

Proposal to develop draft guidelines on how IOTC might operationalize the FAO voluntary guidelines on the marking of fishing gear

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT¹, 30 JANUARY 2020

PURPOSE

To provide participants at the Working Party on the Implementation of Conservation and Management Measures (WPICMM) the opportunity to consider a proposal on how IOTC might operationalize the FAO voluntary guidelines on the marking of fishing gear.

BACKGROUND

At the 23rd Session of the Commission, the European Union submitted a proposal *On Marking of Fishing Gear and Prevention of Marine Pollution* (Proposal L) for consideration. There was no consensus for this proposal to be adopted as a Resolution. However, *the Commission REQUESTED the Secretariat to initiate a process to develop draft guidelines on how IOTC might operationalize the FAO voluntary guidelines on the marking of fishing gear. The process should utilize the expertise of IOTC technical bodies and review the guidelines by electronic means, before being made available to the Commission in 2020* (paragraph 53, IOTC–2019–S23–R_rev1[E], 105 pp).

DISCUSSION

Having reviewed some of the pertinent documents on this subject, including the *FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Marking of Fishing Gear*, the Secretariat is of the opinion that there are some important issues that are in need of addressing and agreeing upon before a process to operationalise the FAO Voluntary Guidelines, can be elaborated; these include the scope of application (gears and area) and types of fisheries (artisanal/industrial). Once there is agreement on the scope of application, the Secretariat can explore with international organisations, donor agencies and non-governmental organizations, as allowed under Resolution 16/10, on the possibility of securing financial contributions for engaging an international expert in *Fishing Operations and Technology* to undertake further work towards developing a process to operationalize the Guideline. Additional work that the Secretariat anticipates are as follows, but may not be limited to:

- gather information from Members and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (CPCs) on their own national requirement, if any, for gear marking;
- conduct risk assessments on the gears which will be subject to marking, so that gear marking actions are prioritized and proportionate with the identified risks;
- develop specifications for marking for each gear type;
- propose means of marking for the concerned fishing gears that are simple, pragmatic, affordable and contains verifiable means of identifying their ownership and link with the vessel(s) and/or operator(s) authorised to use them in their operations, and
- prepare a report on the above activities for consideration by WPICMM04.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the WPICMM:

- 1) **NOTE** document IOTC–2020–WPICMM03–12, which sets out the work required to be undertaken in order develop a process to operationalise the *FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Marking of Fishing Gear*.

¹ IOTC-Secretariat@fao.org

- 2) **AGREE** on the work required to be undertaken to develop a process for the IOTC to operationalise the *FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Marking of Fishing Gear*.
- 3) **RECOMMEND** that the IOTC Secretariat develop the Terms of Reference to recruit an expert in *Fishing Operations and Technology* to present to the Compliance Committee in June 2020.