
OUTCOMES OF THE 26TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY IOTC SECRETARIAT, AUGUST 2022

PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 18th Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch Assessment meeting (WPEB18) of the decisions and requests made by the Commission at its 26th Session, held from 16-20 May 2022, specifically relating to the work of the WPEB.

BACKGROUND

At the 26th Session, the Commission **CONSIDERED** and **ADOPTED** 4 proposals as Conservation and Management Measures (consisting of 4 Resolutions and 0 Recommendations), as detailed below. The Commission **ADOPTED** two new proposals for Conservation and Management Measures relevant to the WPEB.

Resolutions

- Resolution 22/01 *On climate change*
- Resolution 22/04 *On a regional observer scheme*.

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

DISCUSSION

The Commission made a number of general comments on the recommendations made by the Scientific Committee in 2021, which have relevance for the WPEB.

Status of sharks

(para. 38) The Commission **NOTED** the current status of the following sharks:

Blue shark

A new stock assessment for blue sharks was carried out in 2021 using an integrated age-structured model (SS3). On the weight-of-evidence available in 2021, the stock status is determined to be not overfished and not subject to overfishing.

Oceanic whitetip shark

There is no quantitative stock assessment and limited basic fishery indicators currently available for oceanic whitetip sharks in the Indian Ocean therefore the stock status is unknown.

Shortfin mako shark

An assessment of shortfin mako sharks in 2020 was inconclusive. There is no quantitative stock assessment currently available for shortfin mako sharks in the Indian Ocean therefore the stock status is unknown.

(para. 40) The Commission **NOTED** the status of sharks presented in the Scientific Committee report and **REQUESTED** the SC, via its Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch, to develop research plans for the species most vulnerable and/or data deficient (such as shortfin mako, oceanic whitetip), to inform future decisions on action required to address data deficiencies, declining stocks, and the overall need for improved management of interactions with those species in IOTC fisheries.

Scientific Committee Recommendations

(para. 41) The Commission **NOTED** the stock status summaries for species of tuna and tuna-like species under the IOTC mandate, as well as other species impacted by IOTC fisheries ([Appendix 5](#)) and considered the recommendations made by the Scientific Committee to the Commission. The Commission **ENDORSED** the Scientific Committee's 2021 list of recommendations as its own.

(para. 42) The Commission **ENDORSED** the Chairperson (Prof. Kitakado from Japan) and Vice-Chairperson (Dr Denham Parker from South Africa) elected by the Scientific Committee and those officials elected for its subsidiary (scientific) bodies for the coming years, as listed in Appendix 7 of the 2021 Scientific Committee Report.

The complete report of the 26th Session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission is available for download from the IOTC website.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the WPEB:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC-2022-WPEB17-03 which outlined the outcomes of the 26th Session of the Commission, specifically related to the work of the WPEB 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 WPEB meeting.