
PROGRESS MADE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUESTS OF WPNT15 AND SC28

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PURPOSE

To provide participants at the 16th WPNT with an update on the progress made in implementing the recommendations developed by the previous Working Party on Neritic Tunas (WPNT) 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 15th Session of the WPNT, participants also agreed on a series of actions to be taken by participants, CPCs, and the IOTC Secretariat on a range of issues. This paper provides a summary of the progress made on this list of requests so that the working party can evaluate progress made and to agree on the next steps to be taken for each issue.

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 WPNT15.

RECOMMENDATION

That the WPNT **NOTE** the progress made in implementing the recommendations and requests of the 15th Session of the WPNT, and consider whether revised recommendations need to be sent to the SC for its consideration.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Progress made on the Recommendations and Requests of WPNT15.



APPENDIX I

Progress made on the Recommendations and Requests of WPNT15 and SC28

WPNT15 Rec. No.	Recommendation from WPNT15	SC28 Rec. No.	Recommendation adopted by the SC28	Progress/Comments
WPNT15.01 (para. 42)	The WPNT RECOMMENDED that the Scientific Committee consider supporting a consultancy to review existing systems for qualifying datasets — including, but not limited to, those used in fisheries data — with a view to identifying best practices and proposing improvements to the current data quality scoring system used by the Secretariat.	(para. 71)	The SC SUPPORTED a proposed consultancy to review the current data quality scoring system used by the Secretariat.	Status: Ongoing The SC supported the consultancy but this needs to be included in WPNT’s program of work in order to receive funding
WPNT15.02 (para. 43)	ACKNOWLEDGING the difficulties associated with deriving geo-referenced size-frequency data at the spatial resolution of 5° grids in most coastal fisheries, and the fact that most analyses, including stock assessments, do not require such fine resolution, the WPNT RECOMMENDED the SC to urge the Commission to align the spatial resolution of size-frequency data with that of geo-referenced catch and effort data. Consequently, the data may be provided using an alternative geographical area if it better represents the fishery concerned.	SC28.10 (para. 71)	ACKNOWLEDGING the difficulties associated with deriving geo-referenced size-frequency data at the spatial resolution of 5° grids in most coastal longline and surface fisheries, and the fact that most analyses currently used in the assessments, do not require such fine resolution, the SC RECOMMENDED the Commission to align the spatial resolution of size-frequency data with that of geo-referenced catch and effort data. Consequently, the data may be provided using an alternative geographical area if it better represents the fishery concerned. The SC NOTED that this recommendation is relevant for many IOTC	Status: Ongoing The recommendation was adopted by the SC but still has not been adopted into a new Resolution by the Commission – the requirement remains to submit the SF data by a 5° grid area.

			species and has been reiterated by other WPs.	
WPNT15.03 (para. 174)	The WPNT RECOMMENDED that the SC consider and endorse the WPNT Program of Work (2026–2030), as provided in Appendix VI .	Para. 287	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, considering any new research priorities identified by the Commission at its next Session.	Status: Completed
WPNT15.04 (para. 177)	NOTING the decline in participation and the reduced number of paper submissions in recent years, which has resulted in shorter meetings, the WPNT RECOMMENDED that the SC consider setting the WPNT meeting duration to four days as a standard. However, it also suggested retaining flexibility to extend the meeting when necessary, such as when a training workshop is requested by CPCs for inclusion in the agenda.	Para. 73	NOTING the decline in participation and the reduced number of paper submissions in recent years, which has resulted in shorter meetings, the SC CONSIDERED setting the WPNT meeting duration to four days as a standard. However, it also SUGGESTED retaining flexibility to extend the meeting when necessary, such as when a training workshop is requested by CPCs for inclusion in the agenda. NOTING that in 2026 the WPNT will be carrying out assessments for three species, the SC SUGGESTED that it may be	Status: Ongoing The current meeting has only been scheduled for 4 days

			beneficial to retain the 5-day meeting period for next year to ensure that there is time to conduct any required capacity building activities in addition to these assessments.	
WPNT15.05 (para. 185)	<p>The WPNT RECOMMENDED that the Scientific Committee consider the consolidated set of recommendations arising from WPNT15, provided in Appendix XIII, as well as the management advice provided in the draft resource stock status summary for each of the six neritic tuna (and seerfish) species under the IOTC mandate, and the combined Kobe plot for the species assigned a stock status in 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bullet tuna (<i>Auxis rochei</i>) – Appendix VII ○ Frigate tuna (<i>Auxis thazard</i>) – Appendix VIII ○ Kawakawa (<i>Euthynnus affinis</i>) – Appendix IX ○ Longtail tuna (<i>Thunnus tonggol</i>) – Appendix X ○ Indo-Pacific king mackerel (<i>Scomberomorus guttatus</i>) – Appendix XI ○ Narrow-barred Spanish mackerel (<i>Scomberomorus commerson</i>) – Appendix XII 	SC28.02 (para. 269)	<p>The SC RECOMMENDED that the Commission note the management advice developed for each neritic tuna (and seerfish) species under the IOTC mandate, as provided in the Executive Summary for each species, and the combined Kobe plot for the three species assigned a stock status in 2025 (Fig. 2):</p> <p>Bullet tuna (<i>Auxis rochei</i>) – Appendix 12</p> <p>Frigate tuna (<i>Auxis thazard</i>) – Appendix 13</p> <p>Kawakawa (<i>Euthynnus affinis</i>) – Appendix 14</p> <p>Longtail tuna (<i>Thunnus tonggol</i>) – Appendix 15</p> <p>Indo-Pacific king mackerel (<i>Scomberomorus guttatus</i>) – Appendix 16</p> <p>Narrow-barred Spanish mackerel (<i>Scomberomorus commerson</i>) – Appendix 17</p>	Status: Completed

WPNT15 Report	WPNT15 REQUESTS	Update/Progress
Para. 5	The WPNT NOTED that Resolution 15/01 provides simple general guidance on the minimum standards for sampling but this is not comprehensive so the WPNT REQUESTED the WPDCS to develop standards for collecting these data so they are standardised across all CPCs.	Update: Ongoing This has not yet been completed but the Secretariat aims to complete this ahead of the WPB where the size measurements are the most variable.
Para. 33 & 34	<p>The WPNT NOTED that long time series of fishing effort are available for certain key gillnet fisheries targeting neritic tunas, such as those of Islamic Republic of Iran and Sri Lanka. However, the WPNT also NOTED that, in the case of these fisheries, effort is reported in terms of fishing trips, and that in Sri Lanka, multiple gears may be used during a single trip. This limits the utility of the data in the aggregated format currently available at the Secretariat. The WPNT ENCOURAGED the concerned CPCs to explore and analyse these data with a view to assessing their potential for deriving abundance indices based on CPUE.</p> <p>To address the issue relating to effort units, the WPNT REQUESTED the WPDCS to review the effort data available at the Secretariat and, where appropriate, to provide recommendations to the SC on standardised effort units to be considered in future data reporting requirements.</p>	Update: Complete The IOTC data reporting guidelines have been updated (https://data.iotc.org/reference/latest/guidelines/#Geo-referenced_catches_and_efforts) including improved description of form 3CE regarding appropriate effort units: https://data.iotc.org/reference/latest/forms/Form-3CE.html#Standard_effort_units_by_gear_group
Para. 55	The WPNT NOTED that the study used the effort unit of kg/vessel/month. The WPNT NOTED that many CPCs use different units for effort which makes it difficult to compare across different CPCs and years or develop a single CPUE series across the whole region. The WPNT therefore REQUESTED that the WPDCS develop standards on the best effort units to be applied to each gear type.	Update: Complete The IOTC data reporting guidelines have been updated (https://data.iotc.org/reference/latest/guidelines/#Geo-referenced_catches_and_efforts) including improved description of form 3CE regarding appropriate effort units: https://data.iotc.org/reference/latest/forms/Form-3CE.html#Standard_effort_units_by_gear_group
Para. 118	The WPNT therefore ADOPTED the management advice developed for the species under its mandate as provided in the draft resource stock status summaries in the Appendices, and REQUESTED that the summary be provided to the SC as part of the draft Executive Summaries, for its consideration.	Update: Complete - the stock status summarise were reviewed and adopted by the SC.

Para. 180	The WPNT REQUESTED CPCs that may be interested in hosting the 17 th Working Party on Neritic tunas to contact the Secretariat.	Update: Ongoing It is hoped that CPCs will offer to host the 17 th Working Party meeting during the current WPNT16 meeting.