Sri Lanka National Report to the Scientific Committee of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, 2026

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INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

In accordance with IOTC Resolution 15/02 (and other data related CMMs as noted below), final scientific data for the previous year were provided to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 June of the current year, **for all fleets other than longline** [e.g., for a National Report submitted to the IOTC Secretariat in 2026, final data for the 2025 calendar year must be provided to the Secretariat by 30 June 2026)	YES 30/06/2026
In accordance with IOTC Resolution 15/02, provisional **longline data** for the previous year was provided to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 June of the current year [e.g., for a National Report submitted to the IOTC Secretariat in 2026, preliminary data for the 2025 calendar year were provided to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 June 2026). **REMINDER:** Final longline data for the previous year are due to the IOTC Secretariat by 30 Dec of the current year [e.g., for a National Report submitted to the IOTC Secretariat in 2026, final data for the 2025 calendar year must be provided to the Secretariat by 30 December 2024).	YES 30/06/2026
If no, please indicate the reason(s) and intended actions:	

Executive Summary [Mandatory]

Sri Lanka's tuna and tuna-like fisheries constitute a vital component of the country's marine fisheries sector, making a significant contribution to national food security, livelihoods, and export earnings. Sri Lanka has made considerable progress in aligning its tuna fisheries management with regional and international conservation, management, and compliance frameworks, particularly those established by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), with a compliance rate of 71.2 in year 2024.

In 2025, Sri Lanka recorded a total production of 100,510.8 metric tons (MT) of tuna and tuna-like species, of which approximately 65.9% was harvested within Sri Lanka's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The remaining catch was taken in areas beyond national jurisdiction, highlighting the importance of effective monitoring and management of Sri Lanka's high-seas tuna fishing activities and continued compliance with applicable IOTC Conservation and Management Measures.

The fishery was predominantly composed of skipjack tuna (37.7%), yellowfin tuna (32.7%), and bigeye tuna (4.7%), while billfish accounted for 11.5% of the total catch, with swordfish representing the majority of Billfish category. The shark catch was 1,948.9 MT. Sri Lanka has continued to implement measures to promote the sustainability of tuna stocks, including the systematic reduction in the number of Gillnets and limitation of operational length of large-scale gillnets in accordance with IOTC Resolution 17/07, demonstrating the country's commitment to regional conservation and management measures.

Sri Lanka has continued to promote the transition towards more selective and environmentally responsible fishing gears to reduce bycatch and improve species selectivity in the tuna and tuna-like fisheries. The large pelagic fishing fleet comprised of 5,299 vessels, operating across both Sri Lanka's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and areas beyond national jurisdiction. The fleet is predominantly composed of small-scale vessels, with the majority measuring less than 15 meters in length, while 3 vessels exceed 24 meters, reflecting the predominantly small-scale nature of Sri Lanka's large pelagic fishing fleet.

Vessel marking and gear marking are legally required under Sri Lankan regulations, while Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) are mandatory for all vessels operating in the high seas, supporting vessel traceability and real-time monitoring of fishing activities. The tuna and tuna-like fishery primarily rely on longlines and gillnets, with approximately 32.6% of vessels operating exclusively with longlines and 19.3% using gillnets to target large pelagic species. However, national authorities are progressively discouraging the use of gillnets due to their non-selective nature and associated bycatch risks, while promoting more selective and sustainable fishing methods. Sri Lanka has also implemented mandatory human observer coverage for vessels exceeding 24 metres in length, while a pilot Electronic Monitoring System (EMS) programme is currently being implemented to further strengthen monitoring, control and surveillance of fishing activities.

Sri Lanka maintains a pool of ten trained and IOTC-registered observers and is taking measures to achieve a minimum 5% observer coverage at port level as part of its monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) strategy. In strengthening port-based compliance, Sri Lanka continues to implement Port State Measures (PSM) exclusively through the electronic PSM (e-PSM) application, facilitating digital traceability and effective action against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, while the Global Information Exchange System (GIES) has also been updated in accordance with relevant international obligations. In addition, systematic coastal sampling programmes have been introduced to improve the quality and representativeness of fisheries biological data, particularly length-frequency data, in support of regional stock assessments. Collectively, these measures demonstrate Sri Lanka's continued commitment to sustainable, transparent, science-based and effective management of its large pelagic fisheries.

1. BACKGROUND/GENERAL FISHERY INFORMATION [MANDATORY]

Tuna fishery in Sri Lanka occurs mainly within the EEZ and in high-seas. The traditional coastal fishing remains operating mainly targeting neritic tuna and associated fish such as carangids, scads, barracuda and rainbow runner within continental shelf and slope areas of coastal waters. The offshore fisheries is caring out in the area beyond 20nm up to the 200nm and in high seas. Majority of offshore and high seas operating vessels target for Tuna and tuna like species. The tuna fishing fleet consists in array of size but as a whole all are small in size. only 3 vessels are >24m in length. 93.9% boats are below 15m and majority do not have mechanized line hauls. Limited deck space and the manual operation of fishing gears limit the fishing capacity of most boats. About 313 boats were engaged in one to ten days fishing voyages and about 4663 boats conducted fishing voyages with more than ten days. All high seas operating vessels have operational VMS on board.

2. FLEET STRUCTURE [MANDATORY]

Around 5,300 vessels are engaged in large pelagic fishing operations both within Sri Lanka's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and in the high seas. The majority of vessels are less than 15 meters in length, while only three vessels exceed 24 meters in length. Vessel marking and gear marking are legally mandated to ensure proper identification and compliance with fisheries management regulations. Furthermore, the installation and operation of a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) is compulsory for all vessels authorized to fish in the high seas, enabling real-time monitoring of their activities. The principal fishing gears employed in this fleet are longlines and gillnets, although the use of gillnets is being gradually discouraged due to ecological and management concerns, with an increasing emphasis on promoting more selective and sustainable fishing gears. Analysis of operational patterns indicates that 32.6 percent of vessels are exclusively engaged in longline fishing and 19.3 percent operate solely with gillnets, both targeting large pelagic species such as tuna and swordfish. In addition, 31.1 percent of vessels are engaged in small scale ring net operations, primarily targeting small pelagic species like the Indian scads (*Decapterus ruselli*), which form a vital component of the coastal fishery. The remaining 17 percent of vessels employ a combination of the above gears in a seasonal or incidental manner, adjusting their fishing operations based on resource availability and seasonal patterns.

Table 1: Number of vessels operating in the IOTC area of competence, by gear type and size class

Boat Type	Number of Vessels Operated in 2025	Gears used	Trip length
8m-10.3m	313	32.6% LL only 19.3% GI only 31.1% RN 17% Multi gear (two or more combination of above gears)	The boats which are between 8m to 10.3m in length, operating for 1-10 days while rest are operating for 10-30 days. High seas operating multiday boats operate for 30 to 60 days. More time is spent for reaching to the fishing grounds and to come back.
10.3m -15m	4663		
15m-24m	320		
>24m	3		
Total	5299		

3. CATCH AND EFFORT (BY SPECIES AND FISHERY) [Mandatory]

32.6 % multiday vessels are exclusive long liners. Around 200 -2500 hooks are used in longlines depending on the vessel size. Most long-liners use large number of hooks per set (1000 to 2500 hooks), and hauled by mechanized winch. 19.3% of the multiday vessels engage in large pelagic fisheries used large-mesh drift gillnets (GN), targeting skipjack tuna. The tuna gill nets are restricted to maximum 2.5km in length and made of 20-25 net pieces and having 5.5" or 6" stretched mesh sizes. Gillnets are being discouraged and newly build vessels are not permitted to use gillnets.

Ring net have become popular for catching of Indian scads (*Decapterus ruselli*) and trigger fish etc. The other fishing gears being used in lesser extent for tuna were hand-line, trolling and pole and line. Beach seine is a traditional method of near coastal fishery in Sri Lanka. The target species are near coastal small pelagic and demersal fish. It has proper management practices from the history and those has been regularized and number of licenses is freeze**.**

The use of fishing gear in multipurpose vessels is determined based on the availability of fish, climate condition, the availability of the bait, skill of the crew etc. The Indian mackerel, flying fish, milkfish and artificial baits are generally used in long lines. Offshore and the high Seas catch dominated by yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacores*), skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*) and bill fish species and other bony fish.

Fishing activities within EEZ are seasonal depending on the monsoon pattern. Fishing in coastal and offshore areas is more successful just before and after the monsoon. Coastal fishing conducts mainly with 6-7 meters long FRP boats, outboard motorized boats, and 7-10 meters inboard mechanized boats (3.5GT). The trip length of offshore fishing multi-day boats varies from 10 days or more. Longline fishing vessels make every effort to land their catches as early as possible to maintain product quality and meet the requirements of the export market. Gillnet fishing vessels often undertake extended fishing trips lasting more than 30 days. The initial catch is typically preserved through salting and sun-drying, while fish caught later in the trip are stored on ice. The duration of these trips is influenced by several factors, including weather conditions, the limited size of the vessels, and inadequate facilities onboard.

Improving fish quality in fishing vessels is a key priority for minimizing post-harvest losses and economic losses while enhancing access to the export markets. To achieve this target, offshore and high seas fishing vessels are being upgraded with advanced cooling systems such as chilled seawater (CSW) or refrigerated sea water (RSW). The legal framework has been strengthened to conduct tuna fisheries in complying with the conservation and management measures of IOTC.

There are no tuna fishing grounds close to Sri Lanka, and the small-sized vessels travel far away to find fish. Hence, as in the previous year, there was an issue of unbearable operating costs due to the high fuel price, and the lower catch near Sri Lanka. According to information reported by fishers, fuel expenditure accounts for more than 40% of the operational costs of multiday fishing vessels engaged in offshore and high-seas fishing operations. This highlights the significant impact of fuel prices on the economic viability of Sri Lanka's multiday fishing fleet.

Table 2. Annual catch and effort by fishery and primary species in the IOTC area of competence. Include a 'not elsewhere indicated – NEI' category for all other catches combined. **[Mandatory]**

Annex1- 2025 Catch Data for NR_LKA

Figure 1. Historical annual catch for the national fisheries by primary species, for the IOTC area of competence for the entire history of the fisheries. **[Mandatory]**

Refer the previous National Reports for the historical annual catch for the period of 1950-2020 period. Following are the Catch composition of Tuna and tuna like species by gear for the years 2020 To 2025
Source: PELAGOS database (NARA), log book database-(DFAR) & land-based sampling database (DFAR/MFARD)

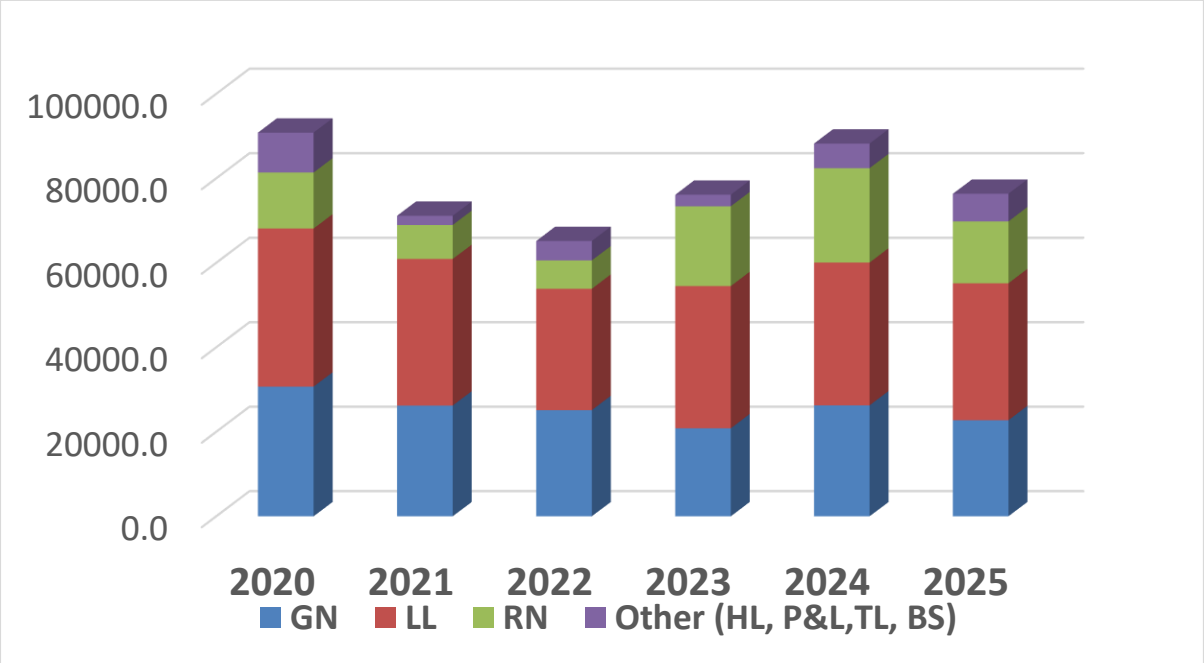


Figure 1a - Tropical Tuna Catch composition by gear from 2020 to 2025

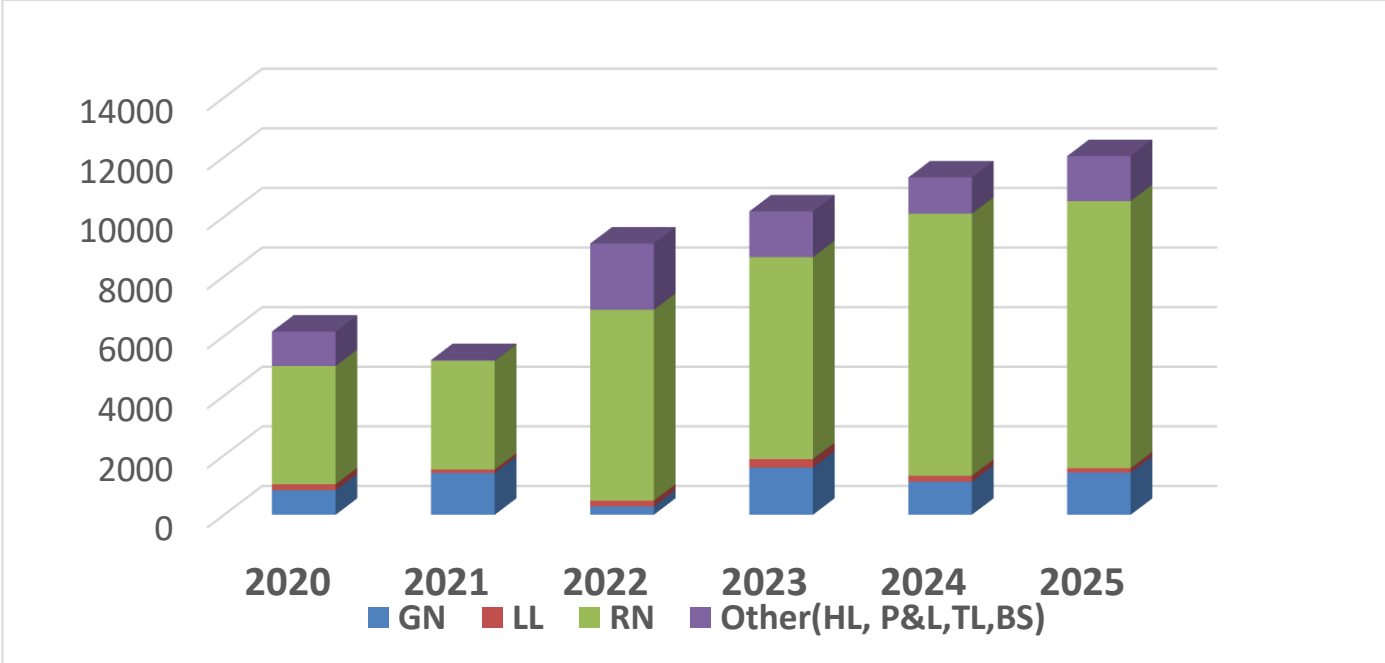


Figure 1b - Neritic Tuna Catch composition by gear from 2020 to 2025

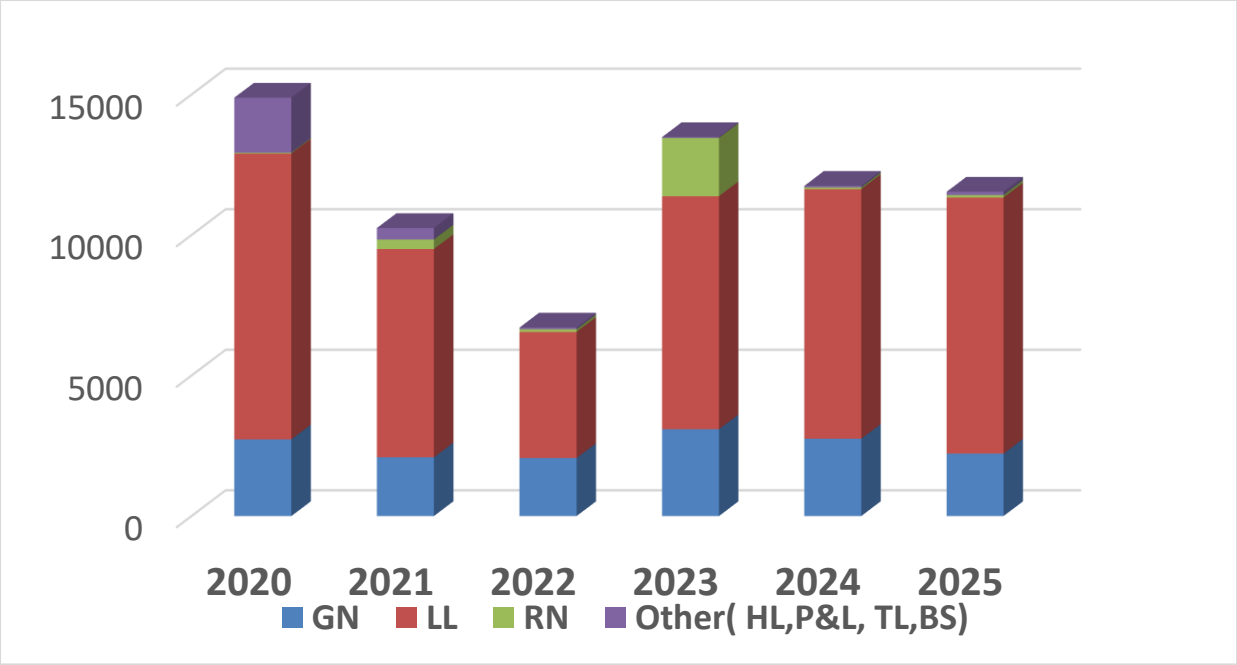


Figure 1c – Bill fish Catch composition by gear from 2020 to 2025

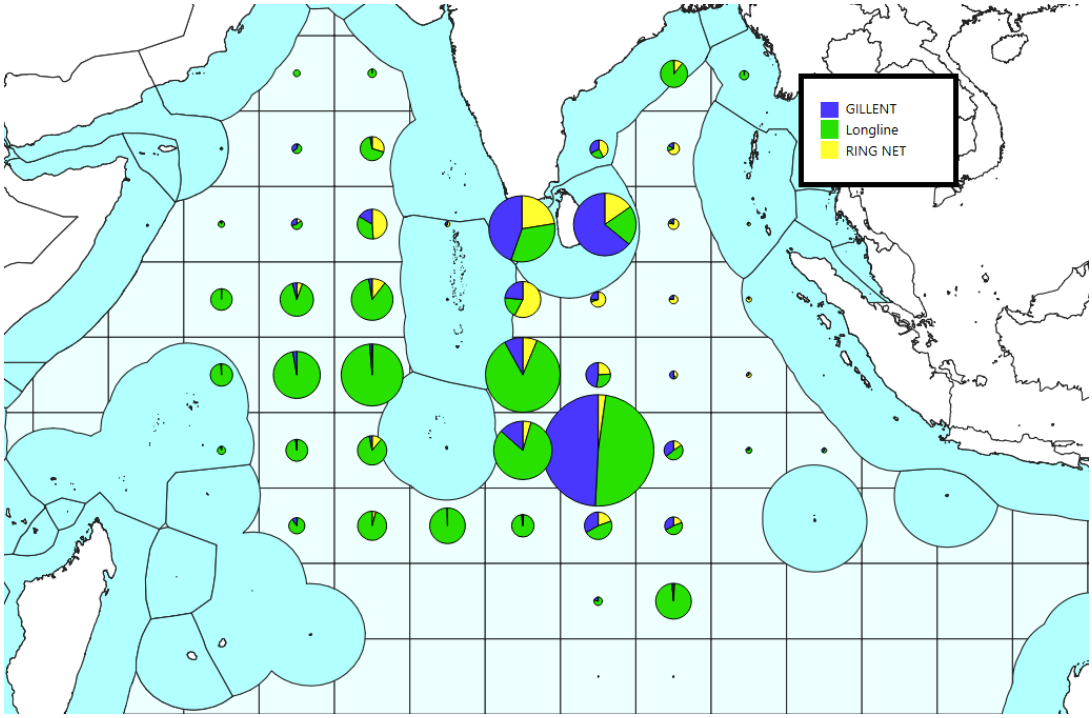


Figure 2a. Map of the distribution of fishing effort, by national fishery in the IOTC area of competence (most recent year e.g., 2025). **[Mandatory]**

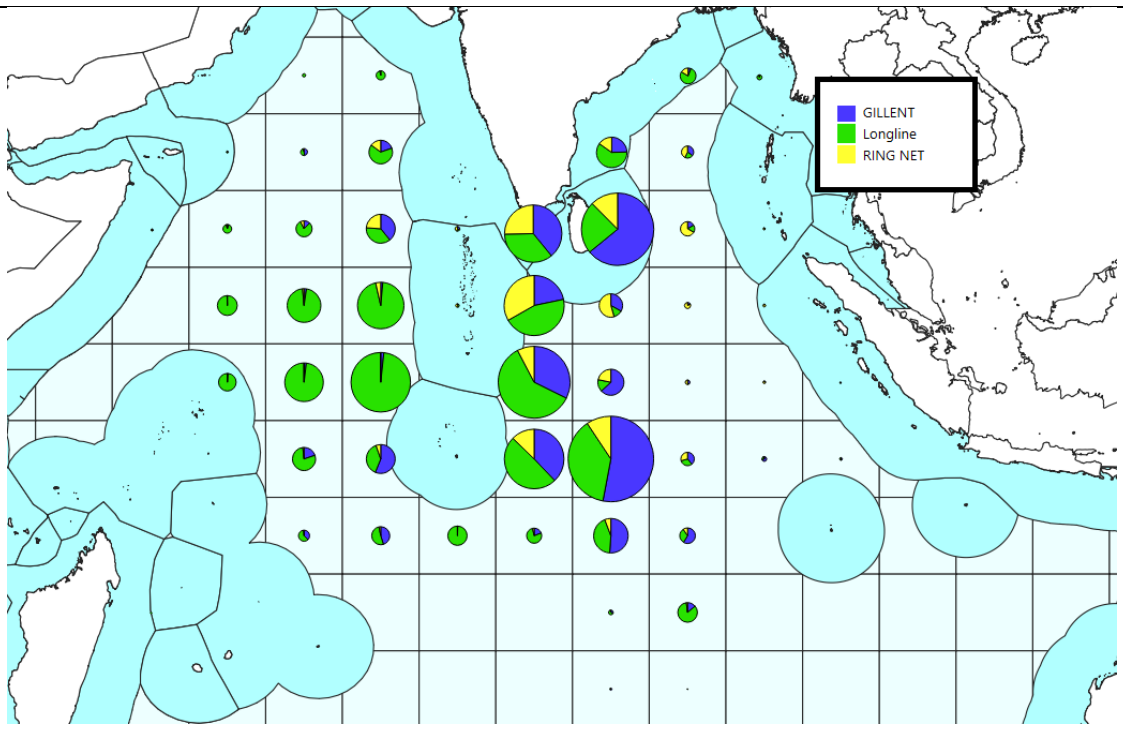
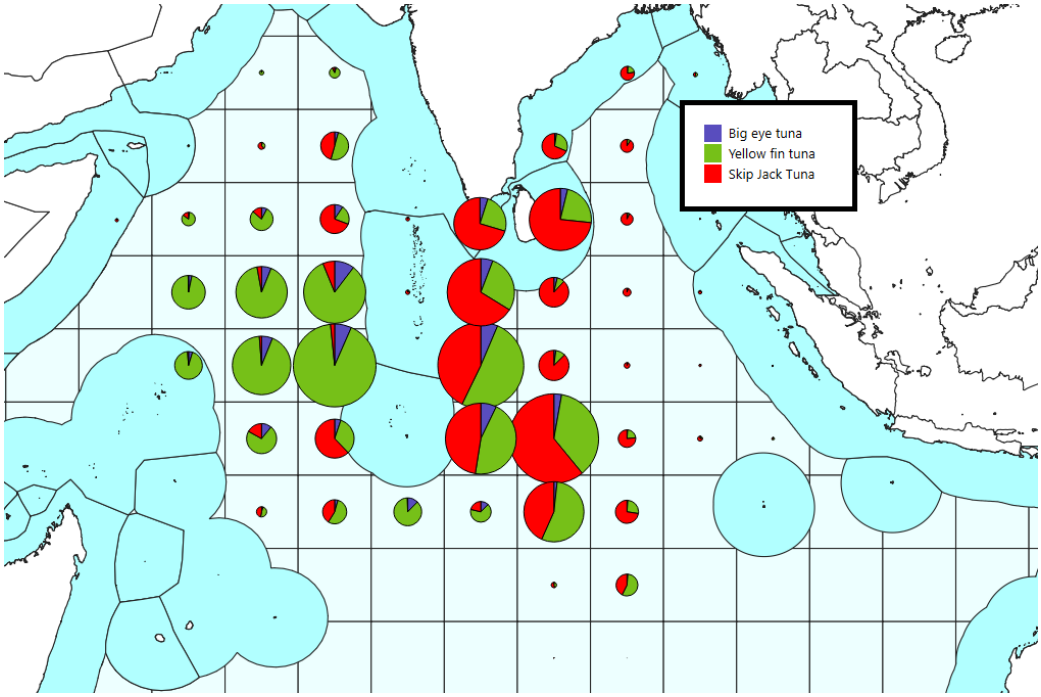
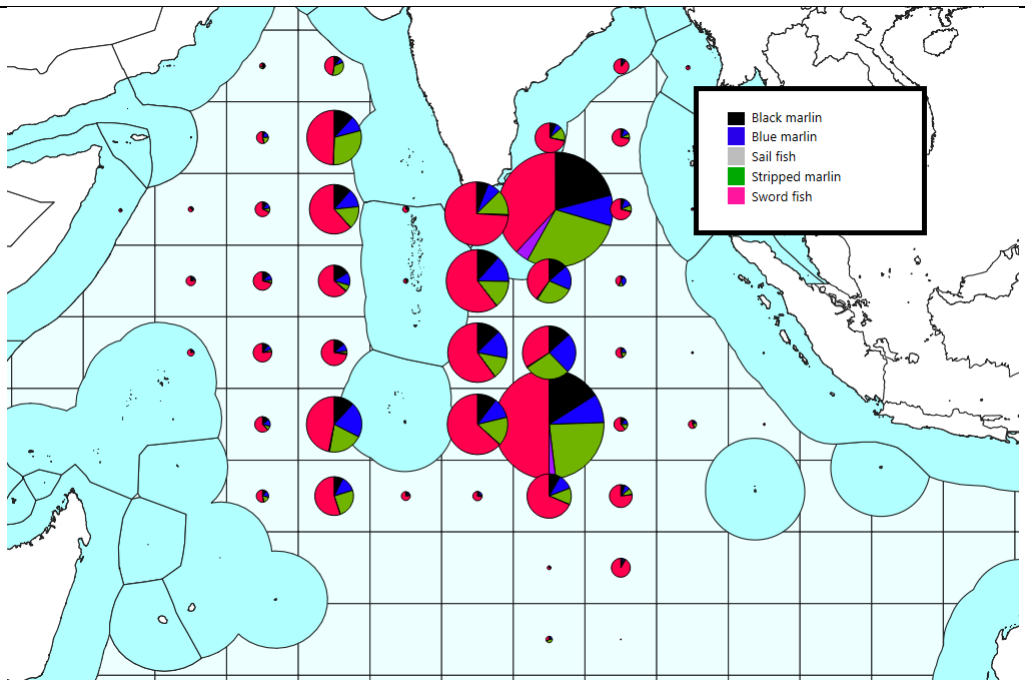


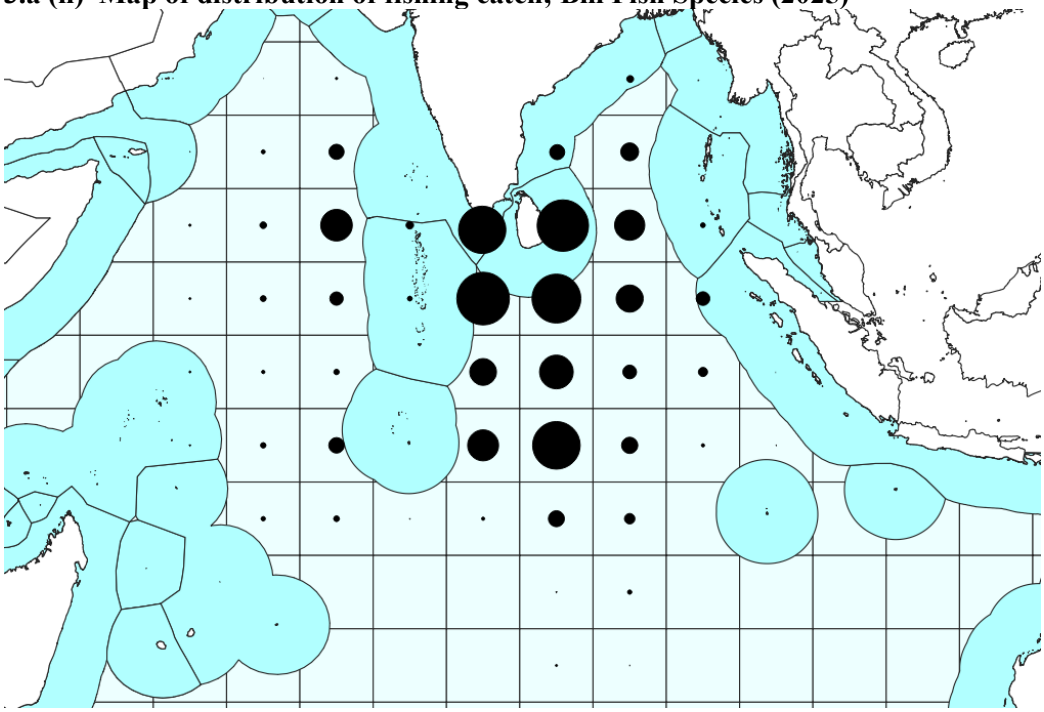
Figure 2b. Map of the distribution of fishing effort, by national fishery in the IOTC area of competence (average of the 5 previous years e.g., 2021–2025). **[Mandatory]**



3.a (i) Map of distribution of fishing catch; Tropical Tuna Species (2025)

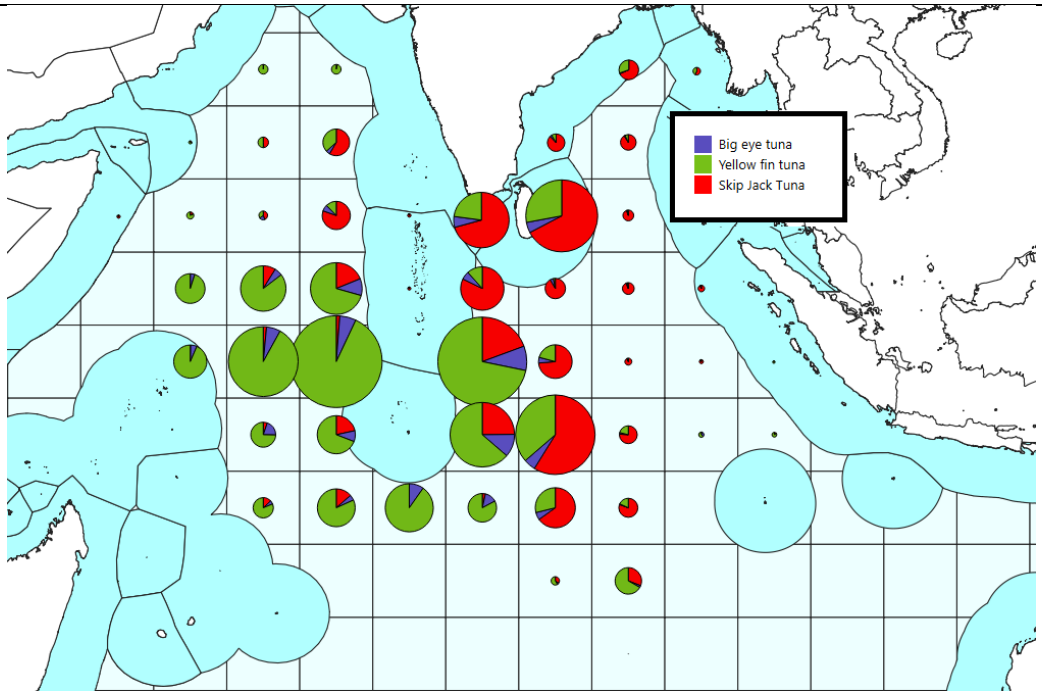


3.a (ii) Map of distribution of fishing catch; Bill Fish Species (2025)

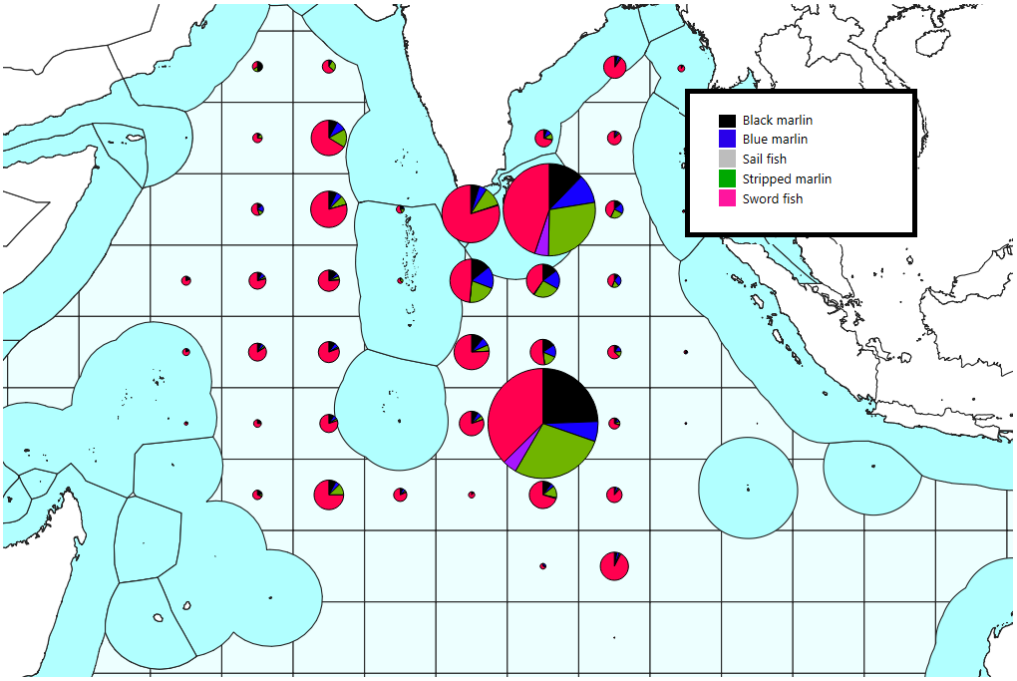


3.a (iii) Map of distribution of fishing catch; Other Species (2025)

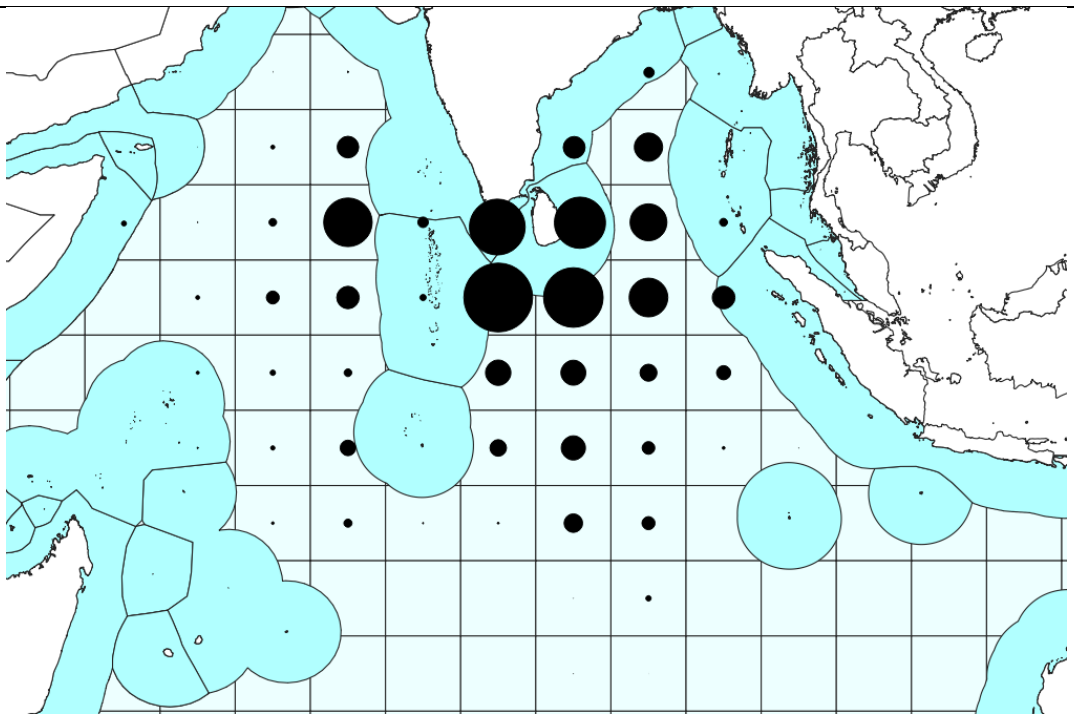
Figure 3a. Map of distribution of fishing catch, by species for the national fisheries, in the IOTC area of competence (most recent year e.g., 2025). **[Mandatory]**



3.b (i) Map of distribution of fish catch Tropical tuna species (fishing catch for last 05 years)



3.b (ii) Map of distribution of fish catch Bill fish species (fishing catch for last 05 years)



3.b (iii) Map of distribution of fish catch Other Species (fishing catch for last 05 years)

Figure 3b. Map of distribution of fishing catch, by species for the national fisheries, in the IOTC area of competence (average of the 5 previous years e.g., 2021–2025). **[Mandatory]**

4. RECREATIONAL FISHERY [Mandatory]

Recreational fishing for tuna and tuna-like species is not a popular or widespread activity in Sri Lanka. However, it is practiced sporadically, mainly in association with the tourism industry, with recreational fishing activities generally targeting reef-associated species such as groupers, sea basses and trevallies.

In 2023, the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources introduced regulations for the management of recreational fishing. These regulations clearly specify the prohibited species and recommended fishing gear types. Furthermore, the sale of fish caught through recreational fishing activities is strictly prohibited.

5. ECOSYSTEM AND BYCATCH ISSUES [Mandatory]

Sri Lanka continues to strengthen its fisheries management framework with a growing focus on environmental sustainability and ecosystem-based approaches. The country has identified and prioritized key environmental issues such as habitat degradation, and overexploitation of certain fish stocks. To address these, the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DFAR), in collaboration with relevant agencies and international partners, is implementing a range of initiatives, including bycatch mitigation measures and the gradual transition to selective and environmentally friendly fishing gears. The National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (NPOA–Sharks) and the National Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (SLNPOA–IUU) are being updated to align with FAO and IOTC guidelines. Measures such as restrictions on gillnet lengths and awareness programs for fishers are being enforced to minimize ecological impacts. In addition, the government has expanded efforts toward marine habitat restoration by the reduction of marine litter through national programs such as *Clean Ocean Sri Lanka*.

5.1 Sharks [Mandatory]

(A) High Seas Fishing Operations Regulations 2014 (Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Act (FARA)

i. The masters/skippers of the vessels have been legally ordered to promptly release of all mammals, turtles, and seabirds, and prohibited and unwanted sharks in live form at minimum harm caused to them if caught incidentally.
ii. It is mandatory to carry and use line cutters and de-hookers on board to release sharks/turtles.
iii. Conduct inspection of boats at the departure and on arrival of the fishing vessels at the port.
iv. Prohibition of intentional surrounding of whale sharks by ring nets. Mandatory to carry dip nets on board for ring nets to release sharks in live form.
v. Deployment of onboard observer for Scientific data collection in the vessels>24m.
vi. Prohibition of use of drift gill nets> 2.5km in high seas.
vii. In 2021/22 DFAR has prepared and published leaflets on live release of Sharks and Rays Shark and Rays, turtles and marine mammals in three languages and distributed among fishermen and continuous awareness programmes are being conducted.
viii. With the collaboration of private stakeholders, DFAR continuous awareness programmes in Harbours displaying Prohibited species including sharks
ix. In 2025, posters were displayed in each harbour premises to aware the fishermen on prohibited species and live release practices.

(B) Shark Fisheries Management Regulation, 2015 (Gazette No. 1938/2 of 26 October 2015)

i. Prohibition of finning on board and prohibition of, catching, retaining, transshipment, and sale of Thresher sharks (i.e. *Alopius vulpinus*, A. *superciliosus* and A. *pelagicus*), Oceanic white tip shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*) and whale Shark (*Rhincodon typus*).
ii. Provisions to collect biological samples for research studies.

(C) Fish Catch data recording regulations 2014 (Log book)

Keeping the records of shark catches including incidental catches, release/discard in live or dead forms. Data on of sharks, mammals, turtles and sea birds is legally mandatory.

(D) Other regulations and actions

i. Regulation on prohibition of use of poisonous substances, explosives or stupefying substances in fishing (FARA amendment 2004)
ii. Prohibition of dredging for fishing and bottom trawling damaging the sea bottoms and breeding and nursery grounds (FARA)
iii. Sri Lanka is a signatory to Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)
iv. Declaration of endangered shark species as protected species under Fauna & Flora Protection Act.
v. Promoting the use of circle hooks to the longlines rather than "J hooks.
vi. *Marine Pollution Prevention Act No 59* of 1981(amended 2008) has legal provisions against pollutions affecting to marine animals and ecosystems.
vii. National Environment Act, has published "The National Red List 2012" of Sri Lanka revealing the National and Global conservation status of the fauna and flora of Sri Lanka. Special attention has been drawn to corals and marine fish species mammals and holothurians.

viii. Species identification guides and posters for shark identification have been prepared and published in 2015 and Species identification guide books were delivered to the field officers, in 2024/25

ix. Improve the onsite sampling program to cover all species of shark as per the IOTC resolutions (15/01 and 15/02) to collect required catch and size data to submit to IOTC in the annual submission of data

x. Awareness programs are being conducted on the banning of thresher sharks, white tip sharks and whale sharks and recording of the incidental catches and prompt release in an unharmed condition.

xi. The sanction on violations has been increased to an adequate severity up to Rupees one million under the provisions of the Amended Act in 2013.

xii. Shark fin sample has to be identified to species level and CITES should obtain clearance from Department of Wildlife to export of the fins of the sharks that are not prohibited to catch in Sri Lanka. The identifications are done both physically and genetically by the National Research Agency (NARA).

(E) Sharks finning regulation [Mandatory]

Shark Fisheries Management Regulation, 2015 (Gazette No. 1938/2 of 26 October 2015)

(i) Prohibition of finning on board and prohibition of, catching, retaining , transshipment , and sale of Thresher sharks(i.e.Alopius vulpinus, A. superciliosus and A. pelagicus) ,Oceanic white tip shark (Carcharhinus Iongimanus) and whale shak(Rhincodon typus). .

There is no practice of finning onboard by the Sri Lanka fishermen. The fins are cut and removed by the buyers who engage in shark fin exports in the shore/ harbor after landing as per their interest. Sri Lanka do not have target fishery for Sharks for fin exportation.

5.1.1. NPOA sharks [Desirable]

- Sri Lanka's National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (SLNPOA-Sharks) published in 2013 and subject to revise in four years period.

- The Steering Committee on implementation of NPOA Sharks meets once in six months. NPOA Sharks is revised in 2018 using the comments and observations made by the members of the National Steering Committee.

- NPOA-Sharks has updated in year 2025 and the draft updated version has shared with the stakeholders for comments. Once finalized it will be published in www.fisheries.gov.lk website

5.1.2. Blue shark [Mandatory]

- Maintenance of updated log book (as per Res. 15/01) on board is legally mandatory.
- Skippers have trained on species identification and catch data recording.
- There is a separate column in the log book to report Blue shark catches for all gears.
- Log book database is maintained at DFAR.
- Catch by small boats is collected by the data collector assigned to the landing sites.
- Annual catch, catch and effort and size-frequency data for blue shark are collected and submitted to the IOTC Secretariat in accordance with IOTC Resolutions 15/01 and 15/02, as specifically required under Resolution 18/02.

5.2 Seabirds [Mandatory]

Seabird catches are not reported in Sri Lanka due to the nature of the fishery and the limited availability of seabird species in the high seas around Sri Lanka. Seabirds are not interacting with long liners either line is setting or line hauling, mostly due to the low height of the small boats without sophisticated superstructure. The National Aquatic Resources and Research Development Agency (NARA) has done three short-term studies on seabirds through comprehensive port sampling, onboard observation study made in research vessels in the high seas of Bay of Bengal and consultation of Fishermen. The findings were present at the WPEB in 2014 and WPEB in 2026. Thus, there are no mitigation measures in applied to prevent seabird interactions and Sri Lanka and has not developed the NPOA-Sea birds. Observers are not deployed in the small vessels due to space and safety restrictions.
No vessels operated south of 25˚S.

5.3 Marine Turtles [Mandatory]

Marine turtles are legally protected under Fauna and Flora Protection Act (FFPA) and Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Act no.2 of 1996. In 1979, Sri Lanka has signed the CITES agreement and therefore, trading of turtles and their parts and products are completely prohibited. The sanctions have been increased in amended FFPA, 2008 and FARA, 2013 for the violation of laws. Further, large-scale drift net fishing in the high seas is restricted to maximum 2.5km in length reducing the entangling of turtles and other non-target species. In the longline fishery use of circle hooks are encouraged than "J" hooks. Mechanized trawling is completely prohibited in Sri Lanka.

Since 2017 use of gill nets are being discouraged and currently Sri Lanka is not issuing new licenses for gill net operations for newly built vessels. The length of gill nets targeting tuna and tuna like species within EEZ also restricted and incorporated to the fishing operation license as a condition. The logbook data collection system allows the fisherman to report the interaction of turtles to the fishing gear. By-catch data recording is being improved through regular awareness programs. Discarded catches are being recorded by the skipper of the vessel/ fishing master (Log book records). L – Live, and D-Dead data reported to the Secretariat through form 1DI as per IOTC Res. 12/04, 15/02, as well as through the Regional Observer Scheme (ROS).

In 2022, DFAR has prepared and published leaflets on live release of turtles in three languages and distributed among fishermen and awareness is being conducted. Also in year 2025, posters were displayed in each harbour premises to aware the fishermen on prohibited species and live release practices. There are two major NGOs working on turtle conservation in south coast of Sri Lanka. In addition, NARA and Department of Wild Life Conservation (DWLC) working on turtle conservation. DWLC is running in-situ conservation activities at Bundala, mainly concerning nest protection, hatching rearing and safe releasing. Eco tourism is one of the main advantages of these projects. This has provided alternative livelihood for the people those engaged in poaching of turtle eggs previously. These projects conduct turtle rescue programs with fisher community.

5.4 Other ecologically related species (e.g., cetaceans, mobulid rays, whale sharks) [Desirable]

Catching of marine mammals is legally prohibited Under the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Act No.2 of 1996 and the Fauna and Flora protection (amendment) Act 1937, (amended 1993 and 2008). Sri Lanka do not operate large purse seines. However, regulation is being enforced prohibiting catching of whale shark by setting gears intentionally.

The fishermen are made aware on releasing dolphins, turtles and whale sharks if incidentally caught to a fishing gear by conducting regular awareness programs by NARA and DFAR. The Log books facilitate reporting of incidental catches of marine mammals. Deployment of an observer in small boats is not practical due to limited space, facilities and safety aspects.

6. NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING SYSTEMS [Mandatory]

6.1. Logsheet data collection and verification (including date commenced and status of implementation)

The log book data recording system is legally mandatory by Fish Catch Data Collection Regulations, 2012 (Gazette, No. 1878/11 amended in 01 September 2014) for multiday fishing vessels > 34 feet (10.3m) in length operate basically in catching large pelagic fish within EEZ and high seas.

It is legally mandatory to submit log sheet after every fishing trip. Fishermen provide detailed data on the spatial and temporal distribution of catch and effort by individual gear, which satisfy the need of rectifying the shortcomings of obtaining special information on catch and effort by individual gear through port sampling programme**.** Data received in logbooks has been utilized for verification and also to overcome inherent inefficiencies of port sampling data as per the IOTC requirement.

Procedures for comparing logbook data with data on fish landings obtained from the Large Pelagic fishery survey has been completed and pre-tested with a sample of boats**.** The vessels that were sampled at ports and the same vessels submitted log sheets were sorted by month referencing to their registration number. The landed catch records were separated by gear and area based on the catch and effort reported as in log sheets since submission of log sheets is a mandatory requirement for multiday fleet of >10.3m. Majority of sampled boats at ports have been regularly submitted the log sheet after every fishing trip. The assumption made during the multi-gear separation process was that each boat made two fishing trips instead of one; longline and gillnet separately. Around 15% landings are sampled jointly by NARA and DFAR officials at 25 major landing sites (fishery harbours). Total of 112 data collectors (108 from DFAR and 05 from NARA) are involved in this field data collection**.**

Logbook data are cross-checked against the Landing Declaration data currently submitted by vessel owners as part of the Department's existing administrative procedure. Although the mandatory submission of Landing Declarations is not explicitly provided for under the existing regulations, the Department intends to introduce an additional clause to the Fish Catch Data Collection Regulations, 2014, making the submission of Landing Declarations by vessel owners a mandatory legal requirement.

6.2. Observer scheme

Sri Lanka has been implementing its National Observer Programme in accordance with IOTC Resolution 11/04 since 2014.

Initial Recruitment and Training (2014)

The Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DFAR) initially called for applications from qualified officers interested in becoming on-board observers. Out of the applicants, 20 officers were selected and underwent basic safety-at-sea training at the Colombo International Nautical and Engineering College (CINEC) from 10–14 March 2014, with financial support from the Fishery Improvement Project (FIP).

Following this, 15 officers were selected for further training. On 08 April 2014, they received training on the IOTC Observer Manual and logistical procedures from experts at the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP). These officers were officially appointed as national observers by DFAR on 1 September 2014, for a two-year term.

Further Training and Support (2015)

Recognizing the need for further capacity building, DFAR organized additional training workshops on species identification, data collection, and reporting. From 23–25 February 2015, IOTC experts conducted a review visit and provided targeted training on completing observer data forms, measuring standard lengths, handling bycatch, and species identification using field guides.

From 23–27 March 2015, observers received further training:

01. **23–24 March:** GPS and communication training at CINEC
02. **25–27 March:** Fish identification training at NARA
    Both sessions were supported by FIP under SFP.

Advanced Technical Training (2018)

From 12–23 February 2018, a comprehensive technical training program was conducted by Capricorn Marine Environmental (CapMarine) under FAO organization. IOTC Secretariat officials also participated during the second week (from 19 February) to evaluate and update the programme. A total of 28 participants, including current observers, were trained as trainers

Observer Programme Expansion and Structured Development (2018–2022)

To further strengthen and diversify the observer pool, DFAR conducted a basic introductory programme on 03 September 2019 for 35 participants from NARA, Ocean University, and the Sri Lanka Navy. Subsequently, 16 candidates were selected and underwent an advanced technical training from 17–19 February 2020, conducted by the observer team trained in 2018, alongside NARA scientists.

In line with the Letter of Understanding (LoU) signed between DFAR and IOTC on 23 October 2018, a structured three-stage training programme was planned:

SV1 (Scoping Visit): Conducted by CapMarine expert Mr. Chris Heinecken in Sri Lanka from 19–26 January 2020.

SV2 (Observer Training):
Part 1: Observer Logistics Coordination training (virtual) – 7 February to 1 March 2022.
Part 2: Scientific Field Observer Training (virtual) – 20 June to 1 July 2022 for 14 observers.
Part 3: In-person SFO training – 26–30 September 2022 conducted by Mr. Philip August (Capmarine)
Part 4: STCW Safety-at-Sea Training – 10–14 October 2022 at CINEC for 10 observers.

Finally, Sri Lank has 10 IOTC Registered Observers under the Observer Pool.

Observer Deployments (2022–2026):

First Deployment – IMUL-A-0782NBO
Debriefing: 20–21 November 2022 at Dikkovita Harbour
Deployment: Began 21 November 2022
Completion: 25 January 2023; final report submitted to IOTC

Second Deployment – IMUL-A-0782NBO
Period: 5–21 June 2023
Observer returned in poor health; report submitted to IOTC

Third Deployment – IMUL-A-0115CBO
Period: 31 December 2023 – 30 April 2024
Final report submitted to IOTC

Fourth Deployment – IMUL-A-0781NBO
Period: 10 December 2025 – 18 February 2026

Table 3. Annual observer coverage by operation, e.g., longline hooks, purse seine sets (for the most recent five years at a minimum, e.g., 2021–2025 or to the extent available). **[Mandatory]**

Year	Number of Vessels > 24m	Number of active vessels	No. of fishing operations	Number of observer coverage	% of Observer coverage
2014	Purse Seine - 08	08	10	02	20
2015	Long line - 02	02	02	02	100
2016	0	0	0	0	0
2017	Long Line -02	02	15	02	13.33
2018	Long Line - 20	20	09	02	22.22
2019	Long Liners - 22	21	86	05	5.81

2020	Long Liners - 23	22	63	07	11.11
2021	Long liners - 23	22	18	03	16.66
2022	Long liners - 23	08	09	02	22
2023	Long liners - 23	05	10	01	10
2024	Long liners - 05	04	07	01	14
2025	Long liners – 03 01longliner vessel <24 m (The vessel is 23.3m in length)	04	14	01	7.14

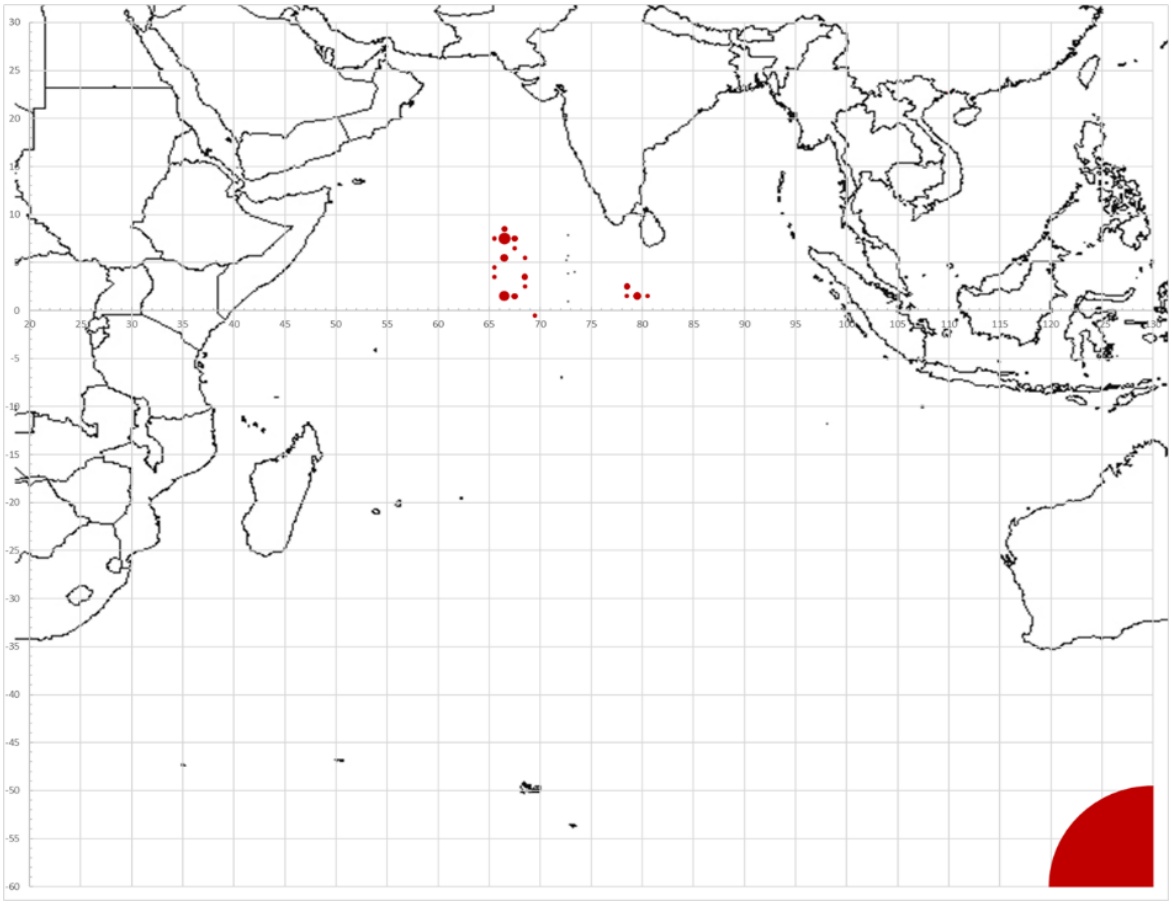


Figure 4. Map showing the spatial distribution of observer coverage. **[Mandatory]**

6.3. Port sampling programme [Mandatory]

Sri Lanka implements port-sampling programmes at Harbours, major fish landing sites and anchorages to collect fisheries and biological information on catches landed by fishing vessels, particularly those engaged in tuna and tuna-like species fisheries. Sampling activities are carried out by the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DFAR) and the National Aquatic Resources Research and Development Agency (NARA), focusing on species identification, catch composition and size-frequency data. These activities contribute to the collection of information required for monitoring the exploitation of tuna and tuna-like species and other IOTC-managed resources.
The information collected through port sampling is used in conjunction with fishing logbook records, Landing Declaration data and information obtained through fisheries observer programmes to improve the accuracy and reliability of national fisheries statistics. The collected data are used for fisheries management, scientific assessments and the preparation of annual statistical submissions to the IOTC Secretariat, in accordance with the applicable IOTC conservation and management measures and data-reporting requirements.

Table 4. Number of vessel trips or vessels active monitored, by species and fishery **[Mandatory]**

Fishing Gear	Number of trips	Main Targeted Species and Bycatch Species
Longline- LL	879	YFT,SKJ,BET,ALB,BLM,BUM,MLS,SFA,SWO
Gillnet- GN	953	SKJ,YFT,BET,ALB,BLM,BUM,MLS,SFA,SWO
Ring net - RN	851	FRI,BLT,KAW,YFT,SKJ,BET,RUS,CNT,RRU

Table 5. Number of fish measured, by species and fishery] **[Mandatory]**

Fishery		Temp. tuna	Tropical tuna			Neritic tuna				Bill fish					Sharks				Seer fish
Fishery	Fishery code	ALB	BET	SKJ	YFT	FRI	KAW	BLT	LOT	BLM	BUM	MLS	SFA	SWO	FAL	BSH	LMA	SMA	COM
	DL.DF[IN]TR	4	522	50	653	0	0	0	0	10	10	0	6	27	255	478	14	41	0
	DL.FR[IS]TR	0	750	155	2683	0	0	2	1	72	55	3	117	2363	227	316	12	54	22
	DL[IN]TR	0	77	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	0	0	0	46	0	0	0	0	0
	DL[SI]TR	0	345	350	175	5	10	12	28	53	9	0	0	304	0	0	0	0	25
Long line	DL[SS]TR	106	1383	2058	8023	0	0	0	0	631	118	2	4	3378	0	0	0	0	432
	GD.AS[IN]TR	9	5	1370	26	5	3	4	0	0	16	0	5	4	88	36	11	4	0
	GD.AS[IS]TR	0	109	7100	156	72	12	69	0	31	69	5	98	34	81	95	6	5	0
	GD.AS[SI]NT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	53	26	0	6	0
	GD.AS[SI]TR	12	68	1201	80	0	0	0	0	25	19	3	7	14	0	0	0	0	0
Gill net	GD.AS[SS]TR	100	300	10155	1563	0	0	0	0	340	264	17	121	263	40	53	0	0	42
	RN[IN]	0	40	169	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	43	0	0	0	0
	RN[IN]NS	0	0	0	0	54	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	RN-FS[IS]NS	0	0	0	0	305	30	31	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
	RN-FS[IS]TR	0	63	2298	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	28	6	1	8	29
	RN-FS[SI]NS	28	53	847	9	876	53	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	RN-FS[SS]	296	282	9382	379	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	29	4	0	5	0
Ring net	RN-FS[SS]NS	0	0	0	0	0	0	639	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

6.4. Actions taken to monitor catches & manage fisheries for Striped Marlin, Black Marlin, Blue Marlin and Indo-pacific Sailfish [Mandatory]

- Maintenance of updated log book (as per Res. 15/01) on board is legally mandatory.
- Skippers are trained on species identification and catch data recording.
- There is a separate column in the log book to report Striped Marlin, Black Marlin, Blue Marlin and Indo-pacific Sailfish.catches for all gears.
- Log book data base is maintained at DFAR.
- Catch by small boats is collected by port sampling programme by the data collectors assigned to the landing sites.

Annual catch and effort data and size frequency data is submitted to IOTC as per the resolution 15/02.
Catch, retain on board, trans-ship, land, any bill fish (Striped Marlin, Black Marlin, Blue Marlin, Indo Pacific Sailfish, Sword fish) smaller than 60 cm Lower Jaw Fork Length is prohibited in High Seas, and has been included to the conditions of the High seas fishing operation license.

6.5. Gillnet observer coverage and monitoring [Desirable]

Significant number of gillnet operating vessel trips (>10%) are being sampled under the existing port sampling program. Annual catch and effort data and size frequency data is submitted to IOTC as per the resolution 15/02. Refer 6.3, Table 5 above.

6.6 Sampling plans for mobulid rays [Mandatory]

No intentional catch of mobulid rays in Sri Lanka . The incidental catches are recorded in log books and monitored by the existing port sampling program. Catch and effort data submitted to IOTC in the annual submission as per the resolution 15/02. In 2021/22, DFAR has prepared and published leaflets on live release of Sharks and Rays in three languages and distributed among fishermen and awareness is being conducted. Also in year 2025, posters were displayed in each harbour premises to aware the fishermen on prohibited species and live release practices.

6.7 Electronic Monitoring Standards [Mandatory for CPC implementing EMS]

Due to the impracticality of deploying human observers aboard small vessels (<24m) owing to space, safety, and logistical constraints, the IOTC recommended the adoption of Electronic Monitoring Systems (EMS) to gather fisheries data.

The Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DFAR), in collaboration with Zindhu Holdings (Pvt) Ltd, has initiated the development of a cost-effective Electronic Monitoring System (EMS) for Sri Lankan IMUL fishing vessels operating on the high seas, where it is difficult to deploy human observers on board.

The system has been trailed on five fishing vessels. During these trials, several technical issues were identified, including radio communication interference, battery drainage, and physical damage or failure of some instruments (Cameras and data storage system).

The software system for data analysis has also been developed. However, further trial data are required to properly test and evaluate its performance.

Therefore, further sea trials are planned and those trials will focus on resolving the identified technical issues, improving the performance of the equipment, and testing the software for observer data analysis and reporting.

The outcomes of this project will guide the development of a national EMS framework to be gradually integrated into the broader fisheries monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) system of Sri Lanka.

7. NATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAMS [Desirable]

7.1. National research programs on blue shark

NARA's research project "Monitoring and assessment of marine living resources, sea birds and socio-economic aspects of IOTC species in Sri Lankan waters" in 2025 included a component titled "Study on bycatch interactions in tuna fisheries in Sri Lanka, focusing on sharks and seabirds." Under this component, monthly shark landing surveys are carried out at the fishery harbours around the country including main harbours such as Negombo, Beruwala, Mirissa and Valachchenai. The surveys collect catch and effort data, species identification, morphometric data and reproductive biology data. Port sampling, logbook and observer data from six fishery harbours are also used to study shark bycatch in the tuna longline fishery, including blue shark.

7.2. National research programs on Striped Marlin, Black Marlin, Blue Marlin and Indo-pacific Sailfish

The data collection programme for billfish has been improved through NARA's routine port sampling programme at major fishery harbours. Because billfish are mostly cut at sea before landing, whole specimens are rarely available for accurate length and weight measurements. To address this, a study has been carried out to develop length- length and length-weight conversion equations for sailfish and swordfish, so that total length and body weight can be estimated from partial measurements taken during port sampling. A spatio-temporal study of sailfish bycatch has also been carried out using tuna longline logbook data (2016–2019). NARA's research project "Monitoring and assessment of marine living resources, sea birds and socio-economic aspects of IOTC species in Sri Lankan waters" includes a component titled "Estimating morphometric relationships of selected billfish species (Sailfish *Istiophorus platypterus* and Swordfish *Xiphias gladius*) using data from the tuna fishery in Sri Lanka." Billfish data are collected under this programme to support fisheries monitoring and reporting to IOTC.

7.3. National research programs on sharks

The data collection programme for sharks has been improved through monthly shark landing surveys at the main fishery harbours in Sri Lanka. The surveys collect catch and effort data, species identification, morphometric data and reproductive biology data. Shark bycatch in the tuna longline fishery, including blue shark, has also been studied using port sampling, logbook and observer data from fishery harbours. A study of silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*) has begun to estimate the hepatosomatic index and gonadosomatic index. NARA's research project "Monitoring and assessment of marine living resources, sea birds and socio-economic aspects of IOTC species in Sri Lankan waters" includes a component titled "Study on bycatch interactions in

tuna fisheries in Sri Lanka, focusing on sharks and seabirds." Shark data are collected under this programme to support fisheries management and reporting to IOTC.

7.4. National research programs on oceanic whitetip sharks

Oceanic whitetip shark data are collected through the shark data collection programme, which runs monthly shark landing surveys at fishery harbours. The surveys collect catch and effort data, species identification, morphometric data and reproductive biology data for all shark species landed. Shark bycatch in the tuna longline fishery is also studied using port sampling, logbook and observer data from harbours. NARA's research project "Monitoring and assessment of marine living resources, sea birds and socio-economic aspects of IOTC species in Sri Lankan waters" includes a component titled "Study on bycatch interactions in tuna fisheries in Sri Lanka, focusing on sharks and seabirds." Data on oceanic whitetip shark and other shark species are collected under this programme to support fisheries management and reporting to IOTC.

7.5. National research programs on marine turtles

Marine turtle interactions with the tuna fisheries are monitored through the national port sampling programme and the logbook data collection system, which record turtle bycatch. Port sampling is carried out at major fishery harbours, and logbook and observer data obtained from DFAR are used to assess interactions between the tuna fisheries and non-target species. NARA's research project "Monitoring and assessment of marine living resources, sea birds and socio-economic aspects of IOTC species in Sri Lankan waters" includes a component titled "Study on bycatch interactions in tuna fisheries in Sri Lanka, focusing on sharks and seabirds," which addresses bycatch of vulnerable species in the longline and gillnet fisheries. The marine turtle bycatch data collected through port sampling and logbooks support national fisheries management and Sri Lanka's reporting obligations to IOTC.

7.6. National research programs on thresher sharks

Thresher sharks (*Alopias* spp.) are covered by NARA's general shark research programme. Under the component "Study on bycatch interactions in tuna fisheries in Sri Lanka, focusing on sharks and seabirds" of the research project "Monitoring and assessment of marine living resources, sea birds and socio-economic aspects of IOTC species in Sri Lankan waters," monthly shark landing surveys are carried out at fishery harbours. These surveys record species identification, catch and effort, morphometric data and reproductive biology data for all landed sharks, including thresher sharks. In addition, port sampling, logbook and observer data from are used to assess shark bycatch in the tuna longline fishery. The information gathered supports national fisheries management and Sri Lanka's reporting to IOTC.

Table 6. Summary table of national research programs, including dates. [currently underway]

No	Project title	Period	Funding source	Objectives	Short description
(a)	Collecting and Preparing Data for IOTC /CITES Data	On going	Government of Sri Lanka	i. Catch and effort data collection for large pelagic species/by-catch species ii. To analyse stock status of the resources iii. Biological studies for selected species iv. Annual catch and effort data Submission to IOTC, FAO data sharing. v. Make recommendations for sustainable resource use.	Information provided to FAO, IOTC and also utilized for domestic fisheries management.
(b)	Strengthening marine fisheries data collection in Sri Lanka	On going	Government of Sri Lanka and Norad through Sri Lanka-Norway bilateral project	Upgrade port sampling in marine fishery of Sri Lanka via establishing a proper sampling strategy.	Development and establishment of a robust fisheries information system. Capacity building of staff NARA, DFAR and Ministry of Fisheries on data collection, management and stock assessments
(c)	Fisheries independent surveys in the coastal areas in Sri Lanka	Ongoing	Government of Sri Lanka and Norad through Sri Lanka-Norway bilateral project	Report findings from fisheries independent surveys according to scientifically recognised norms.	Small Pelagic Fish biomass data is gathered through acoustic methods. Data will be fundamental for the management plans for selected fisheries in Sri Lanka

					Capacity building of NARA scientists
(d)	Strengthening of Fishing Ground Advisories: Validating Tuna Forecasts for Yellow Fin (*Thunnus albacares*), Skipjack (*Katsuwonus pelamis*), & Bigeye Tuna (*Thunnus obesus*), and Strengthening Dissemination	On going	Government of Sri Lanka	Produce fishing ground maps for yellow fin, skipjack, and bigeye tuna fishing operations	The model was updated for the latest satellite and oceanographic model data sources and improved the predictability Successfully practicing for YFT, BET and SKJ
(e)	Comparison of the diet composition of frigate tuna (*Auxis thazard*) in Sri Lankan waters using combined morphological and metabarcoding approaches	On going	MSc Research (NARA, IMR-Norway, UoK, Sri Lanka)	i) To characterize the prey diversity and taxonomic composition of *A. thazard* using morphological stomach-content analysis and determine the prey diversity and taxonomic composition of *A. thazard* using DNA metabarcoding. ii) Spatial variation in condition factor, stomach fullness index, and prey diversity iii) Assess how morphological and molecular methods complement each other in diet analyses iv) Compare feeding ecology of frigate tuna with other studies, particularly focusing on the Indian Ocean.	This study is expected to produce a detailed account of the diet of *A. thazard* in Sri Lankan waters. It is also expected to show whether prey composition differs between Southern and West Coast landing sites during July to September. Based on the metabarcoding studies, the molecular method may reveal additional prey taxa that are not visible under standard morphological analysis. This would support the value of combining both methods in fish diet research.

(f)	Analysis of Recreational Fisheries and Whale-Watching Activities	Ongoing	Government of Sri Lanka	Collect comprehensive data on marine mammal sightings and movements Identify conservation hotspots and human impact zones Identify conservation hotspots and human impact zones	This study will find the interactions (spatial and temporal) marine mammals with fisheries. These findings will be useful to make recommendations on conservation on marine mammals. Also, stakeholder views will be considered to manage the whale watching industry with minimam impacts to the resources.

8. IMPLEMENTATION OF SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE IOTC RELEVANT TO THE SC. [Mandatory]

Table 9. Scientific requirements contained in Resolutions of the Commission, adopted between 2012 and 2024.

Res. No.	Resolution	Scientific requirement	CPC progress
12/04	On the conservation of marine turtles	Paragraphs 3, 4, 6–10	Refer 5.3 above. Carry the line cutters and de-hookers on board by long liners and dip nets by purse seiners has made legally mandatory for the high seas operating vessels under high seas fishing regulation 2014. In 2021/22 DFAR has prepared and published leaflets on live release of turtles in three languages and distributed among fishermen and awareness is being conducted. In 2025, posters were displayed in each harbour premises to aware the fishermen on prohibited species and live release practices.
12/09	On the conservation of thresher sharks (family alopiidae) caught in association with fisheries in the IOTC area of competence	Paragraphs 4–8	Refer 5.1.1 National initiatives on conservation and management of shark. In 2021/22 DFAR has prepared and published leaflets on live release of Sharks and rays in three languages and distributed among fishermen and awareness is being conducted. In 2025, posters were displayed in each harbour premises to aware the fishermen on prohibited species and live release practices.
13/04	On the conservation of cetaceans	Paragraphs 7– 9	Marine mammals (cetaceans) and turtles are protected under Fauna and Flora Protection (amendment) Act 1937(FFPA) (amended 1993 and 2008); Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Act No. 2 of 1996 (FARA)(amended 2004, 2013 •Vessels >24m are deployed with observers and data reported . •There is a separate box in the log book to report

Res. No.	Resolution	Scientific requirement	CPC progress
			incidental catches of cetaceans (if any) and release of them dead/alive form. This has been incorporated to the e-log book/tab by giving pictures and drop down selection. In 2021/22 DFAR has prepared and published leaflets on live release of mammals in three languages and distributed among fishermen and awareness is being conducted In 2025, posters were displayed in each harbour premises to aware the fishermen on prohibited species and live release practices.
13/05	On the conservation of whale sharks (*Rhincodon typus*)	Paragraphs 7– 9	Catch of whale shark is prohibited by the amended shark fishery management regulation 2015 •Fishers are being aware recording of the incidental catches and prompt release in an unharmed condition. -There is a separate box in the log book to report incidental catches •The sanction on violations has been increased up to Rupees one million under the provisions of the Amended Act for High Seas Fishing in 2013. Prohibition of intentional surrounding of whale sharks by purse seiners. Mandatory to carry dip nets on board for purse seines to release whale sharks in live form.(High Seas Fishing Operations Regulations 2014) In 2021/22 DFAR has prepared and published leaflets on live release of Sharks and rays in three languages and distributed among fishermen and awareness is being conducted In 2025, posters were displayed in each harbour premises to aware the fishermen on prohibited species and live release practices.
13/06	On a scientific and management framework on the conservation of shark species caught in association with IOTC managed fisheries	Paragraph 5–6	Catch, retain onboard, tranship, land,store or sell of thresher sharks species, oceanic white tip shark, whale shark and shark finning on board and landing sharks fins detached both within EEZ and high seas areas is prohibited in the consolidated A regulation. published in March 2015 -submitted data for sharks, as required by IOTC data reporting procedures In 2025, posters were displayed in each harbour premises to aware the fishermen on prohibited species and live release practices.
15/01	On the recording of catch and effort by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence	Paragraphs 1–10	Paper Log book onboard is made legally mandatory (catch data collection regulation 2012 (amended 2014) -The log books for year 2019 are printed as per resolution 15/01 and distributed -The Log book templates are provided to Secretariat to display on IOTC website. At present, there are separate three logbooks for LL, GL and RN fisheries.
15/02	Mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs)	Paragraphs 1–7	Data collection sheets have been introduced and the port samplers were trained, sampling procedures introduced, Log book has been improved in a way that enabling the calculation of total catch as per the resolution.Marine mammals and turtles are protected under Fauna and Flora Protection (amendment) Act 1937(FFPA) (amended 1993 and 2008); Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Act No. 2 of 1996 (FARA)(amended2004, 2013). Entanglement of Sea birds are not reported due to the nature of the fishery. However there is a separate cell to report incidental catches of sea birds if any and release of them dead/alive from.

Res. No.	Resolution	Scientific requirement	CPC progress
			A methodology has developed to calculate the length of Billfish species from the cut segments and length data of Billfish are being taken.
17/05	On the conservation of sharks caught in association with fisheries managed by IOTC	Paragraphs 6, 9, 11	The removal of shark fins on board, landing, retention onboard, transhipment and carrying of detached shark fins.and Landing of carcasses of sharks which are not having fins naturally attached to the body at the point of landing is prohibited by law published in March 2015 . Release of live sharks, especially juveniles and pregnant sharks that are caught incidentally is made lagally mandatory by the above regulation. Fishers and the data collectors law enforcement officers have made aware and the species identification guides are provided. In 2021/22 DFAR has prepared and published leaflets on live release of Sharks and rays in three languages and distributed among fishermen and awareness is being conducted. Data recorded as per IOTC data reporting requirements and procedures in Resolution 15/02. In 2025, posters were displayed in each harbour premises to aware the fishermen on prohibited species and live release practices.
18/02	On management measures for the conservation of blue shark caught in association with IOTC fisheries	Paragraphs 2-5	Record Blue shark catch in accordance with the requirements set out in the Resolution 15/01.The data collection programme has been improved to report accurate blue shark catch, effort, size and discard data to IOTC in accordance with the Resolution 15/02. The domestic catch data to collection and monitor system is given under point (6) this report.
18/05	On management measures for the conservation of the Billfishes: Striped marlin, black marlin, blue marlin and Indo-Pacific sailfish	Paragraphs 7 – 11	Data recording of catch and effort data is practiced by using a log book prepared as per the standards given in the resolution 15/02 in the IOTC area. Use of species identification cards for proper identification of fish species specially to ensure accurate reporting of Striped Marlin, Black Marlin, Blue Marlin and Indopacific Sailfish A methodology has developed to calculate the length of Billfish species from the cut segments and length data of Billfish are being taken.
18/07	On measures applicable in case of non-fulfilment of reporting obligations in the IOTC	Paragraphs 1, 4	Nominal catches were submitted to IOTC as per the IOTC 1RC electronic form covering the most commonly caught elasmobranch species according to records of catches and incidents as established in Resolution 15/01 including zero (0) catches.
19/01	On an Interim Plan for Rebuilding the Indian Ocean Yellowfin Tuna Stock in the IOTC Area of Competence (*If not provided under Res 21/01 below*)	Paragraph 22	Refer 21/01 below.
19/03	On the Conservation of Mobulid Rays Caught in Association with Fisheries in the IOTC Area of Competence	Paragraph 11	No intentional catch of mobulid rays in Sri Lanka . The incidental catches are already monitored by the existing port sampling program and catch and effort data submitted to IOTC in the annual submission as per the resolution 15/02. In 2021/22 DFAR has prepared and published leaflets on live release of Sharks and Rays in three languages and distributed among fishermen and awareness is being conducted In 2025, posters were displayed in each harbour premises to aware the fishermen on prohibited species and live release practices.

Res. No.	Resolution	Scientific requirement	CPC progress
21/01	On an Interim Plan for Rebuilding the Indian Ocean Yellowfin Tuna Stock in the IOTC Area of Competence (*If not provided under Res 19/01 above*)	Paragraph 23	Already implemented. This has been reported to compliance committee on the date of 09.03.2023 with a implementation report. Administrative instructions will be issued outlining the methodology currently being implemented to analyse catch data and ensure that Yellowfin Tuna (YFT) catches remain within the applicable catch limit. Both the Landing Declaration process and the detailed inspection procedure have been fully implemented for cross-checking and verification purposes.
23/07	On reducing the incidental bycatch of seabirds in longline fisheries.	Paragraphs 3–7	Sea bird catches are not reported in Sri Lanka due to the nature of the fishery and less availability of sea birds species in the high seas around Sri Lanka. Seabirds are not interacting with long liners either line is setting or line hauling mostly due to the low height of the small boats without sophisticated super structure. The National Aquatic Resources and Research Development Agency (NARA) has done three short-term studies on seabirds through comprehensive port sampling, onboard observation study made in research vessels in the high seas of Bay of Bengal and consultation of Fishermen. The findings were present at the WPEB in 2014 and WPEB in 2026. Thus there is no mitigation measures in applied to prevent seabird interactions and Sri Lanka and has not developed the NPOA-Sea birds. Observers are not deployed in the small vessels due to space and safety restrictions . No vessels operated south of 25˚S.
23/08	On electronic monitoring standards for IOTC fisheries	Paragraphs 3c	Sri Lanka is currently implementing a pilot project on Electronic Monitoring Systems (EMS) The outcomes of this project will guide the development of a national EMS framework to be gradually integrated into the broader fisheries monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) system of Sri Lanka.
25/06	On a regional observer scheme	Paragraph 12	Sri Lanka is actively participating in the IOTC Regional Observer Scheme by deploying trained observers on tuna and tuna-like fishing vessels larger than 24m in length. The program aims to collect reliable data on catch composition, bycatch of non-target and protected species, and compliance with IOTC conservation measures, thereby strengthening national fisheries monitoring and supporting sustainable management of tuna resources.

9. LITERATURE CITED [Mandatory]

This report has been prepared using data, information and official records compiled and maintained by the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DFAR) and the National Aquatic Resources Research and Development Agency (NARA), supplemented by relevant national legislation, policy documents, technical reports, scientific publications and official information issued by regional and international fisheries management organisations. The information presented has been compiled from multiple sources to provide a comprehensive overview of Sri Lanka's tuna and tuna-like fisheries, including the status of fisheries management, fishing operations, catch trends, monitoring and control arrangements, conservation measures and compliance with relevant national and international obligations.

The national legislative and policy framework consulted in preparing this report includes the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Act, No. 2 of 1996, and its subsequent amendments, particularly the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (Amendment) Act, No. 35 of 2013, together with other relevant legislative provisions and regulatory instruments governing fishing operations, vessel registration

and authorisation, fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance, conservation of marine resources and the prevention of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Relevant national policy and management documents were also considered, particularly the Sri Lanka National Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing (SLNPOA–IUU) and the National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (NPOA–Sharks). These documents provided the basis for examining Sri Lanka's national commitments, management objectives, regulatory responsibilities and institutional arrangements relating to sustainable fisheries management.

Scientific and fisheries management information was obtained primarily from the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), including its official statistical database, catch and effort information, species-specific stock assessments, Scientific Committee reports, Working Party reports, circulars and conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission. Particular attention was given to relevant IOTC Resolutions applicable to tuna and tuna-like species, including provisions concerning catch limits, authorised fishing vessels, vessel monitoring systems, fishing capacity, data reporting, observer programmes, port State measures and the conservation of vulnerable marine species. These sources were used to assess the status of Indian Ocean fish stocks, identify applicable management requirements and evaluate Sri Lanka's obligations as a Contracting Party to the IOTC.

In addition, national fisheries information maintained by DFAR and NARA was consulted, including fishing vessel registration, fishing licences, fishing logbooks, catch and landing statistics, port sampling data, fisheries inspection records, vessel monitoring system (VMS) information and observer programme records, where available and relevant. These sources were particularly important in examining the characteristics of Sri Lanka's fishing fleet, fishing patterns, operational areas, fishing gear composition, species-specific catch contributions and the implementation of fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) measures. Information obtained through national data collection and monitoring programmes was also considered in assessing the extent to which Sri Lanka's fisheries operations comply with applicable national regulations and IOTC requirements.

Furthermore, relevant scientific assessments and technical publications produced by IOTC Working Parties, international fisheries research institutions and regional scientific collaborations were reviewed to supplement national information and provide a broader understanding of the status and management of tuna and tuna-like species in the Indian Ocean. These included available assessments of stock biomass, fishing mortality, biological characteristics, recruitment, catch trends and other relevant biological and ecological indicators. Where applicable, information on uncertainties, data limitations and differences in assessment methodologies was also taken into consideration when interpreting scientific findings.