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## REVISION OF THE WPM PROGRAM OF WORK (2025–2029)

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 6 OCTOBER 2024

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### PURPOSE

To ensure that participants at the 15<sup>th</sup> Working Party on Methods (WPM15) revise the Program of Work for the WPM by taking into consideration the specific requests of the Commission and Scientific Committee.

### BACKGROUND

#### *Scientific Committee*

At the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of the SC:

(Para. 181) *The SC **NOTED** IOTC–2023–SC26–08 which provided the SC with a proposed Program of Work for each of its working parties, including prioritisation of the elements requested by each working party.*

(Para. 182) *The SC noted the proposed Program of Work and priorities for the Scientific Committee 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 shall ensure that the efforts of their working party 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.*

(Para. 184) *The SC **AGREED** on the consolidated table of priorities across all Working Parties, as developed by each WP Chair, and **REQUESTED** that the IOTC Secretariat, in consultation with the Chair and vice-Chair of the SC and relevant Working Parties, develop ToRs for the specific projects to be carried out.*

#### *Commission*

At Sessions of the Commission, Conservation and Management Measures adopted contained elements that call on the Scientific Committee, via the WPM, to undertake specific tasks. These requests will need to be incorporated into a revised Program of Work for the WPM.

At the 28<sup>rd</sup> session of the Commission:

(Para. 85): The Commission NOTED the report of the 8th meeting of the Technical Committee on Management Procedures (TCMP) (IOTC-2024-TCMP08-R) and **ENDORSED** the following TCMP recommendation:

- *The TCMP **NOTED** that increased catches of skipjack will also affect yellowfin and bigeye stocks which are overfished and subject to overfishing. The TCMP **RECOMMENDED** that the SC investigate and incorporate ecosystem effects in the next skipjack revision of the MP since the fishery of skipjack will impact catches in other species, such as yellowfin, bigeye, and sharks.*
- *TCMP also NOTED that changes in swordfish catch will also affect other species, particularly shark species. The TCMP **RECOMMENDED** that the SC investigate and incorporate ecosystem effects in the next swordfish revision of the MP*

**DISCUSSION**

Participants at the WPM14 are requested to consider the priorities set by the Commission and the Scientific Committee, via Conservation and Management Measures, and revise its Program of Work to match those priorities.

**RECOMMENDATION/S**

That the WPM:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2024–WPM14–07, which encouraged the WPM to further develop and refine its Program of Work for 2025–2029 to align with the requests and directives from the Commission and Scientific Committee.
- 2) **RECOMMEND** a revised Program of Work for 2025–2029 to the Scientific Committee for its consideration and potential endorsement.
- 3) **NOTE** Appendix B (Schedule of work for the development of management procedures for key species in the IOTC area) that has been **ENDORSED** by the SC in 2021.

**APPENDICES**

**Appendix A:** Working Party on Methods Program of Work (2024–2028) – to be updated for 2025 - 2029

**Appendix B:** Schedule of work for the development of management procedures for key species in the IOTC area.

**APPENDIX A**  
**WORKING PARTY ON METHODS PROGRAM OF WORK (2024–2028)**

**Table 1.** Priority topics for obtaining the information necessary to deliver the necessary advice to the Commission. Resolution 15/10 elements have been incorporated as required by the Commission.

Topic	Sub-topic and project	Timing				
		2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
1. Management Strategy Evaluation	Continuation of Management Strategy Evaluation for Albacore, Skipjack, Yellowfin, Bigeye tunas as well as Swordfish					
	Peer review of BET MSE as per the ToRs endorsed by the SC					
<b>Future Research Requirements (not in order of priority)</b>						
	1.1 Albacore					
Management Strategy Evaluation	1.1.1 Revision of Operating Models based on WPM and SC feedback, including possible robustness tests					
	1.1.2 Implementation of simulation runs and presentation of results at the TCMP					
	1.1.3 Revision and evaluation of new set of Management Procedures after presentation of MP runs to TCMP and Commission (as needed)					
	1.1.5 External peer review					
1.2 Skipjack tuna						

<p>1.2.1 Implementation of simulation runs and presentation of results at the TCMP</p>					
<p>1.2.2 Revision and evaluation of new set of Management Procedures after presentation of MP runs to TCMP and Commission (as needed)</p>					
<p>1.2.3 External peer review (2025-2026)</p>					
<p>1.3 Bigeye tuna</p> <p>1.3.1 Run MP using the catch and CPUE standardisation input data, consider exceptional circumstances, and provide the TAC advice</p> <p>1.3.2 External peer review</p> <p>1.3.3 Presentation of MP application and exceptional circumstances and resulting TAC to the TCMP and Commission meeting for adoption of the TAC</p> <p>1.3.4 Stock assessment to provide information on stock status</p>					
<p>1.4.1 Update OM &amp; present preliminary MP results to TCMP, WPTT/WPM review of new OM</p>					
<p>1.4.2 Present revised MP results to TCMP; iteratively update development if required)</p>					
<p>1.4.3 additional iterations if required</p>					
<p>1.5 Swordfish</p>					
<p>1.5.1 Implementation of simulation runs and presentation of results at the TCMP</p>					

<p>1.5.2 Revision and evaluation of new set of Management Procedures after presentation of MP runs to TCMP and Commission (as needed)</p> <p>1.5.3 External Peer-review</p>					
<p>Multiple stock status derived from different model structures</p> <p>Develop specific guidance for the most appropriate models to be used or how to synthesize the results when multiple stock assessment models are presented: model selection and weighting. (see IOTC-2016-WPTT18-R, para.91)</p>					
<p>Stock status guidance and reference points.</p> <p>Review IOTC stock status characterization against reference points and the framework for the provision of management advice (Resolution 15/10) to address the TORs of ad hoc reference point WG.</p>					
<p>CKMR pilot project</p> <p>Implementation of a CKMR pilot project for Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna to evaluate the logistics and feasibility of sampling, and levels of cross contamination of DNA.</p>					
<p>Capacity Building</p> <p>Ongoing development of tools, materials and courses to continue Capacity Building for increasing participation in the MSE process and develop improved MSE communication to fishery managers.</p>					

**APPENDIX B**
**SCHEDULE OF WORK FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES FOR KEY SPECIES IN THE IOTC AREA**

*A more detailed explanation of the roles of the Working Parties (WPs), Scientific Committee (SC), Technical Committee on Management Procedures (TCMP) and the Commission are provided below*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Albacore</b>	<b>Skipjack</b>	<b>Yellowfin</b>	<b>Bigeye</b>	<b>Swordfish</b>
<b>2023</b>	<b>WPs/SC:</b> Consider recommendations from the Commission and undertake MSE to provide advice on the performance of candidate MPs.	<b>WPs/SC:</b> Consider recommendations from the Commission, review and refine further MSE work if needed and provide advice on the performance of candidate MPs.	<b>WPs/SC:</b> Consider recommendations from the Commission and consider outcomes of the independent review of the Yellowfin assessment. Discuss and agree on a plan for further development of MSE and candidate MPs.	<b>WPs/SC:</b>	<b>WPs/SC:</b> Consider recommendations from the Commission, review and refine further MSE work if needed and provide advice on the performance of candidate MPs.
<b>2024</b>	<b>TCMP:</b> Provide advice to Commission on elements of candidate MPs, and any proposed Resolutions for an MP, that require a decision by the Commission, including the	<b>TCMP:</b> Provide advice to Commission on elements of candidate MPs, and any proposed Resolutions for an MP, that require a decision by the Commission, including the performance	<b>TCMP:</b> Provide advice to Commission on elements of OMs and, if possible, candidate MPs, that require a decision by the Commission, including the performance of	<b>TCMP:</b>	<b>TCMP:</b> Provide advice to the Commission on elements of candidate MPs, and any proposed Resolutions for an MP, that require a decision by the Commission, including the performance

	<p>performance of candidate MPs against Commission objectives.</p> <p><b>Commission:</b> Consider work and advice from subsidiary bodies and provide direction to the WPs/SC on the need to undertake further MSE of candidate or alternative MPs.</p> <p><b>WPs/SC:</b> Consider recommendations from the Commission and undertake MSE to provide advice on the performance of candidate MPs.</p>	<p>of candidate MPs against Commission objectives.</p> <p><b>Commission:</b> Consider work and advice from subsidiary bodies. Decision and adoption of an MP.</p> <p><b>WPs/SC:</b> Consider recommendations from the Commission</p>	<p>candidate MPs against Commission objectives.</p> <p><b>Commission:</b> Consider work and advice from subsidiary bodies and provide direction to the WPs/SC on the need to undertake further MSE.</p> <p><b>WPs/SC:</b> Consider recommendations from the Commission and undertake MSE to provide advice on the performance of candidate MPs.</p>		<p>of candidate MPs against Commission objectives.</p> <p><b>Commission:</b> Consider work and advice from subsidiary bodies. Decision and adoption of an MP.</p> <p><b>WPs/SC:</b> Consider recommendations from the Commission</p>
2025	<p><b>TCMP:</b> Provide advice to Commission on elements of candidate MPs, and any proposed Resolutions for an MP, that require a decision by the Commission, including the performance of candidate</p>	<p><b>TCMP:</b></p>	<p><b>TCMP:</b> Provide advice to Commission on elements of candidate MPs, and any proposed Resolutions for an MP, that require a decision by the Commission, including the performance of</p>	<p><b>TCMP:</b> Provide advice to Commission on the outcomes of the BET MSE review</p>	<p><b>TCMP:</b></p>

	<p>MPs against Commission objectives.</p> <p><b>Commission:</b> Consider work and advice from subsidiary bodies. Decision and adoption of an MP.</p> <p><b>WPs/SC:</b> Consider recommendations from the Commission</p>	<p><b>Commission:</b></p> <p><b>WPs/SC:</b></p>	<p>candidate MPs against Commission objectives.</p> <p><b>Commission:</b> Consider work and advice from subsidiary bodies and provide direction to the WPs/SC on the need to undertake further MSE of candidate or alternative MPs.</p> <p><b>WPs/SC:</b> Consider recommendations from the Commission and undertake MSE to provide advice on the performance of candidate MPs.</p>	<p><b>Commission:</b> Consider advice from subsidiary bodies on the outcomes of the BET MSE review and provide direction to WP/SC, if required.</p> <p><b>WPs/SC:</b> Consider recommendations from the Commission (if any).</p>	<p><b>Commission:</b></p> <p><b>WPs/SC:</b></p>
2026	<p><b>TCMP:</b></p>	<p><b>TCMP:</b></p>	<p><b>TCMP:</b> Provide advice to Commission on elements of candidate MPs, and any proposed Resolutions for an MP, that require a decision by the Commission, including the performance of candidate MPs against Commission objectives.</p>	<p><b>TCMP:</b></p>	<p><b>TCMP:</b></p>



	<b>Commission:</b>	<b>Commission:</b>	<b>Commission:</b> Consider work and advice from subsidiary bodies. Decision and adoption of an MP.	<b>Commission:</b>	<b>Commission:</b>
	<b>WPs/SC:</b>	<b>WPs/SC:</b>	<b>WPs/SC:</b> Consider recommendations from the Commission	<b>WPs/SC:</b>	<b>WPs/SC:</b>