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## **GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF NATIONAL REPORTS TO THE IOTC SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE IN 2023**

**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: 19 NOVEMBER 2023**

**Purpose:** To provide relevant information to the Scientific Committee on research and fishing activities and associated monitoring and research 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 for elasmobranch species and other species taken as bycatch 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 tuna-like 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)* and other data related CMMs.

### **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.

## Oman National Report to the Scientific Committee of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, 2023

Authors

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Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Water Resources

### INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

<p>In accordance with IOTC Resolution 15/02 (and other data related CMMs as noted below), final scientific data for the previous year were 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 2023, final data for the 2022 calendar year must be provided to the Secretariat by 30 June 2023]</p>	<p>YES</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 2023, preliminary data for the 2022 calendar year were provided to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 June 2023].</p> <p><b>REMINDER:</b> Final longline data for the previous year are due to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 Dec of the current year [e.g., for a National Report submitted to the IOTC Secretariat in 2023, final data for the 2022 calendar year must be provided to the Secretariat by 30 December 2023].</p>	<p>YES</p>
<p>If no, please indicate the reason(s) and intended actions:</p>	

**Executive Summary [Mandatory]**

The total production of the Omani fishery sector amounted to around 748,000 Tons in 2022 with an increase of approximately 16% compared to 2017.

Tuna species considered as highly valuable products for Omani consumers, have experienced significant increases in the total annual production. This increase finds its origin, in the dynamism shown by the traditional fleet on the tuna coastal resources and probably the slowdown of the fishing pressure in the Yemen waters. For the industrial fleet contribution reached 6.9% in the total landing up to 51803 Ton in 2022. Coastal fleet landed 5.1 thousand Ton in 2022. On the other hand, Artisanal and coastal fleets have, however, increased slightly in the number of vessels and fishermen.

The Sultanate's total fish production for the year 2022, by about 748 thousand tons from 2021 production by 19% and with a total value amounting to about 465 million Omani riyals. Artisanal fishing contributed a percentage 92.3% of this production amounted to approximately 688 thousand tons with a value of 408 million Omani riyals, while The quantities of commercial fishing production amounted to 51,803 thousand tons, forming a contribution rate of 6.5% of the total production, while coastal fishing contributed by 0.7%, with catch quantities estimated at approximately 5,062 thousand tons.

**Contents [add a table of contents with page numbers] [Desirable]****1. BACKGROUND/GENERAL FISHERY INFORMATION [MANDATORY]**

The coastline of Oman extends to about 3165 km on three different water bodies: Arabian Sea, Sea of Oman and the Arabian Gulf. The rich marine biodiversity and productive ecosystems with valuable fishery stocks are the main characteristics of this coastline. The total production of the fishery sector in 2022 was around 744,889 tons with a total value of 458 million OMR. This production level showed a decrease in the landing of -13.4 % in volume and 6% in the value compared to 2021.

Concerning Tuna and Tuna- like species, they have all shown a significant increase during the period 2019-2022.

The Omani national fleet consists of three different segments: Artisanal, Coastal and Industrial fleets:

- Artisanal fleet: There are two types of fishing units: Dhows (wooden or fiberglass vessels ) and Fiberglass boats.
- Coastal fleet: the total number of vessels in 2022 was ~~264~~ vessels, with a high concentration in the Arabian Sea, and precisely from Ras AL Had in Al Sharqiya to Dhofar.
- Industrial fleet: consists of vessels undertaking large pelagic fishing activities and represents only 0.1% of the total fishery production in 2018.

2. FLEET STRUCTURE [MANDATORY]

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i)- Artisanal fishery

Table 1a: Number of units of artisanal fleet operation in- shore waters.

Years	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of Units	Dhows <del>711</del> fiberglass <del>20634</del>	711	694	684	688	681	688	688	688	688
Gear Type	LL, HL, N, BSN and T									

ii)- Coastal fishery

Table 1b: Number of costal vessels.

Years	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of Vessels	96	93	129	140	144	150	162	220	237	264
Gear Type	LL, HL, N, GL									

iii)- Industrial fishery

Table 1c: Number of vessels operating in Oman EEZ and IOTC area of competence.

Years	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of Vessels	Long liners	5	3	1	1	1	1	3	3	4
	Purse sinner	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Gear Type	LL, TR , PS									
Size of Vessels	OAL: Above 30 m									

3. CATCH AND EFFORT (BY SPECIES AND FISHERY) [Mandatory]

Artisanal fishing contributed a percentage 92.3% of this production with catch quantities amounting to approximately 688 thousand tons and a value of RO 408 million, while the quantities of commercial fishing production amounted to 51803 thousand tons, representing a contribution of 6.5% of the total Production through

longline and netted fishing vessels, while coastal fishing contributed by 0.7% with fishing quantities estimated at 5.062 thousand tons.

Small pelagic fish accounted for the highest proportion of total artisanal fishing production at 51%. Large pelagic fish came in second place with 27%, while demersal fish ranked third with a production rate of 18%. The crustaceans and molluscs group contributed 3% of the total production, and the Sharks by 1%.

**Table 2.** Annual catch by fishery and primary species in the IOTC area of competence.

Tuna catch series by segment:

Table 2a. Artisanal Annual catches (mt) by species.

Artisanal Fleet										
Species	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Yellowfin* Tuna	7736	7178	14947	20848	19292	28419	36735	68578	71473	71843
Long tail Tuna	12972	11158	13954	14540	20893	16611	14650	27206	28136	31844
Kawakawa	4315	4034	4900	5553	7818	9499	6684	8128	7335	6676
Striped Bonito	307	1140	4541	4572	1692	2192	1068	1487	2141	1820
Frigate Tuna	1014	395	684	1078	1184	2186	1119	2450	6359	5301
Skipjack	8	23	16	216	55	206	102	90	229	279
Other Tunas	231	290	1616	390	1109	1032	1410	9083	10438	17845
Sailfish	3041	1047	2249	1754	1622	1847	1470	2647	2868	3565
King fish	4175	4970	3984	7007	3333	2594	2090	5906	7659	5514
Sharks	7283	6473	6738	7507	4965	8285	4772	6068	5290	4774
<b>Total</b>	<b>41082</b>	<b>36708</b>	<b>53629</b>	<b>63465</b>	<b>61963</b>	<b>72871</b>	<b>70100</b>	<b>131643</b>	<b>141928</b>	<b>149461</b>

جدول منسق

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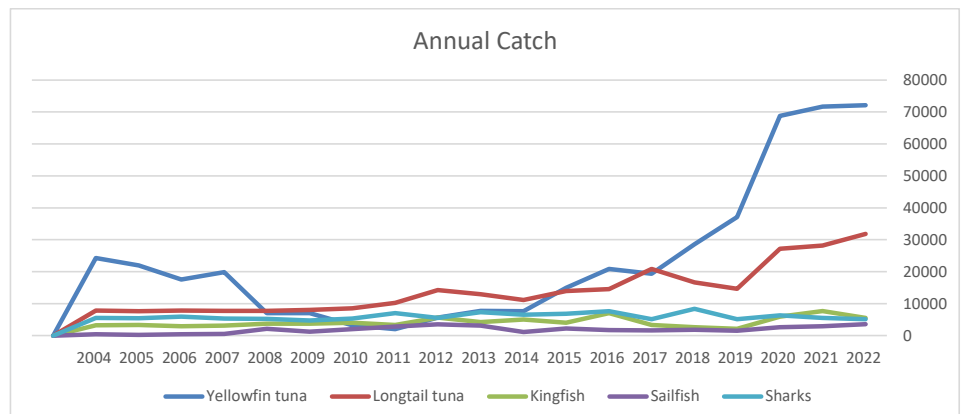
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Table 2b. Coastal Fleet Catches (mt)

Coastal Fleet	
Species	2022
Yellowfin Tuna	41
Longtail Tuna	32
Kawakawa	18
Striped Bonito	9
Frigate Tuna	10
Skipjack	0
Other Tunas	930
Sailfish	11
Kingfish	8
Sharks	305

Table 2c. Industrial Fleet Annual Catches (mt) By Species.

Industrial Fleet										
Species	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Yellowfin Tuna	30	27.8	1	6	110	177	266	207	168	282
Longtail Tuna	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kawakawa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Striped Bonito	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Frigate Tuna	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Skipjack	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Tunas	291	449.1	4	8	179	127	160	54	153	97
Sailfish	72	0	2	8	10	17	14	3	5	14
Kingfish	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sharks	248	130	23	2	0	6.8	13	1	4	0



**Figure 1.** Historical annual catch for the national fisheries by primary species, for the IOTC area of competence for the entire history of the fisheries. **[Mandatory]**

- **Kingfish, Sailfish, and Sharks:** catches are relatively stable over the years. This could indicate a consistent catch quantity, suggesting a stable population or consistent fishing efforts for these species.
- **Yellowfin Tuna and Longtail Tuna:** show an increase over time for longtail tuna. A gradual increase of yellowfin tuna catches started at 2015 after about 7 years of reduced catches. Yellowfin tuna also showed a sharp increase in 2020 might be because slowdown in fishing pressure in some neighboring countries plus the change in fishermen fishing trends to target more valuable fish.

Estimated Fishing Effort:

Table 2d. Estimated Fishing Effort for Artisanal Fleet

Boat – Fishing Gear	Parameters	Total
FG (FT)	Number of Boats	2472
	Estimated Effort	23490
	CPUE (Kg)	1139
	Estimated Catch (Ton)	2249
FG (HL + TL)	Number of Boats	4431
	Estimated Effort	41461
	CPUE (Kg)	1254
	Estimated Catch (Ton)	4298
FG (NET)	Number of Boats	3830
	Estimated Effort	43538
	CPUE (Kg)	4331
	Estimated Catch (Ton)	14753
BEACH SEINE NET	Number of Boats	827
	Estimated Effort	7875
	CPUE (Kg)	22195
	Estimated Catch (Ton)	14822
LAUNCH – FT	Number of Boats	439
	Estimated Effort	4662
	CPUE (Kg)	2458
	Estimated Catch (Ton)	965
LAUNCH – LINE – TL	Number of Boats	178
	Estimated Effort	1702
	CPUE (Kg)	735
	Estimated Catch (Ton)	89

Table 2e. Estimated Effort of Coastal Vessels

Landing (mt)	Number of Vessels	Season Duration	Catch/ Vessel/ Year (mt)	Catch/ Vessel/ Day (mt)	Catch/ Fishing/ Day
5062	264	365	27	5.8	216

Table 2f. Estimated Effort of Industrial Fishing Activity

Years	Long liners					
	Landing (mt)	No. of Vessels	Vessel – day number	Season Duration (month)	Catch/ Vessel - Year (mt)	Catch/ Vessel - Day (mt)
2013	398	5	423	10	80	0.94
2014	590.1	3	464	12	197	1.27
2015	210	1	70	4	210	3.00
2016	163	1	131	7	163	1.32
2017	398	1	231	10	398	1.89
2018	413	1	125	8	413	3.30
2019	19985	4	351	12	625	56.94
2020	40180	8	366	12	5022	13.70
2021	45744	9	365	12	5083	13.93
2022	51803	7	365	12	7400	20.27

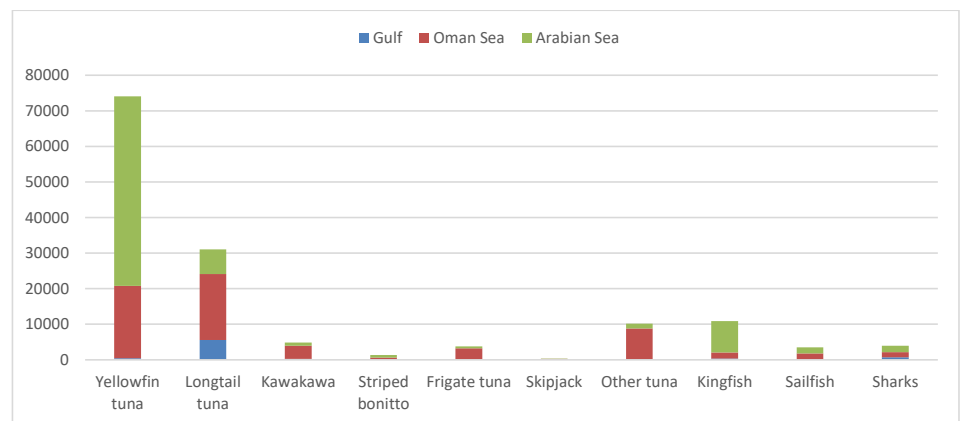


Figure 3a. distribution of fishing catch, by species for the national fisheries, in the IOTC area of competence (2022).

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**4. RECREATIONAL FISHERY [Mandatory]**

There is insignificant recreational fishery for tuna and tuna like species in Oman.

**5. ECOSYSTEM AND BYCATCH ISSUES [Mandatory]****5.1 Sharks [Mandatory]**

The Sultanate of Oman is currently in the process of developing an NPOA-sharks, which aims to set a management scheme for these resources, with the perspective to ensure their conservation and sustainable exploitation. Plus some endangered species were monitored under CITES agreement. Shark fining is banned by the Oman Fishing law.

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

Shark fining is banned by the Oman Fishing law.

**5.1.3. Blue shark [Mandatory]**

*No project in place*

**5.2 Seabirds [Mandatory]**

*No project in place*

**5.3 Marine Turtles [Mandatory]**

Environment Society of Oman (ESO) is working in a project in this field. This study will help the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and water Resources incorporate in its legislation sound conservation measures for the protection of these creatures

**5.4 Other ecologically related species (e.g., cetaceans, mobulid rays, whale sharks) [Desirable]**

Humpback whale project in the Arabian sea and other ecological related projects will be shared once finished.

**6. NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING SYSTEMS [Mandatory]****6.1. Logsheet data collection and verification (including date commenced and status of implementation)**

A primary logsheet has been established and is ready for use. This logbook system records daily information for each trip delivering three documents (copies): One goes for the vessel, the second goes for the port authority and the last for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Water Resources

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

Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) was implemented in Oman in 2001. It was introduced at that time only for industrial fishery. Due to the developments in the fisheries sector, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Water Resources is planning to install a new tracking system that covers all the fishing fleet. For this purpose, the sultanate of Oman, with the collaboration of FAO, launched the project (Vessel Monitoring Systems) to install a new tracking system to improve its efficiency and integrate other departments and authorities.

#### **6.3. Observer scheme**

The Ministry has initiated an observer scheme to monitor the landings through this program. It is, however, the objective of this Ministry to make a special focus on the industrial fleet and especially onboard the vessels targeting tuna species within the IOTC convention area. To date, no onboard observer scheme has yet been implemented in Oman

#### **6.4. Port sampling programme**

This program was launched since 1985 through a joint Omani – American committee via a specialized company named Shemonix. This company trained several officers from the statistical fishery section in order to improve the efficiency of the data collectors and sampling programme. The data collected in PSP included artisanal fishery, industrial fishery, fish export & import and companies. The data collection system has been reviewed and improved since then, and it is considered that the Ministry has an adequate system for the small-scale fishery while further improvement of the data collection system is still needed for coastal and artisanal (dhows) fleets.

#### **6.5. Unloading/Transhipment of flag vessels**

According to the law of Sultanate of Oman, transhipment is prohibited at sea but the vessels operating within IOTC convention area are monitored, in conformity with the IOTC regulations

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

*No project in place*

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

[

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

*No project in place*

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

*later*

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

*No program*

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

*No program*

**7.3. National research programs on sharks**

*[No program]*

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

*No program*

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

Environment Society of Oman (ESO) is working in a project in this field. This study will help the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and water Resources incorporate in its legislation sound conservation measures for the protection of these creatures

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

*No program*

**Table 8.** Summary table of national research programs

Project title	Period	Countries involved	Budget total	Funding source	Objectives	Short description
Green Tiger Prawn	2016-	Oman			Biomass estimate Size composition Age and growth Exploitaion Rate Bycatch analysis Gear selectivity Long term Monitoring progaram	Market sampling project
Stolephorus anchovies	2016-	Oman			Biomass estimate Stock Spacial distribution	Market sampling project
Indian mackerel	2016-	Oman			Biomass estimate Stock Spacial distribution Maturity Age and growth Recruitments Exploitaion Rate = Biomass MSY	Market sampling project

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

**Table 9.** Scientific requirements contained in Resolutions of the Commission, adopted between 2012 and 2022.

Res. No.	Resolution	Scientific requirement	CPC progress
12/04	On the conservation of marine turtles	Paragraphs 3, 4, 6–10	Under progress, and it will be included in the new proposed law.
12/06	On reducing the incidental bycatch of seabirds in longline fisheries.	Paragraphs 3–7	Under progress, and it will be included in the new proposed law.
12/09	On the conservation of thresher sharks (family alopiidae) caught in association with fisheries in the IOTC area of competence	Paragraphs 4–8	Under progress, and it will be included in the new proposed law.
13/04	On the conservation of cetaceans	Paragraphs 7–9	Fishing for cetaceans is prohibited according to the Sultanate Law of Marine fishing and living aquatic resources
13/05	On the conservation of whale sharks ( <i>Rhincodon typus</i> )	Paragraphs 7–9	This type of shark is of no interest to fishermen and never gets caught as no purse seines are deployed in Omani waters.
13/06	On a scientific and management framework on the conservation of shark species caught in association with IOTC managed fisheries	Paragraph 5–6	Sultanate of Oman is in the process of adopting a NPOA-sharks, which will incorporate the relevant requirements under this Plan. Furthermore, the law prohibits discard of any part of sharks and cutting the fins. Furthermore, the official authorities took the necessary actions to inform the vessels owners about the resolution content and they were instructed to fully comply with.
15/01	On the recording of catch and effort by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence	Paragraphs 1–10	Ongoing, the data gathering system is progressing to accommodate the updated requirements.
15/02	Mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs)	Paragraphs 1–7	Under implementation, and the statistical data had been reported
17/05	On the conservation of sharks caught in association with fisheries managed by IOTC	Paragraphs 6, 9, 11	Under progress, and it will be included in the new proposed law.
18/02	On management measures for the conservation of blue shark caught in association with IOTC fisheries	Paragraphs 2-5	Under progress, and it will be included in the new proposed law.
18/05	On management measures for the conservation of the Billfishes: Striped marlin, black marlin, blue marlin and Indo-Pacific sailfish	Paragraphs 7 – 11	These species are not reported in our fishery, as they rarely get caught by our fleets.
18/07	On measures applicable in case of non-fulfilment of reporting obligations in the IOTC	Paragraphs 1, 4	Oman is working progressively to enhance the data collecting system.
19/01	On an Interim Plan for Rebuilding the Indian Ocean Yellowfin Tuna Stock in the IOTC Area of Competence ( <i>If not provided under Res 21/01 below</i> )	Paragraph 22	Catch under threshold from industrial fleet
19/03	On the Conservation of Mobulid Rays Caught in Association with Fisheries in the IOTC Area of Competence	Paragraph 11	Under progress, and it will be included in the new proposed law.

Res. No.	Resolution	Scientific requirement	CPC progress
21/01	On an Interim Plan for Rebuilding the Indian Ocean Yellowfin Tuna Stock in the IOTC Area of Competence ( <i>If not provided under Res 19/01 above</i> )	Paragraph 23	Catch under threshold from industrial fleet
22/04	On a regional observer scheme	Paragraph 12	The Ministry has initiated an observer scheme to monitor the landings through this program. It is, however, the objective of this Ministry to make a special focus on the industrial fleet and especially onboard the vessels targeting tuna species within the IOTC convention area. To date, no onboard observer scheme has yet been implemented in Oman. However, a port sampling system has been established.

**9. LITERATURE CITED [Mandatory]**

- Fishery Statistical Book (2020,2021,2022). Fisheries Statistic & Information Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and water resources.
- Marine and Fisheries Science Center, Dr.Fatma Al-kumi, Management of the Exploited Coastal Tuna Fisheries Resources of the Sultanate of Oman project.
- Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI), 2010. fourth meeting of the working group of fisheries management, Trends and Emerging Issues of the Gulf Fisheries: A regional Perspective.
- Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI), 2010. fourth meeting of the working group on fisheries management, report of the FAO/ RECOFI Workshop on Fishery Stock Indicators and Stock Status, Tehran/Iran, 26-29 July (2009).
- Project of Vessel Monitoring System in Oman