REVISION OF THE WPDCS PROGRAMME OF WORK (2027–2031)

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Purpose

To ensure that participants at the 22nd Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics (WPDCS22) revise the Programme of Work for the WPDCS by taking into consideration the specific requests of the Commission and Scientific Committee.

Background

At the 21st Session of the SC:

(Para. 219) The SC noted paper IOTC–2018–SC21–09 which provided the Scientific Committee (SC) with a proposed Program of Work for each of its Working Parties (WP), including prioritisation of the elements requested by each WP.

(Para. 220) The SC noted the proposed Program of Work and priorities for the Scientific Committee and each of the Working Parties and **AGREED** to a consolidated Program of Work as outlined in Appendix 35a-g. The Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of each working party shall ensure that the efforts of their working party are focused on the core areas contained within the appendix, taking into account any new research priorities identified by the Commission at its next Session.

(Para. 223) The SC noted that the consolidated table of priorities does not replace the full programme of work of each Working Party (Appendix 35a-g) and that adequate attention and focus should still be allocated to those activities where possible. The SC further noted that Table 5 has been developed by the SC and WP Chairs to provide more specific direction to the IOTC Secretariat and the SC Chair as to the priorities of the SC so that, if and when external funding becomes available intersessionally, it is possible to clearly prioritise across all WPs based on the objectives of the SC (as agreed in IOTC–2014–SC17–R, para. 179).

(Para. 225) The SC noted Table 5 outlining the highest priorities from each WP in terms of funding requirements. The complete set of research priorities identified (and ranked according to their importance) by each WP are detailed more fully in **Appendix 35a-g.**

Discussion

Participants at the WPDCS22 are requested to consider the priorities set by the Commission and the Scientific Committee, via Conservation and Management Measures, and revise its Programme of Work to match those priorities.

Recommendations

That the WPDCS:

1. **NOTE** paper IOTC–2026–WPDCS22–28, which encouraged the WPDCS to further develop and refine its Programme of Work for 2027–2031 to align with the requests and directives from the Commission and Scientific Committee.
2. **RECOMMEND** a revised Programme of Work for 2027–2031 to the Scientific Committee for its consideration and potential endorsement.

Appendices

Appendix A: DRAFT: Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics Programme of Work (2027-2031)

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DRAFT: Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics Programme of Work (2027–2031)

Table 1. Priority topics for obtaining the information necessary to deliver the necessary advice to the Commission. *indicates activities with high priority for funding

	Topic		Sub-topic and project	2026.	2027	2028	2029	2030
1	Coastal fisheries data collection	1.1*	Data support missions to assist the implementation of data collection and sampling activities for fisheries insufficiently sampled. Recommended actions include designing sampling guidelines for IOTC fisheries. Priority to be given to the following countries / fisheries: • Indonesia • Pakistan • I.R. Iran • Tanzania • Comoros					
		1.2 *	Biological sampling workshop, including species identification and genetics sampling					
2	Data access and dissemination	2.1	Ocean-climate information: develop an online digital ocean atlas for the IOTC area of competence, linked by the IOTC website; develop indicators on ocean-climate status to be linked to the atlas portal, along with educational resources					
		2.2	Biological information: collaborate with CPCs to collect, Review, analyse, and manage of biological data and information.					
		2.3	Improve accessibility of IOTC scientific products and digital assets through standard metadata and DOI (e.g., remote workshops)					
		2.4	Secretariat To establish a photo and imagery tool library and archive and develop associated reporting guidelines					
3	Monitoring and improving data reporting requirement and performance	3.1	Drafting of indicators to assess performance of IOTC CPCs against IOTC Data Requirements; evaluation of performance of IOTC CPCs with those Requirements; development of					

		plans of action to address the issues identified, including timeframe of implementation and follow-up activities required. Priority given to CPCs with low data compliance assessment scores and/or upon requests by the CPCs.					
	3.2 *	Workshops to clarify data reporting requirements[1] and support preparation of annual submissions including ROS data					
	3.3	Support the documentation of sampling protocols and processing[2]					
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030

[1] Recommended by the CoC; **regular annual webinars / workshops to be held from 2025 onwards with each CPCs (or group of CPCs) prior to the approaching of the data reporting deadline**
[2] Secretariat to finalise the template, CPC to provide information