

## OUTCOMES OF THE 26th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, JUNE 2023

### PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 13<sup>th</sup> Working Party on Neritic Tunas (WPNT13) of the decision and requests made by the Commission at its 26<sup>th</sup> Session, held from 16-20 May 2022, specifically relating to the work of the WPNT. The report from the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission held in May 2023 has yet to be adopted. The Commission discussion on neritic tunas was very limited in 2022 although the Commission did endorse the Recommendations from the 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the Scientific Committee (SC24).

### BACKGROUND

At the 26<sup>th</sup> Session, the Commission **CONSIDERED** and **ADOPTED** 4 proposals as Conservation and Management Measures, as detailed below:

### Resolutions

- Resolution 22/01: *On climate changes as it relates to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission.*
- Resolution 22/02: *On establishing a programme for transshipment by large-scale fishing vessels.*
- Resolution 22/03: *On a Management Procedure for bigeye tuna in the IOTC area of competence.*
- 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 are available here: <http://iotc.org/cmms>

### DISCUSSION

(Para 34) The Commission **NOTED** that the current status of neritic tunas are as follows (full details are provided in Appendix 5 of the Commission report (IOTC-2022-S26-R)):

<b>Kawakawa</b> No new stock assessment was conducted for kawakawa in 2021 and so the results are based on the assessment 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.
<b>Longtail tuna</b> No new assessment was conducted for longtail tuna in 2021 and so the results are based on the assessment 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.
<b>Indo-Pacific king mackerel</b> A new assessment was carried out in 2021 using the data-limited techniques (CMSY and LB-SPR). Based on the weight-of-evidence currently available, the stock is considered to be not overfished and not subject to overfishing.
<b>Narrowed-Barred Spanish mackerel</b> No new assessment was conducted for narrow-barred Spanish mackerel in 2021 and so the results are based on the assessment carried out in 2020 using the Optimised Catch-Only Method (OCOM). Based on the weightof-evidence available, the stock appears to be overfished and subject to overfishing.

**Bullet tuna**

A new assessment was carried out in 2021 using the data-limited techniques (CMSY and LB-SPR), however the catch data for bullet tuna are very uncertain given the high percentage of the catches that had to be estimated due to a range of reporting issues. Stock status in relation to the Commission's BMSY and FMSY reference points remains unknown.

**Frigate tuna**

A new assessment was carried out in 2021 using the data-limited techniques (CMSY and LB-SPR), however the catch data for frigate tuna are very uncertain given the high percentage of the catches that had to be estimated due to a range of reporting issues. Stock status in relation to the Commission's BMSY and FMSY reference points remains unknown.

Although the report of the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission has not been formally adopted, the stock status summaries provided by the SC in its 27<sup>th</sup> Session were endorsed. These are provided in document IOTC-2023-WPNT13-03.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the WPNT

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2023–WPNT13–04 which outlined the outcomes of the 26<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 4 Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) were adopted at the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission (consisting of 4 Resolutions and 0 Recommendations).