

## PROGRESS MADE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF WPEB19 AND SC26

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT AND CHAIR

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### PURPOSE

To provide participants at the 20<sup>th</sup> Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch (WPEB) with an update on the progress made in implementing those recommendations from the previous WPEB meeting which were endorsed by the Scientific Committee (SC), and to provide alternative recommendations for the consideration and potential endorsement by participants as appropriate given any progress.

### BACKGROUND

At the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the WPEB, participants agreed on a series of actions to be taken by participants, CPCs, and the IOTC Secretariat on a range of issues. The subsequent table developed and agreed to by the WPEB was provided to the SC for its endorsement at its December 2023 meeting. This paper provides a summary of the progress made on this list of requests so that the working party can evaluate progress made and to agree on the next steps to be taken for each issue.

### DISCUSSION

The Rules of Procedure of the Scientific Committee include the following seven core tasks, which are to be supported by the various Working Parties.

- a) recommend policies and procedures for the collection, processing, dissemination and analysis of fishery data;
- b) facilitate the exchange and critical review among scientists of information on research and operation of fisheries of relevance to the Commission;
- c) develop and coordinate cooperative research programmes involving Members of the Commission in support of fisheries management;
- d) assess and report to the Commission on the status of stocks of relevance to the Commission and the likely effects of further fishing and of different fishing patterns and intensities;
- e) formulate and report to the sub-commission, as appropriate, on recommendations concerning conservation, fisheries management and research, including consensus, majority and minority views;
- f) consider any matter referred to by the Commission;
- g) carry out other technical activities of relevance to the Commission.

Recalling that the SC, at its 16<sup>th</sup> Session adopted a set of reporting terminology SC16.07 (para. 23), which was subsequently endorsed by the Commission at its 18<sup>th</sup> Session in 2014 (S18, para 10), to further improve the clarity of information sharing from, and among the science bodies, the following two term levels should be noted when interpreting the Reports and Appendix I to this paper:

**Level 1:** From a subsidiary body of the Commission to the next level in the structure of the Commission:

**RECOMMENDED, RECOMMENDATION:** Any conclusion or request for an action to be undertaken, from a subsidiary body of the Commission (Committee or Working Party), which is to be formally provided to the next level in the structure of the Commission for its consideration/endorsement (e.g. from a Working Party to the Scientific Committee; from a Committee to the Commission). The intention is that the higher body will consider the recommended action for endorsement under its own mandate, if the subsidiary body does not already have the required mandate. Ideally this should be task specific and contain a timeframe for completion.

**Level 2:** From a subsidiary body of the Commission to a CPC, the IOTC Secretariat, or other body (not the Commission) to carry out a specified task:

**REQUESTED:** This term should only be used by a subsidiary body of the Commission if it does not wish to have the request formally adopted/endorsed by the next level in the structure of the Commission. For example, if a Committee

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wishes to seek additional input from a CPC on a particular topic, but does not wish to formalise the request beyond the mandate of the Committee, it may request that a set action be undertaken. Ideally this should be task specific and contain a timeframe for the completion.

In addition to the Recommendations endorsed by the SC at its 26<sup>nd</sup> Session, the SC also made several requests which, although are not passed to the Commission for its endorsement, are considered actions which the Scientific Committee has the mandate to issue. The revised recommendations are contained in [Appendix I](#) for the consideration and potential endorsement by the WPEB20.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the WPEB **NOTE** the progress made in implementing the recommendations and requests of the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the WPEB, and consider whether revised recommendations need to be sent to the SC for its consideration.

#### **APPENDICES**

**Appendix I:** Progress made on the Recommendations and Requests of WPEB19

## APPENDIX I

## Progress made on the recommendations and requests of WPEB17 and SC24

WPEB19 Rec. No.	Recommendation from WPEB19	SC26 Rec. No.	Recommendation adopted by the SC26	Endorsed at S28	Progress/Comments
WPEB19.0 1 (para. 66)	The WPEB <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the SC advise the Commission to consider extending measures to prevent finning of sharks such as fins naturally attached including partially attached and tethered for all fisheries or similar, alternative measures (for example, fins artificially attached), providing they had been assessed and endorsed by the SC and Compliance Committee as being equally or more likely to meet the conservation benefit (of a fins naturally attached measure) and are logistically feasible from a compliance monitoring perspective. The WPEB <b>NOTED</b> that while such other measures may be logistically more difficult to implement and monitor for governments, they may be logistically more practical for the fishing industry when conducting their fishing operations and storing shark catches on board.	SC26.12 (para 66 & 67)	<p>The SC <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the Commission consider extending measures to prevent finning of sharks such as fins naturally attached including partially attached and tethered for all fisheries or similar, alternative measures (for example, fins artificially attached), providing they had been assessed and endorsed by the SC and Compliance Committee as being equally or more likely to meet the conservation benefit (of a fins naturally attached measure) and are logistically feasible from a compliance monitoring perspective. The SC <b>NOTED</b> that while such other measures may be logistically more difficult to implement and monitor for governments, they may be more practical (and beneficial to crew safety) for the fishing industry when conducting their fishing operations and storing shark catches on board.</p> <p>The SC <b>NOTED</b> that while the WPEB had held discussion on the scientific need to improve measures to prevent shark finning, the WPEB has not provided a summary of this evidence to the SC. Subsequently, the SC <b>REQUESTED</b> the WPEB to provide this information to support the SC and Commission's further consideration of this issue.</p>		Ongoing: The Commission did not adopt a new Conservation and Management Measure regarding sharks.

WPEB19.0 2 (para 68)	<b>ACKNOWLEDGING</b> that the current ROS data requirements already enable the recording of shark fins attached / non-attached to carcasses. the WPEB <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the SC identifies proper mechanisms to ensure this information is regularly collected and reported to the Secretariat through the ROS.		There was little mention of this during the SC.		
WPEB19.0 3 (para 180)	The WPEB <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the SC consider and endorse the WPEB Program of Work (2024–2028), as provided in <a href="#">Appendix XVII</a> .	SC26 (para 182)	The SC <b>NOTED</b> the proposed Program of Work and priorities for the SC and each of the working parties and <b>AGREED</b> to a consolidated Program of Work as outlined in <a href="#">Appendix 35a-g</a> and in accordance with the IOTC Strategic Science Plan 2020-2024. The Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of each working party will ensure that the efforts of their respective working parties are focused on the core areas contained within the appendix, taking into account any new research priorities identified by the Commission at its next Session.	S28. (para 28)	Update: <b>[Completed]</b>  The Commission <b>NOTED</b> the stock status summaries for species of tuna and tuna-like species under the IOTC mandate, as well as other species impacted by IOTC fisheries and considered the recommendations made by the Scientific Committee to the Commission. The Commission <b>ENDORSED</b> the Scientific Committee’s 2023 list of recommendations as its own.
WPEB19.0 4 (para 192)	The WPEB <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the Scientific Committee consider the consolidated set of recommendations arising from WPEB19, provided at <a href="#">Appendix XVIII</a> , as well as the management advice provided in the draft resource stock status summary for each of the seven shark species, as well of those for marine turtles and seabirds: <b>Sharks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Blue sharks (<i>Prionace glauca</i>) – <a href="#">Appendix VII</a></li> <li>○ Oceanic whitetip sharks (<i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i>) – <a href="#">Appendix VIII</a></li> <li>○ Scalloped hammerhead sharks (<i>Sphyrna lewini</i>) – <a href="#">Appendix IX</a></li> </ul>	SC26.04 (para. 163)	The SC <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the Commission note the management advice developed for a subset of shark species commonly caught in IOTC fisheries for tuna and tuna-like species: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blue shark (<i>Prionace glauca</i>) – <a href="#">Appendix 23</a></li> <li>Oceanic whitetip shark (<i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i>) – <a href="#">Appendix 24</a></li> <li>Scalloped hammerhead shark (<i>Sphyrna lewini</i>) – <a href="#">Appendix 25</a></li> <li>Shortfin mako shark (<i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i>) – <a href="#">Appendix 26</a></li> <li>Silky shark (<i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i>) – <a href="#">Appendix 27</a></li> <li>Bigeye thresher shark (<i>Alopias superciliosus</i>) – <a href="#">Appendix 28</a></li> </ul>	S28. (para 28)	Update: <b>[Completed]</b>  The Commission <b>NOTED</b> the stock status summaries for species of tuna and tuna-like species under the IOTC mandate, as well as other species impacted by IOTC fisheries and considered the recommendations made by the Scientific Committee to the Commission. The Commission <b>ENDORSED</b> the Scientific Committee’s 2023 list of recommendations as its own.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Shortfin mako sharks (<i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i>) – <a href="#">Appendix X</a></li> <li>○ Silky sharks (<i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i>) – <a href="#">Appendix XI</a></li> <li>○ Bigeye thresher sharks (<i>Alopias superciliosus</i>) – <a href="#">Appendix XII</a></li> <li>○ Pelagic thresher sharks (<i>Alopias pelagicus</i>) – <a href="#">Appendix XIII</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Other species/groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Marine turtles – <a href="#">Appendix XIV</a></li> <li>○ Seabirds – <a href="#">Appendix XV</a></li> <li>○ Marine mammals - <a href="#">Appendix XVI</a></li> </ul>	<p>SC26.05 (para. 164)</p> <p>SC26.06 (para. 165)</p> <p>SC26.07 (para. 166)</p>	<p>Pelagic thresher shark (<i>Alopias pelagicus</i>) – <a href="#">Appendix 29</a></p> <p>The SC <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the Commission note the management advice developed for marine turtles, as provided in the Executive Summary encompassing all six species found in the Indian Ocean:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Marine turtles – <a href="#">Appendix 30</a></p> <p>The SC <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the Commission note the management advice developed for seabirds, as provided in the Executive Summary encompassing all species commonly interacting with IOTC fisheries for tuna and tuna-like species:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Seabirds – <a href="#">Appendix 31</a></p> <p>The SC <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the Commission note the management advice developed for cetaceans, as provided in the newly developed Executive Summary encompassing all species commonly interacting with IOTC fisheries for tuna and tuna-like species:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Cetaceans – <a href="#">Appendix 32</a></p>		
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WPEB19/20(DP) Report	WPEB REQUESTS	Update/Progress
WPEB19 (para 27)	The WPEB <b>NOTED</b> that shortbill spearfish ( <i>Tetrapturus angustirostris</i> ; SSP) is <i>de facto</i> a bycatch species since it is not included in the list of the 16 IOTC species and <b>REQUESTED</b> the Secretariat to include SSP in future data review reports prepared for the WPEB.	Update: <b>[Complete]</b> The Secretariat has included this species in the data review paper IOTC-2024-WPEB20(AS)-04.
WPEB19 (para 42)	The WPEB <b>THANKED</b> those CPCs who had already submitted these documents and <b>REQUESTED</b> CPCs who had not yet done so to submit their NPOAs to the Secretariat to be uploaded onto the NPOA portal. The WPEB <b>ENCOURAGED</b> participants to view these documents.	Update: <b>[Ongoing]</b> The Secretariat continues to follow up with CPCs on the status of their NPOAs. Any new NPOAs brought to the attention of the secretariat have been included in document IOTC-2024-WPEB20(AS)-08
WPEB19 (para 66)	<p>The WPEB <b>REQUESTED</b> CPCs to collect and provide all information necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of all relevant measures. The WPEB <b>AGREED</b> to review this information on a regular basis.</p> <p>Note: this was discussed in relation to the WPEB recommending that the SC advise the Commission to consider extending measures to prevent finning of sharks and the monitoring of measures that could be implemented.</p>	Update: <b>[Ongoing]</b> So far no specific information has been provided to the Secretariat on these issues but we hope that CPCs may present information on this during the assessment meeting.
WPEB19 (para 85)	The WPEB also <b>NOTED</b> that given the remaining number of tags to be deployed (31), the WPEB requires additional funds from IOTC to cover ARGOS fees. Therefore, the WPEB <b>REQUESTED</b> that the Secretariat seek funds to cover these fees.	Update: <b>[Ongoing]</b> Currently there is credit available with ARGOS to cover the fees but when that runs out there should be budget available in the IOTC Science budget to cover the ARGOS fees.
WPEB19 (para 107)	The WPEB <b>NOTED</b> that the effort unit is number of days of the trip and <b>REQUESTED</b> the authors to collect more detailed information regarding the	Update: <b>[Ongoing]</b> This related to a paper which provided a CPUE for blue shark in Indonesian waters. The hope is that this work will be presented again when the next blue shark assessment is due to take place and will include more detailed information regarding fishing operations.

	fishing operations, including the number of hooks used which may improve the model.	
WPEB20(D P) (para 84)	The WPEB <b>REQUESTED</b> the IOTC Secretariat to develop a summary paper, based on available observer data, that documents the fleet, spatial and temporal patterns in catch, catch rates, fate and condition (life status) of pelagic shark taken by the different IOTC fisheries, as well as high level statistics on the use of wire trace and shark lines. Where the IOTC Secretariat does not hold sufficient CPC observer data, the IOTC Secretariat could request summaries of the relevant data fields from the CPCs. This will facilitate further discussion and development of scientific advice by the WPEB at its meeting in September 2024.	Update: <b>[Complete]</b> The Secretariat will provide a summary paper that addresses this request. The Secretariat reached out to CPCs with longline observer programmes and received some data from CPCs which will be presented during assessment meeting.