

Draft TCAC Workplan – 2025-2027

Background

1. This paper presents a draft TCAC 2025-2027 workplan for consideration by CPCs at TCAC14 in February 2025, and subsequent endorsement at the 29th Session of the Commission. CPCs are requested to provide written feedback prior to TCAC14 that can then be incorporated and discussed at TCAC14 – particularly in regard to information needs and advice.
2. Consultations prior to TCAC13, and discussions during TCAC13, suggested that the current draft resolution was overly complex and difficult, with ongoing uncertainty over the application of key principles, resulting in agreement at TCAC13 to suspend negotiations on a draft resolution until after TCAC15.
3. TCAC13 considered a decision tree and key points for a workplan and **AGREED** to finalise a workplan at TCAC14 in February 2025. TCAC13 generally agreed with the approach proposed by the Chair, noting concerns that the process may need to be flexible as some items could not be discussed sequentially, but will need to be considered together to facilitate agreement.
4. The workplan will develop a ‘package deal’ which will be structured around three broad allocation criteria (catch history, special requirements of developing States, and baseline/everyone gets a share). TCAC shall consider whether to also consider biomass and EEZ productivity in combination with the catch history criteria, or separately, and if agreed, shall develop a clear rationale and methodology in order to do so.
5. TCAC13 generally **AGREED** that the workplan would focus first on the five principal species (yellowfin, bigeye, skipjack and albacore tunas and swordfish), noting the possible need for variations in weightings for each species. One CPC expressed their disagreement with including all five species in one resolution.
6. TCAC13 **AGREED** that it will consider developing a recommendation to the Commission for a second resolution to be adopted in 2028 for other species, based on the same allocation criteria, subject to variations in weightings. Some coastal CPCs noted 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. Other CPCs expressed concerns that some neritic tuna stocks are currently in the red quadrant of the Kobe plot, and that their coastal distribution should not exclude them from the allocation regime, which should be focussed on the management and conservation of all IOTC stocks.
7. TCAC13 **AGREED** to the Chair’s summary list of Requests and Recommendations.
 - 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.

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- 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. The Chairperson then confirmed the simulations and information papers that would be developed for the upcoming meeting of the TCAC15.
8. TCAC13 also **AGREED** that the following simulations and information papers should be developed for TCAC15, and thus require inclusion in the TCAC workplan.
- 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.

Workplan

- 9. A draft workplan is provided below for consideration by CPCs at TCAC14 in February 2025. The workplan proposes five TCAC meetings over a period of two years, concluding in the first quarter of 2027.
- 10. The draft workplan builds on discussions at TCAC13 and proposes a number of connected tasks and decision points that all ultimately feed into a package deal and resolution. It is expected that delegations will need to consider the package as a whole, and necessarily compromise on some details in order to achieve an agreement. Participation and ownership will be critical – all delegations must own the resolution for it to be successful, recognising that all CPCs must fully implement the resolution through their national processes, and trust that others will also do so.
- 11. The workplan is intended to clarify the process of negotiation, and assist CPCs to engage and monitor progress. This is a working document and will be updated regularly to incorporate feedback on information and advisory needs.
- 12. Some decisions will need to be agreed in-principle, pending satisfactory decisions on other related matters. For example, a decision on catch attribution may only be acceptable for some CPCs if a decision on the transition framework maintains fleet stability. In order to move forward, the TCAC needs to understand these connections and progress negotiations, recording tentative agreements in-principle where required, and avoiding stalemates and gridlocks where nothing can be agreed.
- 13. The final weightings, or percentage ratios, for each criteria will be discussed and developed over the two years, with final agreement scheduled as a key component of the 'package deal'. An example of such weightings can be seen in various RFMO budget contribution formulae that have determined that a percentage of the total budget will be funded equally by all members (similar to a baseline quota), a percentage will be funded by current catch (similar to catch history), and a percentage to be funded by a wealth or development index (discounting for the special requirements of developing States).
- 14. CPCs will also need to carefully consider their information and advisory needs in order to resolve uncertainty, clarify their domestic concerns, and progress agreement. This draft workplan provides an opportunity for CPCs to identify where they require further information or advice in order to progress agreement. CPCs are requested to provide written feedback

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prior to TCAC14 that can then be incorporated and discussed at TCAC14 – particularly in regard to information needs and advice. All delegations will necessarily need to understand the impact of each discussion on their national interests, and on the interests of others, in order to reach a compromise.

15. The workplan proposes that the TCAC first find agreement on the criteria framework and key details before resuming negotiations on a resolution text. The workplan also provides time for the TCAC to consider how it wishes to draft the resolution text, when ready, and determine a drafting process that ensures all interests are considered – whether through the independent chair and ongoing consultations, or through informal or formal groups.

Draft TCAC Workplan: 2025 – 2027

Task	2025		2026		2027
	TCAC14	TCAC15	TCAC16	TCAC17	TCAC18
Priority species for allocation		- Discuss & agree single/multiple resolution structure. Discuss whether individual species require individual weightings and if so, how to calculate weightings.	-If agreed necessary, decide formula for calculating individual weightings for individual species. Discuss & agree single/multiple resolution structure.	- Discuss recommendation on other species	- Agree recommendation on other species
Decision making and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair proposes options for confirming decisions and clearing reports. - Discuss & agree process for confirming decisions and clearing reports. - Discuss & agree if ToR are required. 				
TCAC workplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair proposes draft workplan. - Discuss & agree workplan. 	- Update information needs.	- Update workplan and information needs.	- Update information needs.	
Criteria framework	- Discuss criteria framework (i.e catch history, baseline, special requirements). Agree criteria framework in-principle, pending related agreement on attribution, biomass, transition and jurisdiction.		- Agree criteria framework, including related attribution, biomass, transition and jurisdiction.		

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Task	TCAC14	TCAC15	TCAC16	TCAC17	TCAC18
Catch attribution		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sec summarises CPC data gaps / estimation level trends. - Sec estimates catches taken by foreign flags (i.e one CPC or non-CPC in another CPC's EEZ). - Chair presents paper on catch attribution options, transition periods, and options to balance coastal and flag CPC concerns. - Discuss & agree on principles and steps necessary to attribute catch history. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WPDCS advises on catch estimation methodologies to account for artisanal catch history in CPCs that have been unable to monitor and report artisanal fisheries. - Discuss and aAgree on <u>principles and</u> attribution of catch history. 		
Biomass / EEZ proxy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sec presents on potential proxies for fisheries productivity and artisanal catch history for inclusion in allocation catch history criteria calculations with explanation on how and why these proxies are related to catch history. - Discuss biomass, EEZ size and other proxies, and <u>identify agree</u> which (if any) will be included TCAC16 agenda- for decision+ allocation framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SC presents advice on methodology and estimation of spatial distribution of stock biomass between High Seas and EEZs (and between EEZs) for integration into the allocation process. - WPDCS advises on catch estimation methodologies to account for artisanal catch history in CPCs that have been unable to monitor and report artisanal fisheries. - Agree how biomass, EEZ size and other proxies will be included (if at all) in allocation framework. 		
Jurisdiction		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair presents paper on tRFMO jurisdictional practice, focusing on compatible management, sovereign rights, and the avoidance of a disproportionate burden on developing States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss & agree on <u>jurisdiction, approach for territorial seas and archipelagic waters.</u> 		

- Discuss ~~& agree on~~ jurisdiction of allocation regime across territorial, archipelagic, high seas, and EEZs and identify pathway for agreement.

Task	TCAC14	TCAC15	TCAC16	TCAC17	TCAC18
Reference Years	- Sec presents catch histories for all CPCs from 1950-2023. - Discuss ref. year options		- Agree on reference years		
Transfers	- Chair presents transfers paper - Discuss principles for transfers		- Discuss & agree on framework for transferability.		
Transition	- Discuss transition objectives, mechanism and timescale.		- Agree transition framework.		
Special requirements of developing States	- Discuss chair's papers and mechanisms for addressing special requirements. - Discuss quota distribution methods and indicators. - Instruct chair and sec (and WPDCS?) on information needs to agree on quota distribution method and indicators.		- Discuss & agree on allocation framework to address special requirements of developing States.		
Baseline	- Discuss & agree application of baseline (i.e who gets a share)				
Criteria weightings	- Simultaneous discussions on criteria framework. - Sec presents updated simulations. - Discuss & advise sec on refinements to simulations.		- Sec presents updated simulations. - Discuss & advise sec on refinements to simulations. - Discuss % weightings assigned to each framework principle.	- Sec presents updated simulations. - Discuss & advise sec on refinements to simulations. - Discuss % weightings assigned to each framework principle. <u>- Discuss whether individual species require individual weightings and if so, how to calculate weightings.</u> <u>- If necessary, decide formula for individual species weightings.</u>	- Sec presents final estimations. - Agree % weightings for each framework principle.

Compliance and Capacity Building	–Discuss compliance scheme and connection to capacity building needs.	- Discuss compliance scheme and connection to capacity building needs. - Discuss if capacity building recommendation to IOTC is required.–Agree compliance scheme and connection (if any) to capacity building strategy.	- Agree compliance scheme and connection (if any) to capacity building strategy.		
Capacity building needs and strategy	–Discuss capacity building needs to implement allocation and ensure compliance. –Instruct chair and sec on preparation of capacity building options analysis to implement allocation.	–Discuss & agree if capacity building strategy is necessary to ensure implementation and compliance, and if/how to proceed with prep of strategy.	–Agree capacity building strategy (if previously directed).		
Task	TCAC14	TCAC15	TCAC16	TCAC17	TCAC18
New entrants	–Chair presents options paper on new entrants. –Discuss options for new entrants.	- Chair presents options paper on new entrants. - Discuss options for new entrants.–Discuss & agree on approach for new entrants.	- Discuss & agree on approach for new entrants.		
Review		- Discuss & agree on review options.			
Resolution and package	- <u>Chair to present visualisation and decision tree that prioritises and maps critical elements and criteria.</u> - Discuss & agree on process for drafting resolution (i.e chair, friends of the chair, working group, etc).	- Introduction of draft resolution structure. - Discuss & agree on resolution structure	- Introduction of draft resolution. - Discuss and refine draft resolution.	- Discuss & agree full resolution. - Agree recommendation to IOTC.	