



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
Commission des Thons de l'Océan Indien

Indian Ocean Tuna Commission Standing Committee on Administration and Finance

#SCAF21

May, 2024

Secretariat Support to the Meeting

- 23 IOTC meetings held in 2023:
 - Scientific working parties, working groups (EMS, FADs, MSE), Scientific Committee
 - Compliance: Adhoc Working Groups on FADs, Compliance Committee
 - TCAC
 - Commission, SCAF, TCMP
 - Small Working Group (Amendments in ROP of IOTC for MPF)
 - Special Session of the Commission (SSFD)

Scientific Support

- Facilitated the Scientific Committee and 11 technical meetings
- Documents and reports produced
- Species identification guides
- Revisions to Executive Summaries

Compliance Support

- Facilitated the VMSWG, CDSWG, WPICMM and Compliance Committee meetings
- Maintaining vessel lists (active, authorized, IUU)
- Management of the Regional Observer Programme
- Follow up missions / Capacity development
- Collection, analysis and reporting of compliance information

Financial statements - 2023

Budget 2023: \$4,109,745

Received: \$4,055,531  The contributions received in 2022 includes outstanding contributions from previous years

Spent: \$3,651,731

Unspent: \$458,014  Underspending compared to budget (11%)

Extra-budgetary funds received from China (\$17,000) for MPF

Contributions Outstanding

- The cumulative total of outstanding contribution payments has increased by around 2%, from \$2,711,107 as of 31 December 2022 to \$2,765,321 as of 31 December 2023. This amounted to a deficit of \$54,214.
- As of 31 December 2023, 10 Members had outstanding contributions to a total value of \$2,470,015; and the total outstanding contributions of ex-members was \$295,306.
- No contributions were received from five Members in 2023, namely Eritrea, Iran, Pakistan, Sudan and Yemen
- Partial contributions were received from Bangladesh, Comoros, Madagascar and Mozambique, but these did not cover the full amount due.
- The contribution from Pakistan for the years 2023 and 2024 has been internally approved and should be processed within the coming weeks.

Contributions Outstanding

- Iran is committed to seeking a solution for the payment possibly by providing the funds through cooperation between the IOTC Secretariat and the FAO office in Iran.
- Madagascar informed that they had paid a partial contribution in 2023 that has not been recorded by FAO and that they are tracking the missing funds, and Madagascar will inform the Secretariat of any result.
- Mozambique informed that it has a plan in place to pay its outstanding contributions. Notwithstanding the challenges being faced by Mozambique, they are doing their best to reduce the gap. A partial payment is expected to be made by June.

IOTC Meeting Participation Fund

- The extra contribution to the MPF received from China (\$17,000) in 2023 and confirmed by China for the commitment to providing these funds in 2024 and 2025.
- The total amount available in the MPF in 2023 was \$308,332 (including interest) and that the total expenditures for the MPF in 2023 amounted to \$300,179, leaving a balance of USD 8,153. This covered the costs of 122 participants.
- Due to the expected increased demand and higher travel costs in 2024 that the funds available in the MPF for the remainder of 2024 may not be sufficient to cover demand.

Programme of work and budget estimates 2024

- The proposed 2025 budget represented a 3% decrease from the corresponding 2024 budget.
- It is agreed to an increase in the MPF funding of US\$ 50,000. In addition, it is also agreed to increases in funding for meetings, capacity building and support to science activities.
- It is agreed that the 2025 IOTC budget would cover the expenses linked to the operations of the e- Maris, e-RAV and e-PSM platforms.

Other Business

- It was informed that the SWG with regards to amendments in ROP of IOTC for MPF had met briefly prior to the SCAF and had committed to continuing discussions inter-sessionally in order to provide recommendations to the next session of the SCAF.
- The Chair encouraged more Members to participate in the ongoing work of the SWG. Interested parties were requested to contact the Chair directly.
- A CPC suggested that observers could be requested to pay a fee for attending IOTC meetings in person in order to cover administrative costs.
- The important role observers play in the functioning of the Commission and were concerned about introducing barriers for their participation. It was, therefore, requested that the Secretariat review the FAO policy on this issue.

Other Business

Sustainable Indian Ocean Programme

- The EU informed the SCAF of a new programme of support with a broad thematic scope including fisheries assessment, management and compliance .
- The programme would last 3-4 years with a budget up to EUR 3,000,000.
- The project would be managed by the EU delegation in Mauritius with technical input from the IOTC Secretariat.
- Activities would be focussed on East African countries, freeing-up regular budget to address the needs of other IOTC Members.

Recommendations

- It was recommended that the Chair along with the Chair of the Commission draft and send a letter to the Director General of FAO to express concern about the annual fees and request a reduction, noting that these funds are required for other important activities. It was also noted that the Committee on Fisheries of FAO in coming July could be an opportunity for CPCs to convey their concerns on this matter to FAO.
- It was noted that the MPF is administered according to FAO rules and procedures which do not provide the flexibility for the Secretariat to organise the most convenient travel and accommodation options for participants. Therefore, it was recommended that the Chair of the Commission request FAO allow the Secretariat greater flexibility when administering this fund and providing travel and accommodation solutions for participants.

Recommendations

- In the short-term, it was recommended that the Commission encourage that IOTC meetings be held in FAO Preferred Hotel Programme (PHP) venues (where applicable and/or possible) with the intention of ensuring that MPF recipients are not disadvantaged by having to travel from PHP hotels to the meeting venue. This should be done without prejudice to national market competition rules and procurement processes.
- It was noted that due to the expected increased demand and higher travel costs in 2024 that the funds available in the MPF for the remainder of 2024 may not be sufficient to cover demand and RECOMMENDED the use of the Working Capital Fund to supplement the MPF on an exceptional basis.
- The SCAF NOTED that the 2025 MPF budget may not be sufficient to meet the expected increased demand and higher travel costs and AGREED to an increase in the MPF funding under the Regular budget in 2025. The SCAF RECOMMENDED the use of Working Capital Funds (WCF) to supplement the MPF on an exceptional basis, should the MPF require additional funds in 2025. The SCAF AGREED that the MPF should not be exclusively funded from the WCF. The SCAF ALSO NOTED the potential budgetary consequences, should the policy of covering one person per qualifying CPC be changed.

Recommendations

- The SCAF RECOMMENDED to the Commission that, on an exceptional basis, and pending a review of the SWG, the current 75%:25% allocation of the MPF to science and non-science meetings (Rule XVI.5: of the IOTC Rules of Procedure) not be applied in 2025, while NOTING that given the relevance of Scientific meetings, a sufficient proportion of the MPF should be maintained for those meetings.
- The SCAF RECOMMENDED that the Commission adopt the Programme of Work and Budget and the scheme of contributions for 2025 and 2026 (indicative) as outlined in Appendix 5 and Appendix 6, respectively, while NOTING that the Program of Work for the IOTC Secretariat is based on the assumption that the nature and extent of the activities undertaken by the IOTC Secretariat will remain within the current scope. Any new activities agreed to during the 28th Session of the Commission (S28) that have budgetary consequences, will require an amendment of the figures.

Thank you