



21 August 2025

IOTC CIRCULAR 2025-27

Dear Madam / Sir

REQUEST FOR OBSERVER STATUS FROM GLOBAL FISHING WATCH

Please find attached a request letter from Global Fishing Watch to participate as an Observer to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission processes.

In accordance with Rule XIV of the IOTC Rules of Procedure, Contracting Parties of the Commission may wish to allow Global Fishing Watch to participate as an Observer given their interest in the IOTC as stipulated in the attached letter. Thus, unless any objections are received within 30 days of the date of this Circular, the IOTC Secretariat will consider that approval has been granted for the Executive Secretary to issue an invitation to the potential Observer to attend IOTC meetings accordingly.

Yours sincerely

Paul de Bruyn
Executive Secretary

Attachments:

- Letter from the Global Fishing Watch

Distribution

IOTC Contracting Parties: Australia, Bangladesh, China, Comoros, European Union, France (Territories), India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Rep of), Japan, Kenya, Rep. of Korea, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, United Rep. of Tanzania, Thailand, United Kingdom, Yemen. **Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties:** Liberia, Panama. **Intergovernmental Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations.** Chairperson IOTC. **Copy to:** FAO Headquarters, FAO Representatives to CPCs.

This message has been transmitted by email only

Global Fishing Watch
1025 Connecticut Avenue NW,
Suite 200
Washington, DC

Dr. Paul de Bruyn
Executive Secretary
Indian Ocean Tuna Commission

20 August 2025

Dear Dr. de Bruyn, Mr Ziyad, and Members of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission:

Global Fishing Watch is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing ocean governance through increased transparency of human activity at sea. By creating and publicly sharing map visualizations, data and analysis tools, we aim to enable scientific research and support authorities to contribute to sustainable fisheries management.

Global Fishing Watch has followed the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) outcomes and discussions with interest since our formation in 2017. Since then, Global Fishing Watch has produced several reports and analysis on transshipment in the IOTC, identified IUU fishing activity in the IOTC, and supported capacity development in several IOTC Member countries. In 2023, we obtained funding to support our efforts to formally engage at the policy level in RFMOs, and in 2025 officially started staffing a small RFMO team.

Global Fishing Watch has an extensive work program relating to effective monitoring, control and surveillance of transshipment activities, including in RFMOs. To improve the understanding and management of transshipment, we developed Vessel Viewer, Carrier Vessel Portal, Map, and other tools – innovative technology portals that harness transparency to bring greater monitoring and analysis of this activity to all those who need it, with no charge for its use. The portals provide valuable tools for managers seeking to verify transshipment activities. Other tools, such as a recent release of additional optical imagery in 2025, offer innovative data sources for managers.

Furthermore, we focus on providing expertise and support to core country partners on vessel registration, tracking and port controls – particularly relating to information exchange and publication for use as part of innovative automated analyses.

Global Fishing Watch is therefore seeking observer status to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission. We would be very pleased and honored to follow and contribute to future discussions on transshipment, vessel registration, tracking, port controls, the use of innovation and automation in MCS processes and to IOTC research, as appropriate.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact Brianna Elliott, International Policy Officer - RFMOs, at brianna.elliott@globalfishingwatch.org.

Yours Sincerely,



Tony Long
Chief Executive Officer