

PROGRESS MADE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUESTS OF WPNT14 AND SC27

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LAST UPDATED: JUNE 2025

PURPOSE

To provide participants at the 15th WPNT with an update on the progress made in implementing the recommendations developed by the previous Working Party on Neritic Tunas (WPNT) which were endorsed by the Scientific Committee (SC), and to provide alternative recommendations for the consideration and potential endorsement by participants as appropriate given any progress.

BACKGROUND

At the 14th Session of the WPNT, participants also agreed on a series of actions to be taken by participants, CPCs, and the IOTC Secretariat on a range of issues. This paper provides a summary of the progress made on this list of requests so that the working party can evaluate progress made and to agree on the next steps to be taken for each issue.

DISCUSSION

The Rules of Procedure of the Scientific Committee include the following seven core tasks, which are to be supported by the various Working Parties.

- a) recommend policies and procedures for the collection, processing, dissemination and analysis of fishery data;
- b) facilitate the exchange and critical review among scientists of information on research and operation of fisheries of relevance to the Commission;
- c) develop and coordinate cooperative research programmes involving Members of the Commission in support of fisheries management;
- d) assess and report to the Commission on the status of stocks of relevance to the Commission and the likely effects of further fishing and of different fishing patterns and intensities;
- e) formulate and report to the sub-commission, as appropriate, on recommendations concerning conservation, fisheries management and research, including consensus, majority and minority views;
- f) consider any matter referred to by the Commission;
- g) carry out other technical activities of relevance to the Commission.

Recalling that the SC, at its 16th Session adopted a set of reporting terminology SC16.07 (para. 23), which was subsequently endorsed by the Commission at its 18th Session in 2014 (S18, para 10), to further improve the clarity of information sharing from, and among the science bodies, the following two term levels should be noted when interpreting the Reports and Appendix I to this paper:

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.

In addition to the Recommendations endorsed by the SC at its 26th Session, the SC also made several requests which, although are not passed to the Commission for its endorsement, are considered actions which the Scientific Committee has the mandate to issue. The revised recommendations are contained in Appendix I for the consideration and potential endorsement by the WPNT14.

RECOMMENDATION

That the WPNT **NOTE** the progress made in implementing the recommendations and requests of the 14th Session of the WPNT, and consider whether revised recommendations need to be sent to the SC for its consideration.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Progress made on the Recommendations and Requests of WPNT14.



APPENDIX I

Progress made on the Recommendations and Requests of WPNT14 and SC27

WPNT14 Rec. No.	Recommendation from WPNT14	SC27 Rec. No.	Recommendation adopted by the SC27	Progress/Comments
WPNT14.01 (para. 20)	The WPNT RECOMMENDED that the SC urge all coastal CPCs to join future WPNT meetings, NOTING the high level of catches of neritic species from CPCs such as India and Pakistan who regularly do not attended these meetings.	(para. 38)	The SC NOTED that no scientists from Pakistan have attended the WPNT meeting in recent years despite the fact that they have large catches of these species and therefore ENCOURAGED scientists from this and other CPCs with significant neritic catches to attend these meetings in the future and REQUESTED these CPCs to provide scientific papers providing information on the neritic tuna fisheries in these CPCs.	Status: Completed
WPNT14.02 (para. 28)	ACKNOWLEDGING the difficulties associated with deriving geo-referenced size-frequency data at the spatial resolution of 5° grids in most coastal fisheries, and the fact that most analyses, including stock assessments, do not require such fine resolution, the WPNT RECOMMENDED the SC to urge the Commission to align the spatial resolution of size-frequency data with that of geo-referenced catch and effort data. Consequently, the data may be provided using an alternative geographical area if it better represents the fishery concerned.			Status: Ongoing

WPNT14.03 (para. 40)	The WPNT RECOMMENDED that the SC ENCOURAGE CPCs to evaluate the socio-economic status of their fisheries involved in catching neritic tunas.			Status: Ongoing
WPNT14.04 (para. 66)	Therefore, the WPNT RECOMMENDED that the SC ENCOURAGE collaboration between CPCs to carry out stock identification by the application of genetics in order to better understand the structure of all neritic stocks for improved management plans.	(para. 43)	The SC ENCOURAGED CPCs to collaborate to carry out stock identification by the application of genetic techniques such as Close Kin Mark Recapture (CKMR) to better understand the structure of all neritic stocks for improved management plans.	Status: Completed
WPNT14.05 (para. 116 & 117)	<p>In this context, the WPNT DISCUSSED potential future assessment options for neritic tuna species. The WPNT NOTED that each method requires certain assumptions. For catch-only methods, the assumption is relatively simple and widely used in fisheries applications (functional form for surplus production). Therefore, if the catch estimates are accurate, the application of catch-only methods can prove effective and easy to implement. Furthermore, these methods can yield management metrics required by the IOTC, and the results are more easily understood by managers.</p> <p>Conversely, the inputs for the length-based approach are more likely to be of better quality, especially considering the widespread implementation of sampling programs among coastal countries. There has also been considerable recent advancement and emphasis on the length-based approach, which can estimate stock status and serve as a valuable monitoring tool for various fisheries. The WPNT thus</p>	SC27.09 (para. 44)	NOTING that there has been considerable recent advancement and emphasis on the length-based approach, which can estimate stock status and serve as a valuable monitoring tool for various fisheries, the SC thus ENCOURAGED the continued exploration and utilization of both methods. The SC RECOMMENDED that the Commission urge CPCs to collect more representative length composition data for the effective assessment of these species, with a particular focus on frigate and bullet tuna for which the stock status is still unknown. The SC further RECOMMENDED that the Commission urge CPCs to summarize the size data from their sampling programs for the next WPNT meeting.	<p>Status: Completed</p> <p>The Commission in 2025 endorsed the SC's 2024 list of recommendations as its own.</p>

	ENCOURAGED the continued exploration and utilization of both methods and RECOMMENDED that the SC urge the Commission to put greater focus on urging CPCs to collect more representative length composition data for the effective assessment of these species. The WPNT also REQUESTED that CPCs summarize the size data from their sampling programs for the next WPNT meeting.			
WPNT14.06 (para. 124)	The WPNT RECOMMENDED that the SC consider and endorse the WPNT Program of Work (2025–2029), as provided in Appendix VI .	(para 194)	The SC NOTED the proposed Program of Work and priorities for the SC and each of the working parties and AGREED to a consolidated Program of Work as outlined in Appendix 36a-g . The Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of each working party will ensure that the efforts of their respective working parties are focused on the core areas contained within the appendix, taking into account any new research priorities identified by the Commission at its next Session.	Status: Completed
WPNT14.07 (para. 128)	The WPNT RECOMMENDED that the Scientific Committee consider the consolidated set of recommendations arising from WPNT14, provided in Appendix XIII , as well as the management advice provided in the draft resource stock status summary for each of the six neritic tuna (and seerfish) species under the IOTC mandate, and the combined Kobe plot for the species assigned a stock status in 2024: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bullet tuna (<i>Auxis rochei</i>) – Appendix VII ○ Frigate tuna (<i>Auxis thazard</i>) – Appendix VIII ○ Kawakawa (<i>Euthynnus affinis</i>) – Appendix 	SC27.02 (para 177)	The SC RECOMMENDED that the Commission note the management advice developed for each neritic tuna (and seerfish) species under the IOTC mandate, as provided in the Executive Summary for each species, and the combined Kobe plot for the three species assigned a stock status in 2024 (Fig. 3): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullet tuna (<i>Auxis rochei</i>) – Appendix 17 • Frigate tuna (<i>Auxis thazard</i>) – Appendix 18 • Kawakawa (<i>Euthynnus affinis</i>) – Appendix 19 • Longtail tuna (<i>Thunnus tonggol</i>) – Appendix 	Status: Completed

	<p>IX</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Longtail tuna (<i>Thunnus tonggol</i>) – Appendix X ○ Indo-Pacific king mackerel (<i>Scomberomorus guttatus</i>) – Appendix XI ○ Narrow-barred Spanish mackerel (<i>Scomberomorus commerson</i>) – Appendix XII 		<p>20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indo-Pacific king mackerel (<i>Scomberomorus guttatus</i>) – Appendix 21 • Narrow-barred Spanish mackerel (<i>Scomberomorus commerson</i>) – Appendix 22 	
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WPNT14 Report	WPNT14 REQUESTS	Update/Progress
(para. 68)	The WPNT SUGGESTED that would be valuable to hold a mini workshop on stock structure techniques at next year's WPNT meeting which would require the invited expert to have extensive knowledge in this area. The WPNT further REQUESTED that CPCs submit relevant papers on genetic studies to help the invited expert to understand the current level of knowledge within the WPNT on this topic.	<p>Update: Complete</p> <p>The 2025 WPNT meeting will focus on genetic techniques that can be applied to determine the stock structure of neritic species in the Indian Ocean</p>
(para. 117)	Conversely, the inputs for the length-based approach are more likely to be of better quality, especially considering the widespread implementation of sampling programs among coastal countries. There has also been considerable recent advancement and emphasis on the length-based approach, which can estimate stock status and serve as a valuable monitoring tool for various fisheries. The WPNT thus ENCOURAGED the continued exploration and utilization of both methods and RECOMMENDED that the SC urge the Commission to put greater focus on urging CPCs to collect more representative length composition data for the effective assessment of these species. The WPNT also REQUESTED that CPCs summarize the size data from their sampling programs for the next WPNT meeting.	<p>Update: Ongoing</p> <p>The SC's recommendations were endorsed by the Commission in 2025. However, the Commission did not explicitly urge CPCs to collect more representative length composition data.</p> <p>CPCs have been requested to summarise the size data from their sampling programmes for this year's WPNT meeting.</p>

(para. 20)	<p>The WPNT ADOPTED the management advice developed for Indo-Pacific king mackerel (<i>Scomberomorus guttatus</i>) – Appendix XI, frigate tuna (<i>Auxis thazard</i>) - Appendix VIII, and bullet tuna (<i>Auxis rochei</i>) – Appendix VII as provided in the draft resource stock status summary (the stock status of frigate tuna and bullet tuna remained to be undermined), and REQUESTED that the IOTC Secretariat update the draft stock status summary for the three species with the latest 2022 catch data, and for the summary to be provided to the SC as part of the draft Executive Summary, for its consideration.</p>	<p>Update: Ongoing</p> <p>The stock status summary will be routinely updated by the Secretariat when finalising the executive summary documents after the WPNT and SC meetings.</p>
(para. 127)	<p>The WPNT REQUESTED CPCs that may be interested in hosting the 15th and 16th Working Party on Neritic tunas to contact the Secretariat.</p>	<p>Update: Ongoing</p> <p>It is hoped that CPCs will offer to host the 16th Working Party meeting during the current WPNT15 meeting.</p>