

OUTCOMES OF THE 27TH AND 28TH SESSIONS OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, JUNE 2024

PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 14th Working Party on Neritic Tunas (WPNT14) of the decision and requests made by the Commission at its 27th Session, held from 8-12 May 2023, specifically relating to the work of the WPNT. The report from the 28th Session of the Commission held in May 2024 has yet to be adopted but the adopted Conservation and Management Measures are available. The Commission discussion on neritic tunas was very limited in 2023 although the Commission did endorse the Recommendations from the 25th Session of the Scientific Committee (SC25).

BACKGROUND

At the 27th Session, the Commission **CONSIDERED** and **ADOPTED** 9 proposals as Conservation and Management Measures., as detailed below:

Resolutions

- Resolution 23/03:. On Establishing a Voluntary Fishing Closure in the Indian Ocean for the Conservation of Tropical Tunas
- Resolution 23/04: On Establishing Catch Limits for Bigeye Tuna in the Area of IOTC Competence
- Resolution 23/05: On Establishing a Programme for Transshipment by Large-scale Fishing Vessels
- Resolution 23/06: On the Conservation of Cetaceans
- Resolution 23/07: On Reducing the Incidental Bycatch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries
- Resolution 23/08: On Electronic Monitoring Standards for IOTC Fisheries
- Resolution 23/09: On a Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) Working Group
- Resolution 23/10: Terms of Reference for a Working Party on Socio-Economics
- Resolution 23/11: To Enhance Cooperation in the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission Decision Making Process

Two further proposals were adopted but have since received so many objections that they are no longer in force

At the 28th Session, the Commission **CONSIDERED** and **ADOPTED** 11 proposals as Conservation and Management Measures., as detailed below:

Resolutions

- Resolution 24/01: On climate change as it relates to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
- Resolution 24/02: On management of drifting fish aggregating devices (FADS) in the IOTC area of competence
- Resolution 24/03: On establishment of a list of vessels presumed to have carried out illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the IOTC area of competence.
- Resolution 24/04: On a regional observer scheme.
- Resolution 24/05: On establishing a programme for transshipment by large-scale fishing vessels
- Resolution 24/06: On a ban on discards of bigeye tuna, skipjack tuna, yellowfin tuna, and non- targeted species caught by vessels in the IOTC record of authorisation that operate in the IOTC area of competence.
- Resolution 24/07: On a management procedure for skipjack tuna in the IOTC area of competence.

- Resolution 24/08 On a management procedure for swordfish in the IOTC area of competence.
- Resolution 24/09: To promote compliance by nationals of contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties with IOTC conservation and management measures
- Resolution 24/10: On the promotion of the implementation of IOTC conservation and management measures

Recommendations

- Recommendation 24/11: On conservation and management measure on marine pollution

These Conservation and Management Measures shall become binding 120 days after their distribution to all CPCs. The final versions of the newly agreed CMMs are available here: <http://iotc.org/cmms>

DISCUSSION

(SC27, Para 25) The Commission **NOTED** that the current status of neritic tunas are as follows:

<p>Kawakawa</p> <p>No new stock assessment was conducted for kawakawa in 2022 and so the results are based on the assessment carried out in 2020 using data-limited assessment techniques. Based on the weight-of-evidence available, the kawakawa stock for the Indian Ocean is classified as not overfished and not subject to overfishing.</p>
<p>Longtail tuna</p> <p>No new assessment was conducted for longtail tuna in 2022 and so the results are based on the assessment carried out in 2020 using the Optimised Catch-Only Method (OCOM). Based on the weight-of-evidence currently available, the stock is considered to be both overfished and subject to overfishing.</p>
<p>Indo-Pacific king mackerel</p> <p>A new assessment was carried out in 2022 using the data-limited techniques (CMSY and LB-SPR). Based on the weight-of-evidence currently available, the stock is considered to be not overfished and not subject to overfishing.</p>
<p>Narrowed-Barred Spanish mackerel</p> <p>No new assessment was conducted for narrow-barred Spanish mackerel in 2022 and so the results are based on the assessment carried out in 2020 using the Optimised Catch-Only Method (OCOM). Based on the weight-of-evidence available, the stock appears to be overfished and subject to overfishing.</p>
<p>Bullet tuna</p> <p>A new assessment was carried out in 2022 using the data-limited techniques (CMSY and LB-SPR), however the catch data for bullet tuna are very uncertain given the high percentage of the catches that had to be estimated due to a range of reporting issues. Stock status in relation to the Commission's BMSY and FMSY reference points remains unknown.</p>
<p>Frigate tuna</p> <p>A new assessment was carried out in 2022 using the data-limited techniques (CMSY and LB-SPR), however the catch data for frigate tuna are very uncertain given the high percentage of the catches that had to be estimated due to a range of reporting issues. Stock status in relation to the Commission's BMSY and FMSY reference points remains unknown.</p>

Although the report of the 28th Session of the Commission has not been formally adopted, the stock status summaries provided by the SC in its 28th Session were endorsed. These are provided in document IOTC-2024-WPNT14-03.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the WPNT

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2024–WPNT14–04 which outlined the outcomes of the 27th Session of the Commission, specifically related to the work of the WPNT and **AGREE** to consider how best to provide the SC with the information it needs, in order to satisfy the Commission’s requests, throughout the course of the current WPNT meeting.
- 2) **NOTE** that 9 Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) were adopted at the 27th Session of the Commission (consisting of 9 Resolutions and 0 Recommendations).
- 3) **NOTE** that 11 Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) were adopted at the 28th Session of the Commission (consisting of 10 Resolutions and 1 Recommendation).