



OUTCOMES OF THE COMMISSION AND THE 29th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 15 MAY 2025

PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 27th Working Party on Tropical tuna (WPTT27) data preparation meeting of the decisions and requests made by the Commission at its 29th session, held from 13-17 April 2026, specifically relating to the work of the WPTT.

BACKGROUND

At the 29th Session, the Commission **CONSIDERED** and **ADOPTED** 14 proposals as Conservation and Management Measures (consisting of 12 Resolutions and 2 Recommendations) as detailed below (the report of S29 has yet to be finalised). The Commission also reviewed the report of the Scientific Committee including the stock status of principle tuna species.

Resolutions

- Resolution 25/01 *On climate change as it relates to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission* [[download here](#)]
- Resolution 25/02 *On the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) programme* [[download here](#)].
- Resolution 25/03 *On establishing catch limits for skipjack tuna in the IOTC area of competence* [[download here](#)].
- Resolution 25/04 *On establishing catch limits for bigeye tuna in the IOTC area of competence* [[download here](#)].
- Resolution 25/05 *On establishing a programme for transshipment by large-scale fishing vessels* [[download here](#)].
- Resolution 25/06 *On a Regional Observer Scheme* [[download here](#)].
- Resolution 25/07 *On a management procedure for swordfish in the IOTC area of competence* [[download here](#)].
- Resolution 25/08 *On the conservation of sharks caught in association with fisheries managed by IOTC* [[download here](#)].
- Resolution 25/09 *On the conservation of shortfin and longfin mako sharks caught in association with IOTC fisheries* [[download here](#)].
- Resolution 25/10 *On establishing a Technical Committee on Management Procedures* [[download here](#)].
- Resolution 25/11 *On Port State Measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing* [[download here](#)].
- Resolution 25/12 *On the promotion of the implementation of IOTC Conservation and Management Measures* [[download here](#)].
- Recommendation 25/13 *On promoting the objectives of IOTC through cooperation with the BBNJ Agreement (The agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction)* [[download here](#)].
- Recommendation 25/14 *On the limitation of fishing capacity* [[download here](#)].

Pursuant to Article IX.4 of the IOTC Agreement, the above-mentioned Conservation and Management Measures shall become binding on Members, 120 days from the date of the notification communicated by the Secretariat.

The status of tropical and temperate tunas

(Para 22) The Commission **NOTED** that the 2024 yellowfin tuna stock assessment estimated that the stock is **not overfished** and **not subject to overfishing**, with an 86% probability of the stock being in the Kobe Green quadrant. This was a lot more optimistic than previous stock assessments, which estimated the stock was overfished and subject to overfishing. The Commission **NOTED** that this is a positive sign that the rebuilding plans and efforts by CPCs to reduce catches have been effective.

(Para 23) The Commission **NOTED** that the change in the stock status estimates for yellowfin tuna led to intensive discussions during SC meetings. These discussions investigated potential reasons behind the more optimistic estimates. The Commission also **NOTED** concerns expressed by some CPCs regarding the reliability and transparency of the abundance index used in the stock assessments.

(Para 24) The Commission **NOTED** that significant effort has been dedicated to the assessment, with a large number of scenarios investigated, including biological factors, the influence of length composition data, and CPUE data. A wide range of advanced diagnostics were examined. The Commission further **NOTED** that an expert involved in the external review was part of the assessment team, the assessment addressed many recommendations from the external review and was more stable than previous assessments.

(Para 25) The Commission **NOTED** that investigations by the WPTT and SC revealed that the large change in the CPUE index in 2024 was the main driver of the positive assessment outcome. This change in CPUE was largely attributed to modifications in the standardization methods.

(Para 26) Given the significant uncertainty and potential issues with the CPUE and its influence on the assessment outcome, the Commission tasked the SC with investigating and resolving the CPUE issue, and providing feedback to the Commission in 2026. The Commission **AGREED** that this work is critical to ensuring the assessment can be renewed.

(Para 27) The Commission also **NOTED** that the joint CPUE groups will convene in late April to investigate yellowfin tuna, in addition to their work on bigeye tuna. The Commission further **NOTED** that the CPUE group has proposed measures to increase the transparency and openness of the workshop, in response to SC recommendations. This includes allowing the Secretariat and external experts to participate in and review the standardization procedures during the workshop. This represents a significant improvement over past practice.

(Para 28) The Commission **HIGHLIGHTED** the fact that that CPUE indices are extremely important in the assessment of tropical tuna, including yellowfin. Therefore, it is crucial to allow external expert input into the standardisation process to enhance the credibility and confidence in the resulting abundance indices.

(Para 29) The Commission also **NOTED** the new approach used in the assessment, which scaled the reference points (MSY) based on recent average recruitment. This is the first time such an approach has been used for an IOTC species. However, the SC has raised concerns about potential model artifacts that may cause recruitment to deviate from the long-term average. As this approach could be applied to other species, a thorough investigation is needed to ensure its appropriateness. The Commission **REQUESTED** that this approach be further examined by the SC.

RECOMMENDATION

That the WPTT(DP)

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2025–WPTT27(DP)–04 which outlined the main outcomes of the 29th Session of the Commission, specifically related to the work of the WPTT 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 WGFAD meetings.