessel may be authorised by one or more participating fleets.

From the 117 carrier vessels listed in the IOTC Record of Authorised Vessels (as of 15 April 2022), 23 carrier vessels have been used by the participating fleets in 2021 (Table 2) following submission of request of deployments by the participating fleets, and subsequent approval of the deployments by the IOTC Secretariat.

Table 2: Active carrier vessels in 2021 (Deployment starting in 2020 continuing in 2021 and deployment starting in 2021)

Fleet	Name of carrier vessel active in 2021
Japan	Taisei Maru No. 15
	Taisei Maru No. 24
Korea, Republic of	Sei Shin
	Seibu
	Seiyu
Liberia	Chikuma
	Meita Maru
Malaysia	Kha Yang 333
Panama	Bao Win
	Feng Lu
	Futagami
	Genta Maru
	Harima
	Ibuki
Singapore	Yachiyo
	Chitose
Taiwan, China	Chen Yu No 7
	Ho Yuan
	Yuan Tai No.806
	Sheng Hong
	Shun Tian Fa No.168
	Win Shuen Sheng
	Yong Man Shun

Costs of implementing the At-sea Transshipment Programme for the year 2022 and calculation of contributions for the participants in the Programme

Paragraph 13, Annex IV - The costs of implementing this program shall be financed by the flag CPCs of LSTLVs wishing to engage in transshipment operations. The fee shall be calculated on the basis of the total costs of the program. This fee shall be paid into a special account of the IOTC Secretariat and the IOTC Secretary shall manage the account for implementing the program.

Based on the level of activities recorded during 2020 under the transshipment programme, a budget not to exceed of €350,000 was proposed for the programme in 2021 (1 May 2021 - 30 April 2022). This resulted in a total budget of €9,494,689 allocated for the thirteen years over which the transshipment programme had been implemented.

The principle applied to recover the cost for the programme was discussed and agreed upon by the representatives of the different fleets participating in the at-sea Transshipment Programme. Unlike the initial cost recovery method, which was adopted in the first year of the programme (2009), the cost recovery method for the last twelve years have been based on actual figures from the preceding year.

Due to the suspension of observer deployments in March 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions, significant savings were made in the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 ROP budgets. As a result of the savings, no call for funds were made for the 2021/2022 ROP budget, for the extension of the contract for that same period. The present contract with the consortium of MRAG Ltd/CapFish cc was issued in May 2018 for an initial period of one year with the possibility of annual renewals up to a total of five years, subject to satisfactory performance and availability of funds. The last ROP contract extension, under the current contract, was signed in April 2022 for the period 1 May 2022 – 30 April 2023.

To cater for the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, two amendments were made to the contract. The first amendment was made in February 2021, and that was to provide for the possibility of making payments to the Consortium for unobserved trips, as the submissions of transshipment declarations continued as normal by carrier vessels. This reporting requirement in Resolution 19/06 (superseded by Resolution 21/02) has been well respected by the masters of carrier vessels, and the IOTC Secretariat wishes to extend its gratitude to them. The transshipment declarations were subsequently processed, and trip reports generated by the Consortium for submission to the IOTC Secretariat. As we progressed into the second half of 2021, travel restrictions began to ease and the IOTC Secretariat in consultation with the Consortium began planning for the gradual resumption of observer deployments. However, this necessitated a second amendment to the contract to provide for payment of a “quarantine rate” and an agreement for refunding COVID-19 related expenses (medical tests and logistics) that observers were likely to incur. Delays encountered in justifying the need for this contract amendment to the FAO Procurement Department, and their subsequent negotiations with the Consortium for the best possible rate, resulted in the second contract amendment being signed in late November 2021.

Transshipments: observed and unobserved

For 2021, a total of 60 observer deployments from Large Scale Tuna Longline Fishing Vessels (LSTLVs) within the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission’s (IOTC) Area of Competence were approved. From those 60 deployments, 48 of the approved deployments were unobserved (*force majeure* due to the COVID-19 pandemic), 9 were observed and 3 were subsequently cancelled by the fleet requesting the deployment. Information on transshipments observed/unobserved from the 1st January to 31st December 2021, are presented in Table 3, and Figures 2 and 3. Note that the data pertaining to quantities transhipped are originating from the transshipment declarations made by the vessels (LSTLVs), as opposed to the data produced by the IOTC observers, based on their observations whilst onboard authorised carrier vessels. A total of 1,531 at-sea transshipment operations have been conducted in which 61,525 metric tons of fish were transhipped. In 2021, although the number of transshipments were lower than in 2020, it was still higher than the pre-pandemic average (Figure 1).

Bigeye tuna was the main species transhipped; accounting for 27% of all fish transhipped. This was followed by Albacore tuna and Yellowfin tuna, which accounted for 25% and 19%, respectively. Oilfish (*Revuttus spp.*), which is a non-IOTC species, accounted for the fourth most important species transhipped in 2021, accounting for 10% of the quantity of fish transhipped. Overall, tuna and billfishes accounted for 83% of all species transhipped (Figure 2).

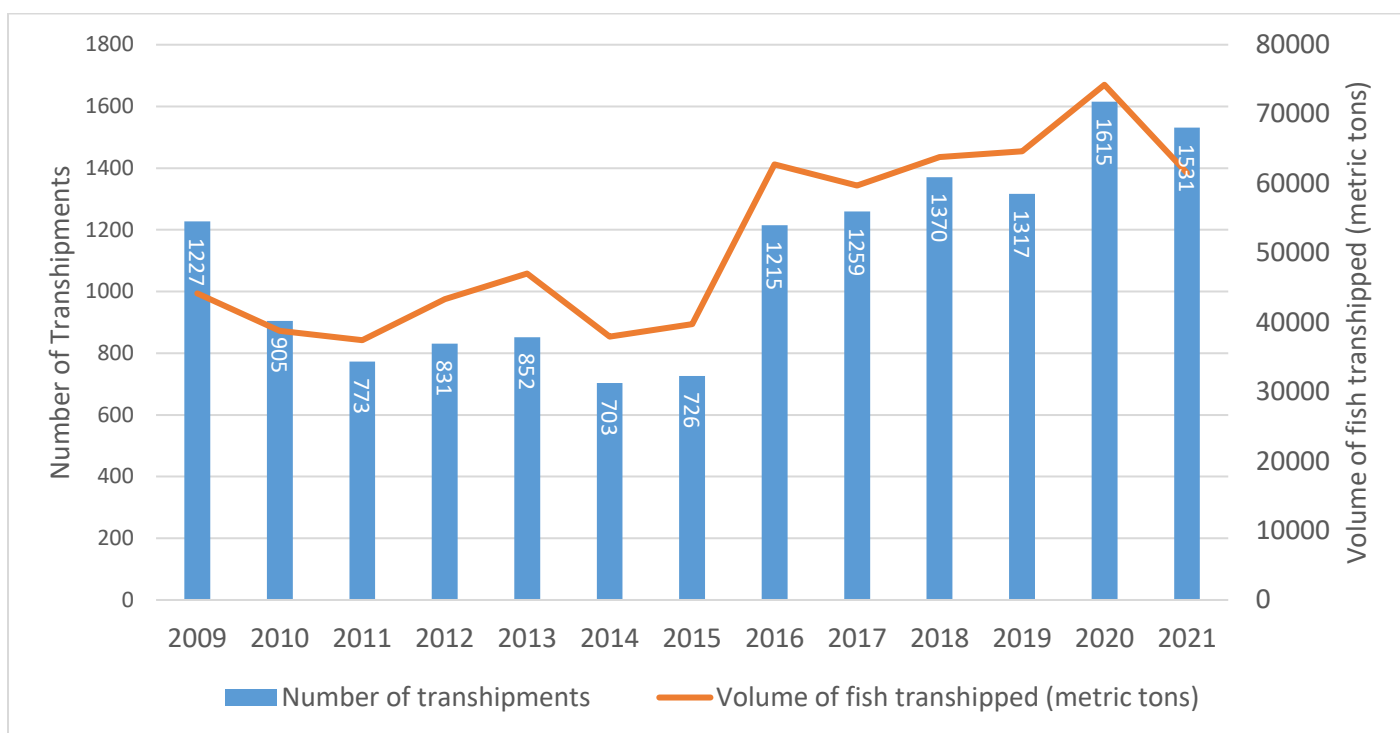


Figure 1: Evolution of IOTC at-sea transshipment activities from 2009 to 2021, through number of transshipments (blue columns) and total weight of fish transhipped (red line).

Table 3: Details of the transshipments undertaken by fleets, during the period 1st January – 31st December, 2021.

Fleet	Albacore	Bigeye tuna	Yellowfin tuna	Oilfish	Swordfish	Other_Tunas ^a	Other_Billfish ^b	Others ^c	Total
China	2,641.31	4,579.78	3,020.61	500.02	1,587.95	23.06	501.82	1,061.73	13,916.27
Taiwan, China	10,686.30	7,041.40	4,545.81	4,990.34	1,656.93	1,059.34	693.97	3,305.51	33,979.59
Japan	788.82	908.03	691.94		87.82	621.92	27.66	23.44	3,149.62
Korea, Republic of	21.65	92.96	447.72		9.87	2.22	15.85		590.26
Malaysia	425.45	97.98	184.29	13.52	19.95	4.50	15.64	21.62	782.94
Oman	36.75	28.92	83.79		1.35				150.81
Seychelles	849.69	3,991.08	2,597.14	549.72	540.71	0.67	210.14	216.34	8,955.48
Total	15,449.96	16,740.14	11,571.30	6,053.60	3,904.56	1,711.70	1,465.07	4,628.63	61,524.97

a: Skipjack tuna, Southern bluefin tuna, Wahoo, Tunas nei.

b: Atlantic blue marlin, Black marlin, Indo-Pacific blue marlin, Indo-Pacific sailfish, Longbill spearfish, Marlins, sailfishes, etc._ nei, Shortbill spearfish, Striped marlin.

c: Blacktip reef shark, Blacktip shark, Blue shark, Mako sharks, Pelagic sharks nei, Scalloped hammerhead, Silky sharks, Shortfin mako, Various sharks nei, Barracudas nei, Dorado/Mahi Mahi, Escolar, Oceanic Sunfish, Opah, Butterfly kingfish, Narrow-barred Spanish mackerel, Other fish Unclassified, Pomfret, Pomfrets, ocean brems nei.

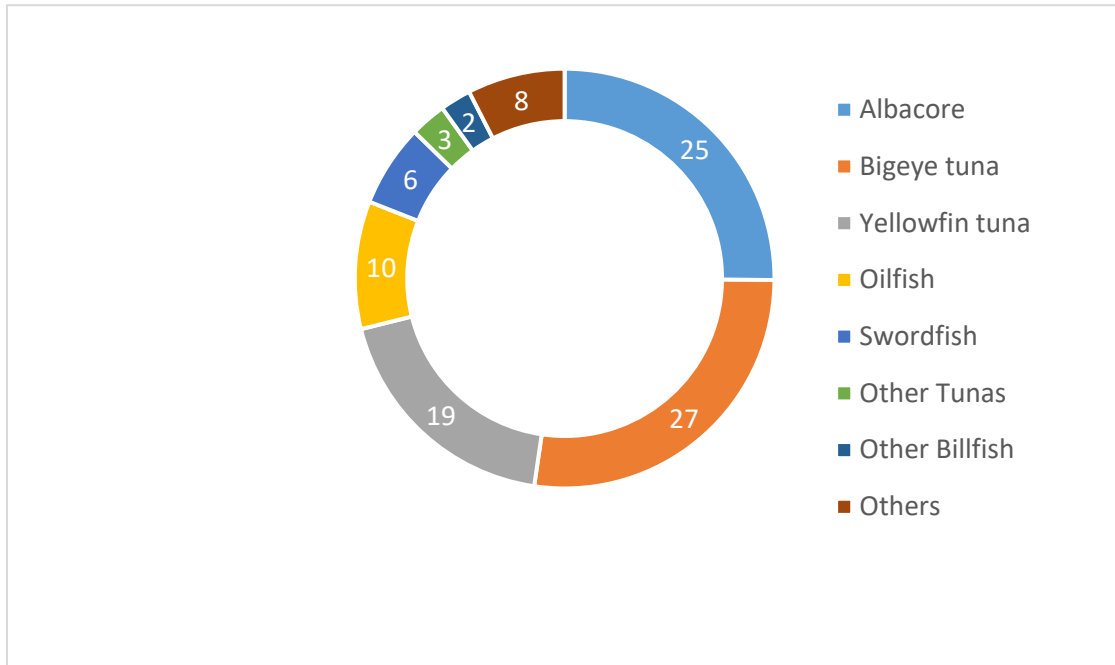


Figure 2: Percentage composition of species groups transhipped in 2021

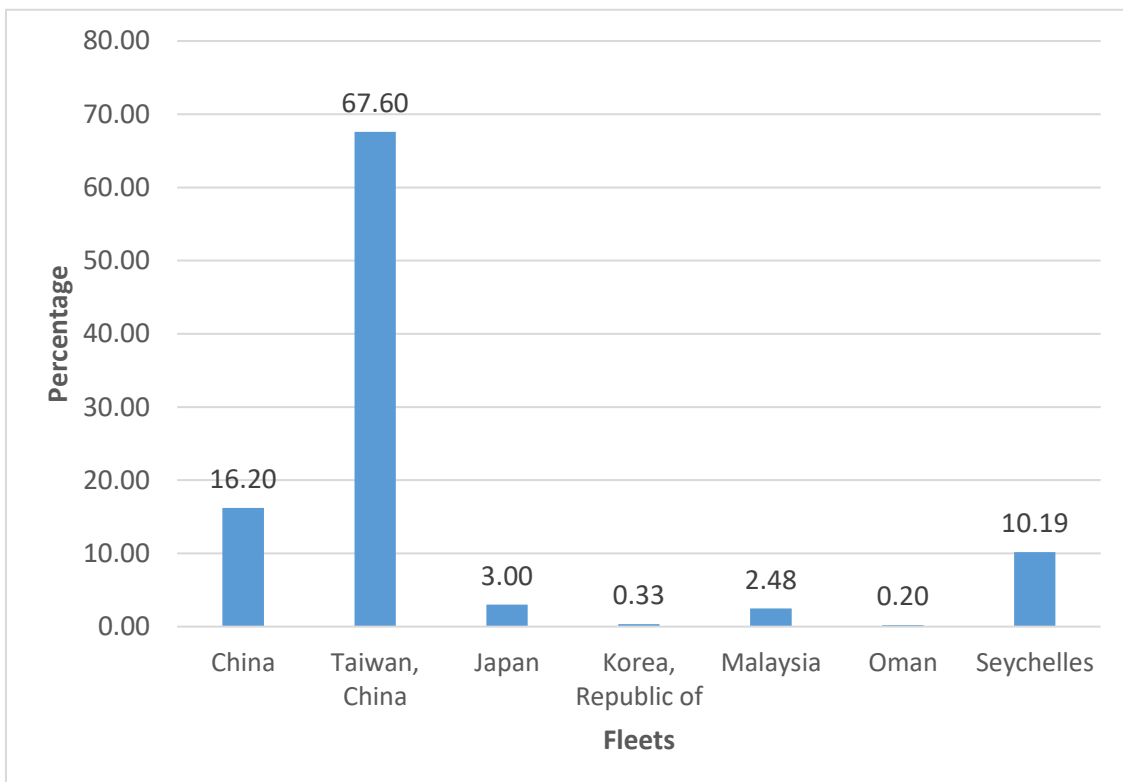


Figure 3. Distribution of transhipments by fleets (2021)

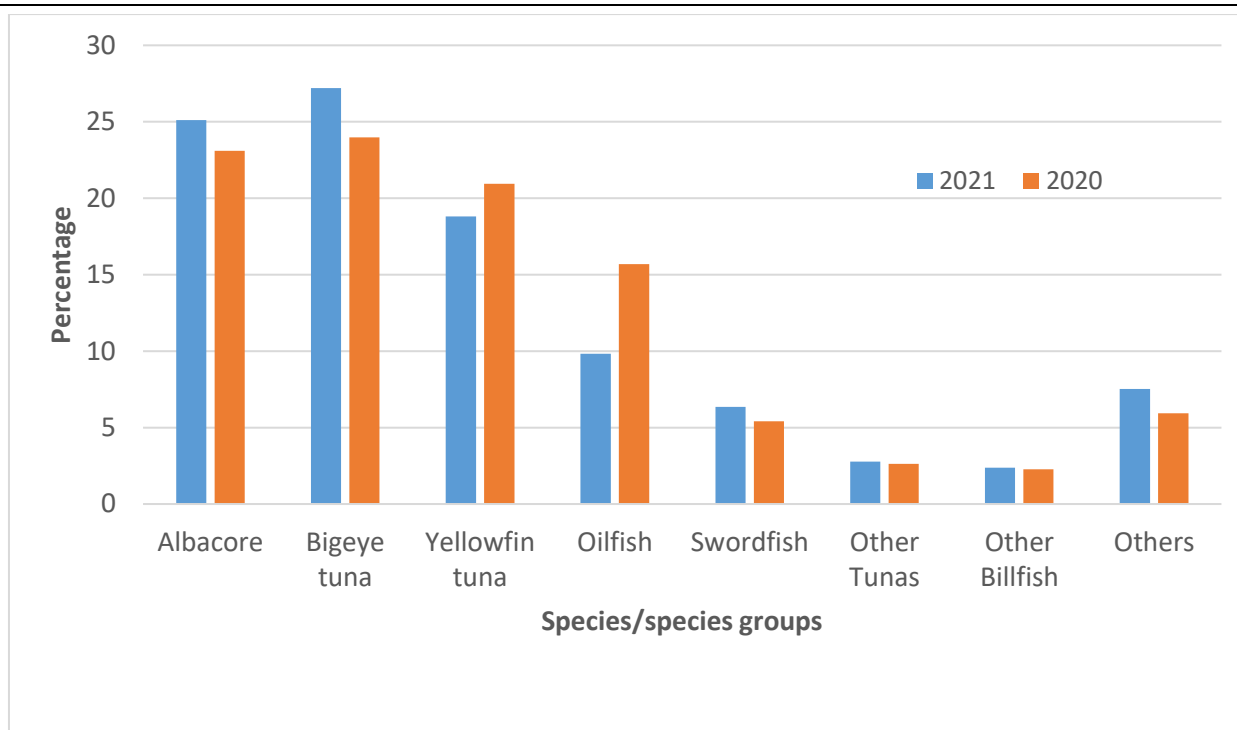


Figure 4. Distribution of species/species groups transhipped in 2020 and 2021

Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the ROP

As indicated in the previous section of this report, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a heavy impact on the at-sea transshipment programme, with almost 80% of the approved “deployments” being unobserved; approximately 85% of transshipment events were unobserved.

In mid-March 2020, on the advice of IOTC ROP Contract Manager, the Executive Secretary of the IOTC informed the Contractor that it was invoking Article 16 of the ROP contract (*force majeure*), and that the IOTC Secretariat was suspending approval for all future observer deployment requests until further notice. The decision to temporarily suspend observer deployment was based on the rapidly closing of borders between most countries, unavailability of flights to dispatch and repatriate observers, and more importantly heeding the health and safety advice being dispensed at the time, in an effort to limit the spread of the virus. The fleets participating in the ROP were also immediately advised of this decision, whilst noting that, exceptionally, this should not prevent the continuation of at-sea transshipment activities. The IOTC Secretariat and the Contractor had since continued implementing the same approach during 2021. With the aim of resuming deployments of observers on a case by case basis, the IOTC Secretariat had successfully proposed amendments in the ROP contract that would facilitate the deployment of observers, from late November 2021.

With the approval of the IOTC Secretariat, the Contractor was able to successfully deploy nine observers over 2021. Occasionally, due to the closure of repatriation ports, observers remained deployed beyond their original trip onboard the same or into a different carrier vessel.