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## PROGRESS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN YELLOWFIN MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVALUATION

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### PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 10<sup>th</sup> Technical Committee on Management Procedure (TCMP10) of the progress of the Indian ocean yellowfin management strategy evaluation.

### BACKGROUND

IOTC Resolution 15/10 requested the IOTC Scientific Committee to develop and assess, through the management strategy evaluation (MSE) process, the performance of Management Procedures (MPs) and Harvest Control Rules (HCRs) to achieve Target Reference Points (TRPs) on average and avoid the Limit Reference Points (LRPs) with a high probability, taking into account the levels of uncertainty in the stock assessments for priority species. In recent years, substantial progress has been made in MSE initiatives for key commercial species such as tuna and billfish. These efforts have led to the successful adoption of MPs for species like skipjack tuna, bigeye tuna, and swordfish.

The development of Management Procedures (MPs) for yellowfin tuna using Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) was recommenced in 2024, with efforts directed towards constructing a robust operating model (OM) to serve as the foundation for MP evaluation. In 2025, work progressed through the calibration of models to updated catch per unit effort (CPUE) time series data and the creation of visualization tools. In recent months, several Candidate Management Procedures have been assessed within a preliminary MSE framework. The outcomes of these activities are detailed in document IOTC-2026-TCMP10-INF06 and were addressed during the MSE Task Force meeting.

The MSE timeline covers the creation of a simulation framework, which will include an expanded range of Operating Models, an Observation Error Model, and Candidate Management Procedures. This project will continue throughout 2026 and 2027, potentially informing work for a new yellowfin tuna stock assessment planned for 2027. The final review of Candidate Management Procedures is anticipated by the end of 2027. All efforts are scheduled to progress far enough to enable the TCMP/Commission to adopt a Management Procedure for this key stock during 2028.

The International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF) has provided initial support for the new MSE development, but further funding will be needed to finish this work in 2027 and 2028.

### DISCUSSION

A detailed report of the progress and current status of the Indian Ocean yellowfin MSE was provided in IOTC-2026-TCMP10-INF06, which outlines preliminary Operating Models, Candidate Management Procedures and a visualization tool.

### RECOMMENDATION/S

That the TCMP:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC-2026-TCMP10-06, which outlines the progress of the Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna management strategy evaluation on Management Procedure and the workplan for its completion.