

OUTCOMES OF 28th SESSIONS OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 3 AUGUST 2024

PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 22 Working Party on Billfish (WPB22) of the decision and requests made by the Commission at its 28th session held from 13–17 May 2024 respectively, specifically relating to the work of the WPB.

BACKGROUND

At the 28th Session of the Commission 10 Conservation and Management Measures were adopted (consisting of 9 Resolutions and 1 Recommendations), 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 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 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 Marine Pollution*

Conservation and Management Measures become binding 120 days after their distribution to all CPCs. The final versions of the newly agreed CMMs will be made available in due course at <http://iotc.org/cmms>

DISCUSSION

The Commission also made a number of general comments on the recommendations made by the Scientific Committee in 2023 (SC26), which have relevance for the WPB (IOTC–2023–S28–R):

Status of billfish

Swordfish

A new assessment was undertaken in 2023 using stock synthesis with fisheries data up to 2021. On the weight-of-evidence available in 2023, the stock is determined to be **not overfished** and **not subject to overfishing**.

Striped Marlin

No new assessment was conducted in 2023 and so the advice is based on the 2021 assessment. On the weight-of-evidence available in 2021, the stock status of striped marlin is determined to be **overfished** and **subject to overfishing**.

Blue Marlin

No new assessment was conducted in 2023 and so the advice is based on the 2022 assessment. On the weight-of-evidence available in 2022, the stock is determined to be **overfished** and **subject to overfishing**.

Black Marlin

No new assessment was conducted in 2023. A stock assessment based on JABBA, was conducted in 2021 for black marlin. Since 2018, there has been no discernible improvement in the data available for black marlin and the subsequent assessment outputs remain uncertain and should be interpreted with caution. As such, there is no reasonable justification to change the stock status from “**Not assessed/Uncertain**”.

Indo-Pacific sailfish

No new assessment was conducted in 2023 and so the advice is based on the 2022 assessment. On the weight-of-evidence available in 2022, the stock status of Indo-Pacific sailfish is determined to be **not overfished nor subject to overfishing**.

The complete report of the 28th Session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission is available for download from the IOTC website: <https://iotc.org/meetings/28th-session-indian-ocean-tuna-commission>

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the WPB

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2024–WPB22–04 which outlined the outcomes of the 28th Session of the Commission, specifically related to the work of the WPB 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 WPB meeting.
- 2) **NOTE** that 10 new Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) were adopted at the 28th Session of the Commission (consisting of 9 Resolutions and 1 Recommendation).