
CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES THAT INCLUDE A REFERENCE TO THE YEAR 2024

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PURPOSE

To draw the attention of the Commission to the IOTC Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) that include a reference to the year 2024.

BACKGROUND

The Commission has the following 9 CMMs that make references to the year 2024.

1. Resolution 23/01 On the management of anchored fish aggregating devices (AFADS)

Para 4. CPCs shall develop an AFAD Management Plan in accordance with the Guidelines in Annex I and shall submit this AFAD Management Plan to the IOTC Executive Secretary by 1 January 2024.

Comment:

- *Management Plans were received from three members prior to the deadline (Indonesia, Maldives and Mauritius).*

2. Resolution 23/03 On establishing a voluntary fishing closure in the Indian ocean for the conservation of tropical tunas

Para 5. As a precautionary measure, starting from 2024, all CPCs are encouraged to ensure that their flag vessels fishing for bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack tuna do not fish in the IOTC area of competence for a minimum period of 31 consecutive days, decided in advance, and communicated to IOTC Secretariat no later than 31st of December 2023.

Para 6. Alternatively, CPCs may implement voluntary catch reductions for yellowfin tuna in addition to the catch reductions imposed through an active Conservation and Management Measure. Those CPCs may also choose to apply voluntary catch reductions for bigeye and skipjack tuna for 2024. Such CPCs shall report to the IOTC Executive Secretary before 31st December 2023, the targeted voluntary reduction including the reference year which will be circulated by the IOTC Executive Secretary to all CPCs as soon as possible.

Comment:

- *This is a voluntary measure. Notice was received by one member (Mauritius) and circulated to all members accordingly.*

3. Resolution 23/04 On establishing catch limits for bigeye tuna in the IOTC area of competence

Para 3. The Commission shall request Taiwan, Province of China to limit their annual bigeye tuna catch in the IOTC area of competence to 11,488 t in 2024 and 2025.

Para 4. Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs) specifically referred to in the table in paragraph 2 may apply a two-year management period to manage their catch limits for 2024 and 2025 in totality. Any underage of the 2024 catch limit may be added to the catch limit in 2025. Any overage of the 2024 catch limit shall be deducted from the catch limit in 2025. However, these CPCs are encouraged to keep their catch in 2024 below the annual catch limits. These CPCs shall submit a compliance table using the template in Annex 1 which includes current catches, balance, and adjusted catch limit to the IOTC Compliance Committee, which shall review the compliance tables.

Para 5. Any overages from the 2024-2025 management period shall be deducted from the catch limit for the management period commencing from 2026. Any underage from the 2024-2025 management period shall not be added to the catch limit for the management period commencing in 2026.

Para 8. If a CPC subject to paragraph 7 catches more than 2,000 t, either in 2024 or 2025, the Commission shall consider establishing a binding catch limit applicable to that CPC from the management period commencing in 2026, if an allocation scheme has not yet been agreed and implemented by the Commission.

Comment:

- *The data for 2024 is not yet available. This will be reviewed by the data submission deadline in 2025.*

4. Resolution 23/05 On establishing a programme for transshipment by large-scale fishing vessels

Para 21. The Commission shall consider the introduction of supply declaration as follows at its annual Session in 2024 taking into account the effectiveness of such supply declaration introduced in ICCAT since 2022.

- Anytime a carrier vessel on the IOTC RCV provides supply services to another vessel at sea in the IOTC area of competence, the master of the carrier vessel completes a supply declaration in accordance with the format set out in Annex V and send it by electronic means to its flag State and the IOTC Secretariat 24 hours in advance of the activity.
- A separate supply declaration is not required when the supply activity is conducted in association with transshipment that is monitored by an IOTC Regional Observer.

Comment:

- *The ICCAT Secretariat has confirmed that discussions regarding the effectiveness of supply declarations have not yet occurred, and that these discussions may take place in June 2024. In addition to this confirmation, document "COC_303/2023"-Report to the ICCAT Conservation and Management Compliance Committee on the implementation of Recommendation by ICCAT on Transshipment [21-15] offers the following observation: "Several Supply Declarations have been received in Word format, that are not consistent with the template of the form "CP54-SupplyDec" provided by the Secretariat. These declarations are in a text format (letter style), which is very different from the proposed table. Coordinates are not indicated and very often the type of product to be transhipped is not indicated. This makes it very difficult for the Secretariat to determine which documents are being sent in accordance with the requirement to submit Supply Declarations, particularly as a few CPCs persist in submitting information not required by the Recommendation which causes an enormous additional burden on the Secretariat (registration and review of non-relevant submissions) and seriously hinders the correct processing of information."*

5. Resolution 23/07 On reducing the incidental bycatch of seabirds in longline fisheries

Para 8. The Scientific Committee will continue to review and make recommendations to the Commission on advancements and best practice in seabird bycatch mitigation as they become available. This will include, by 2024 at the latest, developing advice to the Commission on best practice branch line weighting.

Comment:

- *This was discussed by the WPEB in 2023 who noted that Resolution 23-07 specifies branch line weighting options different to those currently recommended by the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP). No conclusion was reached as to whether the recommendations by ACAP on line weighting should be adopted by the IOTC.*

6. Resolution 23/08 On electronic monitoring standards for IOTC fisheries

Para 2. The Commission shall:

- a. implement a Regional Electronic Monitoring Program (REMP) as per the objectives, purpose and roles and responsibilities described in the IOTC EM Program Standard (Annex 1) by [1 July 2024].

Para 5. The Scientific Committee shall, no later than 2024, review the ROS minimum required data fields to

- a) identify any fields that are logistically difficult for EM and/or human observers to collect, respectively; and
- b) provide advice and recommendations to the Commission on the need and use of those identified fields for scientific purposes, and their collection and reporting status (i.e. mandatory, non-mandatory etc.).
- c) Discuss and provide advice to the Commission on the potential need to develop a separate EM ROS minimum data fields list.

Comment:

- *On track. The WGEMS has met intersessionally in 2024 to review the ROS minimum required data fields. This is being discussed on a gear-by-gear basis.*

7. Resolution 22/03 On a management procedure for bigeye tuna in the IOTC area of competence

Para 12. The first TAC derived from the MP shall apply in 2024 and 2025. After 2025, the TAC shall apply in each of the subsequent three years following the year it is set by the Commission.

Para 18. The Scientific Committee is requested to review, and if necessary, further develop and refine (not later than 2024), the exceptional circumstances guidelines (adopted by SC24 and S26), taking into account, inter alia, the need for an appropriate balance between specificity versus flexibility in defining exceptional circumstances, and the appropriate level of robustness to ensure that exceptional circumstances are triggered only when necessary.

Comment:

- *No revisions to the exceptional circumstances guidelines have been recommended by the SC to date.*

8. Resolution 22/04 On a regional observer scheme.

Para 4. The IOTC Scientific Committee, in collaboration with the Compliance Committee, shall develop and agree on minimum standards for the use of EMS for purse seine, longline, bait boat (pole and line), handline, and gillnet fleets by 2023 at the latest, including on modalities of the substitution of the human observer coverage by an EMS, taking into account factors such as, the principles and regulations regarding minimum safe manning requirements. The Commission may consider and adopt these standards by 2024 in a separate Resolution.

Comment:

- *See Resolution 23/08 above.*

9. Resolution 21/01 On an interim plan for rebuilding the Indian ocean yellowfin tuna stock in the IOTC area of competence (does not apply to India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Madagascar, Oman and Somalia)

Para 18. CPCs shall gradually reduce supply vessels in purse seine operations targeting tropical tuna, by 31st December 2022 as specified below in (a) and (b). Flag States shall submit the status of reducing the use of supply vessel as part of the report of Implementation to the Compliance Committee.

- a. From 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2024: 3 supply vessels in support of not less than 10 purse seiners, all of the same flag State.

Comment:

- *There are currently five CPCs making use of supply vessels in the IOTC area to support the activities of some of their flag purse seiners. Three of the CPCs are exempted from the agreed supply vessel to purse seiner ratio, as they have only one supply vessel under their flag.*

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Commission:

- a) **NOTE** paper IOTC-2024-S28-04 which lists the references to the year 2024 made in existing CMMs.
- b) **CONSIDER** any actions to be taken in response to the above CMMs.