

OUTCOMES OF THE 28th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 15 NOVEMBER 2024

PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 20th Session of the Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics (WPDCS20) of the decisions and requests made by the Commission at its 28th session, held from 13-17 May 2024, specifically relating to the work of the WPDCS.

BACKGROUND

At the 28th Session, the Commission **CONSIDERED** and **ADOPTED** 11 proposals as Conservation and Management Measures, consisting of 10 Resolutions and 1 Recommendation ([IOTC-2024-S28-R](#)). Three of these Resolutions and the Recommendation are directly relevant to the WPDCS while the others mostly deal with management procedures and compliance aspects:

- Resolution [24/01](#) *On climate change as it relates to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission*
- Resolution [24/02](#) *On management of drifting fish aggregating devices (FADs) in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution [24/03](#) *On establishment of a list of vessels presumed to have carried out illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution [24/04](#) *On a Regional Observer Scheme*
- Resolution [24/05](#) *On establishing a programme for transshipment by large-scale fishing vessels*
- Resolution [24/06](#) *On a ban on discards of bigeye tuna, skipjack tuna, yellowfin tuna, and non-targeted species caught by vessels in the IOTC Record of Authorisation that Operate in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution [24/07](#) *On a Management Procedure for skipjack tuna in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution [24/08](#) *On a Management Procedure for swordfish in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution 24/09 *To promote compliance by nationals of Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties with IOTC Conservation and Management Measures*
- Resolution 24/10 *On the Promotion of the Implementation of IOTC Conservation and Management Measures*
- Recommendation [24/11](#) *On Marine Pollution*

DATA-RELATED CMMS

Two Resolutions and the Recommendation adopted at the last Commission meeting are directly relevant to the WPDCS, as they pertain to data collection and reporting, while the others primarily address management procedures and compliance matters.

Resolution 24/02

The Resolution supersedes Resolution [19/02](#), which remains binding for Oman, and is set to come into force on 2 March 2025. The primary amendment to the Resolution pertains to the development and implementation of a DFAD register for all instrumented buoys deployed within the IOTC area of competence (paras. 3-14). In addition, annual limits on DFADs (paras. 15-20) and support vessels (para. 44) will be revised from January 2026. Flag States are required to take further actions to reduce the number of abandoned, lost, or otherwise discarded DFADs (paras. 25-29), and additional specifications have been introduced for DFAD design and materials to minimise entanglement and marine pollution (paras. 30-36).

With regards to reporting obligations, IOTC Forms [3BU](#) and [3DA](#) have been developed to address the Resolution's provisions that require CPCs to:

- Para. 23. Ensure that the instrumented buoy supplier company or their vessels report daily information on all active DFADs in compiled form to the IOTC Executive Secretary with a time delay of at least 30 days, but no longer than 60 days. This information shall contain:
 - a. the geographical location (degrees, minutes and seconds);
 - b. the date;

- c. the time;
 - d. unique instrumented buoy reference number;
 - e. the name and IOTC registration number of the vessels assigned to the instrumented buoy.
- Para. 45a. *ensure that their purse seine and supply vessels using DFADs record any activity in association with a floating object (FAD or log) and/or an instrumented buoy, from the deployment to the end of use, by providing the data and information listed Annex I and following a template provided by the IOTC Secretariat*
 - Para. 45b. *submit the data and information referred to in subparagraph a) to the IOTC Executive Secretary annually by 30 June, in accordance with the IOTC standards for the provision of catch and effort data*
 - Para. 46d. *ensure that their flag vessels fishing on DFADs annually submit the number of instrumented buoys assigned to them by the end of each calendar year, including instrumented buoys which have been lost, or abandoned and/or discarded by 1° by 1° grid area and month strata and DFAD type.*

Resolution 24/04

The Resolution came into effect on 20 September 2024 and supersedes Resolution [22/04](#). The key change to the Resolution is that data collected through Electronic Monitoring Systems (EMS) can now complement or substitute the minimum human observer coverage (Paras. 3-4).

- Para. 3. In order to improve the collection of scientific data, each CPC shall ensure that all fishing vessels of 24 meters length overall and above and under 24 meters if they operate outside the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the flag CPC and in the IOTC area of competence comply with the minimum observer coverage of 5%, as defined by the number of operations/sets
- Para. 4. Providing CPCs meet the minimum mandatory ROS data reporting standards, the minimum human observer coverage provided for in paragraph 3 may be complemented or substituted by means of an EMS. To ensure the minimum mandatory ROS data reporting standards are met, where applicable and in line with the recommendation of the IOTC Scientific Committee on the outcomes from the ROS review of minimum data standards, the EMS shall be complemented by port sampling and/or other Commission approved data collection methods.

Recommendation 24/11

The Recommendation seeks to encourage CPCs to take actions to reduce the amount of abandoned, lost, or discarded fishing gear (ALDFG) (paras. 1-3), as well as marine pollution, including oil or fuel products, garbage, and sewage (paras. 4-5). It also encourages CPCs to conduct research on marine pollution associated with fisheries in the IOTC area of competence.

The Recommendation is relevant to the WPDCS as it includes some provision to initiate the collection of data on ALDFGs:

- Para. 3. The IOTC Secretariat is tasked with developing a data form and standards for collecting and reporting the information of the recovery of abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear.

RECOMMENDATION

That the WPDCS

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2024–WPDCS20–04 which outlined the main outcomes of the 28th Session of the Commission, specifically related to the work of the WPDCS and **AGREE** to consider how best to provide the SC with the information it needs, in order to satisfy the Commission’s requests, throughout the course of the current and next WPDCS meetings.