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## **ANNOTATED AGENDA FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> WORKING PARTY ON ECOSYSTEMS AND BYCATCH: ASSESSMENT MEETING**

**Last updated: August 2025**

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**Date:** 9-13 September 2025

**Location:** Sète, France

**Venue:** [Station Ifremer](#)

**Time:** 09:00 – 17:00 (France time, GMT+1)

**Chair:** Dr Mariana Tolotti (EU, France)

**Vice-Chairs:** Mr Mohammed Koya (India) and Dr Charlene da Silva (South Africa)

### **1. OPENING OF THE MEETING (Chair)**

### **2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION (Chair)**

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-01a: Agenda of the 20th Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch (Assessment Meeting)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-01b: Annotated agenda of the 20th Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch (Assessment Meeting)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-02: List of documents of the 20th Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch (Assessment Meeting)

### **3. THE IOTC PROCESS: OUTCOMES, UPDATES AND PROGRESS**

#### **3.1. Outcomes of the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Scientific Committee (IOTC Secretariat)**

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-03: Outcomes of the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Scientific Committee

#### **3.2. Outcomes of the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission (IOTC Secretariat)**

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-04: Outcomes of the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission

#### **3.3. Review of the Conservation and Management Measures relevant to Ecosystems and Bycatch (IOTC Secretariat)**

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-05: Review of the Conservation and Management Measures relevant to Ecosystems and Bycatch

#### **3.4. Progress on the recommendations of WPEB19 (IOTC Secretariat)**

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-06: Progress on the recommendations of WPEB19

### **4. REVIEW OF THE DATA AVAILABLE AT THE SECRETARIAT FOR BYCATCH SPECIES AND BYCATCH DATA ESTIMATION APPROACHES (All)**

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-07: Review of the statistical data and fishery trends for ecosystems and bycatch species (IOTC Secretariat)

### **5. REVIEW OF NATIONAL BYCATCH ISSUES IN IOTC MANAGED FISHERIES AND NATIONAL PLANS OF ACTION (sharks; seabirds; marine turtles) (CPCs and IOTC Secretariat)**

- 5.1. Updated status of development and implementation of NPOA for seabirds and sharks, and the implementation of the FAO guidelines to reduce marine turtle mortality in fishing operations (CPCs)

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-08: Status of development and implementation of NPOA for seabirds and sharks, and the implementation of the FAO guidelines to reduce marine turtle mortality in fishing operations (IOTC Secretariat)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-11: Enhancing conservation and sustainable use of sharks and rays in Mozambique: The first NPAO-Shark of Mozambique 2025-2029 (Mutombene R)

## 5.2. Updated status of national fisheries and bycatch (CPCs)

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-12: Blue shark (*Prionace glauca*) bycatch in the tuna longline fishery in Sri Lanka (Balawardana T)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-13: Impacts of Industrial Longline Fisheries on Elasmobranch Species Captured in Kenya's Exclusive Economic Zone (Benedict K)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-14: Bycatch of Thai handline fishery in Western Indian Ocean (Thitipongtrakul W)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-15: Status of sharks in India's artisanal fisheries with a focus on shark conservation in India (Muktha M, Shoba J, Akhilesh K, Surya S, Swatipriyanka S, Najmudeen T, Shikha R, Purushottama G, Subal K, Remya L, Abdul A, Vinothkumar R, Livi W, Mahesh V, Sujitha T, Ajay N, Sanjay P, Koyaa K, George G)

## 6. REVIEW INFORMATION ON BIOLOGY, ECOLOGY, FISHERIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL DATA RELATING TO SHARKS (Chair)

### 6.1. Presentation of new information available on sharks (all)

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-17: An update for 2024-2025 on the development of IOTC BTH PRM Project (Evgeny R)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-18: Standardized CPUE of oceanic whitetip shark bycaught by the French Reunion-based pelagic longline fishery (2007-2024) (Tellier C, Sabarros P)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-19: Distribution of blue sharks and shortfin mako sharks across the IOTC/ICCAT tRFMO boundary (da Silva C, West W)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-20: Updated Insights into the Reproductive Biology of Blue Sharks (*Prionace glauca*) in the Western Indian Ocean Based on Longline Observer Data from 2010–2023 (Zhu J)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-21: Best practices, habitat and survival rate of elasmobranch caught by French tropical tuna purse seiners - BEHAVE project (Wain, Sabarros P, Forget, Tolotti M, Goujon)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-22: Comparison of catch rate and mortality of sharks by leader-type based on observer data in the Indian Ocean (Semba Y).
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-23: Post-release mortality of pelagic sharks caught by longliners – POREMO and ASUR projects (Sabarros P, Massey Y, Romanov E, Tellier C, Bach P)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-24: Designing experimental fishing trials to explore the effects of leader material on catch and mortality of sharks: A review of best practice, principles and criteria (Emery T, D'Alberto B, Bromhead D)

### 6.2. Development of shark research work plan (all)

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-25: Resolution 2025-08 as an opportunity to step up science driven conservation and management measure at IOTC for both sharks that are directly targeted and sharks caught as a bycatch in tuna and multi-species fisheries? (Ziegler I)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-26: Information about "Ring-shaped branchline (Meka-ring)" in pelagic longline fisheries and research plan (Daisuke O)

6.3. Review of the minimum standards for safe handling and live release procedures (Annex III of Resolution 25/08) (all)

6.4. Development of ToRs for a long-term project on sharks (all)

## **7. STOCK ASSESSMENT FOR BLUE SHARK (Chair)**

7.1. Review of indicators for blue shark(all)

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-16: CPUE and catch distribution for blue shark in the Tanzanian EEZ (Mbukwah R)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-27: Updated on CPUE standardization of blue shark (*Prionace glauca*) from Indonesian tuna longline fleets 2006-2024 (Novianto D, Setyadji B, Syadiah L, Dodiet R, Januar S)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-28: Catch estimates of blue shark (*Prionace glauca*) in the IOTC area (Rice J)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-29: Comparison of indices of abundance for blue shark (*Prionace glauca*) in the IOTC area (Rice J)

7.2. Stock assessment models (all)

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-30: Stock assessment of blue shark (*Prionace glauca*) in the IOTC area using SS3 (Rice J)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-51: Indian Ocean blue shark stock assessment using Bayesian surplus production models (JABBA): model development, validation, sensitivity analysis and large grid model ensembles (Coelho R)

7.3. Review of the proposed stock assessment of blue shark (all)

7.4. Recommendation and executive summaries (all)

## **8. NEW INFORMATION ON BIOLOGY, ECOLOGY, FISHERIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL DATA RELATING TO ECOSYSTEMS AND BYCATCH SPECIES (Chair)**

8.1. Review new information on the environment and ecosystem interactions and modelling, including climate change issues affecting pelagic ecosystems in the IOTC area of responsibility (all)

- Ecosystems and climate
- Impact of gears
- Mitigation devices/techniques
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-31: Abundance, visiting frequency, interactions, fishery connectivity and economics of exploitation of pelagic species by Réunion's artisanal fishery on anchored FADs (AFICHE): a research project implying tagging of dolphinfish, wahoo and tuna (Romanov E, Poirout T, Bonhommeau S, Cerutti F, Sabarros P, Bach P)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-32: Mitigating the Ecological Impacts of Drifting Fish Aggregating Devices in Seychelles Waters – A Review of the FADWatch Programme (Lucas V)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-33: Have Non-Entangling DFADs Reduced Ghost Fishing in the Indian Ocean? (Grande M, Murua J, Cuevas N, Erauskin-Extramiana M, Lopetegui-Eguren L, Onandia I, Ruiz J, Salgado A, Moreno G, Murua H, Santiago J)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-34: Review of the proposed form for the collection of data on ALDFG (IOTC Secretariat)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-35: Incorporating bycatch release devices in guidelines for best bycatch handling and release practices in tropical tuna purse seiners (Murua J, Ferarios J, Grande M, Ruiz J, Cuevas N, Krug I, Onandia I, Zudaire I, Salgado A, Erauskin-Extramiana M, Lopetegui-Eguren L, Santiago J)

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-49: Influence of drifting FAD immersion time on bycatch rate in the tropical tuna purse seine fishery (Mollier et al.)

8.2. Examining the benefits of retaining non-targeted species catches (all)

8.3. Assessment of the impacts of climate change on IOTC fisheries and bycatch species (all)

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-37: Advancing Regional Ecosystem Fisheries Overview with Climate and Environmental Indicators to Enhance Fisheries Management Advice in the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (Aron R, Marsac R, Murua H, Andonegi E, Jorda M)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-38: Hindcasting the food-web dynamics of the tropical Indian Ocean pelagic ecosystem over the last two decades (Amate R, Jordá M, Corrales X, Zudaire I, Andonegi E)

Information papers:

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-INF06: Which processes structure global pelagic ecosystems and control their trophic functioning? Insights from the mechanistic model APECOSM (Dalaut et al)

## **9. BYCATCH, SPECIES INTERACTIONS, AND ECOSYSTEM RISK ASSESSMENTS FOR OTHER SHARK SPECIES, MARINE MAMMALS, SEABIRDS, AND SEA TURTLES**

9.1. All bycatch species (all)

Information papers:

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-INF01: Bycatch trend and its fate of the Spanish-owned tuna purse seiners fleet from the Atlantic and Indian oceans: impacts of the implementation of good practices (Acevado-Iglesias S)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-INF02: Deep diving into shark catch and trade mismatches (CITIES)

9.2. Other sharks and rays

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-40: Conservation of Whale Sharks (*Rhincodon typus*) Bycaught in IOTC: Review of Biology, Interactions with Purse Seine Fisheries and Best Practices on Handling and Release (Salgado A)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-41: Consideration of sampling requirements and logistics for close-kin mark recapture and a reappraisal of potential for stock structure in Indian Ocean shortfin mako shark (Patterson T)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-42: Evaluation of potential close-kin mark recapture sampling designs for Indian Ocean shortfin mako shark (Patterson T)

9.3. Mobulids (all)

- Review new information on mobulid biology, ecology, fisheries interactions and bycatch mitigation measures (all);
- Review of indicators for Mobulids (all)
- Review of revised best practice safe release and handling guidelines (all)
- Development of management advice on the status of mobulid species – review of new Executive Summary for rays (all)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-INF04: Proposed Mobulid Executive Summary: IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-ES28\_Mobulids.docx
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-INF03: Revised mobulid handling guidelines (Manta Trust)

9.4. Marine mammals (all)

- Best practice guidelines for safe release and handling of cetaceans (all);
  - Review new information on marine mammal biology, ecology, fisheries interactions and bycatch mitigation measures (all);
  - Development of management advice on the status of marine mammal species (all)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-43: Co-Designing a Trial for reduction of cetacean bycatch: A Proposal for Collaborative Bycatch Mitigation Research (Campbell E)
  - IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-44: A Regional Conservation Management Plan for Arabian Sea Humpback Whales: Summary, Status and Timeline (Minton G)

#### Information papers:

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-INF05: Best Practices for the disentanglement of free-swimming small cetaceans

#### 9.5. Seabirds (all)

- Review new information on seabird biology, ecology, fisheries interactions and bycatch mitigation measures (all)
  - Developing advice on best practices for branch weighting
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-45: Developing an IOTC multi-year Seabird Strategy

#### Information papers

- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-INF07: Insights into bycatch reduction based on underwater observations of Yelkouan shearwater (*Puffinus yelkouan*) and Atlantic Puffin (*Fratercula arctica*) interactions with the French pelagic longline fishery in the Western Mediterranean (Poisson F, Ochi, D, Gilman E)

#### 9.6. Sea turtles

- Review new information on marine turtle biology, ecology, fisheries interactions and bycatch mitigation measures (all)
- IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-46: Collaborative approaches to monitor and reduce sea turtle bycatch mortality in the French longline fisheries in the SWIO: latest data and insights (Barret M)
  - IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-47: Launching ACTIVE: strengthening collaborative efforts for sea turtle bycatch mitigation and conservation in the SWIO (Barret M)
  - IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-50: Insights from the Data of the Crew-Based Observer Program: Identifying Blue Corridors for Marine Turtles in Pakistan's EEZ (Razzaque S, Sheikh A, Nawaz R, Shahid U, Afsar N, Abid S, Zafar A, Sheikh M, Hammdan)

### 10. WPEB PROGRAM OF WORK (RESEARCH AND PRIORITIES)

- 10.1. Revision of the WPEB Program of Work 2026-2030 (Chairperson and IOTC Secretariat)
  - IOTC-2025-WPEB21(AS)-09: WPEB Program of Work 2026-2030 (IOTC Secretariat)
- 10.2. Development of priorities for an Invited Expert at the next WPEB meeting (Chairperson)

### 11. OTHER MATTERS (Chair)

- 11.1. Date and place of the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch (Chair)

- 11.2. Nomination of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch (all)
- 11.3. Review of the draft, and adoption of the Report of the 21<sup>th</sup> Session of the (Chairperson)