



IOTC DATA TECHNICAL WORKSHOP TO IMPROVE THE REPORTING OF FISHERY STATISTICS TO THE IOTC

Summary

The IOTC Data Reporting Workshop, held in Jakarta from 26 to 30 May 2025, brought together 32 participants from 18 CPCs to strengthen the reporting of fishery statistics. The workshop was successful in improving understanding and use of IOTC reporting forms, supported by hands-on exercises using Secretariat-developed tools such as data validators and spatial grid mapping aids. Key datasets discussed included annual retained catch, geo-referenced catch and effort, size frequency, FAD-related data, and artisanal landings monitoring, along with fishing craft statistics. Thanks to active participant engagement, several code lists were updated and improvements were agreed on for some of the reporting forms. The Secretariat also presented updates on data compliance assessments and proposed CPC factsheets, and the workshop concluded with discussions on persistent challenges, tool enhancements, and priorities for the next session of the WPDCS.

Introduction

The [Data Reporting Workshop](#) (DRW) to improve the reporting of fishery statistics to the IOTC was held in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 26 to 30 May. The workshop aimed to support the implementation of IOTC reporting templates and facilitate the successful submission of mandatory data to the IOTC Secretariat in line with CPC reporting requirements. A total of 32 participants from 18 CPCs attended the workshop ([Annex I](#)).

The Secretariat presented the IOTC data reporting process to participants ([IOTC–2025–DRW–03](#)), including a review of the relevant Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) and data reporting requirements. In light of the Commission's decision to postpone the implementation of the [IOTC forms](#) for the upcoming data submission (deadline: 30 June 2025), the workshop focused on understanding and completing the forms, as well as using the supporting reporting tools developed by the Secretariat. These tools include the [Data reporting guidelines](#), the [Data reference catalogue](#) and the Data Validators.

The Secretariat also presented the updates made on the [IOTC Fisheries identification wizard](#) based on the outcomes of the Eastern Regional Data workshop ([ERDW](#)) and Western Regional data workshop ([WRDW](#)) conducted in 2024. Additional feedback was provided to CPCs to support the accurate characterisation of their fisheries.

Annual Retained Catch Data

The first exercise involved completing IOTC Form [1RC](#), used to report total annual estimates of fish caught and retained. This was accompanied by the related datasets on discards and species presence, to be reported using Forms [1DI](#) and [1DR](#), respectively. Some CPCs proposed updates to Form 1DR to better align it with the scale dimension used in the fishery characterisation produced by the Fisheries Identification Wizard. Participants were also able to test their preliminary data using the 1RC Data Validator, helping them identify and address potential issues ahead of the final data submission.

Geo-Referenced Catch and Effort Data

The next exercise focused on the reporting of geo-referenced catch and effort data using Form [3CE](#). This dataset is often more challenging to report in accordance with IOTC standards and requirements, mostly due to the spatial dimension of the data. To support this process, the Secretariat first presented the [CWP](#) spatial grid system used for reporting data to the IOTC for surface and longline fisheries ([IOTC–2025–DRW–06](#)). In addition, two optional tools and methodologies – based on [R scripts](#) and [QGis](#) – were introduced to assist participants in identifying and assigning grid cells to their data. These tools were demonstrated through practical, user-friendly tutorials and exercises.

Following the exercises on the completeness and validation of geo-referenced catch-and-effort data, discussions were held on other related datasets, specifically those concerning anchored FAD and drifting FAD activities. These datasets are to be reported by certain CPCs using Forms [3AA](#) and [3DA](#), respectively.

Geo-Referenced Size-Frequency Data

The next dataset put into practice was geo-referenced size frequency data, reported using Form [4SF](#), which also follows the [CWP](#) spatial grid system. The main challenges discussed by participants in providing geo-referenced size frequency data included meeting the threshold of one fish per metric tonne, as required by Resolution [15/02](#), and aligning the data with the spatial resolution of catch-and-effort datasets—particularly for CPCs using irregular reporting areas

Regional Observer Scheme for Coastal Fisheries

Another topic of discussion was the monitoring of landings from artisanal fishing vessels, in accordance with the requirements of Resolution [24/04](#) on a Regional Observer Scheme (ROS). Paragraph 9 of the Resolution states:

“Landings from artisanal fishing vessels shall also be monitored at the landing place by field samplers. The indicative level of coverage of artisanal fishing vessels shall be 5% of the total levels of vessel activity (i.e. total number of vessel trips or total number of active vessels).”

To better understand existing sampling programmes at landing places and the monitoring of coastal fisheries, the Secretariat asked participants to map their current data collection and reporting systems, with the aim of identifying reasonable approaches to estimate artisanal vessel activity. The Secretariat will follow up with CPCs on this matter and present the outcomes for discussion at the next session of the [WPDCS](#).

Fishing Craft Statistics

Lastly, the Secretariat presented Form [2FC](#), used for reporting fishing craft statistics, and agreed with participants on a number of modifications to be implemented. Although the Commission has recently agreed on the mandatory reporting of fishing craft, this obligation is still pending the future revision of Resolution [15/02](#). Nevertheless, the Secretariat encourages CPCs to submit these data, highlighting their importance for the monitoring of artisanal fishing activity and estimation of global fishing capacity, as discussed earlier in the workshop.

Data Compliance Assessments

Following the exercise sessions, the Secretariat presented an overview of the data assessment for compliance ([IOTC–2025–DRW–08](#)), based on the Compliance Assessment Criteria reviewed by [WPICMM08](#) and the submission of data via e-Maris. A detailed explanation was also provided on the criteria used to assess the quality of reported data and the associated scoring system. These scores are typically presented in the data review papers of the Working Parties for each species category. The Secretariat also shared proposals for revising and improving the current scoring system ([IOTC–2025–DRW–09](#)).

CPC Factsheets

Finally, the Secretariat presented a proposal to provide feedback to CPCs through the CPC Factsheet on Data Reporting ([IOTC–2025–DRW–10](#)). This factsheet aims to offer a dedicated review of the data submitted by each CPC, independently of the Compliance Assessment Report. It would include general trends in the main data reported, fishery mapping, and any specific issues identified in the submissions.

Conclusions

The final session of the DRW was dedicated to summarising the outcomes of the workshop and facilitating open discussions to identify persistent challenges and obstacles hindering data reporting to the IOTC by CPCs. The session also covered the revision and update of the tools provided by the Secretariat, as well as the main issues requiring clarification or further discussion at the next session of the [WPDCS](#).

Activities carried out during the workshop and follow-up actions

Presence of species in the catch / Retained catches / Discards

- Form 1DR updated to include information on expected inputs and 0/1 lookup list
- Updated code descriptions for RC sources
- Secretariat to complement and update the fishery codes required by CPCs
- Reminder on the need for discard data to be raised to the whole fishery
- If discards negligible, nil report must be indicated in the form 1DI or in e-MARIS

Geo-referenced catches and efforts

- Two methodologies proposed to facilitate CWP GRID assignment for reporting
- CPCs that have defined coastal areas with another spatial definition should formally confirm their use to the Secretariat in order to incorporate them into the different components of the reporting system (data catalogue, validators, database)

Fad-data related reporting

- Clarification requirements on the level of aggregation for the reporting of AFAD - daily or monthly-aggregated information on AFAD activities
- CPC with purse seine fisheries to liaise with vessel owners to obtain DFAD data (further assistance might be required for Kenya, Tanzania, Oman) - caution with chartering agreements
- Enhancing IOTC Data Reporting Guidelines and support to the CPCs provided through webinars
- Consider development of Data Validators for 3AA and 3DA forms
- Follow-up on the DFAD registry dedicated to compliance

Geo-referenced size-frequencies

- Discussions on the 1 fish per metric tonne threshold expected to continue at the next WPDCS – Main issues for billfish and sharks in some fisheries
- Potential discrepancy between spatial areas for reporting between catch and effort data (national coastal statistical areas) and size-frequency data (CWP 5x5 degree grid areas)
- Information to be circulated about IOTC species identification and sampling workshop

Report of fishing craft statistics

- The Secretariat encourage the CPCs to provide fishing craft statistics with Form 2FC, recommending that the vessel size classification be based on length overall (LOA), and providing GT-LOA conversion factors or relationships where necessary
- Form 2FC and associated description updated during the workshop

Revision of the monitoring at landing place ROS 9.3

- Discussions on the feasible options to assess the monitoring at landing place in relation with the sampling programs of the CPCs are expected to continue at the next WPDCS, and the Secretariat will follow up with the CPCs their mapping on sampling programs on place.

General Conditions of Data Submission

- Final data must be submitted by 30 of June using e-Maris
- CPCs without complete datasets by 30th June, should try and submit preliminary data by 30th June
- The Secretariat will provide feedback 15 days after the deadline to follow up on submission issues

Other Points for WPDCS Discussions

- Request of training workshops and review potential training approaches to support data reporting and data collection (species identification, sampling, data visualisation, and manipulation)
- Improve the efficiency of data collection and subsequent reporting by updating the review of inconsistencies in current requirements set by data-related resolutions.

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