

OUTCOMES OF 29th SESSIONS OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 3 AUGUST 2025

PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 23 Working Party on Billfish (WPB23) of the decision and requests made by the Commission at its 29th session held from 13–17 April 2025 respectively, specifically relating to the work of the WPB.

BACKGROUND

At the 29th Session of the Commission 14 Conservation and Management Measures were adopted (consisting of 12 Resolutions and 2 Recommendations), as detailed below

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](#)].

Conservation and Management Measures become binding 120 days after their distribution to all CPCs. The final versions of the newly agreed CMMs will be made available in due course at <http://iotc.org/cmms>

DISCUSSION

The Commission also made a number of general comments on the recommendations made by the Scientific Committee in 2024 (SC27), which have relevance for the WPB (IOTC–2024–S29–R):

Status of billfish

Swordfish

No new stock assessment was carried out for swordfish in 2024, thus the stock status is determined on the basis of the 2022 assessment. On the weight-of-evidence available in 2023, the stock is determined to be **not overfished** and **not subject to overfishing**.

Striped Marlin

A new stock assessment was carried out for striped marlin in 2024, based on two different models: JABBA, a Bayesian state-space production model (age-aggregated); and SS3, an integrated model (age-structured) (using data up to 2022). On the weight-of-evidence available in 2024, the stock status of striped marlin is determined to be **overfished** and **subject to overfishing**.

Blue Marlin

No new stock assessment was carried out for blue marlin in 2024, thus the stock status is determined on the basis of the 2022 assessment. On the weight-of-evidence available in 2022, the stock is determined to be **overfished** and **subject to overfishing**.

Black Marlin

A new stock assessment was carried out for black marlin in 2024, based on JABBA, a Bayesian state-space production model (using data up to 2022). On the weight-of-evidence available in 2024, the stock status of black marlin is determined to be **not overfished** but **subject to overfishing**.

Indo-Pacific sailfish

No new stock assessment was carried out for Indo-Pacific Sailfish in 2024, thus the stock status is determined on basis of the 2022 stock assessment based on JABBA (using data up to 2019). On the weight-of-evidence available in 2022, the stock status of Indo-Pacific sailfish is determined to be **not overfished nor subject to overfishing**.

Para 34. The Commission **ACKNOWLEDGED** significant improvements in stock assessments for certain billfish species, such as black marlin, which were attributed to enhancements in the quality of reported catch data. The Commission also **EMPHASISED** the need to develop improved methodologies for assessing billfish fisheries, particularly for data-poor species, and to apply suitable assessment techniques where data availability allows.

Para 35. The Commission **NOTED** that, in response to the recommendation by the SC to review the applicability and the effectiveness of the provisions within Resolution 18/05, Australia indicated that they plan to put forward a proposal to the Commission meeting in 2026 to update the catch limits based on the latest stock assessments and projections for the billfish species

The complete report of the 29th Session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission is available for download from the IOTC website: <https://iotc.org/meetings/28th-session-indian-ocean-tuna-commission>

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the WPB

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2025–WPB23–04 which outlined the outcomes of the 29th Session of the Commission, specifically related to the work of the WPB 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 WPB meeting.
- 2) **NOTE** that 14 new Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) were adopted at the 29th Session of the Commission (consisting of 12 Resolutions and 2 Recommendation).