

## **.GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF NATIONAL REPORTS TO THE IOTC SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE IN 2022**

**The National Report is due to be submitted no later than 15 days prior to the start of the annual regular session of the Scientific Committee.**

**DEADLINE: 20 NOVEMBER 2022**

**Purpose:** To provide relevant information to the Scientific Committee on fishing activities of Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties operating in the IOTC area of competence. The report should include all fishing activities for species under the IOTC mandate as well as sharks and other byproduct/ bycatch species as required by the IOTC Agreement and decisions by the Commission.

**NOTE:** The submission of a National Report is **Mandatory**, irrespective if a CPC intends on attending the annual meeting of the Scientific Committee.

### **Explanatory note**

This report is intended to provide a summary of the main features of the tuna and billfish fisheries for Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties. As such, it does not replace the need for submission of data according to Resolution 15/02 *Mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs)*

### **Mandatory versus Desirable information**

National Reports must include all headings as noted in the template below as [Mandatory]. Where data/information is not available for a given [Mandatory] heading, the reason why it is not available should be clearly stated. These mandatory fields for the *National Reports* were agreed to by the Scientific Committee in 2010.

Where available, CPCs are encouraged to provide additional information under the headings shown as [Desirable].

For clarification on minimum reporting requirements for the National Report, please contact the IOTC Secretariat ([IOTC-Secretariat@fao.org](mailto:IOTC-Secretariat@fao.org)).

### **NOTE**

Please use the template below when preparing your National Report. Simply delete this explanatory page and add your own cover page/preliminaries if needed.

Please also delete any text shown in **red** below before submitting your National Report.



## Liberia National Report to the Scientific Committee of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, 2022

Authors

**National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA) and the Liberia Maritime Authority (LiMA)**

### INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

<p>In accordance with IOTC Resolution 15/02, final scientific data for the previous year was provided to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 June of the current year, <b>for all fleets other than longline</b> [e.g. for a National Report submitted to the IOTC Secretariat in 2022, final data for the 2021 calendar year must be provided to the Secretariat by 30 June 2022)</p>	<p>NO. Liberia does not have flag catch vessel operating in the IOTC area. However, there are Liberia flagged reefers vessels operating within the IOTC area.</p>
<p>In accordance with IOTC Resolution 15/02, provisional <b>longline data</b> for the previous year was provided to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 June of the current year [e.g. for a National Report submitted to the IOTC Secretariat in 2022, preliminary data for the 2021 calendar year was provided to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 June 2022).</p> <p><b>REMINDER:</b> Final longline data for the previous year is due to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 Dec of the current year [e.g. for a National Report submitted to the IOTC Secretariat in 2022, final data for the 2021 calendar year must be provided to the Secretariat by 30 December 2022).</p>	<p>NO. Liberia does not have flag catch vessel operating in the IOTC area. However, there are Liberia flagged reefers vessels operating within the IOTC area.</p>
<p>If no, please indicate the reason(s) and intended actions: As stated above, Liberia has no longline flag vessels operating within the IOTC area. Therefore, in the near future when Liberia decides to register longline vessels, the requisite reporting requirement will be implemented.</p>	

## **Executive Summary [Mandatory]**

*[Include a summary of the key aspects of the National Report for the most recent reporting year. This summary will be included in the Scientific Committee report (300 words maximum)]*

## **Contents [add a table of contents with page numbers] [Desirable]**

### **1. BACKGROUND/GENERAL FISHERY INFORMATION [MANDATORY]**

The exploitation of tuna and tuna-like species is a major component of the revenue generating sources of Liberia. Gains have been made in the sector; there were two purse seine tuna vessels flagged to Liberia and conducted fishing activities for the reporting period, although these vessels did not operate within the IOTC area. Liberia did not sign and any new access agreements with private tuna companies to conduct tuna fishing activities in its EEZ. There were access agreements signed during the previous years and the vessels operated within the ICCAT area, therefore, the agreements were transmitted to ICCAT Secretariat. Under access agreement, there were 33 vessels that obtained license to fish for tuna and tuna like species. For the industrial fisheries, the catches for the two flag vessels is estimated at 8721.87 tons of which 77.61% (6769.37 tons) was SKJ, 19.84% tons was YFT and 2.55% (222.04) tons was BET. There are approximately 650 canoes targeting tuna and tuna like species throughout the 114 fish landing sites along the nine coastal counties of Liberia. The catch from these artisanal vessels are caught by set bottom gillnets, hook and line and are landed locally. These artisanal boats commonly called “fanti canoes” ranges in size of 20-40 meters long with outboard motors of 9-40 horse power. The total catch from the artisanal fishery for 2021 is 84.18 tons.

Liberia is endowed with tropical tuna and tuna-like species (mainly Bigeye, Yellowfin, Skipjack, Albacore and many tuna-like species such as the billfishes, small tunas, etc.). Liberia as a flag state is cognizant of its responsibilities and is making every effort to ensure proper management and conservation measures of tuna and tuna-like species in fulfilling its obligations as a CNPC to IOTC.

The Research and Statistics Division of the National Fisheries & Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA) collect all data and information about the marine fisheries, including aquaculture and inland fisheries. Fisheries observers, inspectors and fisheries enumerators have been trained to collect catch and effort data on vessels and fish landing sites.

Fisheries observers are both trained locally and internationally for placement on tuna vessels to collect fisheries and biological datasets. All Companies vessels are required to have an active Vessel Monitoring System (VMS), compatible with the Faria Watch Dog VMS system and a minimum of 15% Liberian observer coverage. Dockside inspection team has been established to inspect all licensed tuna vessels and collect data on species landed (length frequency, total catch landed and catch composition/ port sampling) at Liberia’s port or designated port out of Liberia. Data collection from the artisanal fisheries sector has improved significantly with regards to enumerators’ capacity in the area of species identification. Moreover, Liberia has graduated from the paper-based system of data collection to an electronic system using mobile phones.

### **2. FLEET STRUCTURE [MANDATORY]**

*Liberia does not have catch vessels operating within the IOTC areas.*

### **3. CATCH AND EFFORT (BY SPECIES AND GEAR) [Mandatory]**

*Liberia as a CNCP to IOTC does not have catch vessels conducting fishing activities in the IOTC area, but we have reefers vessels transshipping fisheries products.*

**4. RECREATIONAL FISHERY [Mandatory]**

*Liberia recreational fishing vessels do not conduct fishing activities within the IOTC area.*

**5. ECOSYSTEM AND BYCATCH ISSUES [Mandatory]**

*Ecosystem and bycatch issues are discussed in this section.*

**5.1 Sharks [Mandatory]**

*In 2019, Liberia adopted its National Plan of Action for Sharks and has also prohibited some aspect of shark fishing has on the 2019 Fisheries and Aquaculture Management and Development Law as stated below in Section 5.1.2 of this report.*

**5.1.1. NPOA sharks [Desirable]**

*In 2019, Liberia adopted its first NPOA sharks and is now in the implementation phase.*

**5.1.2. Sharks finning regulation [Mandatory]**

*Section 4.7 of the 2019 Fisheries and Aquaculture Management and Development Law prohibit certain aspect of shark fishing as stated below:*

- 1) *This section applies, inter alia, to all persons carrying out commercial fishing activities within all areas under national jurisdiction of the Republic of Liberia, including the Fisheries Waters, and to all persons using a Liberian fishing vessel for commercial fishing activities in areas beyond national jurisdiction.*
- 2) *No person shall:*
  - a. *without a valid and applicable license or authorization issued under this Act, engage in commercial fishing for sharks;*
  - b. *engage in shark finning;*
  - c. *possess, store, tranship or land, or attempt to tranship, land, buy or sell any:*
    - i. *shark fin (including the tail) that is not naturally attached to the whole corresponding carcass;*
    - ii. *species of shark, in whole or in part, that is prohibited by an international conservation and management measure to be retained on board, transhipped, stored or otherwise; or*
  - d. *possess, use or caused to be used a trace wire or J hook for the purpose of fishing.*
- 3) *The owner, operator and master of each fishing vessel shall release or cause to be released any species of shark that is caught, for which fishing is not permitted, as soon as possible after the shark is brought alongside the vessel, and to do so in a manner that results in as little harm to the shark as possible.*
- 4) *Any person who contravenes Subsection (2) or (3) commits an offence and upon conviction, shall be liable for a fine not exceeding the maximum amount described in the Second Schedule or a term of imprisonment not exceeding three years or both, and the fishing vessel and gear used in the offence and all fish on board shall be forfeit.*

**5.1.3. Blue shark [Mandatory]**

*Liberia does not have vessels operating the IOTC area.*

**5.2 Seabirds [Mandatory]**

*Liberia does not have catch vessels operating in the IOTC area.*

**5.3 Marine Turtles [Mandatory]**

*Liberia does not have catch vessels fishing the IOTC area.*

**5.4 Other ecologically related species (e.g. marine mammals, whale sharks) [Desirable]**

*Liberia does not have vessels operation in the IOTC area.*

**6. NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING SYSTEMS [Mandatory]**

**6.1. Logsheet data collection and verification** (including date commenced and status of implementation)

**6.2. Vessel Monitoring System** (including date commenced and status of implementation)

**Section 11.27 Vessel Monitoring System**

*This section has been in force since 2010*

*The Director General shall establish and operate vessel monitoring systems for purposes of monitoring, control and surveillance, and managing the operation of fishing vessels under this Act. The operator of any industrial fishing vessel, as a condition of license, shall install, maintain and operate a VMS transponder in accordance with such conditions as prescribed or required by the Director General. The mobile transceiver unit (MTU) or other device or equipment shall be an integral component of a vessel monitoring system at all times while the fishing vessel is in the Fisheries Waters or, in respect of a Liberian fishing vessel, in areas beyond national jurisdiction or such other area as may be prescribed or agreed in an international agreement or international conservation and management measures.*

**6.3. Observer scheme** (including date commenced and status; number of observer, include percentage coverage by gear type)

**Table 6.** Annual observer coverage by operation, e.g. longline hooks, purse seine sets (for the most recent five years at a minimum, e.g. 2017–2021 or to the extent available). **[Mandatory]**

**Figure 4.** Map showing the spatial distribution of observer coverage. **[Mandatory]**

*Liberia does not have vessels operation in the IOTC area.*

**6.4. Port sampling programme**

*Liberia does not have vessels operation in the IOTC area.*

**[Mandatory]**

**Table 7.** Number of vessel trips or vessels active monitored, by species and gear] **[Mandatory]**

**Table 8.** Number of individuals measured, by species and gear] **[Mandatory]**

**6.5. Unloading/Transshipment of flag vessels** [including date commenced and status of implementation] **[Mandatory]**

**Table 9.** Quantities by species and gear landed in ports located in the IOTC area of competence **[Mandatory]**

**Table 10.** Quantities by species and gear transhipped in ports located in the IOTC area of competence  
[Mandatory]

**6.6. Actions taken to monitor catches & manage fisheries for Striped Marlin, Black Marlin, Blue Marlin and Indo-pacific Sailfish [Mandatory]**

[  
*Liberia does not have vessels operation in the IOTC area.*

**6.7. Gillnet observer coverage and monitoring [Desirable]**

[  
*Liberia does not have the measures for observer coverage of Gillnet*

**6.8 Sampling plans for mobulid rays [Mandatory]**

*Liberia does not have vessels operation in the IOTC area.*

**7. NATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAMS [Desirable]**

8. The Research and Statistics Division of the National Fisheries & Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA) collect all data and information about the marine fisheries, including aquaculture and inland fisheries. Fisheries observers, inspectors and fisheries enumerators have been trained to collect catch and effort data on vessels and fish landing sites. Observer collects catch and effort including biological data per species per haul using the FAO species code/ guide.

**7.1. National research programs on blue shark**

*Liberia does not have research plan on this species, but apply the FAO guideline with regards to the conservation of the Shark species.*

**7.2. National research programs on Striped Marlin, Black Marlin, Blue Marlin and Indo-pacific Sailfish**

*[Liberia does not have research plan on this species, but apply the FAO guideline with regards to the conservational measures*

**7.3. National research programs on sharks**

*Liberia does not have research plan on this species , but apply the FAO guideline with regards to the conservation of the Shark species.*

**7.4. National research programs on oceanic whitetip sharks**

*[Liberia does not have research plan on this species , but apply the FAO guideline with regards to the conservation of the Shark species.*

**7.5. National research programs on marine turtles**

*Liberia does not have research plan on this species , but apply the FAO guideline with regards to the conservation measures .*

**7.6. National research programs on thresher sharks**

*Liberia does not have research plan on this species , but apply the FAO guideline with regards to the conservation of the Shark species.*

**Table 8.** Summary table of national research programs, including dates. [currently underway]

**Example only**

Project title	Period	Countries involved	Budget total	Funding source	Objectives	Short description
Programme régional de marquage de thons	2017–2021	EU – France and Spain		ED- DG FISH	Observer program: collection of	

					bycatch data	
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**9. IMPLEMENTATION OF SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE IOTC RELEVANT TO THE SC. [Mandatory]**

Respond with progress made to recommendations of the SC and specific Resolutions relevant to the work of the Scientific Committee [to be updated annually to include most recent Conservation and Management Measures adopted by the Commission].

**Table 9.** Scientific requirements contained in Resolutions of the Commission, adopted between 2012 and 2021.

Res. No.	Resolution	Scientific requirement	CPC progress
11/04	On a regional observer scheme	Paragraph 9	N/A
12/04	On the conservation of marine turtles	Paragraphs 3, 4, 6–10	Liberia implement the FAO guidelines for the Conservation
12/06	On reducing the incidental bycatch of seabirds in longline fisheries.	Paragraphs 3–7	Liberia implement the FAO guidelines for the Conservation
12/09	On the conservation of thresher sharks (family alopiidae) caught in association with fisheries in the IOTC area of competence	Paragraphs 4–8	Liberia implement the FAO guidelines for the Conservation
13/04	On the conservation of cetaceans	Paragraphs 7–9	N/A
13/05	On the conservation of whale sharks ( <i>Rhincodon typus</i> )	Paragraphs 7–9	Liberia implement the FAO guidelines for the Conservation
13/06	On a scientific and management framework on the conservation of shark species caught in association with IOTC managed fisheries	Paragraph 5–6	Liberia implement the FAO guidelines for the Conservation
15/01	On the recording of catch and effort by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence	Paragraphs 1–10	N/A
15/02	Mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs)	Paragraphs 1–7	Liberia provides all report in regards to the commission rules and regulation
17/05	On the conservation of sharks caught in association with fisheries managed by IOTC	Paragraphs 6, 9, 11	Liberia is implementing in accordance to IOTC measures
18/02	On management measures for the conservation of blue shark caught in association with IOTC fisheries	Paragraphs 2-5	N/A
18/05	On management measures for the conservation of the Billfishes: Striped marlin, black marlin, blue marlin and Indo-Pacific sailfish	Paragraphs 7 – 11	N/A
18/07	On measures applicable in case of non-fulfilment of reporting obligations in the IOTC	Paragraphs 1, 4	Liberia ensure to fulfil all reporting requirement
19/01	On an Interim Plan for Rebuilding the Indian Ocean Yellowfin Tuna Stock in the IOTC Area of Competence	Paragraph 22	N/A
19/03	On the Conservation of Mobulid Rays Caught in Association with Fisheries in the IOTC Area	Paragraph 11	N/A



Res. No.	Resolution	Scientific requirement	CPC progress
	of Competence		

**10. LITERATURE CITED [Mandatory]**