



Report of the 13th Technical Committee on Allocation Criteria

Thailand, 21 – 24 October 2024

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ACRONYMS

AFAD	Anchored fish aggregating device
BMSY	Biomass which produces MSY
CMM	Conservation and Management Measure
CNCP	Cooperating Non-Contracting Party, of the IOTC
CoC	Compliance Committee of the IOTC
CPs	Contracting Parties
CPCs	Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties
DCS	Developing Coastal State
DFAD	Drifting fish aggregating device
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
FAD	Fish aggregating device
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FMSY	Fishing mortality at MSY
HCR	Harvest control rule
IUU	Illegal, unreported and unregulated
LRP	Limit reference point
LSTLV	Large-scale tuna longline vessel
MSE	Management Strategy Evaluation
NCP	Non-Contracting Party
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OT	Overseas Territories
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organisation
SC	Scientific Committee of the IOTC
SCAF	Standing Committee on Administration and Finance of the IOTC
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
TAC	Total Allowable Catch
TCAC	Technical Committee on Allocation Criteria of the IOTC
TCMP	Technical Committee on Management Procedures
TRP	Target referent point
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System

HOW TO INTERPRET TERMINOLOGY CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT

This report uses the following terms and associated definitions.

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.

Level 3: General terms to be used for consistency:

AGREED: Any point of discussion from a meeting which the IOTC body considers to be an agreed course of action covered by its mandate, which has not already been dealt with under Level 1 or level 2 above; a general point of agreement among delegations/participants of a meeting which does not need to be considered/adopted by the next level in the Commission's structure.

NOTED/NOTING: Any point of discussion from a meeting which the IOTC body considers to be important enough to record in a meeting report for future reference.

Any other term: Any other term may be used in addition to the Level 3 terms to highlight to the reader of an IOTC report, the importance of the relevant paragraph. However, other terms used are considered for explanatory/informational purposes only and shall have no higher rating within the reporting terminology hierarchy than Level 3, described above (e.g. **CONSIDERED; URGED; ACKNOWLEDGED**).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 13th Session of the Technical Committee on Allocation Criteria (TCAC13) was held in Bangkok, Thailand from 21 to 24 October 2024. The meeting was opened by Mr Prathet Sorrak, Chief of Inspector General, Thailand Department of Fisheries who provided a welcoming statement (Appendix 4), and chaired by the Independent TCAC Chairperson, Mr Quentin Hanich.

The meeting was held in a hybrid format that included participants attending in-person and by videoconference.

Letters of Credentials were received from 26 Contracting Parties. India, Republic of Korea and Mozambique participated virtually. Eight NGOs participated in the meeting along with the Invited Experts.

The TCAC elected two vice-chairs to support the Chairperson in accordance with Rule VIII of the IOTC Rules of Procedure.

(Para. 77) The Chairperson thanked the TCAC for a successful meeting that had **AGREED** to the development of a 'package deal' which would be structured around the three allocation criteria (Baseline, Catch History, Special Requirements) with details to be developed through the decision tree, focusing first on the five principal species (yellowfin, bigeye, skipjack and albacore tunas and swordfish). The Chairperson then summarised the list of Requests and Recommendations that were agreed during the meeting.

a. The TCAC **REQUESTED** the WPDCS provide advice on applicability of available catch estimation methodologies to account for artisanal catch history in IOTC CPCs that have been unable to monitor and report artisanal fisheries. The TCAC **ENCOURAGED** all CPCs with artisanal catch histories to attend the upcoming WPDCS.

b. **NOTING** the ongoing challenges for some IOTC CPCs to adequately monitor and record artisanal fishing effort and catch, TCAC **REQUESTS** the WPDCS to identify the current gaps in data collection and for the WPICMM to review capacity needs in CPCs on the basis of their input and **RECOMMENDS** that the Commission consider developing an integrated capacity building strategy to build resilient and enduring fisheries monitoring and data reporting systems and domestic expertise for IOTC developing CPCs, and expand catch estimation methods at State and regional levels. This strategy should include consideration of funding grant opportunities for regional programs, such as the Global Environment Facility and other global funders.

c. **NOTING** that the spatial granularity of the 5° grid area set in IOTC Resolution 15/02 (para. 4) for catch data from longline fisheries hampers accurate estimation of catch distribution between EEZs and High Seas, the TCAC **ENCOURAGES** CPCs with longline fisheries to provide geo-referenced catch data by species from longline fisheries to be reported in weight by 1° grid area and monthly strata or finer scale if available.

d. The TCAC **REQUESTED** that the SC assess whether, and according to which methodology, spatial distribution of stock biomass can be estimated between High Seas and the EEZ (and between EEZs) for integration into the allocation process.

e. TCAC **REQUESTED** CPCs cooperate with the secretariat as it prepares an information paper that estimates catches taken by one CPC (or non-CPC) in another CPC's EEZ which may be subject to catch attribution questions. In order to support this study, TCAC reiterated the importance for CPCs to provide relevant information to the secretariat as covered in Resolution 14/05 or operational data to enable accurate distribution of catch across overlapping HS/EEZ boundaries.

(Para. 78) The Chairperson then confirmed the simulations and information papers that would be developed for the upcoming meeting of the TCAC15.

a. The TCAC **REQUESTED** the secretariat to prepare an information paper that summarises any data gaps in the information reported by CPCs to the IOTC and the level of estimation of CPCs catches over time.

b. The TCAC **REQUESTED** the secretariat to prepare an information paper, based on SC advice, on potential proxies for fisheries productivity and artisanal catch history for inclusion in allocation catch history criteria calculations (eg. biomass, EEZ/or territorial sea size, catches by CPCs fishing in other CPCs EEZs, market studies, and other applicable factors) with explanation on how and why these proxies are related to catch history.

c. The TCAC **REQUESTED** the Secretariat to produce an information Table that presents catch histories for all CPCs from 1950-2023. This will allow CPCs to compare all catch histories for all CPCs. Reference year options shall include those that have previously been considered in TCAC discussions.

d. The TCAC **REQUESTED** the chair to prepare an information paper that describes existing RFMO policies and practices for the transfers of species quotas between CPCs. The information paper will also include discussion of potential frameworks for the TCAC to regulate transfers of species quota between CPCs, including both transferring surplus quota from one CPC to another, and transferring between CPCs of surplus species quota for surplus quota of another species.

e. The TCAC **REQUESTED** the chair to prepare an information paper that explores options for the attribution of catch history for CPCs fishing in the EEZ of other CPCs. The paper shall include options of transition periods and other options to address and balance coastal CPC and flag CPC concerns.

f. The TCAC **REQUESTED** the chair to prepare an information paper that describes jurisdictional practice for tuna RFMOs, focusing on the compatible management of migratory tunas in both high seas and EEZs, and their consideration of the sovereign rights of coastal States, REIO CPCs with an EEZ, and the avoidance of a disproportionate burden of conservation on developing States.

1. OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The 13th Session of the Technical Committee on Allocation Criteria (TCAC13) was held in Bangkok, Thailand from 21 to 24 October 2024. The meeting was opened by Mr Prathet Sorrak, Chief of Inspector General, Thailand Department of Fisheries who provided a welcoming statement ([Appendix 4](#)), and chaired by the Independent TCAC Chairperson, Mr Quentin Hanich.
2. The meeting was held in a hybrid format that included participants attending in-person and by videoconference.

2. LETTERS OF CREDENTIALS AND ADMISSION OF OBSERVERS

3. Letters of Credentials were received from 26 Contracting Parties. India, Republic of Korea and Mozambique participated virtually. The list of participants is provided in [Appendix 1](#).
4. Pursuant to Article VII of the IOTC Agreement and Rule XIV of the IOTC Rules of Procedure, the Commission admitted the following observers:

Non-governmental organizations having special competence in the field of activity of the Commission:

- Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security
- Europêche
- International Pole and Line Foundation
- International Seafood Sustainability Foundation
- Marine Affairs Program (Dalhousie University)
- South West Indian Ocean Tuna Forum
- Sustainable Fisheries and Communities Trust
- Thai Tuna Industry Association

Invited consultants and experts:

- Invited Experts

5. Statements by Mauritius are included in [Appendix 6](#)

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION

6. The Chairperson provided an overview of the agenda for the meeting and noted the following documents ([Appendix 2](#)):
 - the Chairperson’s insights from consultations and proposed draft agenda for TCAC (IOTC-2024-TCAC13-03);
 - the Chairperson’s Explanatory Memorandum for 13th TCAC Agenda and Explanatory Note (IOTC-2024-TCAC13-03 and IOTC-2024-TCAC13-05)
 - the former Chairperson’s proposed 7th draft Allocation Regime text (IOTC-2024-TCAC13-02, IOTC-2024-TCAC13-REF01, IOTC-2024-TCAC13-REF02).
7. The Chairperson proposed suspending negotiations on a draft resolution, and suggested that the meeting should focus mainly on the issues identified during the consultations held with CPCs and explained in document IOTC-2024-TCAC13-03. The Chairperson stated that the TCAC13 should focus on a broader discussion of the key issues highlighted in that document before attempting to revise the current draft proposal for an allocation regime.
8. The TCAC **ADOPTED** the revised agenda provided in [Appendix 3](#).

4. SUMMARY OF CHAIR’S CONSULTATIONS

Presentation of the Consultation Summary

9. The Chairperson made a detailed presentation, summarising the consultations held with CPCs. The outcomes of these consultations are provided in document IOTC-2024-TCAC13-03 and in IOTC-2024-TCAC13-INF18.

10. The TCAC **NOTED** that several CPCs had provided responses to the chairpersons document IOTC-2024-TCAC13-03. Two of these responses (Tanzania - IOTC-2024-TCAC13-04 and Japan - IOTC-2024-TCAC13-06) were distributed to all participants.
11. The TCAC **NOTED** that several CPCs expressed concern regarding waters under their national jurisdiction being included in the allocation regime and felt that this was not in line with UNCLOS or the UN Fish Stocks Agreement which outline the sovereign rights of countries within their EEZs , but some other CPCs expressed different views emphasizing that these international laws require cooperation through relevant international organizations especially for highly migratory species such as tunas . Some CPCs expressed their opinion that this issue could not be decided by the TCAC but should be discussed by the Commission. The TCAC **AGREED** that the issue of application to waters under national jurisdiction needed to be resolved to allow advancing the allocation discussions.
12. The TCAC **NOTED** that the allocation regime should take into consideration the needs of developing coastal states (and SIDS) and in particular their right to develop their fisheries as well as their concern that a regime based on historical catch would not address their development aspirations.
13. The TCAC **NOTED** that some CPCs expressed the importance of considering historical catches as a basis to describe and take due account of the current structure of fisheries in the IOTC area of competence, coherently with what has been done in other RFMOs. Some CPCs disagreed strongly with this suggestion and approach and indicated that prior fishing patterns should not be a determinant of future fishing access rights via an allocation scheme. Other CPCs felt that a compromised approach should be considered.
14. The TCAC **NOTED that** Somalia highlighted that relying solely on historical catches unjustly penalizes such Coastal States, and proposed prioritizing accountability by requiring those responsible for overexploitation to address the resulting ecological and economic disparities, thereby promoting fairness and equity by ensuring that CPCs with minimal historical impact are not disproportionately disadvantaged. Somalia also expressed their strong concern regarding the current draft allocation proposal, particularly related to their sovereign rights over their EEZ as well as the use of historical catch to determine allocations and provided a statement ([Appendix 5](#)).
15. The TCAC **NOTED** the need to ensure that data reporting and quality issues are addressed. Concern was expressed that the quality of data, both for artisanal and small-scale fisheries, and for high seas fisheries, was insufficient to accurately determine catches on high seas and within EEZs, while others indicated that a spatial apportionment method was adequate, as has been applied in previous data simulations by the Secretariat for the TCAC. In addition, concern was expressed that without comprehensive data reporting, monitoring, and enforcement of an allocation regime would be less effective. Any revisions to data collection and reporting would not resolve historical data issues but would be valuable moving forward.
16. The TCAC **DISCUSSED** the options for addressing allocations on a species-by-species level or as a “package deal” including all species together. There was no clear agreement on this issue at this stage as some CPCs felt that the allocation regime should start by addressing a single species, while others felt that the negotiations should allow for trade-offs between species. In addition, some CPCs expressed their concern that if the process was conducted for single species, some CPCs may lose interest in the process once the species for which they have an interest are addressed and wanted to ensure that there is commitment to the process until all species are covered by an allocation regime.
17. The chairperson noted that many of these concerns and issues would be discussed in more detail under subsequent points of the agenda but acknowledged that there was constructive feedback on the consultations, and these had been used to guide the options that would be discussed.

5. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRS

5.1. Discussion of role

18. The TCAC **NOTED** the instructions from the Commission to elect vice-chairs for the TCAC as stated in paragraph 84 of the Commission report (IOTC-2024-S28-R).
19. The TCAC **NOTED** the suggestion by some CPCs that a “Friends of the chair” or small group should be created for the chairperson to consult and advance the process, rather than having vice-chairs. However, in the

absence of a unique Terms of Reference for the TCAC, the TCAC **NOTED** that the TCAC should follow the Rules of Procedure adopted for the Commission as these apply mutatis mutandis to all sub-groups of the Commission. The roles of the Chair and Vice-Chairs are covered under Rule VIII of the [IOTC Rules of Procedure](#).

20. The TCAC also **NOTED** that paragraph 6, Article VI of the [IOTC Agreement](#) states that “*In electing the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairpersons the Commission shall pay due regard to the need for an equitable representation from among the Indian Ocean States.*”. The TCAC **AGREED** that it would be beneficial to elect two vice-chairpersons to ensure this representation is facilitated. More than two vice-chairs are not permitted under the IOTC Agreement.
21. The TCAC **AGREED** that the role of the Chairperson should remain independent and that the vice-chairs should not influence the Chairpersons work, and follow the IOTC Rules of Procedure for Vice-Chairperson roles and responsibilities, (Rule VIII). In addition, the vice-chairs would not receive any compensation from the Commission. The TCAC **NOTED** that the process for drafting a resolution would be further discussed and agreed to at a future TCAC meeting.

5.2. Nominations and election of the Vice-Chairs

22. The TCAC **CALLED** for nominations for the position of the Vice Chairperson. Only two nominations were received and therefore were accepted for the two Vice-chairperson positions. Mr David Wilson (South Africa) and Ms Laura Marot (EU) were nominated, seconded and elected as Vice-Chairpersons of the TCAC for the next biennium.

6. SIMULATIONS AND DATA AVAILABILITY

23. The TCAC **NOTED** the presentation IOTC-2024-TCAC13-INF17, which provided an overview of the origins, data, assumptions, and the application developed by the Secretariat to simulate the allocation criteria outlined in document IOTC-2024-TCAC13-REF02.
24. The TCAC **NOTED** that the total allocation comprises the sum of (i) the baseline allocation (para. 6.5), (ii) the Coastal State allocation (para. 6.6), and (iii) the catch-based allocation (para. 6.7). Firstly, the simulation tool requires setting the percentage contribution of the TAC for each of these components, noting that the ranges for the baseline and Coastal State allocations are restricted to 5–10% and 5–45%, respectively, as outlined in document IOTC-2024-TCAC13-REF03_Rev1. Secondly, the simulation tool requires setting the contribution of each of the three sub-components of the Coastal State Allocation: (i) the equal share (range 35–45%), (ii) the socio-economic component (47.5–55%), and (iii) the National Jurisdiction Area component, which approximates the spatial distribution of the stocks (range 0–17.5%). Thirdly, the catch-based allocation requires setting the year range and selecting the method (either average or best years) to estimate each CPC’s share based on the historical catch, as estimated by the Secretariat for each stock. Fourthly, users can define a transitional period of up to 10 years for implementing the allocation scheme. Based on the selected parameters, the application displays the final allocation table for all CPCs and provides access to downloadable reports that present the simulation outputs for each component and sub-component of the allocation process.
25. The TCAC **NOTED** some CPCs indicated that it would be beneficial for the Secretariat to provide better access and transparency regarding data sources and assumptions in the data used in the allocation simulations. The Secretariat confirmed that all data used in the simulations are available on the IOTC Webpage and that the assumptions used when creating the datasets are documented in the meeting reports of the WPDCS. The Secretariat acknowledged that these reports may not always be easy to access and so will endeavour to provide clearer guidance on the data and would liaise with CPCs that were in disagreement with the data presented for their countries.
26. The TCAC **AGREED** that the simulation tool was valuable and provided CPCs with a good graphical tool to evaluate the various options in the current allocation draft proposal. It was noted that some suggestions would be provided to the Secretariat for improvements and minor adjustments in data presentation.
27. The TCAC **NOTED** that some CPCs raised concerns about baseline allocations. They noted that certain CPCs have no interest in targeting certain stocks, and so perhaps should not receive a baseline allocation. The TCAC **DISCUSSED** that this could be part of the negotiations when deciding on an allocation regime but other CPCs expressed their views that all CPCs should receive a baseline that they could then transfer if it isn’t required.

28. The TCAC **NOTED** that some CPCs highlighted their opinion that there were challenges in spatial catch allocations, noting that the current data resolution has trouble assigning catches to EEZs or high seas when the 5 x 5 grid overlaps with both these regions. Finer resolution data (eg. 1 X 1) would reduce the need for estimation. It was acknowledged that this may not be possible for some countries and/or fleets. The Secretariat clarified that this was not an issue for artisanal fleets, as by definition their data was always assigned to the EEZ, but could be an issue for the high seas fisheries.
29. The TCAC **NOTED** the socio-economic indicators that were included in the simulations. The TCAC **AGREED** that going forward, these indicators would need to be clearly defined with fully transparent data sources provided. Some CPCs expressed concern about some of the indicators, suggesting that they did not fully represent the socio-economic status of some countries. Other CPCs stressed the need for these indicators to be defined in accordance with internationally accepted standards.
30. The TCAC **AGREED** that the current tool should remain the primary simulation tool for presenting the results of the proposed allocation regime. The TCAC **NOTED** that the Secretariat would need to update the tool in response to changes in the allocation proposal. The Secretariat responded that it would continue to maintain and revise the tool as needed, but also noted that due to staffing shortages, this may not be a rapid process.
31. Somalia raised its concern that the current simulations may favour distant water fishing nations (DWFNs) over coastal states, and therefore called for equity in allocations (Refer to [Appendix 5](#)).

7. ALLOCATION CRITERIA FOR CONVENTION AREA

32. The TCAC **NOTED** a presentation IOTC-2024-TCAC13-INF19 by the Chairperson which outlined a potential allocation criteria framework. The Chairperson proposed that the current draft resolution conflates coastal State sovereign rights concerns with the special requirements and aspirations of developing States, and suggested that TCAC discuss these two matters separately, putting aside the question of catch attribution for the moment. With this in mind, the Chairperson proposed three foundation criteria that could provide an allocation framework, which could then be developed through a decision tree and workplan. The presentation focused on three foundational criteria for this framework, namely (1) Catch History/Biomass (2) Special Requirements/Development Quota and (3) a Baseline criteria (Figure 1).

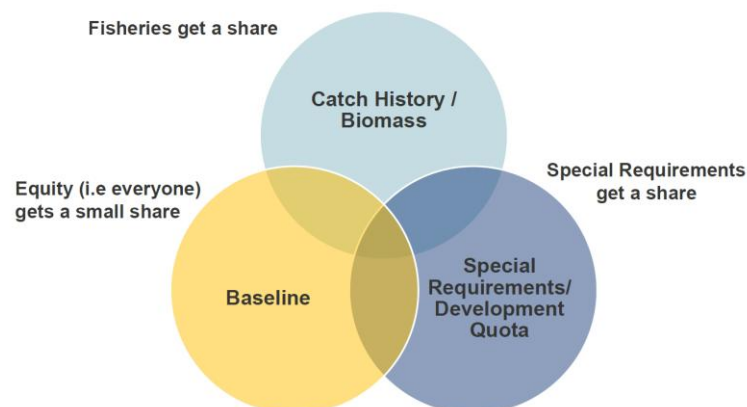


Figure 1: The three foundational criteria for an allocation framework (Initial version)

33. The TCAC **DISCUSSED** these criteria for quota allocation and **EXPRESSED** diverse views on their application for inclusion. The TCAC **AGREED** that these criteria should continue to be discussed and were a suitable framework for advancing the allocation discussions.

Catch History/Biomass

34. The TCAC **DISCUSSED** the implications of combining or separating catch history and biomass for quota determination. Several CPCs found merit in utilising both components, while others cautioned that biomass estimates remain uncertain and unevenly distributed and that they cannot be used as a straightforward proxy for historical catch. Several CPCs expressed their opinion that these two components should be kept separate whilst others were in favour of using them together, providing a clear rationale and methodology was developed in order to do so. The TCAC **AGREED** that this should be considered in the draft workplan of the TCAC to be considered at TCAC14, with the three foundational criteria revised as per Figure 2.

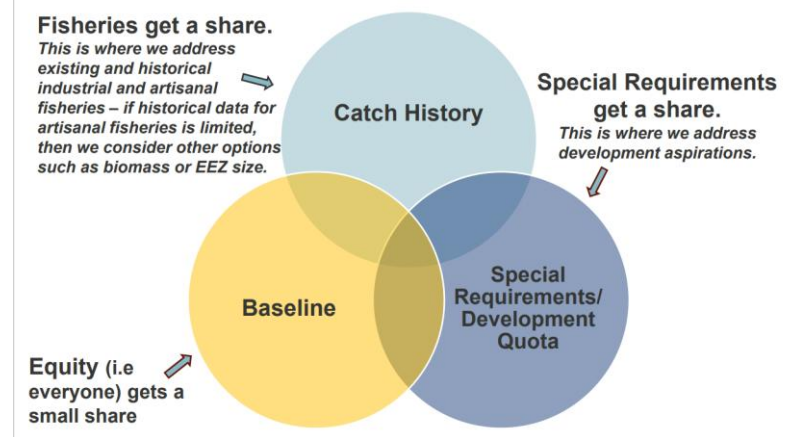


Figure 2: The three foundational criteria for an allocation framework (Agreed version)

35. The TCAC **NOTED** concerns over how to attribute catch in data-poor regions, and suggestions on the use of EEZ size as a biomass proxy for quota allocation to coastal countries. The TCAC **DISCUSSED** this issue, again acknowledging that several tuna stocks are highly migratory and unevenly distributed, in addition, environmental conditions within EEZs vary and therefore tuna are unevenly distributed within EEZs. As a consequence, some CPCs expressed reservations on the possibility to use the EEZ size as a proxy for biomass, while some other CPCs expressed their belief that using EEZ size as a proxy for biomass was a valid path going forward, and some CPCs highlighted the potential use of EEZ size as a biomass proxy to coastal countries as an equitable criterion for quota allocation to coastal countries with limited data, emphasizing the need for future TCAC discussion on its application.

Special Requirements/Developmental Quota

36. The TCAC **DISCUSSED** including a broader socio-economic perspective for countries with developing fisheries. Several CPCs felt that the current draft proposal does not fully meet the needs of developing states and that there should be a distinction between the sovereign rights of coastal states, and the special requirements of developing coastal states and small island developing states.
37. The TCAC **NOTED** that several CPCs urged acknowledgment of artisanal and small-scale fishers' contributions in allocation criteria and that these should be accounted for and included in an allocation regime.
38. The TCAC **NOTED** the Chairperson's explanation that this criteria is to implement international agreements and law and ensure that the special requirements of developing State CPCs are equitably addressed.

Baseline criteria

39. The TCAC **NOTED** an intervention by China stating that the fleet of the invited experts should be covered under China's allocation, as the catches used in the current proposed regime are all covered under China and therefore China pays the contribution for them.

8. TCAC WORKPLAN 2024-2026

40. The TCAC **NOTED** a presentation IOTC-2024-TCAC13-INF20 by the Chairperson which outlined a potential workplan as well as decision tree to guide the work of the TCAC moving forward. The decision tree presented would be refined and agreed in 2025. The Chairperson proposed suspending negotiations on the draft resolution until after the TCAC reached agreement on allocation criteria and key details.
41. The TCAC **AGREED** to suspend negotiations on a draft resolution until after TCAC15 in July 2025, and **AGREED** that the proposed workplan will be finalised at a virtual meeting of TCAC14 in February 2025 for endorsement at 29th Session of the IOTC in 2025.
42. The TCAC generally **AGREED** with the proposed workplan with some CPCs noting that the timeline is ambitious, while others did not view it as ambitious as the allocation discussions had been going on for some time and needs to be concluded. Some CPCs expressed their opinion that the process may need to be flexible as some items could not be discussed sequentially, but rather together to facilitate agreement.

43. The TCAC **NOTED** the concern expressed by several CPCs regarding jurisdiction and stressed that in order to make progress, it would be essential to resolve this issue and that it may require a separate discussion for small-scale and artisanal fisheries.
44. The TCAC **AGREED** that if two meetings were to be held in 2025, that the first meeting should be virtual, while the other could be a physical meeting later in the year.
45. The TCAC **NOTED** the suggestion by the Chairperson to hold smaller working groups to address key components of the allocation regime. The TCAC further **NOTED** the concern expressed by some CPCs that they did not have the resources to fully engage in multiple new Working Groups.
46. The TCAC **NOTED** that some CPCs expressed concern that the allocation discussion process could extend beyond the current Chairpersons contract. The Chairperson agreed to account for this in the workplan and expressed his commitment to the process provided that it can be completed by 2027.
47. The Chairperson proposed focusing the subsequent discussions on the components of the decision tree.

8.1. Decision tree

48. That TCAC **NOTED** the Chairperson 's proposed decision tree (Figure 2).

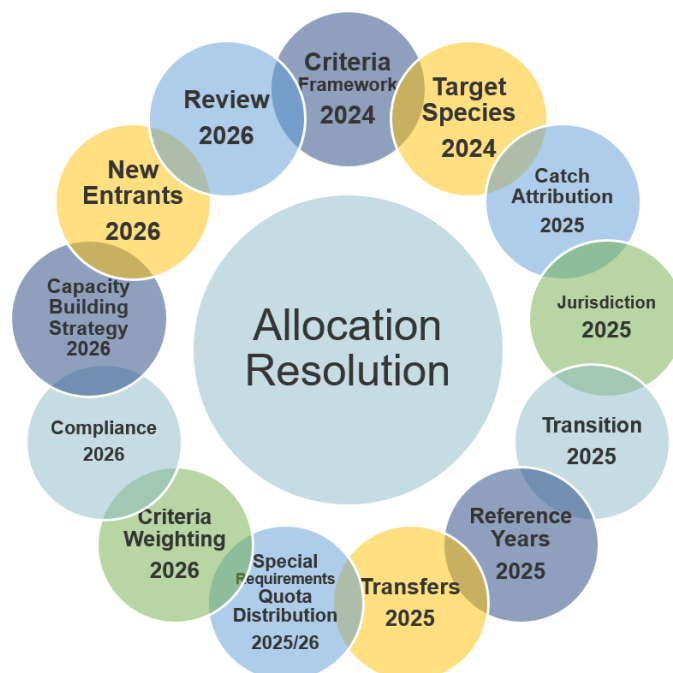


Figure 2: Decision tree to guide the discussions regarding the allocation regime.

○ Target Species

49. The TCAC **NOTED** that there was a need to clarify whether the allocation regime should address individual species, or whether it should include all species together. Several CPCs expressed their opinion that the regime should cover all species prioritizing tropical tuna species, as this would facilitate discussions, trade-offs, potential transfers and negotiations between species that would advance the process. Other CPCs noted that the regime should focus on one species initially in order to simplify the discussions.
50. The CPCs proposing a multi-species approach noted that the fisheries are often multi-species in nature and therefore addressing only a single species would negatively impact on the discussions going forward, as a quota for an individual species caught in a multi-species fishery is difficult to monitor or enforce.
51. The TCAC further **DISCUSSED** prioritising the five principal species (yellowfin, bigeye, skipjack and albacore tunas as well as swordfish) for an allocation regime, with the rest of the IOTC species to be addressed as a second step with a timeline to be discussed and agreed. Some CPCs expressed their desire to ensure that all species are eventually addressed and that the other species should not be neglected once an agreement has been found for the priority species.
52. The TCAC **NOTED** the opinion by several coastal CPCs that neritic tunas should not be included in an allocation regime as they are almost exclusively coastal and therefore more effectively managed at a national level.

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53. The TCAC **AGREED** to focus solely on the five principal species, aiming to submit an allocation resolution for these species to the Commission for adoption in 2027 noting that possible variations in weightings for each species may be necessary. The TCAC **AGREED** that it would include a recommendation in its submission that a second resolution then be adopted for other species, based on the same allocation criteria, subject to variations in weightings with a timeline to be discussed and agreed.
54. The TCAC generally **AGREED** that in principle, all CPs should receive an allocation for all five principal species, regardless of current or historical fishing interest.
55. The TCAC **NOTED** the statement by Oman expressing their disagreement with the inclusion of all five principal species in one resolution.
56. The TCAC **NOTED** the statement by India expressing their opposition to the inclusion of neritic tunas.
- Catch attribution (and biomass) and transition
57. The Chairperson emphasised the importance of this issue going forward and that it would tie into other issues and negotiations.
58. The TCAC **NOTED** a suggestion to examine catch data in EEZs versus high seas for major fleets (such as Japan, Korea, China, Invited experts, EU) for which the data is available to address historical attribution concerns.
59. The Chairperson proposed including this analysis in the workplan and further noted that there is precedent in the Pacific where there was a disagreement between DWFN and coastal states regarding sovereign rights of tuna resources. Agreement was reached by acknowledging sovereign rights of coastal states while DWFN were able to access EEZs at a price. The Chairperson did acknowledge the differences between the Pacific and Indian Ocean, particularly the fact that in the Pacific, most of the fishing grounds are located within EEZs, whereas this is not the case in the Indian Ocean and so the discussions would be different.
60. The Chairperson further called for an openness to new ideas. He stressed that there was no commitment to agreement but called for an open mind to find innovative solutions and look at new ideas and proposals. The TCAC **NOTED** that there was a general willingness to explore new possibilities to address past deadlocks and encouraged the Chairperson to prepare an options paper for TCAC15.
61. Australia made a statement on the recent discussions about a shift in allocation criteria within the IOTC, acknowledging the need for compromise and creative solutions to progress toward an agreement by 2027. They emphasized Australia's sovereign rights over its EEZ and the importance of fair allocation, while remaining open to a new approach that balances conservation with opportunities for local communities.
- Reference years and jurisdiction
62. The TCAC **NOTED** that there was substantial disagreement on the appropriate reference years to use in the allocation calculations. Several CPCs advocated for excluding years after the adoption of certain CMMs and in particular Resolution 18/01 (years after 2018), as these CPCs reduced their catch in response to these management measures and therefore felt that by including the years after their adoption, CPCs that objected to, or did not adhere to the catch limits, were being rewarded. Others felt that these years should be included to account for the aspirations of several CPCs to develop their fleets as they had limited catch histories prior to the CMM implementation.
63. The Maldives expressed their strong opposition to including years after the adoption of 18/01 (after 2018) in the set of reference years going forward and requested that their opinion be put on record. Conversely Oman expressed their strong opposition to excluding years after 2018 and also requested that this opinion be put on record.
64. The TCAC **NOTED** additional comments regarding the inclusion of EEZs in the allocation framework. Some CPCs emphasized the importance of respecting sovereign rights over EEZs as outlined in UNCLOS and the UN fish stocks agreement. The Chairperson noted that the requested guidance from the FAO Legal department clarified that the IOTC Agreement covers both EEZ and high seas, but that discussions on territorial seas and archipelagic waters remains for the Commission to discuss.
65. The Chairperson proposed reviewing how this issue is addressed in other RFMOs.

66. The TCAC **DISCUSSED** the process of transitioning from the current management situation to the new allocation regime and **NOTED** the need for exploring potential mechanisms to address the challenges of catch attribution and ensure a smooth transition.
- Criteria weightings
67. The Chairperson noted that agreement was needed on the criteria components which would be finalised in 2025. Thereafter the weighting of the various components would need to be discussed. The Secretariat would then be able to provide options for weightings in the simulations for 2026. The Chairperson noted that this would be clearly outlined in the workplan.
- Development indices/socio-economic indicators
68. The TCAC **NOTED** that the first meeting of the Working Party on Socio-Economics was due to be held and that that working party could discuss and provide advice on the socio-economic indicators that could be used in the allocation regime.
69. The TCAC **DISCUSSED** the need to take into account the sovereign rights of coastal states and the special requirements of developing States. The importance of historical catch information was acknowledged; however, consideration of future needs and developmental requirements of coastal states was also noted as being important in the allocation regime.
70. The TCAC **NOTED** the concern raised by some CPCs regarding the need to acknowledge their current limited industrial fishing capacity and the need for equitable opportunities for them to develop their fleets and obtain future opportunities for fishing.
71. The TCAC **NOTED** the Chairpersons suggestion to prioritise catch attributions for 2025 while deferring detailed discussions on special requirements to 2026.
72. The TCAC **NOTED** the concern expressed by several CPCs that perhaps special requirements should include socio-economic and abundance considerations, particularly for coastal states without historical catch.
73. The TCAC **NOTED** that several CPCs expressed their opinion that there should be an emphasis on adhering to established legal criteria, avoiding adverse impacts on artisanal fisheries. In addition, there would need to be an alignment with internationally established methodologies for assessing socio-economic impacts and their evolution over time and that ad hoc methods or indices should be discouraged. In addition, the source of the data should be clear and easily accessible to ensure transparency and avoid ambiguity in the estimation of indices.
74. The TCAC again **DISCUSSED** the need to consider the criteria of the allocation regime as a package where elements should not be treated in isolation. This would allow flexibility on each criterion.
- Transferability
75. The Chairperson highlighted the potential for CPCs to transfer unused catch, allowing for broader distribution of benefits and that this would be further discussed in 2025. The Chairperson stressed that this would only apply to annual quota transfers, not long-term rights. The Chairperson proposed developing an information paper on various transferability options with examples.
- Compliance
76. The TCAC **AGREED** that compliance with the allocation scheme is fundamental to its integrity. This will be further discussed in future meetings of the TCAC.

9. CHAIR'S SUMMARY

77. The Chairperson thanked the TCAC for a successful meeting that had **AGREED** to the development of a 'package deal' which would be structured around the three allocation criteria (Baseline, Catch History, Special Requirements) with details to be developed through the decision tree, focusing first on the five principal

species (yellowfin, bigeye, skipjack and albacore tunas and swordfish). The Chairperson then summarised the list of Requests and Recommendations that were agreed during the meeting.

- a. The TCAC **REQUESTED** the WPDCS provide advice on applicability of available catch estimation methodologies to account for artisanal catch history in IOTC CPCs that have been unable to monitor and report artisanal fisheries. The TCAC **ENCOURAGED** all CPCs with artisanal catch histories to attend the upcoming WPDCS.
 - b. **NOTING** the ongoing challenges for some IOTC CPCs to adequately monitor and record artisanal fishing effort and catch, TCAC **REQUESTS** the WPDCS to identify the current gaps in data collection and for the WPICMM to review capacity needs in CPCs on the basis of their input and **RECOMMENDS** that the Commission consider developing an integrated capacity building strategy to build resilient and enduring fisheries monitoring and data reporting systems and domestic expertise for IOTC developing CPCs, and expand catch estimation methods at State and regional levels. This strategy should include consideration of funding grant opportunities for regional programs, such as the Global Environment Facility and other global funders.
 - c. **NOTING** that the spatial granularity of the 5° grid area set in IOTC Resolution 15/02 (para. 4) for catch data from longline fisheries hampers accurate estimation of catch distribution between EEZs and High Seas, the TCAC **ENCOURAGES** CPCs with longline fisheries to provide geo-referenced catch data by species from longline fisheries to be reported in weight by 1° grid area and monthly strata or finer scale if available.
 - d. The TCAC **REQUESTED** that the SC assess whether, and according to which methodology, spatial distribution of stock biomass can be estimated between High Seas and the EEZ (and between EEZs) for integration into the allocation process.
 - e. TCAC **REQUESTED** CPCs cooperate with the secretariat as it prepares an information paper that estimates catches taken by one CPC (or non-CPC) in another CPC's EEZ which may be subject to catch attribution questions. In order to support this study, TCAC reiterated the importance for CPCs to provide relevant information to the secretariat as covered in Resolution 14/05 or operational data to enable accurate distribution of catch across overlapping HS/EEZ boundaries.
78. The Chairperson then confirmed the simulations and information papers that would be developed for the upcoming meeting of the TCAC15.
- a. The TCAC **REQUESTED** the secretariat to prepare an information paper that summarises any data gaps in the information reported by CPCs to the IOTC and the level of estimation of CPCs catches over time.
 - b. The TCAC **REQUESTED** the secretariat to prepare an information paper, based on SC advice, on potential proxies for fisheries productivity and artisanal catch history for inclusion in allocation catch history criteria calculations (eg. biomass, EEZ/or territorial sea size, catches by CPCs fishing in other CPCs EEZs, market studies, and other applicable factors) with explanation on how and why these proxies are related to catch history.
 - c. The TCAC **REQUESTED** the Secretariat to produce an information Table that presents catch histories for all CPCs from 1950-2023. This will allow CPCs to compare all catch histories for all CPCs. Reference year options shall include those that have previously been considered in TCAC discussions.
 - d. The TCAC **REQUESTED** the chair to prepare an information paper that describes existing RFMO policies and practices for the transfers of species quotas between CPCs. The information paper will also include discussion of potential frameworks for the TCAC to regulate transfers of species quota between CPCs, including both transferring surplus quota from one CPC to another, and transferring between CPCs of surplus species quota for surplus quota of another species.
 - e. The TCAC **REQUESTED** the chair to prepare an information paper that explores options for the attribution of catch history for CPCs fishing in the EEZ of other CPCs. The paper shall include options of transition periods and other options to address and balance coastal CPC and flag CPC concerns.
 - f. The TCAC **REQUESTED** the chair to prepare an information paper that describes jurisdictional practice for tuna RFMOs, focusing on the compatible management of migratory tunas in both high seas and EEZs, and their consideration of the sovereign rights of coastal States, REIO CPCs with an EEZ, and the avoidance of a disproportionate burden of conservation on developing States.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

10.1. Meeting schedule for 2025/26 and host nominations

79. The TCAC **AGREED** that a two-day virtual meeting of TCAC14 be held from the 6 – 7 February 2025 to finalise the workplan, among other topics.

80. The TCAC **ACKNOWLEDGED** the offer from Tanzania to host the next physical session of the TCAC from the 14 – 18 July 2025. The TCAC **THANKED** Tanzania for their generous offer and accepted the invitation.

10.2. Discussion on ToRs and RoPs.

81. The TCAC **DISCUSSED** whether it would be necessary to develop formal Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the TCAC to be appended to the IOTC Rules of Procedure (RoPs). The TCAC **AGREED** that generic RoPs of the IOTC for the Commission and its subsidiary bodies would serve as the basis for the operation of the TCAC. The TCAC **CONSIDERED**, but did not agree to, a proposal to develop specific ToRs for presentation to the Commission.

11. ADOPTION OF REPORT

The report of the 13th Session of the Technical Committee on Allocation Criteria (IOTC–2024–TCAC13–R) was **ADOPTED** by correspondence.

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APPENDIX 2.**ADOPTED AGENDA OF THE 13TH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON ALLOCATION CRITERIA****Date:** 21 - 24 October, 2024**Location:** Bangkok, Thailand**Time:** 9:00AM – 8 hours, daily**Chairperson:** Mr Quentin Hanich

- 1. OPENING OF THE SESSION**
- 2. LETTERS OF CREDENTIALS AND ADMISSION OF OBSERVERS**
- 3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION**
- 4. SUMMARY OF CHAIR'S CONSULTATIONS**
- 5. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRS**
 - 5.1 Discussion of role
 - 5.2 Nominations
 - 5.3 Election
- 6. SIMULATIONS AND DATA AVAILABILITY**
 - 6.1 Data limitations
 - 6.2 Simulation parameters
 - 6.3 Simulation demonstration
 - 6.4 Simulation exercise for high seas component of convention area
 - 6.5 Discussion of data and method requirements for simulations, and recommendations
- 7. ALLOCATION CRITERIA FOR CONVENTION AREA**
 - 7.1 Baseline/minimum share
 - 7.2 Catch history/biomass
 - 7.3 Special requirements of developing states
- 8. TCAC WORKPLAN 2024-2026**
 - 8.1 Allocation criteria/framework
 - 8.2 Priority species
 - 8.3 Use of simulations, data and methods
 - 8.4 Decision tree
 - Target species
 - Catch attribution
 - Reference years
 - Criteria weightings
 - Development indices/socio-economic indicators
 - Transition
 - Transferability
 - Compliance
 - Jurisdiction/Geographic scope
 - Implementation/capacity building
 - New entrants and CNCs
 - Review
 - 8.5 Finalisation of Package deal

9. CHAIR'S SUMMARY

10. OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 Meeting schedule for 2025/26 and host nominations

11. ADOPTION OF REPORT

APPENDIX 3.
LIST OF DOCUMENTS

All documents are available on the IOTC website [\[click here\]](#)

Document number	Title
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-01	Draft agenda version 27 August 2024
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-01b	Draft agenda version September 2024
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-01c	Indicative Schedule
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-01d	Indicative schedule Day 1
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-02	TCAC Chairs draft proposal for an Allocation Regime v7 - TC without comments
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-03	Insights from consultations and proposed draft agenda for TCAC
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-04	Comments from Tanzania
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-05	Explanatory Memorandum for 13th TCAC Agenda
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-06	Japans comments on the TCAC agenda
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-07	Chairs Explanatory Note
Reference Papers	
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-REF01	TCAC Chairs draft proposal for an Allocation Regime v7 - TC & Annotated
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-REF02	TCAC Chairs draft proposal for an Allocation Regime v7 - clean
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-REF03_Rev1	CPC proposals for simulation parameters
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-REF04	Statement by Mauritius
Information Papers	
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-INF00	Simulation scenarios Readme
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-INF01-15	Simulation Scenario Results
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-INF16	TCAC Simulation Tool User Manual
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-INF17	Data and Simulation Overview - Presentation
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-INF18	TCAC Consultations Summary
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-INF19	Allocation Criteria Framework
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-INF20	TCAC Species and Range and workplan
NGO Statements	
IOTC-2024-TCAC13-NGO01	SWIOTUNA Position Statement

APPENDIX 4.

OPENING STATEMENT BY THE CHIEF INSPECTOR GENERAL, THAILAND DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES

Distinguished Chair, Professor Quentin Hanich,
Representatives from the IOTC Secretariat,
Delegates from Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non – Contracting Parties (CPCs) of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC),
Respected observers, and
Honored Guests

On behalf of the Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives of the Kingdom of Thailand, I, Prathet Sorrak, Chief of Inspector-General of the Department of Fisheries, am deeply honored to warmly welcome all of you to the 13th Session of the Technical Committee on Allocation Criteria (TCAC13) today.

First, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Professor Quentin Hanich on his appointment as the Chair of the TCAC13. With his vast experience and expertise, I am confident he will lead this meeting to achieve its objectives.

The TCAC meeting serves as a crucial platform for discussing and reviewing the criteria for the sustainable allocation of tuna resources in the Indian Ocean, a vital factor for global food security and the livelihoods of countless people worldwide.

As a member of IOTC and a co-host of this meeting, Thailand is honored to promote cooperation among member states to ensure the sustainable management of fisheries resources in line with international commitments.

Our goal is to safeguard tuna resources as a secure and sustainable food source for future generations.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all delegates and experts for taking the time to participate in this meeting. I sincerely hope it will result in valuable recommendations and management frameworks that benefit all parties involved.

Finally, I wish you all a wonderful stay in Bangkok and I now declare the TCAC13 meeting officially open.

Thank you.

APPENDIX 5.
STATEMENT BY SOMALIA

JAMHUURIYADDA FEDERAALKA SOOMAALIYA
WASAARADDA KALLUUMEYSIGA IYO
DHAQAALAHHA BULUUGGA
XAFIISKA AGAASIMAHA GUUD



جمهورية الصومال الفيدرالية
وزارة الثروة السمكية
والاقتصاد الأزرق
مكتب مدير العام

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF SOMALIA
MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND BLUE ECONOMY
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

Date: 24/10/2024

RE: Somalia positional statement inclusion in the TCAC13 report

Dear Paul,

Somalia appreciates the efforts of the Secretariat in preparing the draft report for the TCAC discussions. However, there are critical concerns that Somalia wishes to have addressed and included, particularly regarding exclusion of Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) in the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and historical catch data.

Somalia reaffirms its position that **EEZs** should be excluded from the allocation criteria for the TAC. Somalia holds that each coastal state has **sovereign rights** over the marine resources within its EEZ, as recognized under the **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)**. Therefore, any allocation regime that includes EEZs in the catch allocation process undermines these sovereign rights.

The inclusion of EEZs in the allocation criteria creates **unnecessary overlap** and could lead to external interference in how coastal states manage their own resources. Somalia emphasizes that the management and conservation of resources within its EEZ should remain under its **exclusive jurisdiction**, free from the constraints of international allocation regimes.

Somalia further contends that the **biomass** within a coastal state's EEZ plays a crucial role in supporting tuna stocks, and the state should have the **primary responsibility** and authority to manage these resources in line with its national priorities and conservation efforts. Any allocation framework should focus on the **high seas** where shared resources exist, without infringing on the **sovereignty of coastal states** within their EEZs.

Somalia calls for the **clear exclusion** of EEZs from the allocation criteria, ensuring that **sovereign management rights** are respected and that coastal states can maintain control over the resources within their EEZs in accordance with international law.

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Somalia emphasizes that any catches attributed to the country during the periods of 1950-1990 and 1990-2019 must be strictly verified. The period from 1950 to 1990 requires thorough scrutiny, as the legitimacy of these catches is highly questionable. For the period from 1990 to 2019, Somalia was in a transition period marked by civil war and lacked control over its EEZ. Therefore, any data from these two periods should be regarded as **Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing** activities.

Catches during these years were overwhelmingly carried out by **foreign Distant Water Fishing (DWF) fleets** without Somalia's oversight. Including such data in Somalia's historical catch records **contravenes the agreed-upon allocation principles**, which explicitly state that all IUU catches must be excluded from historical catches. This **misrepresentation** undermines the fairness of the allocation process.

Somalia calls for a **clear exclusion** of any catches linked to **IUU fishing** or foreign fleets and stresses the importance of considering **biomass** within Somalia's EEZ as a more accurate measure of its contribution to the **sustainability of tuna stocks**.

H.E. Abdi Dirshe



Director General
Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy

APPENDIX 6.
STATEMENTS BY MAURITIUS

13th Meeting of IOTC Technical Committee on Allocation Criteria
21-24 October 2024, Bangkok, Thailand

Agenda Item 2: Letters of Credentials and Admission of Observers

Statement by the Republic of Mauritius

The long-standing position of the Republic of Mauritius as regards the United Kingdom’s purported membership of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) as a “coastal State situated wholly or partly within the Area [of competence of the Commission]” remains unchanged. This is all the more relevant in the context of the commitment given by the United Kingdom at the last Session of the Commission that it would clarify the status of its IOTC membership at the earliest opportunity once the negotiations between Mauritius and the United Kingdom on the exercise of sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago have been concluded.

The Republic of Mauritius would like to take this opportunity to inform this Committee that on 3 October 2024, the Republic of Mauritius and the United Kingdom reached a political agreement on the exercise of sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago. Under the treaty which has to be finalized, the United Kingdom will recognize the sovereignty of the Republic of Mauritius over the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia.

The Republic of Mauritius requests that this statement be annexed to the report of this meeting.

13th Meeting of IOTC Technical Committee on Allocation Criteria
21-24 October 2024, Bangkok, Thailand

Agenda Item 7: Allocation Criteria for Convention Area

Statement by the Republic of Mauritius

The Republic of Mauritius reiterates the statements which it had made with regard to the Chagos Archipelago and the Island of Tromelin under agenda item 6 at the 10th meeting of the Technical Committee held from 20 to 23 June 2022 in Seychelles and which are annexed to the report of that meeting (Document IOTC-2022-TCAC10-R[E], Appendix 4).

The Republic of Mauritius also reaffirms that since the Chagos Archipelago and the Island of Tromelin form an integral part of its territory, no State other than the Republic of Mauritius can be granted any allocations in respect of the Chagos Archipelago and the Island of Tromelin.

The Republic of Mauritius requests that this statement be annexed to the report of this meeting.