

REVIEW OF CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES RELATING TO METHODS

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 06 OCTOBER 2026

PURPOSE

To encourage participants at the Working Party on Methods (WPM) to review the existing Conservation and Management Measures (CMM) relating to Methods, noting the CMMs contained in document IOTC–2026–WPM17–04; and as necessary to 1) provide recommendations to the Scientific Committee on whether modifications may be required; and 2) recommend whether other CMMs may be required.

BACKGROUND

In addition to the CMMs outlined in document IOTC–2026–WPM17–04, Methods are currently subject to several other CMMs adopted by the Commission, including:

Recommendation 14/07 *To standardise the presentation of scientific information in the annual Scientific Committee report and in Working Party reports.* This Recommendation builds upon the excellent work to date by the Scientific Committee, its working parties and the IOTC Secretariat to standardise the presentation of scientific information in their annual reports, including via the 'Executive Summaries' for each stock. In this context and in order to support scientific advice made available by the IOTC Scientific Committee, the executive summaries of the annual IOTC Scientific Committee report which present the stock assessment results may include, when possible as defined in this proposal, clearly: Stock status; Model outlooks; Data quality and limitations of the assessment models; Alternative approach (data poor stocks).

Resolution 15/10 *On target and limit reference points and a decision framework.* This Resolution establishes the general principles that would guide the application of the precautionary approach in the context of IOTC, including the adoption of provisional reference points that would apply until such time as the Commission decides to update the reference points after considering the advice of the Scientific Committee. The Resolution also considers a decision framework to facilitate management measures that are currently being undertaken by the Commission. This Resolution superseded Recommendation 13/10.

Resolution 12/01 *On the implementation of the precautionary approach.* This Resolution establishes the general principles that would guide the application of the precautionary approach in the context of the IOTC. The basic tenet being: do not take actions that would have an unacceptably high risk of compromising the health of the resource or its environment in the long term. The provisions also include ecosystem considerations in the form of impacts on non-target and associated or dependent species and their environment, or the effects of unanticipated environmental events.

Resolution 22/03 *On a Management Procedure for bigeye tuna in the IOTC area of competence.* This Resolution provides a management procedure for the bigeye tuna stock managed by the IOTC with a view of maintaining the stock biomass in the green zone of the Kobe plot (not overfished and not subject to overfishing) while maximizing the average catch from the fishery and reducing the variation in the total allowable catch (TAC) between management periods.

Resolution 24/07 *On a Management Procedure for Skipjack in the IOTC Area Of Competence.* This Resolution provides a management procedure for the skipjack stock managed by the IOTC with a view of maintaining the stock above the biomass target (BTARG = 0.4B₀) while maximizing the average catch from the fishery and reducing the variation in the total allowable catch (TAC) between management periods. This resolution supersedes Resolution 21/03 On harvest control rules for skipjack tuna in the IOTC area of competence.

Resolution 25/03 *On establishing catch limits for skipjack tuna in the IOTC area of competence.* This Resolution adopted the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for skipjack tuna (628,606 t in 2025 and 2026) in accordance with the Management Procedure (MP) established by Resolution 21/03. It specifies on how CPCs may apply a two-year

management period to manage their catch limits for 2025 and 2026, and provide provisions on how to deal with underage and overage of the catch limit during the two years.

Resolution 25/04 *On Establishing Catch Limits for Bigeye Tuna in the Area of IOTC Competence.* This Resolution adopted the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for bigeye tuna (92,670 t in 2026, 2027, and 2028) in accordance with the Management Procedure (MP) established by Resolution 22/03. It specifies on how CPCs may apply a three-year management period to manage their catch limits for 2026, 2027, and 2028, and provide provisions on how to deal with underage and overage of the catch limit during the three years.

Resolution 25/07 *On a Management Procedure for Swordfish in the IOTC Area Of Competence.* This Resolution provides a management procedure for the swordfish stock managed by the IOTC with a view of maintaining the stock above the biomass target (BTARG = BMSY) while maximizing the average catch from the fishery and reducing the variation in the total allowable catch (TAC) between management periods. It provides a minor revision to management procedure specified in Resolution 24/08 based on the advice from the Scientific Committee.

Resolution 25/10 *On establishing a Technical Committee on Management Procedures.* This Resolution supersedes Resolution 16/09 which aims at the decision making response of the Commission in relation to management procedures through the establishment of the Technical Committee on Management Procedures (TCMP). The Resolution specifies that the TCMP shall meet prior to and in conjunction with the annual Commission Session, unless otherwise decided by the Commission at the previous year's Commission meeting. It also allows that the Scientific Committee at its annual meeting may recommend a change to the date and/or format of the next TCMP.

Resolution 26/02 *On Establishing Catch Limits for Swordfish in the Area of IOTC Competence.* This Resolution adopted the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for Swordfish tuna (30,527 t in 2027 and 2028) in accordance with the Management Procedure (MP) established by Resolution 25/07. It specifies on how CPCs may apply a three-year management period to manage their catch limits for 2027 and 2028, and provide provisions on how to deal with underage and overage of the catch limit during the three years.

DISCUSSION

As part of best practice, the WPM is obliged to review existing CMMs and consider whether their science-based components need to be updated. If this is the case, then the WPM should provide clear, science-based recommendations for the Scientific Committee's consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

That the WPM **NOTE** paper IOTC–2026–WPM16–05 which aimed to encourage the WPM to review the existing Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) relating to Methods, and as necessary to 1) provide recommendations to the Scientific Committee on whether modifications may be required; and 2) recommend whether other CMMs may be required.