

OUTCOMES OF THE THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE AND THE FIFTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 23 AUGUST, 2011

PURPOSE

To inform the Working Party on Methods (WPM) of the recommendations arising from the Thirteenth Session of the Scientific Committee (6–10 December, 2010), and the Fifteenth Session of the Commission (18–22 March, 2011) specifically related to the work of the WPM.

BACKGROUND

Scientific Committee:

At the 13th Session of the Scientific Committee (SC13), the following recommendations on Management Strategy Evaluation and CPUE standardisation were agreed to:

Management Strategy Evaluation

- 1) The SC **supported** the development of a MSE under the IOTC framework, and **recommended** that a meeting is organized in 2011 that will gather the scientist, managers and representative of the Industry (para. 251 of the SC13 report).

CPUE Standardisation

- 2) The SC **agreed** that the WPB should examine inter-annual environmental anomalies to describe the inter-annual variability in CPUE and that this work should be pursued in the inter-sessional period. In addition, the effect of shifting effort distribution (e.g. caused by piracy) should be investigated (para. 45 of the SC13 report).
- 3) The SC strongly **recommended** that a formal assessment of the skipjack stock be a priority task at the next session of the WPTT. The SC recalled that the success of this assessment will depend on the preparation of realistic series of standardized CPUE for Maldivian pole and line fleet and for the European purse seine fleet (para. 134 of the SC13 report).

Commission:

At the 15th Session of the Commission (S15), the following recommendations on Management Strategy Evaluation and CPUE standardisation were agreed to:

Management Strategy Evaluation

- 4) The Commission **endorsed** the development of a Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) in the framework of IOTC and requests that this process be continued in 2011 (para. 43 of the S15 report).

CPUE Standardisation

- 5) The Commission **noted** that stock assessments for some species rely on longline fisheries standardized CPUE series, in particular from Japan. Due to the decreasing effort of this fleet during the last few years, the Commission **requests** that alternative CPUE series for other fleets are used by the Scientific Committee and its Working Parties in stock assessments (para. 36 of the S15 report).

DISCUSSION

At the 15th Session of the Commission, Members highlighted the need for a management strategy evaluation process to be developed with the IOTC framework, although no specific proposals were made on how this should be achieved. As such, participants of the 4th Session of the Working Party on Methods are asked to consider the development of a process for MSE in an IOTC context.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Working Party on Methods **NOTE** the recommendations of the Thirteenth Session of the Scientific Committee and the Fifteenth Session of the Commission, relevant to the WPM, and consider how to progress these issues at the present meeting.