
REVISION OF THE WPTmT PROGRAM OF WORK (2014–2018)

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 13 JULY 2014

PURPOSE

To ensure that participants at the 5th Working Party on Temperate Tunas (WPTmT05) revise the Program of Work for the WPTmT by taking into consideration the specific requests of the Commission and Scientific Committee.

BACKGROUND

Scientific Committee

At the 16th Session of the SC:

- (Para. 192) The SC **NOTED** paper IOTC–2013–SC15–16 which outlined the proposed research priorities for each of the Working Party meetings held in 2013, with the aim of developing an IOTC Science Work Plan for 2014, and future years.
- (Para. 193) The SC **NOTED** the proposed work plans and priorities of each of the Working Parties and **AGREED** to the revised work plans as outlined in Appendix XXXIV [of the SC16 Report]. The Chairs and Vice-Chairs of each working party shall ensure that the efforts of their working party is 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. 194) The SC **REQUESTED** that all Working Parties provide their work plans with items prioritised based on the requests of the Commission of the SC.
- (Para. 195) The SC **ADOPTED** a revised assessment schedule, ecological risk assessment and other core projects for 2014–18, for the tuna and tuna-like species under the IOTC mandate, as well as the current list of key shark species of interest, as outlined in Appendix XXXV [of the SC16 Report].
- (Para. 196) The SC **REQUESTED** that the IOTC Secretariat develop a template for each working party to use in developing their works plans in 2014, with the aim of standardising the way in which each working party presents a prioritised plan each year for the SC's consideration.

Commission

At Sessions of the Commission, Conservation and Management Measures adopted contained elements which call on the Scientific Committee, via the WPTmT, to undertake specific tasks. These requests will need to be incorporated into a revised Program of Work for the WPTmT:

Resolution 13/09 On the conservation of albacore caught in the IOTC area of competence

- (para. 2) Through its IOTC Working Party on Temperate Tunas (WPTmT), to examine in relevant 2014 sessions the state of albacore stock, by considering even common working sessions with the ICCAT scientific community to improve the knowledge on the interrelation between the Indian Ocean and Atlantic albacore populations; and
- (para. 3) To advise the Commission, by end of 2014 at the latest:
- a) On Target Reference Points (TRPs) and Limit Reference Points (LRPs) used when assessing the albacore stock status and when establishing the Kobe plot and Kobe matrices;
 - b) On potential management measures having been examined through the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) process. These management measures will therefore have to ensure the achievement of the conservation and optimal utilisation of stocks as laid down in article V of the Agreement for the establishment of the IOTC and more particularly to ensure that, in as short a period as possible and no later than 2020, (i) the fishing mortality rate does not exceed the fishing mortality rate allowing the stock to deliver MSY and (ii) the spawning biomass is maintained at or above its MSY level.

DISCUSSION

Participants at the WPTmT05 are requested to consider the priorities set by the Commission and the Scientific Committee, via Conservation and Management Measures, and revise its Program of Work (previously outlined in paper IOTC–2014–WPTmT05–03) to match those priorities.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the WPTmT:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2014–WPTmT05–08, which encouraged the WPTmT to further develop and refine its Program of Work for 2014–2018 to align with the requests and directives from the Commission and Scientific Committee.
- 2) **RECOMMEND** a revised Program of Work for 2014–2018 to the Scientific Committee for its consideration and potential endorsement.

APPENDICES

[Appendix A](#): DRAFT: Working Party on Temperate Tunas Program of Work (2014 to 2018)

APPENDIX A

DRAFT: WORKING PARTY ON TEMPERATE TUNAS PROGRAM OF WORK (2014 TO 2018)

The following is the Draft WPTmT Program of Work (2014 to 2018) and is based on the specific requests of the Commission and Scientific Committee, and will need to be modified to incorporate topics identified during the WPTmT05. The Program of Work consists of the following, noting that a timeline for implementation would be developed by the SC once it has agreed to the priority projects across all of its Working Parties:

- **Table 1:** Priority topics for obtaining the information necessary to develop stock status indicators for albacore in the Indian Ocean;
- **Table 2:** High priority topics, by project for albacore in the Indian Ocean; and
- **Table 3:** Stock assessment schedule.

Table 1. Priority topics for obtaining the information necessary to develop stock status indicators for albacore in the Indian Ocean

Topic	Sub-topic	Priority
Stock structure (connectivity)	Genetic research to determine the connectivity of albacore throughout its distribution	High
	Gene-tag methodology	Med
	Otolith microchemistry/isotope research	Low
Biological information (parameters for stock assessment)	Age and growth research	High
	Age-at-Maturity	High
	Fecundity-at-age/length relationships	Medium
Ecological information	Spawning time and locations	High
CPUE standardisation	Develop standardised CPUE series for each albacore fishery for the Indian Ocean	High
Stock assessment / Stock indicators	Develop and compare multiple assessment approaches to determining stock status for albacore	High
Target and Limit reference points	To advise the Commission, by end of 2014 at the latest on Target Reference Points (TRPs) and Limit Reference Points (LRPs).	High
Management measure options	To advise the Commission, by end of 2014 at the latest, on potential management measures having been examined through the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) process.	High

Table 2. High priority topics, by project for albacore in the Indian Ocean.

Topic	Sub-topic and project	Priority
Stock structure (connectivity)	Genetic research to determine the connectivity of albacore throughout its distribution	High
	➤ Determine albacore stock structure, migratory range and movement rates in the Indian Ocean.	
	➤ Determine the degree of shared stocks for albacore in the Indian Ocean with the southern Atlantic Ocean.	
Biological information (parameters for stock assessment)	Age and growth research	High
	➤ China and other CPCs to provide further research reports on albacore biology, including using through the use of fish otolith studies, either from data collected through observer programs or other research programs, at the next WPTmT meeting in 2013.	
	Age-at-Maturity	
	➤ Quantitative biological studies are necessary for albacore throughout its	High

	range to determine key biological parameters including age-at-maturity and fecundity-at-age/length relationships, age-length keys, age and growth, which will be fed into future stock assessments.	
Ecological information	Spawning time and locations ➤ Collect gonad samples from albacore to confirm the spawning time and location of the spawning area that are presently hypothesized for albacore	High
CPUE standardisation	Develop standardised CPUE series for each albacore fishery for the Indian Ocean	High
Stock assessment / Stock indicators	Develop and compare multiple assessment approaches to determining stock status for albacore	High
Target and Limit reference points	To advise the Commission, by end of 2014 at the latest on Target Reference Points (TRPs) and Limit Reference Points (LRPs). ➤ Used when assessing the albacore stock status and when establishing the Kobe plot and Kobe matrices	High
Management measure options	To advise the Commission, by end of 2014 at the latest, on potential management measures having been examined through the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) process. ➤ These management measures will therefore have to ensure the achievement of the conservation and optimal utilisation of stocks as laid down in article V of the Agreement for the establishment of the IOTC and more particularly to ensure that, in as short a period as possible and no later than 2020, (i) the fishing mortality rate does not exceed the fishing mortality rate allowing the stock to deliver MSY and (ii) the spawning biomass is maintained at or above its MSY level.	High

Table 3. Assessment schedule for the IOTC Working Party on Temperate Tunas (WPTmT)

Species	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<i>Working Party on Temperate Tunas</i>					
Albacore	Stock assessment	–	Stock assessment	–	Stock assessment