

PROGRESS MADE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF WPTT27

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 18 MAY 2026

PURPOSE

To provide participants at the 28th WPTT(DP) with an update on the progress made in implementing those recommendations from the previous Working Party on Tropical Tunas (WPTT) meeting which were endorsed by the Scientific Committee (SC), and to provide alternative recommendations for the consideration and potential endorsement by participants as appropriate given any progress.

BACKGROUND

At the 27th Session of the WPTT, participants agreed on a series of actions to be taken by participants, CPCs, and the IOTC Secretariat on a range of issues. The subsequent table developed and agreed to by the WPTT was provided to the SC for its endorsement at its December 2024 meeting.

DISCUSSION

The Rules of Procedure of the Scientific Committee include the following seven core tasks, which are to be supported by the various Working Parties.

- a) recommend policies and procedures for the collection, processing, dissemination and analysis of fishery data;
- b) facilitate the exchange and critical review among scientists of information on research and operation of fisheries of relevance to the Commission;
- c) develop and coordinate cooperative research programmes involving Members of the Commission in support of fisheries management;
- d) assess and report to the Commission on the status of stocks of relevance to the Commission and the likely effects of further fishing and of different fishing patterns and intensities;
- e) formulate and report to the sub-commission, as appropriate, on recommendations concerning conservation, fisheries management and research, including consensus, majority and minority views;
- f) consider any matter referred to by the Commission;
- g) carry out other technical activities of relevance to the Commission.

Recalling that the SC, at its 16th Session adopted a set of reporting terminology SC16.07 (para. 23), which was subsequently endorsed by the Commission at its 18th Session in 2014 (S18, para 10), to further improve the clarity of information sharing from, and among the science bodies, the following two term levels should be noted when interpreting the Reports and [Appendix I](#) to this paper:

Level 1: From a subsidiary body of the Commission to the next level in the structure of the Commission:

RECOMMENDED, RECOMMENDATION: Any conclusion or request for an action to be undertaken, from a subsidiary body of the Commission (Committee or Working Party), which is to be formally provided to the next level in the structure of the Commission for its consideration/endorsement (e.g. from a Working Party to the Scientific Committee; from a Committee to the Commission). The intention is that the higher body will consider the recommended action for endorsement under its own mandate, if the subsidiary body does not already have the required mandate. Ideally this should be task specific and contain a timeframe for completion.

Level 2: From a subsidiary body of the Commission to a CPC, the IOTC Secretariat, or other body (not the Commission) to carry out a specified task:

REQUESTED: This term should only be used by a subsidiary body of the Commission if it does not wish to have the request formally adopted/endorsed by the next level in the structure of the Commission. For example, if a Committee

wishes to seek additional input from a CPC on a particular topic, but does not wish to formalise the request beyond the mandate of the Committee, it may request that a set action be undertaken. Ideally this should be task specific and contain a timeframe for the completion.

In addition to the Recommendations endorsed by the SC at its 27th Session, the SC also made several requests which, although are not passed to the Commission for its endorsement, are considered actions which the Scientific Committee has the mandate to issue. The revised recommendations are contained in [Appendix I](#) for the consideration and potential endorsement by the WPTT28(DP).

RECOMMENDATION

That the WPTT:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2026–WPTT28(DP)–06 which detailed the progress made in implementing the recommendations of the WPTT27, and the requests of the 27th Session of the Scientific Committee (SC28), taking into consideration the recommendations from the SC and decisions of the Commission;
- 2) **AGREE** to consider and revise as necessary, the recommendations, and for these to be combined with any new recommendations arising from the WPTT28(DP), noting that these will be provided to the SC for its endorsement.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Progress made on the Recommendations and Requests of WPTT27

APPENDIX I

Progress made on the recommendations of WPTT26

WPTT27 Rec. No.		SC28 Rec. No.	Recommendation adopted by the SC28
WPTT27.01 (para 102):	<p><i>Bigeye tuna Stock Assessment</i></p> <p>WPTT REQUESTED that the IOTC Secretariat update the draft stock status summary for bigeye tuna with the latest 2024 catch data, if necessary. The WPTT RECOMMENDED that the SC develop the stock status advice as part of the Executive Summary, following the review of the final assessment results intersessionally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bigeye tuna (<i>Thunnus albacares</i>) – Appendix VI 	(para. 180)	<p><i>Bigeye tuna stock assessment</i></p> <p>The SC NOTED concerns that using the yellow quadrant from the KOBE plot may cause confusion when communicating the stock status to the Commission, compared to the percentage values for being in each of the four quadrants (e.g. the green quadrant has the highest percentage, but the stock is classified as yellow). The SC also NOTED concerns that this approach of using 50% probability leads to a stock status that is on a ‘knife-edge’, and when the stock is around the TRP (currently SSBMSY), the stock will fluctuate between the four quadrants, even though the stock is performing as expected under the Management Procedure (MP)..</p>
WPTT27.02 (para 107):	<p><i>Bigeye tuna Management Procedure</i></p> <p>NOTING the provision in Resolution 23/04 that sets catch limits for some CPCs, including a mechanism to deduct any over catch (as well as a provision to set catch limits for other CPCs if their catches exceed 2000 t), the WPTT RECOMMENDED that the Commission review 2024 catches of bigeye tuna as soon as possible and enact, as appropriate, the relevant catch limit setting mechanisms adopted in the Resolution 23/04.</p>	SC28.22 (para. 211)	<p><i>Bigeye tuna MP (Resolution 22/03)</i></p> <p>SC NOTED that 2024 catch of bigeye tuna (82,874 t) has exceeded the 2024 TAC (80,583 t), which is an exceptional circumstance, and as such, the SC RECOMMENDED that the Commission should ensure that the appropriate provisions (e.g., in paragraphs 4, 5 and 8) of 23/04 are implemented to ensure catches remain inside the TAC, conditional on the allowances and requirements of those provisions.</p>
WPTT27.03 (para 179):	<p><i>Yellowfin tuna – Update on the standardised CPUE indices</i></p> <p>The WPTT NOTED concerns regarding the current process for developing the joint CPUE analysis, specifically related to transparency and reproducibility, and also NOTED suggestions for areas where</p>	(para 185)	<p><i>Yellowfin tuna</i></p> <p>SC CONGRATULATED the authors of the joint longline CPUE index for correcting the error in the 2024 YFT joint longline CPUE indices (with the corrected updated provided in IOTC-2025-SC28-12). The SC NOTED</p>

WPTT27 Rec. No.		SC28 Rec. No.	Recommendation adopted by the SC28
WPTT27.04 (para 159):	<p>improvements can be made. The WPTT RECOMMENDED that future analyses be initiated with adequate lead time to allow for thorough development, review, and consultation. It was further ENCOURAGED the code used in the analysis to be standardised, well-documented, version-controlled, and made publicly available to ensure transparency and reproducibility.</p> <p>The WPTT RECOMMENDED that the SC review the updated CPUE and updated preliminary assessment grid and analyses and evaluate the need to undertake a new full stock assessment (including potentially projections) for yellowfin tuna in 2026 (thus amending the Program of Work if necessary)</p>	(para 194)	<p>however, that these indices were provided late to the WPTT, making detailed scrutiny of the indices more challenging. Despite the short time available, the WPTT was able to analyse the indices, and further CONGRATULATED the authors of the YFT stock assessment on providing a preliminary analysis of the stock assessment model grid using the corrected joint longline CPUE indices that was presented to the SC (IOTC-2025-SC28-13)</p> <p>The SC AGREED that the stock assessment for YFT would not need to be re-run in 2026, and a full assessment would take place according to the PoW in 2027</p>
WPTT27.05 (para 222):	<p>Revision of the WPTT Program of Work (2026–2030)</p> <p>The WPTT RECOMMENDED that the SC consider and endorse the WPTT Program of Work (2026–2030), as provided in Appendix VII.</p>	(para 286) (para 287)	<p>Program of Work (2026–2030) and assessment schedule</p> <p>The SC NOTED IOTC–2025–SC28–08 which provided the SC with a proposed Program of Work for each of its working parties, including prioritisation of the elements requested by each working party.</p> <p>The SC NOTED the proposed Program of Work and priorities for the SC and each of the working parties and AGREED to a consolidated Program of Work as outlined in Appendix 36a-g. The Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of each working party will ensure that the efforts of their respective working parties are focused on the core areas contained within the appendix, taking into account any new research priorities identified by the Commission at its next Session</p>
WPTT27.06 (para 229)	<p>Date and place of the 28th and 29th Sessions of the WPTT</p> <p>The Secretariat will continue to liaise with CPCs to determine their interest in hosting these meetings in the future. The WPTT RECOMMENDED the SC consider late October 2026 as a preferred time period to hold the WPTT28 meeting in 2026. It was also AGREED that the WPTT Assessment meeting should continue to be held back-to-back with the WPM.</p>	(para 296)	<p>The SC REQUESTED that the schedule of Working Party and Scientific Committee meetings for 2026 and 2027 provided at Appendix 39 be communicated by the IOTC SC Chairperson to the Commission for its endorsement.</p>

WPTT27 Rec. No.		SC28 Rec. No.	Recommendation adopted by the SC28
WPTT27.07 (para. 231)	<p>Review of the draft, and adoption of the Report of the 27th Session of the WPTT</p> <p>The WPTT RECOMMENDED that the Scientific Committee consider the consolidated set of recommendations arising from WPTT27, provided at Appendix VIII, as well as the management advice provided in the draft resource stock status summary for each of the three tropical tuna species under the IOTC mandate, and the combined Kobe plot for the three species assigned a stock status in 2025 (Figure 1), noting that the final assessment model runs of the bigeye tuna will be completed after the meeting, therefore, the status advice for bigeye tuna should be developed by the SC following the review of the final stock assessment results and update of the Kobe plot intersessionally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bigeye tuna (<i>Thunnus obesus</i>) – Appendix IV ○ Skipjack tuna (<i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i>) – Appendix V ○ Yellowfin tuna (<i>Thunnus albacares</i>) – Appendix VI 	SC28.01 (para. 267)	<p>Tuna – Highly migratory species</p> <p>The SC RECOMMENDED that the Commission note the management advice developed for each tropical and temperate tuna species as provided in the Executive Summary for each species, and the combined Kobe plot for the four species assigned a stock status in 2025 (Fig. 1):</p> <p>Albacore (<i>Thunnus alalunga</i>) – Appendix 8</p> <p>Bigeye tuna (<i>Thunnus obesus</i>) – Appendix 9</p> <p>Skipjack tuna (<i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i>) – Appendix 10</p> <p>Yellowfin tuna (<i>Thunnus albacares</i>) – Appendix 11</p>

WPTT27 Report	WPTT27 REQUESTS	Update/Progress
<p>Para. 9</p> <p>Para 16</p> <p>Para 17</p>	<p>Data available at the Secretariat</p> <p>The WPTT NOTED that, following the official submission of retained catch data in late June 2025, Indonesia submitted updated datasets for 2023 on 31 July 2025 and for 2024 on 19 October 2025. The WPTT ACKNOWLEDGED that these revisions were part of Indonesia’s ongoing efforts to refine its catch estimation process. As the data review and validation process was still underway and some inconsistencies remained to be resolved, the Secretariat applied the IOTC legacy estimation procedure (Moreno et al., 2012) to generate provisional catch estimates by species and fishery for 2023, while the 2023 estimates were temporarily extended to 2024. The WPTT ACKNOWLEDGED that this step was necessary to ensure the availability of a complete and coherent dataset for the bigeye tuna stock assessment conducted in early October, representing the best scientific information available at the time. The WPTT REQUESTED the Secretariat to update the IOTC database to incorporate Indonesia’s final data submissions for 2023 and 2024, and to revise the input data for the stock assessment accordingly.</p> <p>The WPTT REQUESTED that Somalia collaborate with the Secretariat to develop estimates of historical catches for its coastal fisheries</p> <p>WPTT REQUESTED the WPDCS to evaluate Somalia’s 2024 reported catch and provide guidance on constructing an early catch history so this data can be incorporated into future assessments</p>	<p>Update: completed.</p> <p>Update: CPC to complete.</p> <p>Update: ongoing.</p>
<p>Para 93</p>	<p>Bigeye tuna stock assessment</p> <p>WPTT REQUESTED the Secretariat to document the updated results of the final grid in the revised version of IOTC–2025–WPTT27–15rev2, along with a summary of changes and additions to the model runs (which are now based on catch input incorporating revised Indonesian catch data submitted on 17 October). The WPTT also REQUESTED that standard diagnostics be performed on the grid models. A few additional sensitivities were requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of Somali catch data for 2024; • Re-running the likelihood profile on natural mortality; • Examination of a scenario where regional recruitment proportions were allowed to change over time 	<p>Update: Completed.</p>

Para. 100	<p>The WPTT REQUESTED that the IOTC Secretariat update the draft stock status summary for bigeye tuna with the latest 2024 catch data, if necessary. The WPTT RECOMMENDED that the SC develop the stock status advice as part of the Executive Summary, following the review of the final assessment results intersessionally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bigeye tuna (<i>Thunnus obesus</i>) – Appendix VI 	Update: completed.
Para. 104	<p>Bigeye tuna management procedure</p> <p>The WPTT NOTED that the total catch of bigeye tuna in 2024 (86,974 t) was greater than the adopted TAC for 2024 (80,583 t) and that this was an exceptional circumstance. To better evaluate the relative impact of differences between catch and the agreed TAC, the WPTT REQUESTED that the difference be reported as a percentage in future considerations of exceptional circumstances. The WPTT also NOTED that the comparison between catch and the agreed TAC should take into account the impact of the catch reported by Somalia for 2024, which is pending review by the WPDCS.</p>	Update: ongoing.
Para. 110	<p>Skipjack tuna management procedure</p> <p>WPTT NOTED that EU purse seine log school CPUE series initially presented at the meeting, based on updated information, appeared to have recent points that were anomalous relative to the rest of the series. The WPTT REQUESTED that the CPUE data collation and standardisation be reviewed to check for any errors, and the finalised series should be provided and compared with the range observed in the operating models used in MSE when the MP was adopted, for consideration at WPM</p>	Update: Completed.
Para 156	<p>Yellowfin tuna</p> <p>The WPTT REQUESTED that the joint CPUE working group, and the yellowfin tuna stock assessment team, conduct the following work to the degree possible in the given timeframe in order to develop and submit (15 days before the SC) the following two papers for review by the SC (see the full request 156 of IOTC-2025-WPTT27-R)</p>	Update: Completed.

<p>Para 166</p> <p>Para 167</p> <p>Para 169</p>	<p>Update on the management strategy evaluation of yellowfin tuna</p> <p>The WPTT NOTED that these discussions should include consideration of Harvest Control Rules and management objectives. However, the WPTT REQUESTED following the same structured approach used for other species and investing sufficient time in examining the underlying OMs before progressing to the specification of HCRs or management objectives, particularly given the historical challenges with OM conditioning</p> <p>The WPTT also REQUESTED that a trial specification document be developed in the future, detailing the OMs and associated technical elements once the system is operational and NOTED that should summarise the entire MSE process from start to finish. Such a document should include references to the individual decision papers and technical documents for transparency and traceability</p> <p>The WPTT RECOGNISED that the IOTC is developing MSEs for multiple species simultaneously, involving several expert groups, and that this is a technically complex and resource-intensive process. The WPTT REQUESTED that the WPM allocate time to discuss MSE planning in detail, including funding and coordination aspects, to ensure consistent integration of these efforts within the broader IOTC MSE development framework</p>	<p>Update: Developers to complete</p> <p>Update: Developers to complete</p> <p>Update: Ongoing</p>
<p>Para 220</p>	<p>Revision of the WPTT Program of Work (2026–2030)</p> <p>The WPTT REQUESTED that the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the WPTT, in consultation with the IOTC Secretariat, develop Terms of Reference (TOR) for each of the high priority projects that are yet to be funded, for circulation to potential funding sources.</p>	<p>Update: Completed.</p>