
IOTC-2026-WPICMM09-17 [E]

ON A DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR A SYSTEM OF FISHING GEAR MARKING IN THE IOTC AREA OF COMPETENCE

PREPARED BY: EUROPEAN UNION: 26 JANUARY 2026

Preamble

(Omitted)

Application

1. This resolution shall apply to all CPCs within the IOTC area of competence.
2. This resolution shall not apply to fish aggregating devices for which the marking shall be done in accordance with IOTC Resolution 23/01 on the management of anchored fish aggregating devices (AFAD) and IOTC Resolution 24/02 on the management of drifting fish aggregating devices (FADs) in the IOTC area of competence.

Database and data management

3. CPCs shall establish a data recording system, compatible or linked with their licensing system for recording and reporting for:
 - a. issuance and/or replacement of gear marks;
 - b. receive and record the reporting of gear loss from fishers;
 - c. receive and record the reporting of recovery of gear and/or marks from fishers and others;
 - d. receive and record infringement of gear marking requirement from enforcement parties.
4. CPCs shall report annually the information reported in paragraph 10 on the loss and abandonment of fishing gear, to the IOTC Secretariat. CPCs may also report annually the information collected under paragraph 14.
5. The IOTC Secretariat shall establish a gear marking database to:
 - a. Record and consolidate data reported from CPCs on gear loss and abandonment;
 - b. Record and consolidate data reported by the CPCs on infringements related with gear marking requirements; and
 - c. Conduct analysis on where fishing gears are lost for possible identification of "hotspot" of ALDFG.

Marking of fishing gear

6. CPCs shall ensure that all fishing gears on board their vessels flying their flag and fishing for the IOTC managed species are clearly marked.
7. The minimum information on marks shall contain the following information:
 - a. flag country (represented by three-letter ISO codes);
 - b. type of fishing gear (represented by two or three letter codes in ISSCFG);
 - c. the year the tag/mark was issued; and
 - d. IMO number, when applicable, or a unique letter or number (or a combination of them), which may be linked to the owner of the gear (license/permit number, or any identifiable number).

Gear loss, abandonment and discard

8. CPCs shall ensure that no fisher deliberately abandon fishing gear, except for safety reasons.
9. CPCs shall require vessels flying their flags make all reasonable efforts to reduce, minimise and eliminate abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG) while operating in the IOTC area of competence.
10. CPCs shall require vessels flying their flag to report gear loss or abandonment within 24 hours to its competent authority of the following information:
 - a. vessel name, IMO number, or call sign of the vessel, if available;
 - b. gear type and amount (or quantity) of gear lost or abandoned;
 - c. the time when the gear was lost or abandoned;
 - d. the position (longitude/latitude) where the gear was lost or abandoned
 - e. measures taken by the vessel to retrieve lost or abandoned gear; and
 - f. the circumstances that led to the gear being lost or abandoned (e.g., for safety).

Recovery, retrieval and disposal

11. CPCs shall require that their vessel fishing to have appropriate equipment on board to retrieve ALDFG.
12. CPCs shall require vessels flying their flag to make every reasonable effort to retrieve the gear they lost or abandoned as soon as possible.
13. CPCs shall encourage vessels flying their flag to retrieve ALDFG not linked to their vessel, if it can be certain the gear is ALDFG.
14. When retrieving any ALDFG, CPCs shall encourage the reporting the following information to the competent authority:

- a. vessel name, IMO number, or call sign of the vessel, if available and if applicable, that retrieved the gear;
 - b. details of marks that indicate the vessel that lost or abandoned the gear (if known)
 - c. the type of gear retrieved;
 - d. the quantity of gear retrieved;
 - e. the time when the gear was retrieved;
 - f. the position (longitude/latitude) where the gear was retrieved;
 - g. if possible, photographs of the gear retrieved;
15. CPCs shall encourage vessels flying their flag to bring back retrieved ALDFG to port for proper disposal.
 16. CPCs shall make available disposal facilities in major fishing ports of their jurisdiction for proper disposal of end-of-life gear.
 17. CPCs shall coordinate effort to retrieve ALDFG in hotspot area within their EEZ as identified through data reported by fishers or other entities, when feasible.
 18. If sufficient data becomes available, the Commission may implement a scheme to coordinate effort to retrieve ALDFG in hotspot areas in high seas of IOTC area of competence as identified through gear loss data as reported by CPCs, fishers or other entities, when deemed feasible and necessary.
 19. The Secretariat shall develop a template for reporting of loss and recovery of ALDFG referred to in paragraph 14.