

OUTCOMES OF THE FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE AND OF THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 14 NOVEMBER 2013

PURPOSE

To inform participants at the Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics (WPDCS09) of the recommendations arising from the Fifteenth Session of the Scientific Committee (SC15), held from 10–15 December 2012, and the 17th Session of the Commission (S17) held from 6–10 May, 2013, specifically relating to the work of the WPDCS.

BACKGROUND

Scientific Committee:

As there was no WPDCS held in 2012, the SC did not need to consider specific recommendations from the WPDCS. However, a range of issues relevant to the WPDCS were discussed, which CPCs are requested to consider, which are provided in Appendix I: Consolidated set of recommendations of the Fifteenth Session of the Scientific Committee (10–15 December, 2012) to the Commission, relevant to the WPDCS (provided at [Appendix I](#)).

Commission:

At the 17th Session, the Commission **CONSIDERED** and **ADOPTED** 11 proposals as Conservation and Management Measures (11 in total consisting of 11 Resolutions and 0 Recommendations), as detailed below:

Resolutions

- Resolution 13/01 *On the removal of obsolete Conservation and Management Measures*
- Resolution 13/02 *Concerning the IOTC record of vessels authorised to operate in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution 13/03 *On the recording of catch and effort by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution 13/04 *On the conservation of cetaceans*
- Resolution 13/05 *On the conservation of whale sharks (*Rhincodon typus*)*
- Resolution 13/06 *On a scientific and management framework on the Conservation of sharks species caught in association with IOTC managed fisheries*
- Resolution 13/07 *Concerning a record of licensed foreign vessels fishing for IOTC species in the IOTC area of competence and access agreement information*
- Resolution 13/08 *Procedures on a fish aggregating devices (FADs) management plan, including more detailed specification of catch reporting from FAD sets, and the development of improved FAD designs to reduce the incidence of entanglement of non-target species*
- Resolution 13/09 *On the conservation of albacore caught in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution 13/10 *On interim target and limit reference points and a decision framework*
- Resolution 13/11 *On a ban on discards of bigeye tuna, skipjack tuna, yellowfin tuna and non-targeted species caught by purse seine vessels in the IOTC area of competence*

Pursuant to Article IX.4 of the IOTC Agreement, the above mentioned Conservation and Management Measures became binding on Members, 120 days from the date of the notification communicated by the Secretariat in IOTC Circular 2013-49 (17 May 2013), i.e. 14 September 2013, with the exception of Resolution 13/11, which will enter into effect on 1 January 2014. However, pursuant to Article IX.5 of the IOTC Agreement, the IOTC Secretariat received an objection from India (dated 13 September 2013), for the following Conservation and Management Measures adopted at the 17th Session of the Commission:

- Resolution 13/02 *Concerning the IOTC record of vessels authorised to operate in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution 13/03 *On the recording of catch and effort by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution 13/06 *On a scientific and management framework on the Conservation of sharks species caught in association with IOTC managed fisheries*
- Resolution 13/07 *Concerning a record of licensed foreign vessels fishing for IOTC species in the IOTC area of competence and access agreement information*

According to Article IX.5 of the Agreement, an extension period of 60 days (until 13 November 2013) was applied before the 4 IOTC Resolutions 13/02, 13/03, 13/06 and 13/07, were to come into force (14 November 2013), unless more than one-third of the Members also objected (Article IX.6). As of 14 November 2013, no further objections from Members were received by the IOTC Secretariat. Thus, pursuant to Article IX of the IOTC Agreement, the above 4 Resolutions entered into effect on Thursday 14 November 2013.

Please note that three out of the four Resolutions above, superseded previous Resolutions. Resolutions adopted by the Commission are considered as self-standing instruments, which enter into force according to the relevant provision of the IOTC agreement (Article IX.1). **Therefore, the following Resolutions remain in force in relation to India:**

- Resolution 07/02 *Concerning the Establishment of an IOTC Record of Vessels Authorised to Operate in the IOTC Area, Resolution 01/02 Relating to Control of fishing vessels*
- Resolution 12/03 *On the Record of Catch and Effort by Fishing vessels in the IOTC Area of Competence*
- Resolution 12/07 *Concerning a Record of Licensed Foreign Vessels Fishing for IOTC Species in the Area of Competence and Access Agreement Information*
- Resolution 01/02 *Relating To Control Of Fishing Activities*

The updated *Compendium of Active Conservation and Management Measures for the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission* may be downloaded from the IOTC website at the following link, dated 14 November 2013:

English:

<http://iotc.org/files/CMM/IOTC%20-%20Compendium%20of%20ACTIVE%20CMMs%2014%20November%202013.pdf>

French:

<http://iotc.org/files/CMM/CTOI%20-%20Recueil%20des%20MCG%20ACTIVES%2014%20novembre%202013.pdf>

DISCUSSION

The Commission also considered a range of other proposals for CMMs on matters relevant to the WPDCS, but consensus could not be reached. The following is a brief discussion of those proposals which the WPDCS may wish to take into consideration when developing recommendations to the Scientific Committee:

Mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Members and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPC'S)

The Commission **CONSIDERED** a proposal on *Mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Members and Cooperating Contracting Parties (CPC's)* but agreement could not be reached and the proposal was deferred until the next meeting of the Commission. This proposal aimed to introduce amendments to Resolution 10/02 *Mandatory statistical requirements for IOTC Members and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPC's)* by including a list of the most commonly caught elasmobranch species for which nominal catch data could be reported as part of the statistical requirement for IOTC CPCs. In addition, the amendments aimed to improve the completeness of the fisheries data by including new obligations on data reporting on FADs, marine turtles and seabirds as well as better defining fishing gears.

Other requests – On data

The Commission **NOTED** some minor improvements in the quantity of fisheries statistics available to the SC and its Working Parties in 2012 but reiterated its concerns about the lack of fisheries data from some gears and fleets for target and bycatch species. Specifically, many fisheries statistics are missing or incomplete for some industrial and artisanal fisheries. As such, the Commission **REQUESTED** that all CPCs improve their data collection and reporting to the IOTC, especially taking into account that the Commission has initiated the consultation process on developing criteria for a quota allocation system. (para. 34 of the S17 report).

RECOMMENDATION

That the WPDCS **NOTE** paper IOTC–2013–WPDCS09–03 which outlined the main outcomes of the Fifteenth Session of the Scientific Committee (SC15) and the Seventeenth Session of the Commission (S17), specifically related to the work of the WPDCS, and consider how to progress outstanding issues at the present meeting so as to meet the Commission's requests.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: [Consolidated set of recommendations of the Fifteenth Session of the Scientific Committee \(10–15 December, 2012\) to the Commission, relevant to the Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics](#)

APPENDIX I

CONSOLIDATED SET OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIFTEENTH SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE (10–15 DECEMBER, 2012) TO THE COMMISSION RELEVANT TO THE WORKING PARTY ON DATA COLLECTION AND STATISTICS

Extract of the Report of the Fifteenth Session of the Scientific Committee

(IOTC–2012–SC15–R; Appendix XXXVIII, PAGES 275–288)

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSION

Sampling coverage

SC15.12 (para.48) The SC **RECOMMENDED** that IOTC CPCs having fleets targeting albacore or ports where albacore landings are high, in particular Mauritius and Indonesia, make every possible effort to collect biological information on albacore in the future. In this regard China informed the SC about the difficulties that Chinese observers are experiencing to collect biological samples of albacore onboard longliners flagged to China. China indicated that it would make every possible effort to maintain data collection at reasonable levels in the future.

Non-compliance matters

SC15.13 (para.87). **NOTING** that despite the mandatory reporting requirements detailed in Resolutions 10/02 and 12/03 data on billfish fisheries, in particular for the marlins, remain largely unreported by CPCs, the SC **RECOMMENDED** that the Compliance Committee and the Commission note these non-compliance matters, develop mechanisms to ensure that CPCs fulfil their reporting obligations.

Data reporting requirements

SC15.14 (para.89) **NOTING** that despite the mandatory reporting requirements detailed in Resolutions 05/05, 10/02, 10/06, 12/03 and 12/04, bycatch data remain largely unreported by CPCs and the SC **RECOMMENDED** that the Compliance Committee and the Commission address this non-compliance by taking steps to develop mechanisms which would ensure that CPCs fulfil their bycatch reporting obligations.

Gillnet fisheries of the Indian Ocean

SC15.16 (para.91) The SC **RECOMMENDED** that the Commission considers allocating funds to support a regional review of the data available for gillnet fleets operating in the Indian Ocean. The scientists from all CPCs having gillnet fleets in the Indian Ocean should provide at the next session of the WPEB, a report summarising the known information on bycatch in their gillnet fisheries, including sharks, marine turtles and marine mammals, with estimates of their likely order of magnitude where more detailed data are not available.

Sharks – Status of catch statistics and data reporting

SC15.18 (para.96) **NOTING** that the information on retained catches and discards of sharks contained in the IOTC database remains very incomplete for most fleets despite their mandatory reporting status, and that catch-and-effort as well as size data are essential to assess the status of shark stocks, the SC **RECOMMENDED** that all CPCs collect and report catches of sharks (including historical data), catch-and-effort and biological data on sharks, as per IOTC Resolutions, so that more detailed analysis can be undertaken for the next WPEB meeting.

SC15.19 (para.97) **NOTING** that there is extensive literature available on pelagic shark fisheries and interactions with fisheries targeting tuna and tuna-like species, in countries having fisheries for sharks, and in the databases of governmental or non-governmental organisations, the SC **AGREED** on the need for a major data mining exercise in order to compile data from as many sources as possible and attempt to rebuild historical catch series of the most commonly caught shark species. In this regard, the SC **RECOMMENDED** that the Commission allocates funds for this activity, in the 2013 IOTC budget.

IOTC database for neritic tunas

SC15.38 (para.168) The SC **NOTED** that some CPCs have data collection systems that do not include

provisions for the sampling of neritic tuna species, as required by the Commission, and **RECOMMENDED** that the existing sampling systems are extended to facilitate data collection for neritic tunas, by species, so as to fulfil their mandatory reporting requirements regarding those species. The SC further **NOTED** that some CPCs have fisheries directed at neritic tuna species and may require assistance with the implementation of data collection for those fisheries and **RECOMMENDED** that such CPCs contact the IOTC Secretariat for further guidance.

Summary discussion of matters common to Working Parties

Capacity building activities

SC15.39 (para.177) The SC **RECOMMENDED** that the Commission increase the IOTC Capacity Building budget line so that capacity building workshops/training can be carried out in 2013 and 2014 on the collection, reporting and analyses of catch and effort data for neritic tuna and tuna-like species. Where appropriate this training session shall include information that explains the entire IOTC process from data collection to analysis and how the information collected is used by the Commission to develop Conservation and Management Measures.

Implementation of the Regional Observer Scheme

SC15.51 (para.218) The SC **RECOMMENDED** that all IOTC CPCs urgently submit, and keep up-to-date, their list of accredited observers to the IOTC Secretariat and implement the requirements of Resolution 11/04 *on a Regional Observer Scheme*, which states that:
“The observer shall, within 30 days of completion of each trip, provide a report to the CPCs of the vessel. The CPCs shall send within 150 days at the latest each report, as far as continuous flow of report from observer placed on the longline fleet is ensured, which is recommended to be provided with 1°x1° format to the Executive Secretary, who shall make the report available to the Scientific Committee upon request. In a case where the vessel is fishing in the EEZ of a coastal state, the report shall equally be submitted to that Coastal State.” (para. 11)

SC15.52 (para.220) The SC **RECOMMENDED** that the Commission consider how to address the lack of implementation of observer programmes by CPCs for their fleets and reporting to the IOTC Secretariat as per the provision of Resolution 11/04 *on a Regional Observer Scheme*, noting the update provided in [Appendix XXXIII](#).

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SPECIFIC CPCs AND/OR OTHER BODIES

IOTC-OFCF Project, 2012

SC15.60 (para.18) The SC **THANKED** Japan and the IOTC Secretariat for providing financial and technical support to assist the implementation of the IOTC Observer Scheme in coastal countries of the IOTC area of competence and **RECOMMENDED** that Japan consider an extension of IOTC-OFCF Project activities in the future.

Report of the Fourth Session of the Working Party on Temperate Tunas (WPTmT04)

Data available at the Secretariat for temperate tuna species

SC15.61 (para.40) The SC **NOTED** the main albacore data issues that are considered to negatively affect the quality of the statistics available at the IOTC Secretariat, by type of dataset and fishery, which are provided in Appendix VI of the WPTmT04 report (IOTC-2012-WPTmT04-R), and **RECOMMENDED** that the CPCs listed in the appendix, make efforts to remedy the data issues identified and to report back to the WPTmT at its next meeting.

SC15.62 (para.44) The SC **NOTED** that following a request by the Ministry of Fisheries of Mauritius, the IOTC-OFCF Project had provided assistance for an independent evaluation of data collection and reporting systems in Mauritius, in particular evaluation of catch, effort, and size data collection systems for albacore, as recommended by the SC in 2011. The SC **THANKED** Mauritius and the IOTC-OFCF Project for this initiative and **RECOMMENDED** that the Project considers extending support in the future to assist Mauritius to address the recommendations issuing from the evaluation, where possible.

Report of the Tenth Session of the Working Party on Billfish (WPB10)

Data available at the Secretariat for billfish species

SC15.65 (para.62) The SC **NOTED** the main billfish data issues that are considered to negatively affect the quality of the statistics available at the IOTC Secretariat, by type of dataset and fishery, which are provided in Appendix VI of the WPB10 report (IOTC–2012–WPB10–R), and **RECOMMENDED** that the CPCs listed in the appendix, make efforts to remedy the data issues identified and to report back to the WPB at its next meeting.

Length-age keys

SC15.66 (para.64) The SC **RECOMMENDED** that as a matter of priority, CPCs that have important fisheries catching billfish (EU, Indonesia, Japan, Sri Lanka and Taiwan, China,) to collect and provide basic or analysed data that would be used to establish length-age keys and non-standard measurements to standard measurements keys for billfish species, by sex and area.

Data inconsistencies

SC15.67 (para.73) The SC **RECOMMENDED** that as a matter of priority, India, Iran and Pakistan provide catch-and-effort data and size data for billfish, in particular for gillnet fisheries, as soon as possible, noting that this is already a mandatory reporting requirement.

Review of fleet dynamics

SC15.72 (para.83) The SC **RECOMMENDED** that both Japan and Taiwan, China undertake a complete historical review of their longline data and to document the changes in fleet dynamics for presentation at the next WPB meeting. The historical review should include as much explanatory information as possible regarding changes in fishing areas, species targeting, gear changes and other fleet characteristics to assist the WPB understand the current fluctuations observed in the data.

Report of the Eighth Session of the Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch (WPEB08)

Sharks – Status of catch statistics and data reporting

SC15.74 (para.95) The SC **NOTED** the main shark data issues that are considered to negatively affect the quality of the statistics available at the IOTC Secretariat, by type of dataset and fishery, which are provided in Appendix VIII of the WPEB08 report (IOTC–2012–WPEB08–R), and **RECOMMENDED** that the CPCs listed in the Appendix, make efforts to remedy the data issues identified and to report back to the WPEB at its next meeting, noting the status and type of datasets that need to be provided for sharks, and other bycatch species provided at Appendix IX of the WPEB08 report (IOTC–2012–WPEB08–R).

SC15.75 (para.98) The SC **NOTED** the absence of information on shark catches from artisanal fisheries in Mozambique and **RECOMMENDED** that information on shark catches from those fisheries is collected and reported in due course.

Report of the Fourteenth Session of the Working Party on Tropical Tunas (WPTT14)

Data availability

SC15.76 (para.139) **NOTING** that the main tropical tuna data issues that are considered to negatively affect the quality of the statistics available at the IOTC Secretariat, by type of dataset and fishery, which are provided in Appendix VI of the WPTT report (IOTC–2012–WPTT14–R), the SC **RECOMMENDED** that the CPCs listed in the appendix, make efforts to remedy the data issues identified and to report back to the WPTT at its next meeting.

SC15.77 (para.140) **NOTING** that the Maldivian skipjack tuna catch is not separated by association type, i.e. aFAD or free schools, and therefore the proportion of skipjack tuna caught under aFADs around the Maldives is unknown, the SC **RECOMMENDED** that the Maldivian data collection system is further improved in order to account for the association of the reported catch, as this could improve the standardisation of the pole-and-line CPUE.

IOTC database for neritic tunas

SC15.88 (para.167) The SC **NOTED** the main data issues that are considered to negatively affect the quality of the statistics for neritic tunas available at the IOTC Secretariat, by type of dataset and fishery, which are provided in Appendix VI of the WPNT02 report, and **RECOMMENDED** that the CPCs listed in the appendix, make efforts to remedy the data issues identified and to report back to the WPNT at its next meeting.

SC15.89 (para.169) The SC **RECOMMENDED** that the IOTC Secretariat request that any datasets for neritic tuna species held by SWIOFP, or any other parties, be provided to the IOTC Secretariat before the

next meeting of the WPNT.

SC15.90 (para.170) **NOTING** that the nominal catch data (NC) for India, Indonesia and Thailand provided at the WPNT02 meeting were found to conflict with the NC data history provided by these countries in recent years, and for catch-and-effort data for most of the history of the gillnet fleet, the SC **RECOMMENDED** that India, Indonesia and Thailand liaise with the IOTC Secretariat to provide a fully justified revised catch history which will replace the data currently held by the IOTC Secretariat before the next WPNT meeting.

Data set availability

SC15.91 (para.171) **NOTING** that some CPCs, in particular from India, Indonesia and Thailand, have collected large data sets on neritic tuna species over long time periods, the SC **RECOMMENDED** that this data, as well as data for other CPCs, be submitted to the IOTC Secretariat as per the requirements adopted by IOTC Members in Resolution 10/02. This would allow the WPNT to develop stock status indicators or comprehensive stock assessments of neritic tuna species in the future.