

## OUTCOMES OF THE 25th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 8 JUNE 2022

### PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 12<sup>th</sup> Working Party on Neritic Tunas (WPNT12) of the decision and requests made by the Commission at its 25<sup>th</sup> Session, held from 7 - 11 June 2021, specifically relating to the work of the WPNT. The 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission was held from the 16 – 20 May 2022, however the report from that meeting has yet to be adopted. The Commission discussion on neritic tunas was very limited in 2021 although the Commission did endorse the Recommendations from the 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the Scientific Committee (SC24).

### BACKGROUND

At the 25<sup>th</sup> Session, the Commission **CONSIDERED** and **ADOPTED** 3 proposals as Conservation and Management Measures, as detailed below:

### Resolutions

- Resolution 21/01: *On an interim plan for rebuilding the Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna stock in the IOTC area of competence.*
- Resolution 21/02: *On establishing a programme for transshipment by large-scale fishing vessels.*
- Resolution 21/03: *On harvest control rules for skipjack tuna in the IOTC area of competence.*

These Conservation and Management Measures shall become binding 120 days after their distribution to all CPCs. The final versions of the newly agreed CMMs are available here: <http://iotc.org/cmms>

### DISCUSSION

(Para 20) The Commission **NOTED** that the current status of neritic tunas (*in 2021*) is as follows (full details are provided in Appendix 5 of the Commission report (IOTC-2021-S25-R)):

<p><b>Kawakawa</b></p> <p>A new stock assessment was carried out in 2020 using data-limited assessment techniques. Based on the weight-of-evidence available, the kawakawa stock for the Indian Ocean is classified as not overfished and not subject to overfishing.</p>
<p><b>Longtail tuna</b></p> <p>A new assessment was carried out in 2020 using the Optimised Catch-Only Method (OCOM). Based on the weight-of-evidence currently available, the stock is considered to be both overfished and subject to overfishing.</p>
<p><b>Indo-Pacific king mackerel</b></p> <p>No new stock assessment for Indo-Pacific king mackerel was carried out in 2019, thus, the stock status is determined on the basis of the 2016 assessment when a preliminary assessment was undertaken using catch-only methods techniques (Catch-MSY and OCOM). Given that no new assessment was undertaken in 2020, the WPNT considered that stock status in relation to the Commission's BMSY and FMSY target reference points remains unknown.</p>
<p><b>Narrowed-Barred Spanish mackerel</b></p> <p>A new assessment was carried out in 2020 using the Optimised Catch-Only Method (OCOM). Based on the weight-of-evidence available, the stock appears to be overfished and subject to overfishing.</p>

**Bullet tuna**

No quantitative stock assessment is currently available for bullet tuna in the Indian Ocean, and due to a lack of fishery data for several gears, only preliminary stock status indicators can be used. Stock status in relation to the Commission's  $B_{MSY}$  and  $F_{MSY}$  reference points remains unknown.

**Frigate tuna**

No quantitative stock assessment is currently available for frigate tuna in the Indian Ocean, and due to a lack of fishery data for several gears, only preliminary stock status indicators can be used. Stock status in relation to the Commission's  $B_{MSY}$  and  $F_{MSY}$  reference points remains unknown.

Although the report of the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission has not been formally adopted, the stock status summaries provided by the SC in its 24<sup>th</sup> Session were endorsed. These are provided in document IOTC-2022-WPNT12-03.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the WPNT

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC-2022-WPNT12-04 which outlined the outcomes of the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission, specifically related to the work of the WPNT and **AGREE** to consider how best to provide the SC with the information it needs, in order to satisfy the Commission's requests, throughout the course of the current WPNT meeting.
- 2) **NOTE** that 3 Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) were adopted at the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission (consisting of 3 Resolutions and 0 Recommendations).