

## OUTCOMES OF THE 27<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, LAST UPDATED: NOVEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup> 2023

### PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 19<sup>th</sup> Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics (WPDCS19) of the decisions and requests made by the Commission at its 27<sup>th</sup> Session, held in Seychelles from 8 - 12 May 2023), specifically relating to the work of the WPDCS.

### BACKGROUND

At the 27<sup>th</sup> Session, the Commission **CONSIDERED** and **ADOPTED** 9 proposals as Conservation and Management Measures (consisting of 8 Resolutions and 1 Recommendation), as detailed below:

### Resolutions

- [Resolution 23/3](#) *On Establishing a Voluntary Fishing Closure in the Indian Ocean for the Conservation of Tropical Tunas* [[Download here](#)]
- [Resolution 23/4](#) *On Establishing Catch Limits for Bigeye Tuna in the Area of IOTC Competence* [[Download here](#)]
- [Resolution 23/5](#) *On Establishing a Programme for Transshipment by Large-scale Fishing Vessels* [[Download here](#)]
- [Resolution 23/6](#) *On the Conservation of Cetaceans* [[Download here](#)]
- [Resolution 23/7](#) *On Reducing the Incidental Bycatch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries* [[Download here](#)]
- [Resolution 23/8](#) *On Electronic Monitoring Standards for IOTC Fisheries* [[Download here](#)]
- [Resolution 23/9](#) *On a Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) Working Group* [[Download here](#)]
- [Resolution 23/10](#) *Terms of Reference for a Working Party on Socio-Economics* [[Download here](#)]

### Recommendations

- [Recommendation 23/11](#) *To Enhance Cooperation in the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission Decision Making Process* [[Download here](#)]

Pursuant to Article IX.4 of the IOTC Agreement, the above-mentioned Conservation and Management Measures shall become binding on Members, 120 days from the date of the notification communicated by the Secretariat.

### DISCUSSION

The Commission also made a number of general comments on the recommendations made by the Scientific Committee in 2023, which have relevance for the WPDCS (IOTC–2023–S27–R):

### Report of the Scientific Committee

(Para. 16) *The Commission **NOTED** that all scientific working group and working party meetings had been successfully held in 2022, utilising videoconference platforms and a shortened format. The Commission also **NOTED** that the Scientific Committee meeting had been held in the Seychelles using a hybrid format and that the MPF was used to support the attendance of participants to that meeting. .*

(Para. 18) *The Commission **NOTED** the concern expressed by several members that the lack of basic data for some species has resulted in their stock status being assessed as uncertain. The Commission **URGED** all members to submit data to improve the assessments for species under the IOTC mandate.*

(Para. 19) *The Commission **NOTED** the request from several members to provide capacity building to improve participation in the IOTC stock assessment processes. Although this is particularly relevant for the discussions regarding*

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Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) it is also an issue for the complex stock assessments currently being conducted by the SC.

(Para. 20) *The Commission **NOTED** a request by a member to provide information on stock status on the high seas and separately for within EEZs. The SC Chair explained that the current understanding of the stock structure of most IOTC species does not allow for this kind of separation, as the stocks are commonly highly migratory and cross these management boundaries. In addition, the data provided by most members is not sufficiently spatially stratified to be able to separate the catch between these regions accurately.*

***The status of tropical and temperate tunas***

(Para. 24) *The Commission **NOTED** that the SC was currently prioritising single species MSEs as there was a need to provide robust management advice on a species-by-species basis. However, the SC is also looking into the possibility of developing a multi-species MSE for tropical tunas, considering the nature of the tropical tuna fishery. In addition, the feasibility of incorporating environmental factors and climate change into the MSEs is being assessed.*

The complete report of the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission is available for download from the IOTC website: <https://iotc.org/documents/COM/27/RE>

**RECOMMENDATION/S**

That the WPDCS:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2023–WPDCS19–04 which outlined the outcomes of the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission, specifically related to the work of the WPDCS and **AGREE** to consider how best to provide the SC with the information it needs to satisfy the Commission’s requests throughout the course of the current WPDCS meeting.
- 2) **NOTE** the 9 Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) adopted at the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission (consisting of 8 Resolutions and 1 Recommendation) which have a direct impact on the work of the WPDCS.