
RESOLUTION 26/06

MANDATORY STATISTICAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR IOTC CONTRACTING PARTIES AND COOPERATING NON-CONTRACTING PARTIES (CPCs)

Keywords: Data reporting; total catch; catch and effort; size data; fish aggregating devices (FAD); surface fisheries; longline fisheries; coastal fisheries

The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)

GIVEN that the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (UNFSA) obliges coastal States and fishing States on the high seas to collect and share, in a timely manner, complete and accurate data concerning fishing activities on, inter alia, vessel position, catch of target and non-target species and fishing effort;

NOTING that the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries provides that States should compile fishery-related and other supporting scientific data relating to fish stocks covered by subregional or regional fisheries management organizations and provide them in a timely manner to the FAO;

RECALLING the commitment made by Contracting Parties under Article V of the IOTC Agreement to keep under review the conditions and trends of the stocks and to gather, analyse and disseminate scientific information, catch and effort statistics and other data relevant to the conservation and management of the stocks and to fisheries based on the stocks covered by the IOTC Agreement;

COGNISANT that the above commitment can only be achieved when Contracting Parties meet the requirements of Article XI of the IOTC Agreement i.e. to provide statistical and other data and information to minimum specifications and in a timely manner;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the IOTC Scientific Committee has repeatedly stressed the importance of the timeliness of data submissions;

GIVEN that the activities of support vessels and the use of drifting fish aggregating devices (DFADs) are an integral part of the fishing effort exerted by the purse seine fleet;

NOTING that one of the difficulties faced by the Technical Committee on Allocation Criteria is the lack of information required to delineate catches taken from specific national jurisdictions and the high seas;

NOTING the concern of the IOTC Scientific Committee that the lack of data from CPCs' fisheries under the mandate of the IOTC on the mortality of marine turtles and marine mammals undermines the ability to estimate levels of marine turtle and marine mammal bycatch, and consequently the capacity of the IOTC to respond and prevent adverse effects of fishing on these marine species;

FURTHER NOTING the IOTC Scientific Committee's concern about the impossibility to undertake assessments on the status of seabirds in the Indian Ocean, while acknowledging that some species are currently critically endangered, and that the lack of reporting of seabird interactions by CPCs seriously undermines the ability of IOTC to respond and prevent adverse effects of fishing on seabirds;

FURTHER CONSIDERING the call upon States, in United Nations General Assembly Resolution 80/109 on Sustainable fisheries in 2025 to collect the necessary data in order to evaluate and closely monitor the use of large-scale fish aggregating devices and other devices, as appropriate, and their effects on tuna resources and tuna behaviour and associated and dependent species, to improve management procedures to monitor the number, type and use of such devices and to mitigate possible negative effects on the ecosystem, including on juveniles and the incidental by-catch of non-target species, particularly sharks and turtles;

REAFFIRMING United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/80/109 calling upon States and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements to collect and, where appropriate, report to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations required catch and effort data, and fishery-related information, in a complete, accurate and timely way, including for straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks within and beyond areas under national jurisdiction, discrete high seas fish stocks, and by-catch and discards; and, where they do not exist, to establish processes to strengthen data collection, including through innovative technologies, and reporting by members of regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements, including through regular reviews of member compliance with such obligations, and, when such obligations are not met, require the member concerned to rectify the problem, including through the preparation of plans of action with timelines;

ADOPTS, in accordance with Article IX, paragraph 1 of the IOTC Agreement, the following:

Definitions

1. For the purposes of this Resolution:
 - (a) “IOTC species” means all species of fish listed in Annex B of the IOTC Agreement.
 - (b) “Coastal Fisheries” means fisheries targeting IOTC species other than longline or surface, as defined below.
 - (c) “Longline Fisheries” means fisheries undertaken by vessels in the IOTC Record of Authorized Vessels that use longline gear.
 - (d) “Surface Fisheries” means all fisheries undertaken by vessels in the IOTC Record of Authorized Vessels other than longline fisheries; in particular those using purse seine, pole-and-line, gillnets, handlines and trolling gear.

Total catch data

2. CPCs shall submit annual estimates of the total catch by species and gear, by quarter if possible, in accordance with paragraph 8 (separated, whenever possible, by retained catches in live weight and by discards in live weight or numbers) for all species under the IOTC mandate as well as the most commonly caught elasmobranch species according to records of catches and incidents established in [Resolution 15/01](#) *On the recording of catch and effort data by fishing vessels in the IOTC Area of Competence*.
3. CPCs should provide data concerning non-target species as required under [Resolution 23/06](#) *On the conservation of cetaceans*, [Resolution 23/07](#) *On reducing the incidental bycatch of seabirds in longline fisheries* and [Resolution 12/04](#) *On the conservation of marine turtles*, [Resolution 25/08](#) *On the conservation of sharks caught in association with fisheries managed by IOTC* and [Resolution 19/03](#) *On the Conservation of Mobulid Rays Caught In Association with Fisheries in the IOTC Area of Competence* (or any other superseding Resolution).
4. CPCs shall submit catch and effort data for their IOTC fisheries as follows:
 - a) **Surface Fisheries:** catch weight by species and fishing effort shall be provided by 1° grid area and month strata. Purse seine and pole and line fisheries data shall be stratified by fishing mode (e.g. free swimming schools or schools in association with floating objects). The data shall be extrapolated to the total national monthly catches for each gear. Documents describing the extrapolation procedures (including raising factors corresponding to the logbook coverage) shall also be submitted routinely. Effort units reported should be consistent with those effort requirements of [Resolution 15/01](#)
 - b) **Longline Fisheries:** catch by species, in numbers or weight, and effort as the number of hooks deployed shall be provided by 5° grid area and month strata. Documents describing the extrapolation procedures (including raising factors corresponding to the logbook coverage) shall also be submitted routinely. For the work of relevant working parties under the IOTC Scientific Committee, longline data should be of a resolution of 1° grid area and month or finer. These data would be for the exclusive use of the IOTC Scientific Committee and its Working Parties, subject to the approval of the data owners and IOTC [Resolution 12/02](#) *Data confidentiality policy and procedures*, and should be provided for scientific use only in a timely fashion. Effort units reported should be consistent with those effort requirements of [Resolution 15/01](#).

- c) **Coastal Fisheries:** catches by species, fishing effort and fishing gear shall be submitted annually in accordance with paragraph 8., Fishing gear and fishing effort reported annually may be provided using an alternative geographical area if it better represents the fishery concerned. Effort units reported should be consistent with the effort requirements in [Resolution 15/01](#).
- d) In addition to the catch and effort data prescribed above, flag CPCs shall also report annual catch data for Surface and Longline Fisheries differentiated by (i) areas under national jurisdiction (ii) high seas, and (iii) areas under the national jurisdiction of other coastal State(s) if their vessels operate in those waters under any arrangement such as access agreements or chartering arrangements.
- e) CPCs shall also provide, to the extent possible, the geospatial catch and effort data as described in paragraph 4(d) for historical data time series, within 3 years of the adoption of the Resolution. The geospatial catch and effort data reported by the CPCs shall be validated and endorsed by the Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics and the IOTC Scientific Committee.
- f) Provisions on catch and effort data, applicable to IOTC species, shall also be applicable to the most commonly caught elasmobranch species according to records of catches and incidents as established in [Resolution 15/01](#).

Size data

- 5. Size data shall be provided for all gears and for all species mentioned in paragraph 4 and following the procedures described in the *Guidelines for the reporting of fisheries statistics to the IOTC*. Size sampling shall be run under strict and well described random sampling schemes which are necessary to provide unbiased figures of the sizes taken. Sampling coverage shall be set to at least one fish measured by ton caught, by species and type of fishery, with samples being representative of all the periods and areas fished. Alternatively, size data for longline fleets may be provided as part of the Regional Observer Scheme where such fleets have at least 5% observer coverage of all fishing operations. Length data by species, including the total number of fish measured, shall be submitted by a 5° grid area by month, by gear and fishing mode (e.g. free swimming schools or schools in association with floating objects for the purse seiners). Documents covering sampling and raising procedures shall also be provided, by species and type of fishery.
- 6. Considering that the activities of purse seine supply vessels and the use of DFADs are an integral part of the fishing effort exerted by the purse seine fleet, CPCs shall provide the following data in a timely fashion for the exclusive use of the IOTC Scientific Committee and its Working Parties, subject to the approval of the data owners and in accordance with Resolution 12/02 *Data confidentiality policy and procedures*:
 - a) The number and characteristics of purse seine supply vessels:
 - i. operating under their flag,
 - ii. assisting purse seine vessels operating under their flag, or
 - iii. licensed to operate in their EEZs, and that have been present in the IOTC Area of Competence;
 - b) The number of days at sea by purse seine and purse seine supply vessels by 1° grid area and month to be reported by the flag State of the supply vessel;
 - c) The total number set by the purse seine and purse seine supply vessels per quarter, as well as:
 - i. The positions, dates at the time of setting, FAD identifier and FAD type (i.e. drifting log or debris, drifting raft or FAD with a net, drifting raft or FAD without a net, anchored FADs and other FADs e.g. Payao, dead animal etc.); and
 - ii. The FAD design characteristics of each FAD (consistent with Annex IV of [Resolution 24/02 On Management of Drifting Fish Aggregating Devices \(FADs\) in the IOTC Area of Competence](#)).

Statistics on fishing vessels

7. By 1 January 2030, and annually thereafter, CPCs shall provide detailed statistics of the fishing vessels that contributed to the catches reported to the IOTC in the calendar year to the IOTC Executive Secretary. The aggregated fishing vessel statistics provided should include the following information and data.
 - a) fishery involved;
 - b) vessel type;
 - c) mechanisation type;
 - d) onboard fish preservation type; and
 - e) size class.

Timeliness of data submission to the IOTC Secretariat

8. CPCs shall comply with the following timelines for data submission to the IOTC Executive Secretary:
 - a) Provisional data on longline vessels operating in the high seas shall be submitted for the previous year no later than 30 June, and final data shall be submitted no later than 30 December.
 - b) Final data for all other vessels (including supply vessels) shall be submitted for the previous year no later than 30 June.
 - c) Where the final data cannot be submitted by the required date, at least preliminary data should be provided.
 - d) Beyond a delay of two years, all revisions of historical data should be formally reported on forms provided by the IOTC Secretariat, along with the proper justification. Revisions reported will be reviewed by the IOTC Scientific Committee, which will advise the IOTC Secretariat if revisions are accepted for scientific use. Developing coastal CPCs with limited data collection and validation systems may request the Commission to grant an extension of this timeline beyond two years and for a maximum of five years concerning data collection and validation. Any such request shall be accompanied with an explanation of the reasons for the request and submission of a detailed written plan with clear timelines to achieve progress made by the requesting CPC in reviewing its catch data to the Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics and the IOTC Scientific Committee. The IOTC Scientific Committee shall provide advice to the Commission on the merits of the request for consideration at its next annual Session following the request. In considering the request, the Commission shall give due consideration to the special requirements of developing States and the availability of technical support. If the Commission grants the request, the requesting CPC shall annually provide detailed updates of its progress made in reviewing its catch data to the Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics. If the requesting CPC fails to submit such an update, the extension shall be considered withdrawn.

Final provisions

9. This Resolution supersedes Resolution 15/02 *Mandatory Statistical Reporting Requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs)*.