



12 February 2024

## IOTC CIRCULAR

2024-07

Dear Madam / Sir

### INVITATION TO THE 28<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE INDIAN OCEAN TUNA COMMISSION & ASSOCIATED MEETINGS

I have the honour to extend to you an invitation to participate in the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission, which will be held from 13 to 17 May 2024.

The 21st Session of the Compliance Committee, the 21st Session of the Standing Committee on Administration and Finance and the 8th Session of the Technical Committee on Management Procedures will also be held in conjunction with the Commission meeting. Session dates are given below, in the Calendar of Important Dates.

All meetings will be held at the Swissotel Bangkok Ratchada, Thailand [[click here for information on this hotel](#)].

Note: The meetings will allow for physical participation and participation by videoconference. However, given meeting room size limitations, each observer organisation may only have a maximum of two persons in the meeting room at any one time.

#### Credentials

In accordance with Rule III of the IOTC Rules of Procedure, official credentials are required in order to participate in all the above meetings. Importantly, the letter of credentials shall conform with the draft letter provided in Appendix I of the IOTC Rules of Procedure [[click here](#)].

Only credentialed individuals will receive the Zoom links to join the meetings.

Credentials should be submitted to the Secretariat ASAP, but no later than 15 days before each meeting to [iotc-secretariat@fao.org](mailto:iotc-secretariat@fao.org). Credentials for MPF applicants are required earlier.

#### **Contracting Parties & Cooperating Non-contracting Parties (CPCs)**

Each CPC is requested to provide a letter of credentials signed by the appropriate Authority indicating who will attend in-person and who should receive the Zoom link. The credentials should also include the email address and contact phone number for each person. It is important to duly authorise the alternate as shown in Appendix I, paragraph 3.

#### **Observers**

IOTC Observers are also requested to submit a similar Letter of Credentials indicating who will attend in-person and who should receive the Zoom link. The credentials should also include the email address and contact phone number for each person.

#### Meeting Participation Fund

The participation of one representative from developing Members of the IOTC to meetings will be supported through the IOTC Meeting Participation Fund (MPF).

- Applications to participate in the TCMP must be received by the IOTC Secretariat ([iotc-secretariat@fao.org](mailto:iotc-secretariat@fao.org)) no later than 45 days in advance of the meeting.
- Applications to participate in the CoC, SCAF and Commission meetings respectively must be received by the IOTC Secretariat ([iotc-secretariat@fao.org](mailto:iotc-secretariat@fao.org)) no later than 60 days in advance of the meeting.

#### Distribution

**IOTC Contracting Parties:** Australia, Bangladesh, China, Comoros, European Union, France (Territories), India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Rep of), Japan, Kenya, Rep. of Korea, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, United Rep. of Tanzania, Thailand, United Kingdom, Yemen. **Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties:** Liberia. **Intergovernmental Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations.** Chairperson IOTC. Copy to: FAO Headquarters, FAO Representatives to CPCs.

This message has been transmitted by email only

Given the limitations of the MPF budget it is proposed that eligible Members nominate one person to attend all four meetings. The rules of procedure for the administration of the MPF as well as guidelines for applying to the MPF can be found in Appendix VIII of the IOTC Rules of Procedure [\[click here\]](#). Please be reminded that there is no provision in these rules for the IOTC Secretariat to consider late applications to the MPF.

Deadlines for MPF applications are shown on the below calendar.

#### **Proposals for Conservation and Management Measures:**

In accordance with the procedure agreed upon by the Commission in 2011, only those proposals for new or revised Conservation or Management Measures received thirty (30) days before the Session, at the latest, will be considered by the Commission. Thus, all proposals must be received by the IOTC Secretariat before midnight on 13 April, Seychelles time.

However, in accordance with Resolution 16/10, Contracting Parties are encouraged to submit a provisional title, Contracting Party sponsorship and a focal point for each proposal (including the email address of the focal point), a minimum of 60 days prior to each annual Session (i.e. 14 March) so that all Contracting Parties are provided with an opportunity to identify proposals being developed by other CPCs, and as appropriate, cooperate in the development of proposals prior to the Session in which they are to be discussed.

#### **Proposals to amend the IOTC Rules of Procedure:**

In accordance with Rule XVII of the IOTC Rules of Procedure, any proposals to amend the ROP must be distributed at least 60 days before the session of the commission i.e. 14 March.

#### **Voting in a hybrid meeting**

Voting by a roll call can be facilitated in a hybrid setting when all duly authorised voters are visible (i.e. in the meeting room or on-screen). For this type of vote, the procedures described in Rule X of the IOTC Rules of Procedure shall apply.

However, secret ballots will be conducted by in-person voting only. Accordingly, only duly authorized persons who are physically present at a meeting of the Commission may cast a secret vote and the procedures described in Rule X of the IOTC Rules of Procedure shall apply. Note, Members that are unable to attend the Session physically, are invited to include a person in their delegation to the Session of the Commission who is physically located in the country where the Session is being held (e.g. someone such as an embassy attaché), for the purpose of casting votes on their behalf. This person must be listed as the head of delegation or alternate on the letter of credentials to enable them to vote.

#### **Meeting hours of the Commission**

In May 2023, the Commission adopted a revised Rules of Procedure. One of the approved amendments in the newly adopted Rules of Procedure is Appendix V, which pertains to the work of the Compliance Committee.

The revised IOTC Rules of Procedure under Appendix V paragraph 6 states:

*“IOTC Final Compliance Report*

*The Commission shall consider the IOTC Provisional Compliance Report and any associated or other relevant information, including responses to compliance issues and follow-up actions recommended by the Compliance Committee and adopt it, with amendments as required, as the IOTC Final Compliance Report.”*

This new provision results in the need for the Commission to review and discuss the Preliminary Compliance Report developed during the preceding Session of the Compliance Committee. This additional requirement may take significant time. As such, I would like to extend the Commission meeting duration by an additional hour each day. This would ensure that time is not reduced for the other important points of the agenda.

**Further information**

Information concerning the meeting location and Sessions, including the agendas and other meeting documents will be communicated by the IOTC Secretariat in the coming weeks via Circulars and the IOTC website meeting pages [[click here](#)].

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Kim', followed by a long horizontal line.

Ms Jung-re Riley Kim  
IOTC Chairperson

## Calendar of important dates

Dates (2024)	Commission S28 (14-18 May)	Who	Notes
14 March	Deadline for receiving proposals to amend the IOTC Rules of Procedure (ROP XVIII.1)	CPs	It is preferable to receive any proposals before the 60 days distribution deadline (14 March) to allow for translation.
	Provisional agenda posted on the S28 meeting page (ROP IV.4)	Secretariat	60 days before the meeting
	Deadline for receiving applications from bodies seeking observer status (ROP XIV)	New observers	60 days before the meeting
	Deadline for MPF applications	Members	60 days before the meeting
13 April	Provisional agenda with comments posted on the S28 meeting page (ROP IV.4)	Secretariat	30 days before the meeting
	Deadline for receiving proposals for conservation and management measures (IOTC Agreement IV.4)	Members	30 days before the meeting. It is advisable that Members submit proposals that have been subject to advanced consultation (especially if the meeting is in a reduced format).
	Meeting documents posted on the S28 meeting page	Secretariat	ASAP but at least 30 days before the meeting
5-7 May	Compliance Committee		Deadline for credentials is 20 April* Deadline for MPF applications 6 March
8 May	Standing Committee on Administration & Finance		Deadline for credentials is 23 April* Deadline for MPF applications 9 March
9 May	Report adoption: COC21 & SCAF21		
10-11 May	Technical Committee on Management Procedures		Deadline for credentials is 26 April* Deadline for MPF applications 26 March
13-17 May	Commission (S28)		Deadline for credentials is 28 April* Deadline for MPF applications 14 March

\* earlier if MPF is being requested