

OUTCOMES OF THE 19th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 14 MAY 2015

PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 5th Working Party on Neritic Tunas (WPNT05) of the decision and requests made by the Commission at its 19th Session, held from 27 April – 1 May 2015, specifically relating to the work of the WPNT.

BACKGROUND

At the 19th Session, the Commission **CONSIDERED** and **ADOPTED** 11 proposals as Conservation and Management Measures (consisting of 11 Resolutions and 0 Recommendations), as detailed below:

Resolutions

- Resolution 15/01 *On the recording of catch and effort data by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution 15/02 *On mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs)*
- Resolution 15/03 *On the vessel monitoring system (VMS) programme*
- Resolution 15/04 *Concerning the IOTC record of vessels authorised to operate in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution 15/05 *On conservation measures for striped marlin, black marlin and blue marlin*
- Resolution 15/06 *On a ban on discards of bigeye tuna, skipjack tuna, yellowfin tuna, and a recommendation for non-targeted species caught by purse seine vessels in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution 15/07 *On the use of artificial lights to attract fish to drifting fish aggregating devices*
- Resolution 15/08 *Procedures on a fish aggregating devices (FADs) management plan, including a limitation on the number of FADs, more detailed specifications of catch reporting from FAD sets, and the development of improved FAD designs to reduce the incidence of entanglement of non-target species*
- Resolution 15/09 *On a fish aggregating devices (FADs) working group*
- Resolution 15/10 *On target and limit reference points and a decision framework*
- Resolution 15/11 *On the implementation of a limitation of fishing capacity of Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties*

Pursuant to Article IX.4 of the IOTC Agreement, the above mentioned Conservation and Management Measures shall become binding on Members, 120 days from the date of the notification communicated by the Secretariat in IOTC Circular 2015–049 (i.e. 10 September 2015).

DISCUSSION

The Commission also made a number of general comments on the recommendations made by the Scientific Committee in 2014, which have relevance for the WPNT as follows (paragraph numbers refer to the report of the Commission (IOTC–2015–S19–R)):

Longtail tuna

Para. 18. *The Commission NOTED the advice from the Scientific Committee that indicates that longtail tuna is currently subject to overfishing and that there is a high to very high risk of breaching rules associated with MSY-based reference points by 2015, even if catches are reduced.*

Para. 19. *The Commission NOTED that CMM proposal IOTC–2015–S19–PropE will provide a discussion point for this species, to address the concerns raised by the Scientific Committee.*

Para. 20. *The Commission NOTED that the IOTC Secretariat had issued a call for Expressions of Interest for a project involving genetic research to determine the connectivity of neritic tunas throughout their distributions, among other IOTC species and sharks. The project was conceptualised following the recommendation in 2013 by the Working Party on Neritic Tunas (WPNT) which recommended that research on stock structure of neritic tunas (including longtail tuna) under the IOTC mandate.*

Meeting Participation Fund

Para. 37. *The Commission NOTED that the MPF was used to fund the participation of a reduced number of national scientists to the Working Parties in 2014 (49 in 2014; 58 in 2013; 42 in 2012), all of which were required to submit and present a working paper at the meeting.*

Para. 38. *The Commission NOTED that at its 2014 meeting, the Scientific Committee had recommended that the Meeting Participation fund be maintained into the future and increased back to its original allocation of \$200,000 per year (see recommendations SC17.34, para. 119). As per the IOTC Rules of Procedure (2014), the SC had reminded the IOTC Secretariat that the MPF budget should be spent at the ratio of 75:25 (science : non-science meetings) which would equate to US\$150,000 science : US\$50,000 non-science meeting.*

Para. 39. *The Commission AGREED that the MPF budget remains important and therefore provisions according to the estimated needs will be integrated into the budget.*

Consultants

Para. 40. *NOTING the Scientific Committee’s attempts to prioritise the various projects and consultancies which it had requested funding for in 2016, in particular, that the High priority projects were those which it felt must be undertaken in 2016, the Commission REQUESTED that only those High priority projects listed in the Scientific Committee budget be funded by the Commission’s regular budget, with exceptions detailed in other areas of the S19 report.*

On a ban on discards of bigeye tuna, skipjack tuna, yellowfin tuna, and a recommendation for non-targeted species caught by purse seine vessels in the IOTC area of competence

Para. 130. *The Commission ADOPTED Resolution 15/06 On a ban on discards of bigeye tuna, skipjack tuna, yellowfin tuna, and a recommendation for non-targeted species caught by purse seine vessels in the IOTC area of competence ([Appendix XXI](#)). The Resolution bans the discard of three tropical tuna species, with the exception of fish unfit for human consumption or if no space available to accommodate all fish. It also encourages all purse seine vessels to retain on board and then land all non-targeted species as far as the vessel can ensure appropriate fishing operation (including but not limited to other tunas, rainbow runner, dolphinfish, triggerfish, billfish, wahoo, and barracuda) except fish considered unfit for human consumption. This latest revision replaces the words “well space” by “storage capacity”. This Resolution supersedes Resolution 13/11.*

On a FADs Management Working Group

Para. 133. *The Commission ADOPTED Resolution 15/09 On a FADs Management Working Group ([Appendix XXIV](#)). This Resolution details terms of reference for an ad hoc working group on fish aggregating devices (FADs). The ad hoc working group will assess the consequences of the increasing number and technological developments of FADs in tuna fisheries and their ecosystems, in order to inform and advise on future FAD-related management options. This ad hoc working group will be of multi-sectorial nature, involving various stakeholders such as scientists, fishery managers, fishing industry representatives, administrators and fishers.*

The complete report of the 19th Session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission is available for download from the IOTC website:

- English: www.iotc.org/documents/report-19th-session-indian-ocean-tuna-commission
- French: www.iotc.org/fr/documents/rapport-de-la-19e-session-de-la-commission-des-thons-de-l%E2%80%99oc%C3%A9an-indien

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the WPNT

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2015–WPNT05–04 which outlined the main outcomes of the 19th Session of the Commission, specifically related to the work of the WPNT and **AGREE** to consider how best to provide the SC with the information it needs, in order to satisfy the Commission’s requests, throughout the course of the current WPNT meeting.
- 2) **NOTE** the 11 Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) adopted at the 19th Session of the Commission (consisting of 11 Resolutions and 0 Recommendations), and in particular, Resolution 15/01 *On the recording of catch and effort data by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence* and Resolution 15/02 *On mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPCs)* which have a direct impact on the work of the WPNT.