# France OT National Report to the Scientific Committee of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, 2026

**Executive Summary**

Since Mayotte came under the Community regime on 1 January 2014, the only French tropical overseas territories in the Indian Ocean are the Éparses Islands, which fall under the higher administration of the French Southern and Antarctic Lands (TAAF). The Glorieuses Marine Natural Park was established on 22 February 2012 (Decree No. 2012-245) and became a National Nature Reserve in 2021 (Decree No. 2021-734). It is part of the Éparses Islands and covers the entire Glorieuses exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

The Éparses Islands (France Territoires) have no tuna fleets registered in that territory. Nevertheless, the TAAF administration issues fishing licences to French and foreign longliners and purse seiners wishing to fish in waters administered by France Territoires. The granting of these licences is accompanied by an onboard observer programme. At-sea observations of French longliners based in Réunion are carried out by onboard observers or through self-sampling (data collected by vessel captains). These activities are coordinated by IRD and funded by the European Union under the Data Collection Framework (DCF) project.

Data from longliners flying the EU-French flag were presented in the EU-FR report. France's current research programme on large pelagic species, conducted mainly by IRD and Ifremer, covers monitoring fishing activities, landings, and the biometrics of target species and discards; studying the migratory behaviour of large pelagic species; research on fish aggregating devices; collecting observer data through electronic monitoring; genetic and microchemical studies to delineate stocks; developing measures to mitigate bycatch and depredation; studying post-release mortality of sharks caught by European purse-seine and longline fisheries; and developing an innovation to enable the rapid release of marine megafauna caught on longlines and improve their survival. Most projects are funded through international, European, or national calls for proposals. This report lists the various projects that continued or began in 2024. It also includes projects directly involving the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), although these projects are still being launched.

In line with the IOTC's research priorities, France is conducting various projects at national, European, and international levels. France actively participated in all IOTC working groups held in 2024 and submitted 15 scientific contributions.

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