18 November 2026

IOTC CIRCULAR

2026-52

Dear Madam / Sir

OBJECTION FROM THE SULTANATE OF OMAN TO IOTC RESOLUTIONS 26/01 AND 26/06

Please find attached a communication from the Sultanate of Oman regarding its objections, in accordance with Article IX (5) of the IOTC Agreement, to:

- Resolution 26/01 *On establishing interim catch limits for yellowfin tuna in the IOTC Area of Competence* [download here]
- Resolution 26/06 M*andatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs)* [download here]

which were adopted at the 30th Session of the IOTC.

An extension period of 60 days has already been applied to the entry into force of Resolutions 26/01 and 26/06. Thus they will enter into force on the 18 November 2026, unless a total of more than one-third of the members also object before this time.

The relevant paragraphs (5, 6 and 7) of Article IX on the ensuing process are reproduced herein for your reference.

5. Any Member of the Commission may, within 120 days from the date specified or within such other period as may be specified by the Commission under paragraph 4, object to a conservation and management measure adopted under paragraph 1. A Member of the Commission which has objected to a measure shall not be bound thereby. Any other Member of the Commission may similarly object within a further period of 60 days from the expiry of the 120-day period. A Member of the Commission may also withdraw its objection at any time and become bound by the measure immediately if the measure is already in effect or at such time as it may come into effect under this article.

6. If objections to a measure adopted under paragraph 1 are made by more than one-third of the Members of the Commission, the other Members shall not be bound by that measure; but this shall not preclude any or all of them from giving effect thereto.

7. The Secretary shall notify each Member of the Commission immediately upon receipt of each objection or withdrawal of objection.

Yours sincerely

Paul de Bruyn
Executive Secretary

Attachment:

- letters from Oman

Distribution

IOTC Contracting Parties: Australia, Bangladesh, China, Comoros, European Union, France (Territories), India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Rep of), Japan, Kenya, Rep. of Korea, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, United Rep. of Tanzania, Thailand, United Kingdom, Yemen. **Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties:** Liberia, Panama. **Intergovernmental Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations. Chairperson IOTC. Copy to**: FAO Headquarters, FAO Representatives to CPCs.

This message has been transmitted by email only

Sultanate of Oman
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Wealth & Water Resources

سلطنة عمان
وزارة التراث الزراعي والسمكية ومصادر المياه

No. : 2631298982 الرقم :

Date : 17 November 2026 التاريخ :

Date : الموافق :

Mr. Paul de Bruyn
Executive Secretary
Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC
Victoria, Seychelles

Subject: Formal Objection by the Sultanate of Oman to IOTC Resolution 26/01 on Establishing Interim Catch Limits for Yellowfin Tuna

Dear Mr. de Bruyn,

The Sultanate of Oman presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) and refers to Resolution 26/01, adopted at the 30th Session of the Commission in May 2026, concerning the establishment of interim catch limits for yellowfin tuna in the IOTC Area of Competence.

The Sultanate of Oman reaffirms its full commitment to the conservation and sustainable management of tuna resources and to the objectives and principles of the IOTC Agreement.

Nevertheless, following an assessment of the provisions of Resolution 26/01 and their implications for Oman's fisheries sector, the Sultanate of Oman hereby formally notifies the Commission of its objection to Resolution 26/01 in its entirety, pursuant to Article IX, paragraph 5, of the Agreement for the Establishment of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission.

Oman considers the adoption of Resolution 26/01 premature, as it is still assessing the long-term implications of the measures introduced and does not yet have sufficient clarity on their potential consequences. Furthermore, as it has been reported to the IOTC, Oman is currently in the process of reviewing how its artisanal and coastal fleets operate, how their catches are recorded and attributed, and the sampling and statistical systems that underpin national reporting.

This objection is based mainly on the following considerations:

1. Protection of Artisanal and Coastal Fisheries

Under Oman's previous management framework of yellowfin under Resolution 19/01, artisanal and coastal fisheries were not subject to the same quantitative limitations as the purse-seine and long liner industrial fleets.

ص.ب ٤٢٧ الرمز البريدي ١٠٠ مسقط سلطنة عمان. هاتف ٢٤٩٥٣٢٥٩ ٩٦٨+. فاكس ٢٤٦٩٣٢٤٦ ٩٦٨+
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By introducing a single national catch limit covering artisanal, coastal and industrial fisheries, Resolution 26/01 would represent a significant change with relevant socioeconomic implications for traditional fishing communities, coastal livelihoods and national food security.

Oman considers that the specific circumstances of artisanal and coastal fisheries should be adequately recognised and that these fisheries should be excluded from any future IOTC allocation frameworks.

2. Insufficient Recognition of National Development Needs

The annual catch limit of 25,000 tonnes, even taking into account the five-year transition period, does not adequately reflect Oman's legitimate development aspirations, the importance of yellowfin tuna for Oman compared with other commercial tuna species, such as skipjack, which are not significant or its ongoing investments in modernising its fishing capacity.

Allocation arrangements should not permanently constrain coastal States' ability to responsibly utilize their fisheries resources and that also contribute to national economic diversification.

3. Protection of National Fleet Development and Investment

In line with Oman Vision 2040, Oman is pursuing the development of its coastal and commercial fleets, the strengthening of domestic fish processing industries, job creation and an increased contribution of the fisheries sector to national GDP.

The restrictions under Resolution 26/01 could undermine these investments and constrain the long-term development of the national fisheries value chain, particularly by limiting opportunities to expand national fishing capacity.

4. Equity in the Allocation of Fishing Opportunities

Oman considers that the allocation arrangements under Resolution 26/01 still rely predominantly on historical catch records established under Resolution 21/01, which Oman also objected These were based on quite old periods of reference of yellowfin tuna catches reported for 2014, while Small Island Developing State CPCs and Least Developed Country CPCs were able to choose between their reported catches for 2014 or 2015, or their average catches for 2017–2019.Periods of reference that would have hardly penalized Oman.

Further, the allocations under Resolution 26/01, despite being introduced as interim limits for 2027 and 2028, may undermine coastal States' ability to develop a mininum industrial fishing capacity and do not adequately reflect their differing development circumstances.

5. Need for

a Balanced and Long-Term Allocation Framework

While recognising that Resolution 26/01 is intended as an interim measure for 2027 and 2028, the Sultanate considers that restrictive national allocations should be accompanied by an equitable and transparent

long-term allocation framework that adequately addresses the interests of coastal States, the specific characteristics of artisanal fisheries and opportunities for future fleet development.

6. Continued Commitment to Conservation and Management

This objection should not be interpreted as opposition to scientific fisheries management or the conservation of yellowfin tuna stocks.

Oman remains committed to responsible fishing practices, improved fisheries data collection, monitoring, control and surveillance, and the implementation of applicable conservation and management measures.

Oman remains committed to constructive cooperation with the Commission and its Members towards scientifically sound, equitable and effective management arrangements.

Formal Notification and Request

In accordance with Article IX, paragraph 5, of the IOTC Agreement, the Sultanate of Oman formally requests the Secretariat to:

1. Register this communication as the Sultanate of Oman's official objection to Resolution 26/01 in its entirety.
2. Confirm that Resolution 26/01 shall not be binding upon the Sultanate of Oman in accordance with the applicable provisions of the IOTC Agreement.
3. Notify all Members of the Commission of this objection pursuant to Article IX, paragraph 7.
4. Take this objection into account in determining the legal status and entry into force of Resolution 26/01 under Article IX.
5. Facilitate further consultations towards an equitable allocation framework that adequately addresses the legitimate development interests of coastal developing States.

The Sultanate of Oman reiterates its commitment to constructive engagement within the IOTC and expresses its readiness to work with all Members towards a balanced and sustainable management framework for yellowfin tuna.

Please accept, Mr. Executive Secretary, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Dr. Abdulaziz Said Almarzouqi
DG of Fisheries Resources Development
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources
Sultanate of Oman

Sultanate of Oman
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Wealth & Water Resources

سلطنة عمان
وزارة التراث الزراعي والسمكية ومواد المياه

No. : 2631298982 الرقم :

Date : ..... التاريخ :

Date : 17 November 2026 الموافق :

Mr. Paul de Bruyn
Executive Secretary
Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
Abis Centre, Providence
P.O. Box 1011
Victoria, Seychelles

Subject: Objection to Resolution 26/06 on Mandatory Statistical Reporting Requirements Adopted at the 30th Session of the IOTC — Position of the Sultanate of Oman

Dear Colleagues,

The Sultanate of Oman presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission ("IOTC") and has the honor to refer to the adoption, at the Commission's 30th Annual Session, held in 2026, of Resolution 26/06 on Mandatory Statistical Reporting Requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs) ("Resolution 26/06").

The Sultanate of Oman (hereinafter, "Oman") emphasizes that the IOTC Agreement is founded on the principle of cooperation among its Members to ensure the conservation and optimum utilization of tuna stocks through appropriate management, as outlined in Article V. Achieving these objectives necessitates collective effort in the adoption and implementation of robust conservation and management measures, and Oman remains fully committed to that shared endeavour.

1. Resolution 26/06 – Mandatory Statistical Reporting Requirements

In accordance with Article IX(5) of the IOTC Agreement, Oman hereby formally notifies the Commission of its objection to Resolution 26/06.

At the outset, Oman underlines its full support for fisheries reporting that is accurate, comprehensive and timely, as an indispensable basis for the scientific work of the Commission. Nevertheless, the geospatial reporting, size-sampling and other requirements set

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سلطنة عمان

وزارة الثروة الزراعية والسمكية وموارد المياه

out in paragraphs 4(d)-(e), 5 and 8(d) of the Resolution place a disproportionate burden on coastal States with a significant artisanal and coastal fishing component. Oman is in the process of reviewing how its artisanal and coastal fleets operate, how their catches are recorded and attributed, and the sampling and statistical systems that underpin national reporting. Resolution 26/06 would impose further and immediate demands on that ongoing process.

Oman is also concerned that these provisions could operate to the detriment of legitimate historical catches solely because such catches were insufficiently sampled, reconstructed or reported after the relevant deadlines. The effect would be to entrench existing imbalances in historical data in favour of States that have long operated industrial monitoring systems, to the prejudice of other CPCs fisheries development and of its standing in the design of the future TAC allocation system.

Furthermore, Oman considers that the distinction by jurisdiction required for statistical reporting must in no case be interpreted as establishing ownership of catches or any entitlement under future allocation arrangements. Catches reported by small-scale fisheries fleet should be excluded from any future IOTC allocation arrangement.

This objection notwithstanding, Oman will continue to comply with its statistical reporting obligations under the previously applicable resolutions of the Commission while it finalizes the review and reinforcement of its national data collection and statistical systems, including the review of its historical catch series of its artisanal and coastal fleets. For the avoidance of doubt, this undertaking does not constitute acceptance of, or voluntary compliance with, Resolution 26/06.

This objection does not diminish Oman's commitment to the objectives of the IOTC Agreement, and Oman remains willing to engage constructively with other Members on this matter in future sessions of the Commission.

Oman further requests that this letter be circulated to all Members of the Commission.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Abdulaziz Said Almarzouqi
DG of Fisheries Resources Development
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources
Sultanate of Oman