



SWIOTUNA POSITION STATEMENT

13TH MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON ALLOCATION CRITERIA (TCAC)

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON ALLOCATION CRITERIA (TCAC)

21 – 24 October 2024, Bangkok, Thailand

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TUNA FISHERIES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

South West Indian Ocean Tuna Forum (SWIOTUNA) recognizes the important role played by Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) in the “Sustainable” management of Tuna and tuna-like resources in the Indian Ocean. The Commission achieves this by promoting among its Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties to ensure conservation and appropriate utilization of fish stocks and encouraging the sustainable development of fisheries.

The Commission enhances and promotes good governance of Tuna and Tuna-like species for sustainable development, food security and sustaining livelihoods especially for the coastal communities. Governance at all levels is mainly defined by the process through which Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties articulate, prioritize and frame their issues. It follows ability of the actors to implement monitor and enforce decisions made at the different levels of decision-making.

Considering the diverse interest and different levels of development between developing and developed countries (Contracting Parties) and the Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties, coming to consensus on all resolutions is in no doubt elusive. This perhaps explains the reason the allocation criteria have taken this long to realize, and may take more couple of years to complete. More so, although Catch Allocation decision making is guided by broad international laws (i.e. International Law of the Sea and other relevant laws, regulations and agreements) and inconsideration of the existing IOTC Catch Allocation Principles, the decision making at IOTC area of competence considering the complexity of the area require a bounded rationality decision-making approach rather than open decision-making approach.

The decision making may be better governed not by the actors’ interest but by boundaries that safeguard the resource (tuna and tuna-like species), the ecology/environment in which the resource thrives and the people who depend on the resource for their survival at either

artisanal or industrial level. Resolutions made at IOTC level need to meet a rational threshold in favour of all actors to enable equitable benefit of the tuna and tuna-like species.

It is thus paramount that resolutions governing allocation are guided and meet irreducible minimum ecological and social safeguards that genuinely protect and promote sustainability of the tuna resource and that of the Indian Ocean Coastal Communities, i.e. the decision needs to focus on ensuring:

- ***Stock sustainability;***
- ***Tuna fisheries development for tuna industry – especially for developing countries; and***
- ***Sustainable livelihoods for coastal communities.***

Based on the above background SWIOTUNA urges that the 13th TAC meeting considers the following areas.

1. SUSTAINABILITY OF INDIAN OCEAN TUNA STOCK

Conservation and Management Measures that support sustainability and rebuilding of tuna stock in the Indian ocean should be of high priority to safeguard food security and livelihoods of the current and future coastal communities.

2. PROMOTE AND SUPPORT TUNA FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT



- a) Resolutions that support mutual benefits between Distance Water Fishing Nations and Indian Ocean Coastal States while ensuring tuna fisheries development in the developing countries;
- b) Baseline Allocation: that each CPC will receive a reasonable equal percentage of the TAC for a given fish stock;
- c) Catch Attribution: that allocations be established in stepwise approach within two allocation cycles or 6 years; and
- d) Coastal State Allocation: fair indicators in consideration of the socio-economic status for individual Coastal State be considered to allow meaningful development of tuna fisheries in the respectful Coastal State.

3. SUSTAINABILITY OF THE LIVELIHOODS OF THE COASTAL STATES COMMUNITIES



Resolutions that safeguard livelihood a key pillar to food, nutrition security for coastal communities. Resolutions should aim at reducing ecological and

social risks to coastal communities, these include resolutions that address Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported practices such as:

- a) Transparency and compliance in tuna fisheries reporting, this involves advocating and promoting implementation of IOTC's VMS program and Port State Measures.
- b) Effective management of Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs), this includes gear marking and traceability.



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