



REPORT ON COMPLIANCE WITH YELLOWFIN TUNA CATCH LIMITS

Prepared by: IOTC Secretariat, 10 April 2026

PURPOSE

This document provides information on the level of compliance with Resolutions [18/01](#), [19/01](#) and [21/01](#) *On an interim plan for rebuilding the Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna stock in the IOTC Area of Competence*. This document will consider whether the CPCs that are bound to these Resolutions have assured compliance with the measures stipulated therein.

BACKGROUND

Article IX.5 of the IOTC Agreement provide for any Member of the Commission to object to a conservation and management measure adopted under Article IX.1 within 120 days from the date specified of its adoption or within such other period as may be specified by the Commission. The Commission further recognises that conservation and management measure adopted by the Commission are standalone instruments, and any CPC objecting to a superseding measure will remain bound by the preceding measure.

India notified the Commission of its objection to Resolution 19/01, thus it remains bound by Resolution 18/01. The Islamic Republic of Iran, Madagascar, Oman and Somalia notified their objections to Resolution 21/01, thus they remain bound by Resolution 19/01. All remaining CPCs are bound by Resolution 21/01.

DISCUSSIONS

Resolution 18/01

The applicability of this Resolution is for all fishing vessels targeting tuna and tuna like species in the Indian Ocean with an overall length of 24 meters and above, and those with overall length below 24 meters, if they fish outside the EEZ of their flag State. This Resolution is applicable only to India, which maintains that it did not have vessels matching these criteria in 2024 and was thus not subject to catch reductions for yellowfin tuna in 2024.

India has not had any commercial fishing vessels that fit these criteria in the IOTC Record of Authorised Vessels since April 2017. Since then, India has only had four government registered Research/Training vessels in the IOTC Record of Authorised Vessels.

Resolution 19/01

As indicated earlier Resolution 19/01 superseded Resolution 18/01. As also mentioned above, only four CPCs are currently bound by this Resolution. Indonesia had also been previously bound by this Resolution, however, it formally notified in March 2025 of the withdrawal of its objection to the superseding Resolution 21/01.

The applicability of this Resolution is similar to those defined in Resolution 18/01, with catch limits and catch reductions placed on three major gear types; purse seine, longline and gillnets. The “CPCs’ other gears” was the other catch all category.

In 2024, the Indonesian purse seine fishery and Iranian gillnet fishery were subject to catch limits of 7,231 t and 32,623 t of yellowfin tuna, respectively. Both CPCs were assessed to have caught less yellowfin tuna than their allocated limits. Indonesia, however, had by 2024 accumulated an overcatch of 8,160 t of yellowfin tuna. Discussions which began in the Compliance Committee in 2025 (CoC22) is expected to be progressed further in the CoC23 in order to identify a payback mechanism for Indonesia, for the significant overcatch made by their purse seine fishery.

The catch made by the Madagascar longline fishery in 2024 has remained largely below the threshold limit set for this gear and, therefore, is not subject to a catch limit. The Omani longline and purse seine fisheries have also remained at level that are significantly below the threshold limits for these two gear types. Somalia has no vessels in the IOTC Record of Authorised Vessels and, therefore, this measure is not applicable to Somalia. To note, both Oman and Somalia have registered significant catches made by their artisanal fisheries sector, a component that is excluded from the catch limit measure for yellowfin tuna, under Resolution 19/01.

None of the CPCs subject to Resolutions 18/01 and 19/01 had supply vessels active under their flag during 2024, so the measures related to reduction of supply vessel and maintaining the ratio of 2 supply vessels in support of not less than 5 purse seiners, all of the same flag State, where not applicable to them. Neither was the requirement, in Resolution 19/01, for the concerned CPCs to report before the 1st January 2024 which purse seiners are served by each supply vessel applicable, since none of them had supply vessel at the time.

Resolution 21/01

Resolution 21/01 superseded Resolution 19/01, and its application is much broader than the latter; it applies to all CPCs within the IOTC Area of Competence. It is not applicable to CPCs situated outside of the IOTC Area of Competence if they only operate carrier vessels (Liberia and Panama) and, by default, CPCs that have objected to it (India, Iran, Oman, Madagascar and Somalia).

As appropriate, CPCs subject to this Resolution are assessed for compliance with catch limits, submission of corrective actions to adhere to the prescribed catch level, plan to reduce supply vessels, information on purse seiners/supply vessel association, report on actions related to gillnet vessels and submission of their list of vessels, which have fished for yellowfin tuna in the IOTC Area of Competence in the preceding year.

- *Catch limits*

For the year 2024, seven CPCs were not assessed with this requirement as, by default, it is not applicable to them under the criteria defined above; situated outside the IOTC Area and operating carrier vessels only or have objected to the Resolution. One CPC has not submitted a response to this requirement, and 23 CPCs have provided their responses. Of the latter, for 21 CPCs this requirement has been assessed as “Not Applicable” to them as they did not exceed their quantitative limit set by the Commission for 2024, and two CPCs (Sri Lanka and Sudan) have been assessed as “Non-compliant 1”; Sri Lanka for exceeding the quantitative limit set by the Commission for 2024 and Sudan for not providing a response to this requirement.

- *Plan to reduce supply vessels*

As indicated in the Table 1, below, there are currently 15 supply vessels in the IOTC Record of Authorised Vessels (RAV), flagged to seven CPCs.

Records indicate that between April 2005 and March 2026, a total of 37 individual supply vessels have registered in the RAV, with the first registration made under the Seychelles flag. These vessels have not necessarily been active at the same time in any one year, but have fluctuated in numbers between years.

Both the European Union and the Seychelles, which have had, historically, the highest number of supply vessels in the RAV, continue to have the most supply vessels registered. Both CPCs have previously submitted plans to reduce their number of supply vessels active in the IOTC Area. At its peak, the European Union (France and Spain) had 16 supply vessels in the Record of Authorised Vessels (RAV). This has been reduced to the current six. At its peak, Seychelles had 12 supply vessels in the (RAV), compared to only three currently. Oman has not historically operated supply vessels in the IOTC Area. The two Omani supply vessels were only registered in the RAV in the second half of 2025. The other CPCs (Kenya, Korea and Tanzania) with supply vessels currently in the RAV are exempted from the requirement to reduce their number of supply vessels, since they operate only one supply vessel each. Japan and Thailand, which previously operated supply vessels in the IOTC Area, no longer operate supply vessels in the IOTC Area.

Table 1. Record of number of supply vessels in the IOTC Area of Competence, by CPC.

CPC	No. of supply vessel	
	Current	Historical
European Union	6	16
Japan	0	1
Kenya	1	1
Korea (Republic of)	1	1
Mauritius	1	2
Oman	2	2
Seychelles	3	12
Tanzania	1	1
Thailand	0	1
Total	15	37

- *Information on purse seiners/supply vessel association*

A common requirement under all three extant resolutions dealing with the rebuilding of the Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna stocks, is that *CPC flag States shall report annually before the 1st of January for the coming year of operations which purse seiners are served by each supply vessel. This information will be published on IOTC website so as to be accessible to all CPCs and is mandatory.* For the current year, information on purses seiner/supply vessel association has been submitted by the European Union (for France-EU and Spain-EU), Korea (Republic of), Mauritius, Oman and Seychelles. Tanzania has reported the association period between its purse seiner and supply vessel up to the end of the first quarter of 2026, in spite of the authorisation period having been updated recently. Kenya has not reported any association between its purse seiner and supply vessel for 2026.

- *Actions related to gillnet vessels*

There are a number of actions that the Commission has requested CPCs with gillnet vessels to undertake:

- CPCs shall encourage phasing out or convert gillnet fishing vessels to other gears, considering the huge ecological impact of these gears and fast track the implementation of Resolution 17/07 “On the Prohibition to use large-scale driftnets in the IOTC
- CPCs shall set their gillnets at 2m depth from the surface in gillnet fisheries by 2023 to mitigate ecological impacts of gillnets.
- CPCs are encouraged to increase their observer coverage or field sampling in gillnet fishing vessels by 10% using alternative data collection methodologies (electronic or human).

In accordance to data extracted from the e-RAV on 20 March 2026, only two CPCs (Iran and Sri Lanka) have gillnet vessels in the IOTC Record of Authorised Vessels.

Iran, which is bound by Resolution 19/01, has reported the following:

- the Iranian Fisheries Organization has encouraged gillnet vessel owners to transition to selective fishing methods. Nevertheless, a number of traditional gillnet (dhows) have continued seasonal and temporary operations using longline fishing during the past year.
- prior to the adoption of Resolution 19/01, in 2017, the Fisheries Organization issued a guideline specifying that gillnets must be set at least 2 meters below the water surface.
- field sampling rate for 2025 was 12%.

Sri Lanka, which is bound by Resolution 21/01, has reported the following:

- between 2019 – 2025, 161 gillnet vessels have been converted to pole-and-line vessels.

- conducted a survey to record the number of large-scale gillnets in Sri Lanka and made aware the fishers on Resolution 17/07, during the period of 2018-2020. The survey concluded that since the surface current wave action is very high around Sri Lanka, creating rough sea conditions in the offshore, the majority of fishermen (65%) lay their gillnets about 3m below the surface to avoid nets from washing away from the target fishing grounds.
- laying of gillnets below 2m depth is incorporated to the draft regulation. Prohibition of large-scale gillnets (larger than 2.5km) in the IOTC area of competence will be published. In the meantime gillnet restriction has been included to the conditions of the fishing operation license. Use of large[-scale] gillnets in high seas is already prohibited.
- data collection in the small landing sites is by increasing the field samplers in a view to increase the data collection from 5% to 10% for the gillnet operating artisanal vessels. Pilot project on EMS is being conducted under the technical assistance of EJ/IOTC for the small vessels to increase observer coverage.

As indicated earlier, the scope of Resolution 21/01 is much broader than its predecessors, as it applies to all vessels regardless of size and area of operations. Therefore, the measures outlined under paragraphs 21 – 23 of this Resolution applies to all CPCs who have gillnet vessels operating in the IOTC Area. Pakistan has reported a list of 124 gillnet vessels that have fished for yellowfin tuna in 2025, but have not fulfilled the obligation of paragraph 24. Other official sources of informationⁱ indicate that since Resolution 21/01 was adopted, four other CPCs (Australia, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Malaysia), who have not objected this Resolution, have also operated vessels that use gillnets, but have also not fulfilled the obligation of paragraph 24. The requirement for these CPCs to report under the obligation set under paragraph 24, may have been the result of the Secretariat erroneously narrowing the scope of reporting for CPCs with gillnet vessels/using gillnet, to only those with such vessels in the RAV.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the CoC23:

- **NOTE** document IOTC-2026-CoC23-06 *Report on compliance with yellowfin tuna catch limits*.
- **RECOMMEND** that Kenya and Tanzania provide information, for the remainder of 2026, on the association of their supply vessel and purse seiner, for inclusion in the IOTC website.
- **RECOMMEND** that Australia, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Malaysia inform the CoC on if they no longer have gillnet vessels operating in the IOTC Area.
- **RECOMMEND** that Pakistan provide information to the CoC on its efforts to implement the requirements of paragraph 21 -23 of Resolution 21/01.
- **NOTING** the narrow scope of reporting applied in the e-MARIS Campaign CoC23, consider to **RECOMMEND** to the Commission that the audience of reporting be applied to CPCs with vessels utilising gillnet, both on the RAV or not, in the e-MARIS Campaign for CoC24.

ⁱ https://iotc.org/sites/default/files/Fishing_Craft_Statistics_20250702.zip