
France OT National Report to the Scientific Committee of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, 2024

Executive Summary

Since Mayotte became a territory under community regime on January 1, 2014, the tropical French overseas territories of the Indian Ocean only concern the Scattered Islands which are attached to the higher administration of the French Southern and Antarctic Lands (TAAF). A marine natural park was created on February 22, 2012 (decree no. 2012-245), it is the Glorieuses PNM, which depends on the Scattered Islands and extends over the entire Glorieuses EEZ.

The Scattered Islands (France Territories) do not have tuna fleets registered for this territory. However, the TAAF administration issues fishing licenses to French and foreign longliners and seiners wishing to fish in the waters administered by France Territoires, and an onboard observer program accompanies the granting of these licenses. In 2023, there was no OBSPEC training organized by the TAAF administration and no observers boarded during the year 2023 on tuna purse seiners or auxiliary vessels under French or foreign flag operating in the area. . Observations at sea on French longliners based in Reunion Island are made by onboard observers or via self-sampling (data collection by captains). These observations are managed by the IRD with European funding as part of the Data Collection Framework (DCF) project. In 2023, 114 fishing operations were observed on 2 Réunionese vessels in the EEZs of the Remote Islands, including 64 by onboard observation and 50 via self-sampling. Data from longliners flying the EU-France flag were presented in the EU-FR report. France's current research program (mainly IRD and Ifremer) on large pelagics covers monitoring of fishing activities, landings and biometrics of target species and discards, study of the migratory behavior of large pelagics, studies on fish aggregation devices, collection of observer data from electronic monitoring, genetic and microchemical studies for stock delimitation, development of by-catch and depredation mitigation measures, post-discard mortality in European seine and longline shark fisheries, and development of an innovation to facilitate rapid release of marine megafauna caught on longlines and improve individual survival. Most projects are funded by international, European or national calls for tender. This report lists the various projects that continued or began in 2023. It also includes projects directly involving the IOTC, even if these projects are not directly related to the IOTC.