

PROGRESS MADE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUESTS OF WPM14 AND SC26

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PURPOSE

To provide participants at the 15th Working Party on Methods (WPM15) with an update on the progress made in implementing those recommendations from the previous WPM 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 14th Session of the WPM, 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 WPM was provided to the SC for its endorsement at its meeting in December 2023.

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 16th Session adopted a set of reporting terminology SC16.07 (para. 23), which was subsequently endorsed by the Commission at its 18th 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 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 26rd 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](#).

RECOMMENDATION

That the WPM **NOTE** the progress made in implementing the recommendations and requests of the 14th Session of the WPM, 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 WPM14

APPENDIX I

Progress made on the recommendations and requests of WPM14 and SC26

WPM14 Rec. No.	Recommendation from WPM07	SC26 Rec. No.	Recommendation adopted by the SC24
WPM014.01	<p><i>Review of intersessional meetings related to the IOTC MSE process</i></p> <p>(Para 13) The WPM THANKED the participants of the Working Party on Methods Management Strategy Evaluation Task Force meeting for their informative discussions and input on the technical aspects of MSE and related topics. The WPM NOTED that the output of this meeting remains very important to the WPM as it provides an informal forum for the highly technical discussions necessary to advance the MSE process in IOTC for which there is insufficient time during the WPM meeting. The WPM further RECOMMENDED that the SC endorse this meeting being included in the schedule of meetings for 2024.</p>		(Para. 121) The SC NOTED the good progress made in Management Strategy Evaluations exercises for IOTC species in 2023, and the useful discussions of MSE work at the MSE Task Force meeting (a technical expert group of the WPM) and the TCMP meeting in 2023.
WPM014.02	<p><i>Albacore MSE: Update</i></p> <p>(Para 22) The WPM RECOMMENDED that this OM procedure be endorsed and a final version of a set of OMs be constructed for the evaluation of management procedures for the albacore stock.</p>		(Para 122) The SC NOTED that the challenges encountered when conditioning OMs based on the albacore stock assessment have been resolved when using Approximate Bayesian Computation (ABC) to condition the albacore OMs. ABC can offer a variety of solutions to potential problems that may arise during conditioning (e.g., cannot account for recent observed catches). The SC endorsed this OM procedure and agreed that a final set of OMs be constructed for the MP evaluation
WPM014.03	<p><i>Bigeye tuna MP (Resolution 22/03)</i></p> <p>(Para 41) The WPM agreed with the review findings that there was no evidence for exceptional circumstances and RECOMMENDED</p>	SC26.18	(Para 106) The SC agreed with the review findings that there was no evidence for exceptional circumstances and

	that the agreed TAC for 2024 and 2025 should remain unchanged.		RECOMMENDED that the agreed TAC for 2024 and 2025 should remain unchanged.
WPM014.04	<p>Yellowfin tuna MSE: Update</p> <p>(Para 69) In concluding its discussion, the WPM RECOMMENDED that pursuing the development of the Close-Kin Mark Recapture project should be a high priority for the Commission and REQUESTED that the project developers present the pilot project to the 2023 Scientific Committee meeting. The WPM NOTED that such a presentation should also include firstly, a detailed overview of relevant IOTC data to highlight where adult and juvenile fish are caught, where they are landed and where they can be potentially sampled, and secondly, a more detailed costing of the pilot project.</p>	SC26.19	(Para 114) Following the presentation of document IOTC-2023-SC26-11 the SC RECOMMENDED that pursuing the development of the Close-Kin Mark Recapture project for yellowfin tuna should be a high priority for the Commission.
WPM014.05	<p>General MSE issues</p> <p>(Para75) The WPM NOTED that there is a need to ensure that any code and input files used for developing MPs is housed internally on an accessible platform, so it is available to other users and not lost when developers move on to other tasks. The WPM NOTED that ICES uses a Transparency and Assessment Framework (TAF) which is a useful frontend to direct users to the locations of relevant documents and code (e.g. Github repositories) that enable users to re-run assessments and other analyses, but that a much smaller system would be needed for the IOTC.</p>	SC26.20	(Para 129) The SC NOTED that there is a need to ensure that any code and input files used for developing MPs is housed internally on an accessible platform, so it is available to other users and not lost when developers move on to other tasks. The SC NOTED that ICES uses a Transparency and Assessment Framework (TAF) which is a useful frontend to direct users to the locations of relevant documents and code (e.g. Github repositories) that enable users to re-run assessments and other analyses, but that a much smaller system would be needed for the IOTC. The SC NOTED

	<p>The WPM NOTED that most important information to be curated would be the input files, executables, and control files (not the large volume of output files), and RECOMMENDED that the IOTC Secretariat is provided with the necessary resources to manage the curation of this information.</p>		<p>that most important information to be curated would be the input files, executables, and control files (not the large volume of output files), and RECOMMENDED that the Commission ensure that the IOTC Secretariat is provided with the necessary resources to manage the curation of this information.</p>
WPM014.06	<p>CPUE Standardisation</p> <p>(Para 94) The WPM NOTED that several longline fleets provided the CPUE indices (such as swordfish, blue marlin, and black marlin) that were used to assess the billfish stocks. These indices were standardised using widely disparate techniques and frequently showed contradictory trends. WPM AGREED that enhancing the transparency and credibility of the billfish stock assessments can be facilitated by a delicated CPUE workshop that draws the experiences from the IOTC Joint CPUE standardisation procedure for the tropical tuan. Thus, the WPM RECOMMENDED holding a cross-cutting CPUE standardisation workshop in 2024 focusing on billfish (ideally prior to the WPB15 meeting) amongst the involved longline fleets to have focused discussions on standardising methods and processes for the primary billfish species.</p>		
WPM014.07	<p><i>Revision of the WPM Program of work (2024–2028)</i></p> <p>(para.117) The WPM RECOMMENDED that the Scientific Committee consider and endorse the WPM Programme of Work (2024–2028), as provided in Appendix IV.</p>		<p>(para. 182) The SC NOTED the proposed Program of Work and priorities for the SC and each of the working parties and AGREED to a consolidated Program of Work as outlined in Appendix 35a-g 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</p>

			the core areas contained within the appendix, taking into account any new research priorities identified by the Commission at its next Session.
WPM14.08	<p><i>Date and place of the 15th and 16th sessions of the WPM</i></p> <p>(para 124) The WPM NOTED that international travel restrictions due the global Covid-19 pandemic has now been greatly eased and it is now possible to have arrangements for a physical meeting in 2024. The Secretariat will continue to liaise with CPCs to determine their interest in hosting these meetings in the future as the SC is encouraging a return to physical meetings in 2024. The WPM RECOMMENDED the SC consider mid-October 2024 as a preferred time period to hold the WPM15. As usual it was also AGREED that this meeting should continue to be held back-to-back with the WPTT, with the WPM taking place before the WPTT.</p>		Para(191) The SC REQUESTED that the schedule of Working Party and Scientific Committee meetings for 2024 and 2025 provided at Appendix 37 be communicated by the IOTC SC Chairperson to the Commission for its endorsement.
WPM14.09	<p><i>Review of the draft, and adoption of the Report of the 13th Session of the WPM</i></p> <p>(para. 126) The WPM RECOMMENDED that the Scientific Committee consider the consolidated set of recommendations arising from WPM14, provided in Appendix V.</p>		

WPM14 Report	WPM14 REQUESTS	Update/Progress
Para. 7	<p><i>Outcome of the 27th Session of the Commission</i></p> <p>The WPM NOTED that the small working group had yet to meet to discuss ways to simplify the advice presented to the TCMP and Commission. The WPM REQUESTED that the Secretariat along with the SC Chair, reach out to the Commission Chair as well as a few Member country representatives to</p>	<p>Update: Completed. The small working group hold the meeting the meeting in February 2024 to discuss the ways to simplify the advice presented to the TCMP and Commission</p>

	discuss ways in which this can be progressed. The WPM further NOTED that it would be best if these discussions could take place prior to the virtual meeting of the TCMP in February 2024.	
Para. 33	Skipjack MSE Update WPM NOTED that a new stock assessment for skipjack will be reviewed during the WPTT in 2023. The WPM asked the developer whether reconditioning the OM with same approach based on the 2023 will be possible. The WPM was informed by the developer that this will not take much time and it is feasible to do within the timeframe before TCMP presentation (if possible before the SC meeting). Thus, the WPM REQUESTED the developer, to recondition skipjack OMS based on the 2023 adopted stock assessment grid.	Update: Completed.
Para. 34	The WPM NOTED the requested modifications to the empirical-MP (new period to calculate performance metrics, stability clauses and robustness tests), and the analyst has been contracted to further develop the skipjack MSE in 2024	Update: Completed. The Skipjack MP was adopted at the 28 th Session of the Commission (Resolution 24/07)
Para. 57	Swordfish MSE Update In summary, the WPM REQUESTED to test a maximum implementation error of 15% for a single management cycle, or three years, in order to assess whether the swordfish MP can successfully bring the stock back to target over the projection horizon. Additionally, the WPM requested to test an implementation error of 10% over a longer period of time in order to better understand and compare the performance of various MP..	Update: Completed. The Swordfish MP was adopted at the 28 th Session of the Commission (Resolution 24/08)
Para. 65	Yellowfin MSE Update The WPM NOTED that a CKMR project will require significant international collaboration, in particular in relation to sample collection across the fisheries and spatial extent of the IOTC, but also most likely scientific collaboration relating to the design and standard operating procedures for the sampling. There will also be a very significant need for training of international collaborators including from coastal states and in relation to ensuring sample collection methods are applied in a way that ensures cross contamination does not occur. The WPM NOTED that a range of countries have previous experience participating in sampling projects but REQUESTED the project put	Update: Ongoing.

	particular effort to organising collaboration with other countries with very significant fisheries that have not previously participated in sampling projects	
Para. 75	<p>General MSE issues</p> <p>The WPM NOTED that some requests from the TCMP for the development of the OMs and MPs have not yet been addressed and REQUESTED that the developers ensure that all requests from May 2023 TCMP are addressed before the next TCMP meeting in February 2024</p>	Update: Completed. The TCMP in 2024 has addressed specific requests on skipjack and swordfish MSE.
Para. 92	<p>CPUE Standardisation</p> <p>The WPM NOTED that the joint CPUE index for bigeye tuna needs to be updated for the MP application in 2024 to set TAC for 2026-2028) and REQUESTED the trilateral Group to produce required index in time (preferably based on operational data if time allows).</p>	Update: Ongoing. The trilateral Group has produced the joint index for bigeye tuna and presented it to the WPTT DP meeting in 2024. However, due to time constraint only annual index was produced but quarterly index is required for the MP input. The WPM in 2024 will discuss possible options to proceed.
Para. 116	<p>Revision of the WPM Program of work (2024-2028).</p> <p>The WPM REQUESTED that the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the WPM, in consultation with the IOTC Secretariat, develop Terms of Reference (ToR) for each of the projects detailed on the WPM Programme of Work (2023-2027) that are yet to be funded, for circulation to potential funding bodies.</p>	Update: Ongoing.
Para. 96	<p>The WPM reviewed the progress of the MSE work conducted to date, and subject to the comments held in this report, endorsed the MSE conducted thus far and REQUESTED additional work to address the reviewed comments made.</p>	Update: Ongoing. To be presented during the WPM in 2024.