



**Ministry of Agriculture-Jahad
Iran Fisheries Organization**

**Iran (Islamic Republic of) National Report to the
Scientific Committee of the Indian Ocean Tuna
Commission, 2025**

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INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

In accordance with IOTC Resolution 15/02 (and other data related CMMs as noted below), final scientific data for the previous year were provided to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 June of the current year, for all fleets other than longline [e.g., for a National Report submitted to the IOTC Secretariat in 2025, final data for the 2024 calendar year must be provided to the Secretariat by 30 June 2025)	YES 30/06/2025
In accordance with IOTC Resolution 15/02, provisional longline data for the previous year was provided to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 June of the current year [e.g., for a National Report submitted to the IOTC Secretariat in 2025, preliminary data for the 2024 calendar year were provided to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 June 2025). REMINDER: Final longline data for the previous year are due to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 Dec of the current year [e.g., for a National Report submitted to the IOTC Secretariat in 2025, final data for the 2024 calendar year must be provided to the Secretariat by 30 December 2025).	N/A
If no, please indicate the reason(s) and intended actions: There is only one industrial longline vessel, which has not been active in recent years. However, a number of artisanal gillnet dhowes actively engaged in longline fishing during 2024. Although these vessels are not included in the official count of longline fishing vessels, they were encouraged to adopt a seasonal fishing approach, operating exclusively during designated fishing periods.	

Executive Summary:

Tuna and tuna-like species constitute a significant portion of Iran's large pelagic fisheries. This sector is pivotal to the nation's marine economy, operating primarily in the Persian Gulf, Oman Sea, and the high seas. In 2024, Iran's total fish production around 1.5 million metric tonnes. Of this, 751 thousand tonnes (50%) originated from the Persian Gulf, Sea of Oman, and high seas. The Caspian Sea contributed 38 thousand tonnes (3%), while aquaculture accounted for 709 thousand tonnes (47%).

The total catch of large pelagic species, including by-catch, was approximately 302 thousand metric tonnes about 40% of Iran's total marine catch in 2024. Of this, around 292 thousand metric tonnes were tuna and tuna-like species caught in the Indian Ocean area competency. The composition of this catch included tropical tuna (114 thousand tonnes, 37.7%), neritic tuna (149 thousand tonnes, 49.4%), billfish species (28 thousand tonnes, 9.5%), various shark species (1309 tonnes, 0.4%), and other non-target species (9 thousand tonnes, 3%).

Iran's marine fisheries continue to demonstrate a strong reliance on large pelagic resources, particularly tuna and tuna-like species, which account for nearly half of the national marine catch. This dependence highlights both the economic significance of pelagic fisheries and the biological vulnerability of these resources to overexploitation.

Overall, the data suggest that while Iran's pelagic fisheries remain productive and economically important, sustainability challenges persist. Effective management will require a balanced approach between economic utilization and ecological conservation, supported by science-based policy, seasonal regulation, and regional collaboration under the IOTC framework.



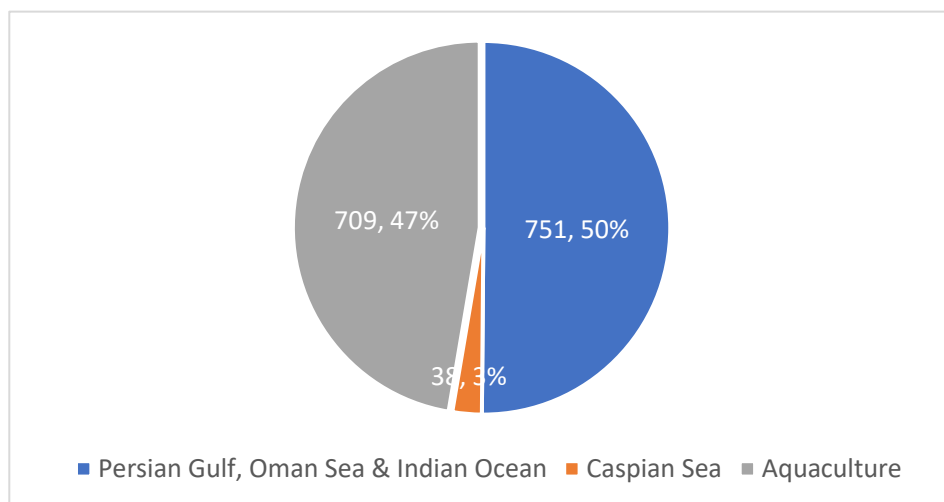
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1. BACKGROUND / GENERAL FISHERY INFORMATION:

Iran's extensive coastline, stretching from the Caspian Sea in the north to the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman in the south, provides a rich and diverse marine environment. The southern waters, in particular, are well known for their abundance of large pelagic species. Four coastal provinces Khuzestan, Bushehr, Hormozgan, and Sistan & Baluchestan border these southern waters, together offering approximately 5,800 km of coastline. Iranian fishers have a long history of offshore fishing, especially in the northwestern Indian Ocean, where they primarily use gillnets to target tuna and other large pelagic species.

Iran's aquatic production consists of both aquaculture and marine capture fisheries. In 2024, total aquatic production reached about 1.5 million metric tonnes, including 709,000 metric tonnes from aquaculture and approximately 751,000 metric tonnes from marine fisheries.



Marine fisheries, primarily concentrated in the southern waters, accounted for 95% of the catch, while the northern waters contributed 3%. Over 144,000 fishermen utilize a variety of vessels, including fishing boats, dhows, and ships, to engage in gillnet, purse seine, trolling, trawl, and wire-trap fishing.

2. FLEET STRUCTURE:

Fishing for large pelagic species in Iran is conducted mainly using gillnet, purse seine, and longline (operated by traditional boats), as well as trolling by small coastal vessels. The gillnet fleet is largely composed of locally built wooden and fiberglass boats. In the southern fisheries, a total of approximately 15,488 fishing vessels operate, of which about 8,125 are engaged in catching large pelagic species within the IOTC area of competence. These include 4,272 gillnet boats (less than 20 GT), 402 gillnet dhows of less than 50 GT, 394 gillnet dhows between 51–100 GT, 582 gillnet dhows exceeding 100 GT, 2,474 trolling boats under 3 GT, 496 traditional longline boats under 3 GT, and 92 longline dhows between 51–100 GT. In the current year, there were no active purse seine vessels. Overall, gillnet boats—particularly those under 3 GT—constitute the dominant segment of the fleet, followed by gillnet dhows across various tonnage categories. Table 2.1 presents the distribution of the fishing fleet by GT category for the period 2020–2024

Gear Group	Capacity GT	Number of Active Fishing Vessels by Year				
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Purse seine	500 to 1000 t	2	2	0	0	0
	>1000 t	5	5	0	0	0
Coastal Artisanal Longline*	< 3	250	280	492	371	496
	51 to 100	70	70	85	59	92
	100 to 200	0	0	0	0	0
	>1000	1	1	1	0	0
Gillnet	< 3 t	3,752	2,694	3,416	4,762	3,983
	3 to 20 t	230	437	247	301	289
	21 to 50 t	216	254	303	345	402
	51 to 100 t	246	506	477	261	394
	>100 t	487	246	248	478	582
Trolling	< 3 t	1,901	1,771	1,808	2,171	2,474
Total fishing Craft		6,839	5,917	6,500	8,317	8,125

Table 2.1 shows the number of active fishing vessels by gear type and vessel capacity.

* It should be noted that approximately 588 gillnet operated as longliners in 2024. These vessels were not included in the total fleet count, as their operations are seasonal and temporary, operating only during certain fishing seasons.

3. CATCH AND EFFORT (BY SPECIES AND FISHERY):

Catch and effort data were collected from 67 landing centres located along Iran's southern coast. A stratified random sampling method was employed to ensure that the data was representative of the entire fishing fleet. Approximately 10% of the fishing vessels, including dhows and boats of various types, were randomly selected, and their fishing data were collected through questionnaires by trained field samplers.

In addition, the number of fishing days at sea is recorded in the data collection software, for all active fishing vessels. These data are raised based on the total fishing effort. There is specific scientific capture fishery statistic committee at both the provincial and national levels, and fishery research experts and administrative officers are members of these committees. In these committees, trends of data collection and raising are evaluated and ultimately approved.

Large pelagic fisheries by Iran fleet, are done in coastal area and high seas by different type of vessels that the result of catch reflected in table 3.1 and figure3.1 shows the total yearly catch by gear type and species groups reported for the all fleet. The catch quantity of large pelagic species (including by-catch) in Iran was 301962 Mt in 2024 reported to the IOTC Secretariat and around 291609 Mt belongs to tuna and tuna-like species in the coastal and high seas. Those catch consist of tropic tuna 113780 Mt, neritic tuna 149281Mt, billfish 28549 Mt and Sharks 1309 Mt, and other species 9043 Mt. Figure 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 showing the amount of catch for different fishing methods by species during 2020 to 2024. Total catch for purse seine, gillnet, long line by coastal artisanal boats and trolling in 2024 was estimated 0 Mt, 262712 Mt, 11187 Mt and 28062 Mt respectively. Gillnet with 87% of Catch is the dominant fishing gear followed by long line with 3.7% and around 9.3% comes from trolling vessels.

GEAR GROUP	SPECIES GROUP	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Purse Seine	Neritic Species	416	220	0	0	0
	Tropical Species	610	305	0	0	0
	Billfish	0	0	0	0	0
	Sharks	0	0	0	0	0
	Others	0	6	0	0	0
Coastal Artisanal Longline	Neritic Species	0	0	0	0	0
	Tropical Species	8,839	5,600	9,304	8,586	11,036
	Billfish	0	0	0	0	0
	Sharks	0	0	0	0	0
	Others	0	60	130	114	151
Gillnet	Neritic Species	129,488	129,917	117,866	122,941	130,418
	Tropical Species	79,799	103,904	106,106	101,505	98,843
	Billfish	18,370	26,077	31,470	28,948	24,201
	Sharks	3,442	4,085	2,779	1,152	1,259
	Others	22,576	29,069	29,343	9,703	7,991
Trolling	Neritic Species	12,376	5,092	11,266	8,960	18,863
	Tropical Species	5,109	3,198	3,025	1,316	3,900
	Billfish	2,142	453	3,339	2,502	4,348
	Sharks	190	55	252	359	50
	Others	115	188	1,371	489	901
Total Catch		283,472	308,231	316,252	286,576	301,962

Table.3.1 Annual catch by gear type and species group (Mt)

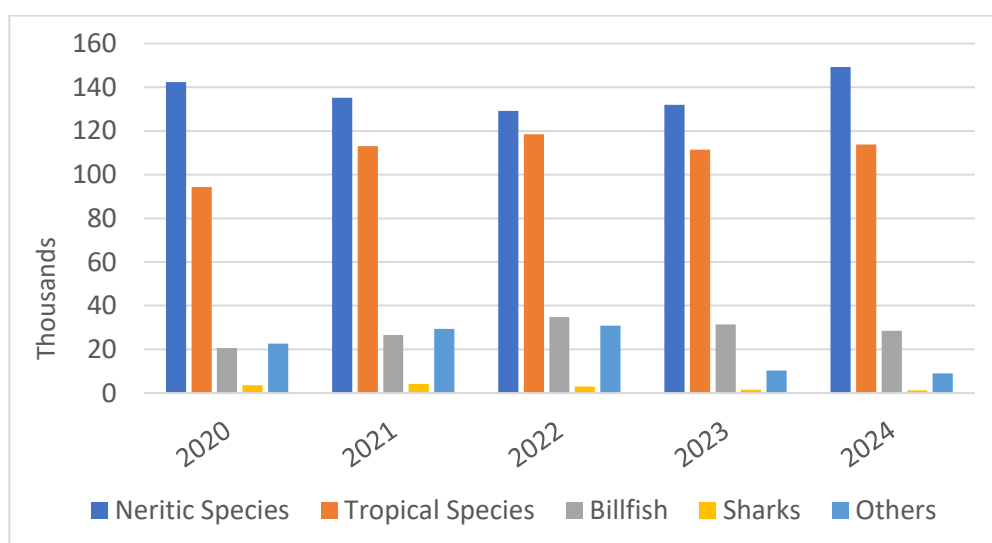


Figure.3.1 Annual catch by gear type and species group (Mt)

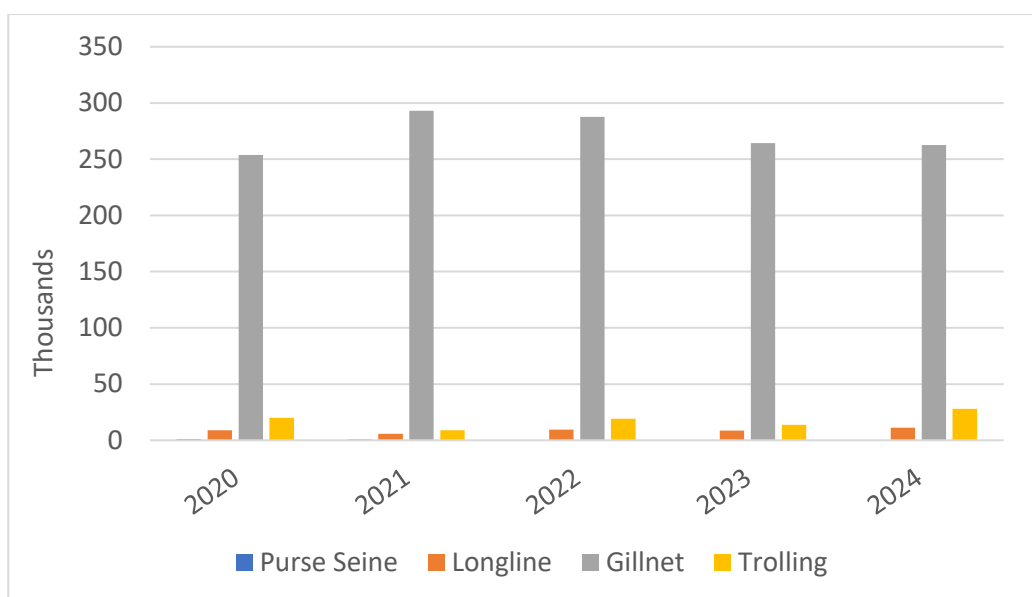


Figure 3.1- Annual Catch by Gear Type

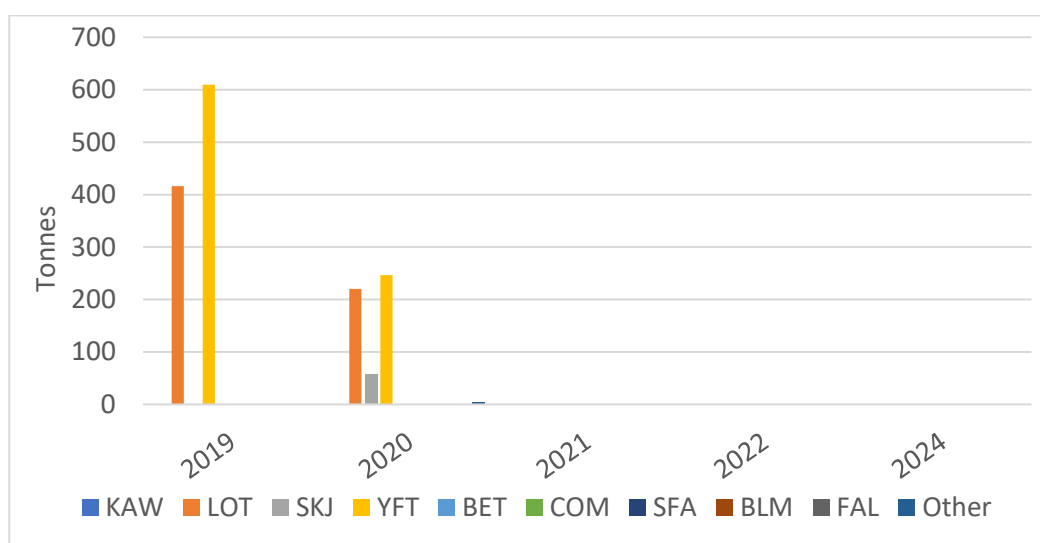


Figure3.2 Annual Catch of Purse Seiners by Species

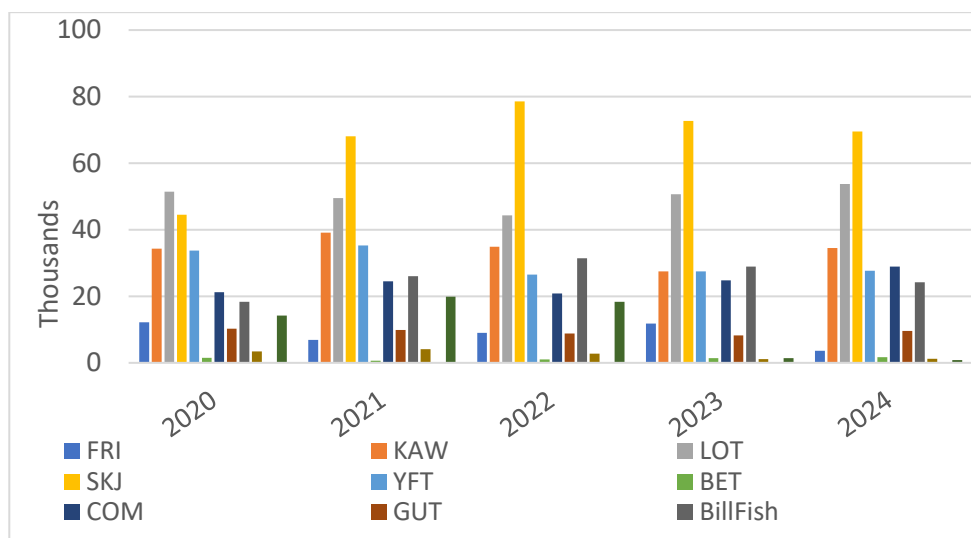


Figure 3.3 Annual Catch of Gillnets by Species

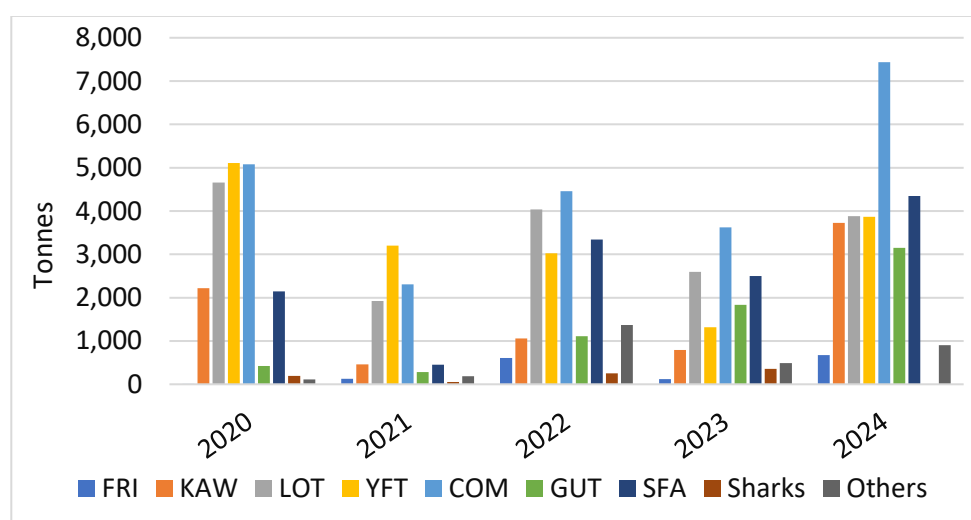


Figure 3.4 Annual Catch of Trolling Method by Species

In 2024, fishing effort for large pelagic species around 1,119,408 days was carried out by all fishing fleet consist of gillnet, long line by artisanal boats and trolling, of which 859 thousand days was operated by gillnet, 70 thousand days by seasonal and temporal longline and about 191 thousand days done by trolling fisheries. Table 3.2 and figure 3.5 show that the highest gillnet fishing pressure occurs within the Islamic Republic of Iran's coastal water.

To mitigate the effects of fishing effort on tuna and tuna-like populations, Iran has taken several conservation and management measures. These include implementing limitations on engine power and dimensions for active fishing vessels according to the *Vessel Replacement Guidelines*, enforcing a moratorium or cessation of all fishing activities by fishing vessels in all provincial fishing grounds, establishing a seasonal

fishing cessation for specific tuna species, including Narrow-barred Spanish Mackerel (COM), and implementing a Fishing Effort Management Plan in a designated area of the fishing grounds to control and adapt fishing effort. This plan will involve managing and adjusting the activities of various groups of vessels within the active fishing fleet.

Furthermore, several measures have been put into effect to decrease fishing efforts in specific regions. These measures include restricting the number of vessels permitted to fish in a particular area, regulating the use of fishing gear, shortening fishing seasons, reducing fishing days, increasing the mesh size in fishing nets, and promoting the adoption of selective fishing techniques that exclusively target the intended species. By adopting these measures, it is possible to sustainably manage tuna and tuna-like populations and guarantee the long-term sustainability of the fishing industry, which is heavily depends on them.

GEAR GROUP	Capacity GT	Annual fishing effort by different vessel categories (days)				
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Purse seine	500 to 1000 t	0	0	0	0	0
	>1000 t	401	376	0	0	0
Coastal Artisanal Longline	< 3	34,000	45,000	49,200	49,920	60,690
	51 to 100	9,520	16,800	29,520	6,490	9,384
	100 to 200	0	0	0	0	0
	>1000	0	0	0	0	0
Gillnet	< 3 t	764,432	541,066	568,892	600,452	545,532
	3 to 20 t	43,369	77,334	46,606	57,645	58,037
	21 to 50 t	44,594	60,629	63,268	71,066	78,731
	51 to 100 t	36,904	93,199	100,245	55,436	72,387
	>100 t	72,941	46,197	52,129	101,037	103,917
Trolling	< 3 t	133,500	127,260	135,740	183,070	190,730
Total all Gear fishing effort		1,139,662	1,007,861	1,045,600	1,125,115	1,119,408

Table 3.2. Fishing effort by different vessel categories (days)

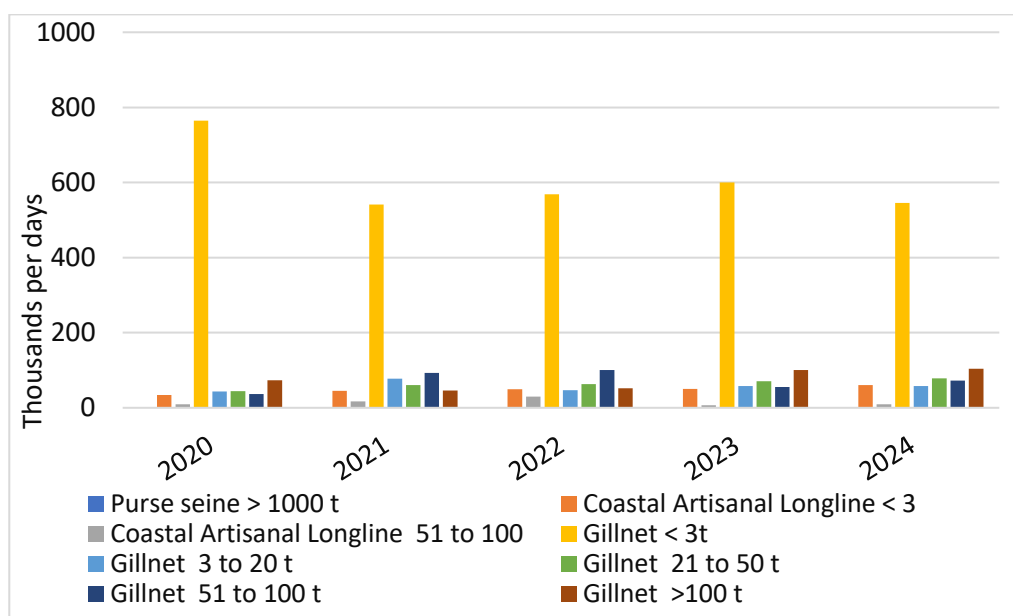


Figure3.5 Tuna and tuna like fishing effort by all fleet in (fishing day)

4. Recreational fishery:

Under the current regulations established by the Iran Fisheries Organization, there are no provisions for recreational tuna fishing. Consequently, there is little interest or demand for this activity, and no licenses are being issued for recreational tuna fishing.

5. ECOSYSTEM AND BYCATCH ISSUES

The Iran Fisheries Organization (IFO) monitors and controls fishing vessels and their catch primarily through a port-based monitoring and inspection system. Experts at fishing ports verify fishing gears and devices, ensure compliance with national and international standards, and assess vessels before departure and upon return to evaluate catch composition and bycatch.

During landing periods, IFO conducts capacity-building workshops for fishers engaged in tuna and tuna-like fisheries. These sessions aim to strengthen awareness of IOTC resolutions and ecological obligations, with a particular focus on ecosystem protection and bycatch reduction. Moreover, IFO has trained specialized personnel in species identification (particularly sharks and sea turtles), and provides technical guidance where needed. Fishermen are also instructed on compliance with international maritime laws and fisheries regulations of other coastal States, especially in relation to “innocent passage” within the territorial waters of third parties.

According to IFO regulations and Resolution No. 380 of Iran's Supreme Environment Council, targeted shark fishing is strictly prohibited. Only sharks legitimately caught as bycatch may be retained, and all viable sharks must be released alive.

5.1 Sharks

According to IFO regulations, no licenses have ever been issued for targeted shark fisheries in Iran. Fishermen are only allowed to land sharks caught as by-catch. Furthermore, due to cultural dietary preferences, nearly 90% of Iranians do not consume shark meat, and consumption is limited mainly to small local communities in the southern coastal regions. In recognition of the need to protect shark species and ensure whole-shark landings, all relevant IOTC resolutions have been translated and communicated to stakeholders at various national meetings. Shark conservation concepts and requirements have also been integrated into capacity-building workshops for fishermen. These activities are implemented in close cooperation with Fisheries Unions, environmental organizations, and NGOs.

Due to the absence of onboard observers, Iran has not been able to report detailed data on released/discarded sharks by species from the national fleet operating within the IOTC Area of Competence. According to the collected information, the amount of shark species in 2024 is shown in table 5.1 and figure5.1

GEAR GROUP	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
1-FAL	154	239	427	126	219
2-SPN	6	9	19		
2_1_SPK				3	5
2_1_SPL				2	3
3-SMA	10	15	24	8	14
4-OCS	12	18	32	10	17
5-THR	0	0	0	0	0
6-CCD	325	379	204	154	114
7-CCQ	650	757	407	309	276
8-RHA	1,948	2,271	1,430	899	661
9-RHN	527	452	488	0	0
TOTAL	3,632	4,140	3,031	1,511	1,309

Table 5.1. Total number and weight of sharks, by species

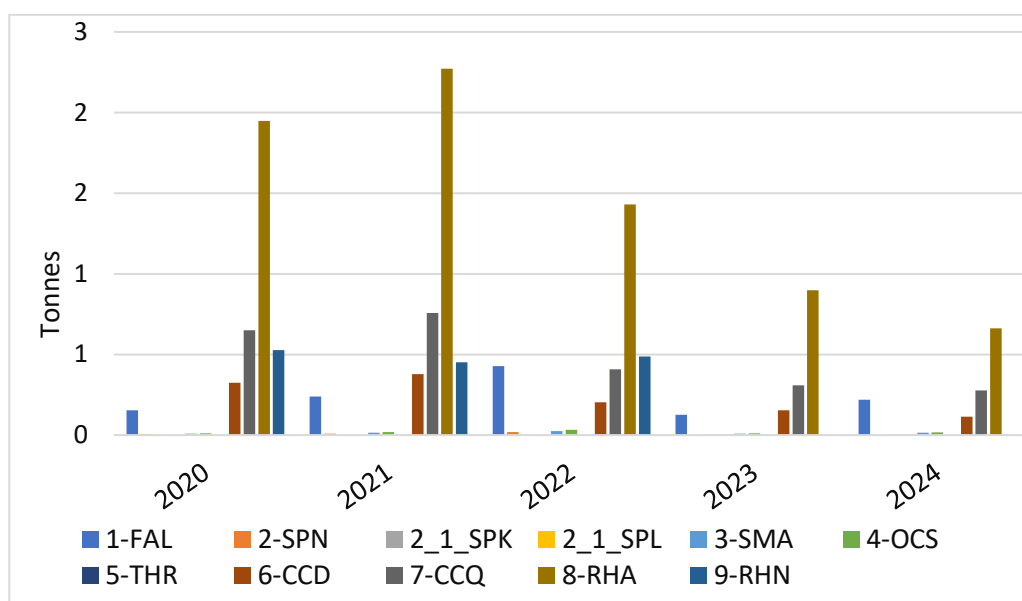


Figure 5.1 Annual Shark Catch by species

5.1.1. NPOA sharks:

The National Action Plan for Sharks and Rays is being jointly developed by the Iranian Environmental Organization, the Iranian Fisheries Organization, the Iranian Fisheries Science Research Institute, and Kerman University, and is currently undergoing final review and revision.

5.1.2. Blue shark:

Iran's fishing fleet does not target blue sharks, and no landings of blue sharks have been recorded, as monitored by port samplers at landing sites. In fact, our statistical report indicates a shark catch of zero.

5.2. Seabirds:

Based on IOTC resolution 12/06, the reduction of seabird by-catch specifically applies to longline fisheries and is not applicable to Iran. In 2023 Iran do not have any active longline vessels. Regarding seabirds, in the oceanic gillnet fishery, nets are modified to be set one meter below the water surface, and to date, no bycatch of oceanic seabirds from Iranian vessels has been reported. Consequently, there is currently no plan under development for seabird bycatch.

5.3. Marine Turtles:

Given that various species of marine turtles are considered protected in Iran, hunting these species is prohibited under the National Regulation of Tuna Fishing (2016) and the Law of Hunting and Fishing of the Iranian Environmental Protection Organization (1976). According to the law on hunting and fishing approved on June 6, 1967 (with amendments approved on January 20, 1975, and December 15, 1996), the determination of damages for wild animals' falls under the authority of the Supreme Council for Environmental Protection. Article 18 of this law recognizes the Environmental Protection Organization as a private plaintiff in claims for damages resulting from violations. The specified penalty for fishing marine turtles is set at 150,000,000 IRR.

The Iran Fisheries Organization has taken several actions to protect these valuable species:

- The IFO educates the fishing community on how to handle and release marine turtles that become entangled in fishing nets. This includes conducting training courses for fishermen, designing educational posters and brochures, and providing logbooks and training manuals.
- The IFO has informed gillnet vessel operators that they must record all incidents involving marine turtles during fishing operations in their logbooks and report these incidents to the Iran Fisheries Organization.
- If a marine turtle becomes entangled in the net, they must stop rolling the net as soon as the turtle surfaces, carefully disentangle it without causing injury, and assist in its recovery before returning it to the water as much as possible.
- Furthermore, the Environmental Protection Organization of Iran has designated areas along the shores of the Oman Sea and the Persian Gulf for marine turtle spawning and nesting to help protect these important species. In parallel, the National Action Plan for the Conservation of Sea Turtles has been fully developed and is awaiting translation into English for submission to the IOTC Secretariat.

5.4. Other ecologically related species (e.g., cetaceans, mobulid rays, whale sharks)

In accordance with Article 71 of the Executive By-Law of the Law on the Protection and Exploitation of Aquatic Resources of the Islamic Republic of Iran, approved by the Iranian Parliament, the capture, handling, or disturbance of marine mammals (Cetaceans) is strictly prohibited in all seasons and across all maritime areas under Iranian jurisdiction. Therefore, all Iranian fishermen are required to release any incidentally caught marine mammals immediately back into the sea. We trust that the above information provides a clear update on Iran's current activities and planned initiatives in relation to ecosystem and bycatch management.

Based on national laws and regulations set by the Iran Fisheries Organization (IFO), the catch of mammals or any other sensitive and endangered species is strictly forbidden. If any fishermen accidentally catch mammals, turtles, sharks, or any other sensitive species, they are required to release them safely and promptly. On the other hand, if inspectors or fishery guards discover any endangered species on board a vessel, the owner and captain of the vessel will be brought to court and punished by the fishery infraction investigation commission. These commissions are established in various cities and provinces and have the authority to suspend fishing activities for up to three months. It is important to note that the IFO has never issued any licenses for the catch of different species of mammals or sharks. Fishermen make efforts to release all entangled mammals or endangered species, and only sharks are considered as by-catch in landing sites.

Also, based on Iran religious beliefs, more than 90% of people do not eat Sharks or any mammals. Therefore, we have not received any reports about the total number of mammals or different species of sharks, by species, that are released/discarded by the national fleet in the IOTC area of competence.

As mentioned previously, we have not received detailed reports on the incidental catch of different species of seabirds, marine turtles, and marine mammals due to the lack of on-board observers. The main problem to implementing an observer scheme is the insufficient accommodation space and facilities on board. This limitation makes it impossible to accurately record important events by species, fishing gears, and positions (timeline) for the national fleets. Additionally, we have recently started establishing a

network through virtual platforms on mobile phones. This has allowed us to receive some news, pictures, and videos about the safe release of these species, most of which are from Iran territorial waters.

Furthermore, there are several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) actively working with local communities and fishermen. These NGOs primarily focus on training these individuals and raising public awareness about the importance of conservation and responsible fishing practices.

6. NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING SYSTEMS

6.1. Logsheet data collection and verification

Iran has implemented a logbook program for artisanal gillnets and industrial purse seiners in 2011, and created a new logbook template based on IOTC resolutions. In the recent years, Iran has filled out the logbooks for the industrial purse seiners, and we plan to expand it to other artisanal fleets in the future, which will cover 10% of the vessels in the high seas.

6.2. Observer scheme

Due to some problems with the lack of accommodations, Iran fishing fleet has not been able to install observers on board the vessels. Iran has focused on improving the implementation of the observer scheme in ports and port sampling to meet the observer rate required by IOTC. Therefore, data and important biological and socio-economic information are collected by monitoring the fishing landing sites on a regular basis. This activity covers more than 10% of the active vessels.

6.3. PORT SAMPLING PROGRAM

6.3.1. Catch Data sampling

Catch, effort, and biological data from the coastal and offshore large pelagic fishery are gathered at 43 of the 71 active fish landing sites located along the Persian Gulf and Oman Sea coasts. These sites include 10 in Khuzestan Province, 8 in Bushehr Province, 20 in Hormozgan Province, and 5 in Sistan and Baluchestan Province. At each landing site, port samplers are stationed during fish landing operations to record catch and effort information and to complete the prescribed data collection forms. During the same period, fish size data are conducted to obtain length/weight frequency data.

Data on catch and effort are collected at all the mentioned sites through a stratified random sampling method. Under this approach, approximately 10 percent of the total fishing vessels, representing different vessel categories such as fishing dhows and motorized boats, are randomly selected, and their fishing data are systematically recorded. Additionally, landing site surveys are routinely carried out to collect detailed information on artisanal fisheries catches. Port sampling activities were conducted for small-scale fisheries. Under this system, approximately 10 percent of the fishing vessels are randomly selected, and the collected sample data are raised to represent all active fishing vessels. Total catches are maintained and categorized according to vessel type, fishing gear, species composition, landing site, and month. At each landing site, one port sampler is assigned and responsible for data collection. All sampling and data processing activities are managed through the AMAR Software, the official fisheries statistics system operated by the Iran Fisheries Organization.

Additionally, control of fishing licenses and completion of questionnaires are conducted by the Head of the Fishery Statistical Unit at each respective port. These controls are subsequently verified at the provincial fisheries centers using computer-based checks, and then processed further at the national Data Centre in Tehran. To ensure data accuracy, cross-checks are carried out through complete censuses at one or two landing sites.

The collection of size data for tuna and tuna-like species plays a fundamental role in assessing their population structure, growth patterns, and the effects of fishing activities on their stocks. Such data are essential inputs for developing sound and science-based management measures for tuna fisheries. The gathered size information serves as a key component of the scientific evidence required to support sustainable management of tuna resources. Moreover, systematic size sampling contributes to better understanding of the conservation status and long-term sustainability of these species. To ensure accuracy and representativeness, size sampling must be conducted through rigorously defined random sampling procedures designed to eliminate bias in the size composition data. Sampling coverage should include at least one measured fish per tonne of catch, by species and fishery type, ensuring adequate representation across all fishing areas and time periods.

To enhance the assessment of tuna and tuna-like species in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, port sampling has been implemented using a random sampling design across

four coastal provinces. Field samplers collected size data from 19 designated landing centers. A minimum of one fish per tonne of catch was measured, categorized by species and fishery type. The direct measurement approach was employed, ensuring unbiased and precise size data, which are vital for estimating population structure and growth trends over time. Although this method is relatively time-intensive, it provides greater accuracy compared to estimates derived from catch records.

Size data were collected by measuring Fork Length (FL). Analyzing the size distribution of tuna populations across different fishing gears is fundamental for informed fisheries management and conservation planning. The data were gathered from multiple fishing methods, including gillnets, hook-and-line, and longline fisheries. To obtain reliable estimates, particularly for larger individuals and during spawning periods, robust statistical analyses and sufficient sample sizes are required to ensure data quality and support the development of effective stock assessment models for tuna species.

In 2024, approximately 383,408 tuna specimens were measured, representing an increase of about 121% compared with 2023. Of this total, around 231,792 individuals (60.5%) were categorized as coastal tuna species, while 151,616 individuals (39.5%) belonged to tropical tuna species. The length measurement data for these species are being reported using the new IOTC 4SF format.

Four additional tuna species Frigate tuna (FRI), Bullet tuna (BLT), Wahoo (WAH), and Indo-Pacific king mackerel (GUT) — were incorporated into the list of species reported under the IOTC framework. This progress mainly resulted from the capacity-building programs conducted for fishery cooperatives and their active participation in tuna size data collection. In addition, collaboration with the Iranian Fisheries Science Research Institute (IFSRI) significantly enhanced both the scope and accuracy of the data collection process. Size data were collected by month, year, species name, fishery type (gillnet, trolling, longline), and within 5-degree grid squares. Fork length frequency distributions were compiled for ten economically important tuna and seerfish species. The dominant species was Narrow-barred Spanish mackerel (COM) (*Scomberomorus commerson*), accounting for 25.8% of the total samples (98,747 individuals), followed by Yellowfin tuna (YFT) (*Thunnus albacares*) at 23.2% (88,799 individuals), Skipjack tuna (SKJ) (*Katsuwonus pelamis*) at 18.7% (71,564), Kawakawa (KAW) (*Euthynnus affinis*) at

16.6% (63,728), and Longtail tuna (LOT) (*Thunnus tonggol*) at 14.2% (54,408). Other species recorded included Bigeye tuna (BET) (*Thunnus obesus*) representing 0.9% (3,641 individuals), Indo-Pacific king mackerel (GUT) (*Scomberomorus guttatus*) 0.4% (1,371), Frigate tuna (FRI) (*Auxis thazard*) 0.2% (676), Bullet tuna (BLT) (*Auxis rochei*) 0.1% (352), and Wahoo (WAH) (*Acanthocybium solandri*) 0.03% (122 individuals).

The majority of size data were obtained from gillnet fisheries, which accounted for approximately 95% of the total samples, followed by longline (3.3%) and trolling (1.7%) operations. Tables 6.1 and 6.2 present the number of tuna and tuna-like species for which length measurements were recorded by gear type, along with the mean length data as reported in the IOTC database.

Size Data recorded in the IOTC Database						
GEAR GROUP	SPECIES	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Gillnet	FRI	Nil	Nil	172	0	676
	KAW	25,230	23,448	32,295	26,807	63,728
	BLT	0	0	0	0	352
	LOT	33,735	26,839	40,008	49,210	54,408
	COM	26,946	23,254	29,068	39,597	92,071
	GUT	0	0	0	0	1,371
	SKJ	19,398	5,959	18,809	16,839	71,564
	YFT	18,063	12,470	27,994	33,761	76,289
	BET	502	465	615	1,750	3,641
	WAH	0	0	0	0	122
Total Gillnet Length Frequency		123,874	92,435	148,961	167,964	364,222
Purse seine	KAW	0	0	0	0	0
	LOT	0	0	189	0	0
	SKJ	0	224	0	0	0
	YFT	285	659	45	0	0
	BET	0	103	0	0	0
Total Purse seine Length Frequency		285	986	234	0	0
Trolling/ Hand & Line	COM	2,428	0	840	1,305	6,676
	LOT	0	0	0	0	0
	YFT(by Coastal LL Method)	7,712	2,084	5,503	3,808	12,510
	YFT(by Hook & Line Method)	0	0	1,685	0	0
Total Trolling/ Hand & Line Length Frequency		10,140	2,084	8,028	5,113	19,186
Total Length Frequency		134,299	95,505	157,223	173,077	383,408

Table 6.1. Number of tuna and tuna-like species for which length measurements were recorded by gear type

Mean Length Data recorded in the IOTC Database						
GEAR GROUP	SPECIES GROUP	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Gillnet	FRI	Nil	Nil	36/9	0/0	35/4
	KAW	55/2	52/5	49/0	52/1	52/9
	BLT	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	28/5
	LOT	72/0	68/2	69/3	64/8	65/0
	COM	87/9	86/9	88/1	81/9	83/7
	GUT	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	53/2
	SKJ	60/4	59/5	58/9	56/5	57/2
	YFT	84/0	81/8	81/0	78/7	81/3
	BET	84/3	79/6	84/0	86/2	84/2
	WAH	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	116/6
Purse seine	KAW	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0
	LOT	0/0	0/0	76/8	0/0	0/0
	SKJ	0/0	54/2	0/0	0/0	0/0
	YFT	136/4	98/7	83/6	0/0	0/0
	BET	0/0	87/3	0/0	0/0	0/0
Trolling/ Hand & Line	COM	83/5	0/0	86/2	96/8	97/0
	LOT	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0
	YFT(by Coastal_LL_Method)	95/7	84/2	86/1	82/0	95/6
	YFT(by Hook & Line_Method)	136/4	98/7	83/6	0/0	0/0

Table.6.2. Mean Length Data recorded in the IOTC Database

6.4. Actions taken to monitor catches & manage fisheries for Striped Marlin, Black Marlin, Blue Marlin and Indo-pacific Sailfish

Iran maintains a national framework for monitoring billfish (Striped Marlin, Black Marlin, Blue Marlin, and Indo-Pacific Sailfish) through port-based sampling activities and the collection of catch and effort information from major landing sites. Data on landings for these species during 2019–2024 are presented in Table 3.1. Regular verification of species composition and continued capacity-building for field-samplers and data staff have contributed to improving data accuracy and consistency at the national level. With respect to management, Iran applies measures in line with sustainable fisheries principles and national tuna fishery regulations, including the prohibition on the capture or retention of billfish smaller than 60 cm in Lower Jaw Fork Length. Iran supports ongoing monitoring, transparent data submission to the IOTC Secretariat, and participation in regional scientific initiatives aimed at enhancing knowledge of billfish

fisheries. These actions are undertaken within the country's available resources and consistent with its commitment to the long-term conservation and responsible utilization of highly migratory species in the Indian Ocean.

6.5. Gillnet observer coverage and monitoring:

Iran's gillnet fleet mainly comprises small-scale coastal vessels and traditional dhows with limited onboard facilities, making long-term observer deployment impractical. To address this constraint, Iran has strengthened its port-based observer and sampling program at major landing sites to verify catch composition and support IOTC reporting requirements. Within available resources, efforts are directed toward enhancing data quality through field-samplers training, exploring feasible short-term observer trials, and assessing alternative approaches such as self-sampling (where vessel crews record catch information themselves under supervision) and electronic monitoring (EM) systems using cameras and sensors for automated data collection. These activities reflect Iran's commitment to improving monitoring capacity and contributing to regional scientific initiatives while maintaining flexibility to adapt measures in accordance with future scientific advice and operational conditions.

6.6 Sampling plans for mobulid rays:

The Islamic Republic of Iran recognizes the importance of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) initiatives to improve data on tunas and tuna-like species. In accordance with the national release policy, mobulid rays are not normally landed; therefore, traditional landing-site sampling is of limited applicability. To improve bycatch monitoring, Iran considers the use of field questionnaires that include information on release condition (alive or dead), gear type, and approximate size, along with interviews with vessel captains and the provision of awareness and training programs for crew members. The deployment of trained personnel on selected vessels and pilot testing of electronic monitoring (EM) systems may also serve as complementary tools to record and document mobulid ray bycatch at sea. Reporting of bycatch and release information to the IOTC will be undertaken in accordance with the Commission's reporting guidelines, subject to operational feasibility, available resources, and national legal frameworks.

7. NATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAMS:

7.1. National research programs on blue shark

7.2. National research programs on Striped Marlin, Black Marlin, Blue Marlin and Indo-pacific Sailfish

7.3. National research programs on sharks

7.4. National research programs on oceanic whitetip sharks

7.5. National research programs on marine turtles

7.6. National research programs on thresher sharks

No relevant national research programs are currently being implemented for items 7.1-7.6.

Table 8: Summary table of national research programs

Project title	period	Countries involved	Budget total	Funding source	Objectives	Short* description
Modelling distribution and prediction areas with high density and abundance of tuna fish species in the Indian Ocean and the Oman Sea using Gillnet data and environmental variables	2023-2026	IRAN	500 US dollars	Iranian Fisheries Research Institute	Modelling the relationship between tuna distribution and abundance with environmental variables	
Comprehensive assessment of habitat suitability for pelagic fish in the Persian Gulf through integration of environmental and fishing data	2025-2026	IRAN	300 US dollars	Iranian Fisheries Research Institute	-Investigating the relationship between habitat preferences, fishing area and catch quantities in the Persian Gulf. -Identifying sensitive and vulnerable areas to increased fishing activities by integrating habitat preferences, the location of fishing centuries, and catch quantities of pelagic fish in the Persian Gulf	

Short description *

Tuna fisheries in Sistan and Baluchestan Province (Iranian waters of the Oman Sea) are central to Iran's fishing economy, accounting for over 60% of tuna group catches and more than 80% of industrial landings in 2023. Rising fleet capacity and climate-related pressures have intensified stress on tuna populations.

Understanding spatial distribution and abundance patterns can optimize fishing efforts and reduce operational costs. Biophysical factors—such as chlorophyll-a, sea surface temperature, salinity, and dissolved oxygen—play a key role in shaping tuna habitats. However, industrial-scale fishing threatens ecosystem integrity by depleting apex predators.

This study uses two years of catch data, fishing effort, and length frequency, combined with high-resolution satellite data. Generalized Additive Models (GAMs) will be used to analyse spatial-temporal patterns and identify key environmental factors. The models will support predictive mapping of future fishing areas and help develop sustainable management strategies.

We selected pelagic fish of the Persian Gulf, given the high dependence of fishery revenues and the high catch rates of pelagic fish in the Persian Gulf. Fishing in the Persian Gulf is mainly carried out on a small scale. However, many fish stocks, both demersal and pelagic, are mostly overfished. Fisheries management is the responsibility of coastal countries, and although there are efforts to control fishing in the Persian Gulf, the lack of accurate data, incomplete reporting of catch statistics, and lack of enforcement of laws have created major challenges. In this study, which will be conducted in 2025 to 2026, by integrating environmental data, catch quantities, and the location of fishing centers and modeling habitat preferences of pelagic fish, sensitive areas vulnerable to human activities and fishing in the Persian Gulf will be determined. In addition, changes in the habitat of pelagic fish and their vulnerability to future climate change will be shown.

8. IMPLEMENTATION OF SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE IOTC RELEVANT TO THE SC.

Iran has taken various actions to implement the Scientific Committee recommendations and IOTC Resolutions. Table 9 details the resolutions and how they have been implemented.

Table 9. Scientific requirements contained in Resolutions of the Commission, adopted between 2012 and 2024.

Res. No.	Resolution	Scientific requirement	CPC progress
12/04	On the conservation of marine turtles	Paragraphs 3, 4, 6–10	Iran has made steady progress in implementing Resolution 12/04 on the Conservation of Marine Turtles. Marine turtles are fully protected under national legislation, and their capture is prohibited by law, with strict penalties enforced. The Iran Fisheries Organization (IFO) has conducted training programs for fishermen on safe handling and release practices, distributed translated IOTC resolutions, and required gillnet vessels to record and report all turtle interactions. In collaboration with the Environmental Protection Organization, several nesting and spawning sites along the Persian Gulf and Oman Sea have been designated for protection.
12/09	On the conservation of thresher sharks (family <i>alopidae</i>) caught in association with fisheries in the IOTC area of competence	Paragraphs 4–8	Under the IFO regulations and Resolution No. 380 of Iran's Supreme Environment Council, targeted shark fishing is strictly prohibited, and all live bycatch sharks must be released immediately. Iran has strengthened thresher shark conservation by training fishers on species identification and safe-release practices, distributing translated IOTC resolutions, and enforcing strict port-based monitoring and penalties.
13/04	On the conservation of cetaceans	Paragraphs 7–9	Iran has strengthened the protection of cetaceans in line with Article 71 of the national Executive By-Law, which strictly prohibits the capture, handling, or disturbance of marine mammals in all Iranian waters. All incidentally caught cetaceans must be released immediately, and fishers receive regular training on safe-release practices, species awareness, and IOTC bycatch resolutions.
13/05	On the conservation of whale sharks (<i>Rhincodon typus</i>)	Paragraphs 7–9	Iran fully prohibits the capture of whale sharks, and fishers are required to release any incidental encounters immediately. Training programs along with translated IOTC resolutions are provided to improve species recognition and safe-release practices.
13/06	On a scientific and management framework on the conservation of shark species caught in association with IOTC managed fisheries	Paragraph 5–6	In Iran, targeted shark fishing is prohibited; sharks are only landed as by-catch and must be whole. With ~90% of the population not consuming shark meat, domestic demand is minimal. All IOTC shark resolutions have been translated, disseminated, and integrated into fishermen's training in collaboration with fisheries unions and NGOs, resulting in strong progress in shark conservation.
15/01	On the recording of catch and effort by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence	Paragraphs 1–10	Catch and efforts by gears and vessel types are recorded and reported monthly.
15/02	Mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs)	Paragraphs 1–7	According to the Res. Iran submitted -Total catch data, -Catch by gear and effort data, - Size (Biometry) data, But, Only Iran dose not submitted, - Timelines and position of data,

Res. No.	Resolution	Scientific requirement	CPC progress
17/05	On the conservation of sharks caught in association with fisheries managed by IOTC	Paragraphs 6, 9, 11	Training fishermen translated current resolutions and distributed among fishermen, there is no interest for their catch because of no market. Related report has sent before to the secretariat. In total in 2021 the amount of sharks that are caught during tuna fisheries is around 1.3% of total catch
18/02	On management measures for the conservation of blue shark caught in association with IOTC fisheries	Paragraphs 2-5	During Iran fisheries histories our experts never recorded any blue shark landing. In fact, the shark catch is nil in our statistical report. So, it is not applicable for Iran.
18/05	On management measures for the conservation of the Billfishes: Striped marlin, black marlin, blue marlin and Indo-Pacific sailfish	Paragraphs 7 – 11	Iran monitors billfish species through a national port-based sampling programme that collects and verifies catch and effort data from major landing sites. Iran continues to improve data quality, report transparently to the IOTC Secretariat
18/07	On measures applicable in case of non-fulfilment of reporting obligations in the IOTC	Paragraphs 1, 4	Related report has sent before to the secretariat.
19/01	On an Interim Plan for Rebuilding the Indian Ocean Yellowfin Tuna Stock in the IOTC Area of Competence (<i>If not provided under Res 21/01 below</i>)	Paragraph 22	Iran is implementing the provisions of Resolution 19/01, Paragraph 22 through national management measures aimed at conserving and rebuilding the Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna stock. The Iran Fisheries Organization (IFO) has communicated relevant instructions to tuna fisheries branches in coastal provinces to ensure compliance with conservation and management measures. The national action plan includes: promoting a transition from gillnet fisheries to more selective hook-based gears, and managing fishing seasons and effort levels. These actions have effectively reduced fishing effort and total yellowfin catch.
19/03	On the Conservation of Mobulid Rays Caught in Association with Fisheries in the IOTC Area of Competence	Paragraph 11	In 2024 no intentional catch of Mobulid Rays in Iran
21/01	On an Interim Plan for Rebuilding the Indian Ocean Yellowfin Tuna Stock in the IOTC Area of Competence (<i>If not provided under Res 19/01 above</i>)	Paragraph 23	provided under Res 19/01 above
23/07	On reducing the incidental bycatch of seabirds in longline fisheries.	Paragraphs 3–7	Not Applicable, related report has sent before to the secretariat.
23/08	On electronic monitoring standards for IOTC fisheries	Paragraphs 3c	Iran has not implemented Electronic Monitoring Systems (EMS) because its fisheries are predominantly artisanal and small-scale, relying on gillnet fishing conducted at night (sunset to sunrise). These vessels lack sufficient deck lighting, which is essential for effective EMS operation.
24/04	On a regional observer scheme	Paragraph 12	Due to a lack of facilities, Iran has not yet been able to place regional observers on board its vessels. The country has focused on implementing the observer scheme at ports and through landing site sampling to meet the observer coverage rate required by the IOTC. As a result, important biological data are collected regularly at fishing landing sites, covering more than 10% of active vessels.

9. LITERATURE CITED:

-Iran Fisheries Statistics yearbooks 2020-2024

-Data Collection System and Data Processing Method in Iran