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

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### Purpose

To ensure that participants at the 20<sup>th</sup> Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics (WPDCS20) revise the Program of Work for the WPDCS by taking into consideration the specific requests of the Commission and Scientific Committee.

### Background

At the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the SC:

(Para. 219) The SC noted paper IOTC–2018–SC21–09 which provided the Scientific Committee (SC) with a proposed Program of Work for each of its Working Parties (WP), including prioritisation of the elements requested by each WP.

(Para. 220) 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. 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. 223) The SC noted that the consolidated table of priorities does not replace the full programme of work of each Working Party (Appendix 35a-g) and that adequate attention and focus should still be allocated to those activities where possible. The SC further noted that Table 5 has been developed by the SC and WP Chairs to provide more specific direction to the IOTC Secretariat and the SC Chair as to the priorities of the SC so that, if and when external funding becomes available intersessionally, it is possible to clearly prioritise across all WPs based on the objectives of the SC (as agreed in IOTC–2014–SC17–R, para. 179).

(Para. 225) The SC noted Table 5 outlining the highest priorities from each WP in terms of funding requirements. The complete set of research priorities identified (and ranked according to their importance) by each WP are detailed more fully in **Appendix 35a-g**.

### Discussion

Participants at the WPDCS20 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.

### Recommendations

That the WPDCS:

1. **NOTE** paper IOTC–2024–WPDCS20–09, which encouraged the WPDCS to further develop and refine its Program of Work for 2024–2028 to align with the requests and directives from the Commission and Scientific Committee.
2. **RECOMMEND** a revised Program of Work for 2024–2028 to the Scientific Committee for its consideration and potential endorsement.

### Appendices

Appendix A: DRAFT: Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics Program of Work (2025–2029)

## Appendix A

### DRAFT: Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics Program of Work (2025–2029)

**Table 1.** Priority topics for obtaining the information necessary to deliver the necessary advice to the Commission. \* indicates activities with high priority for funding

Topic	Sub-topic and project	Timings					
		2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
<b>1 Coastal fisheries data collection</b>	<b>1.1*</b> Data support missions to assist the implementation of data collection and sampling activities for fisheries insufficiently sampled. Recommended actions include: designing sampling guidelines for IOTC fisheries. Priority to be given to the following countries / fisheries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indonesia</li> <li>• Pakistan</li> <li>• I.R. Iran</li> <li>• Kenya</li> <li>• Tanzania</li> <li>• Comoros</li> <li>• Madagascar</li> </ul>						
	<b>1.2</b> Biological sampling workshop, including species identification and genetics sampling						
<b>2 Data access and dissemination</b>	<b>2.1*</b> Ocean-climate information: develop an online digital ocean atlas for the IOTC area of competence, linked by the IOTC website; develop indicators on ocean-climate status to be linked to the atlas portal, along with educational resources						
	<b>2.2</b> Biological information: collaborate with CPCs to Review, analyse, and manage of biological data and information						
	<b>2.3</b> Improve accessibility of IOTC scientific products and digital assets through standard metadata and DOI (e.g., remote workshops)						

	<b>2.4</b>	Establish a photo and imagery tool library and archive and develop associated reporting guidelines						
<b>3 Compliance with IOTC data reporting requirements</b>	<b>3.1</b>	Drafting of indicators to assess performance of IOTC CPCs against IOTC Data Requirements; evaluation of performance of IOTC CPCs with those Requirements; development of plans of action to address the issues identified, including timeframe of implementation and follow-up activities required. Priority to be given to the following CPCs / fisheries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indonesia</li> <li>• India</li> <li>• Pakistan</li> <li>• Oman</li> <li>• Tanzania</li> <li>• Other (as required / determined)</li> </ul>						
	<b>3.2 *</b>	Workshops to clarify data reporting requirements <sup>1</sup> and support preparation of annual submissions						
	<b>3.3</b>	Support the documentation of sampling protocols and processing <sup>2</sup>						
<b>5 Support for the implementation of the IOTC Regional Observer Scheme (ROS)</b>	<b>5.1</b>	ROS e-tools						
	<b>5.1.1</b>	Review and update ROS e-tools according to the new ROS data standards	funding available for 2025					
	<b>5.1.2</b>	Support the adoption of the ROS e-Reporting and ROS national database tools by countries not having any existing observer data collection and management system in place						

<sup>1</sup> Recommended by the CoC; **regular annual webinars / workshops to be held from 2025 onwards with each CPCs (or group of CPCs) prior to the approaching of the data reporting deadline**

<sup>2</sup> Secretariat to finalize the template, CPC to provide information

<b>5.2</b>	ROS Regional Database						
	<b>5.2.1</b> Review and update the ROS database structure						
	<b>5.2.2</b> Incorporate all historical observer data currently available in other proprietary data formats (e.g., ObServe, ICCAT ST09 and other custom observer forms)						
<b>5.3</b>	ROS Electronic Monitoring Systems						
	<b>5.3.1</b> Implement pilot EMS system on gillnet / coastal longline vessels for fleets insufficiently covered by on-board observers, possibly by providing support through remote / in-person meetings <sup>3</sup>						
<b>5.4</b>	Evaluate the combination of alternative data collection systems and protocols for the collection of scientific observer data for artisanal and coastal fisheries, with an initial expert to develop protocols and guidelines for minimum data collection requirements in coastal fisheries, including through EMS systems through a regional workshop						
<b>5.5</b>	Review and update ROS training materials to the CPCs						
		<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>2029</b>	<b>2030</b>

<sup>3</sup> Sri Lanka EMS, training and setup of data exchange