
OUTCOMES OF THE 18th SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT¹, 31 OCTOBER 2016

PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 12th Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics (WPDCS12) of the recommendations arising from the 18th Session of the Scientific Committee (SC18) held from 8–12 November 2015, specifically relating to the work of the WPDCS.

BACKGROUND

At the 18th Session of the SC, the SC noted and considered the recommendations made by the WPDCS in 2015 that included modifications to national statistical systems.

Based on the recommendations arising from the WPDCS11, the SC18 adopted a set of recommendations, provide at [Appendix A](#) of this paper.

The recommendations contained in [Appendix A](#) were provided to the Commission for consideration at its 20th Session held in May 2016. A separate paper, IOTC–2016–WPDCS2–04 addresses the responses and actions of the Commission.

In addition, the SC18 reviewed and endorsed a Program of Work for the WPDCS, as detailed in [Appendix B](#). A separate paper (IOTC–2016–WPDCS12–09) will outline the review and further development of a *Program of Work* for the WPDCS for the next five years.

DISCUSSION

In addition to the recommendations outlined in [Appendix A](#) and [Appendix B](#), the following extracts from the SC18 Report (IOTC–2015–SC18–R) are provided here for the consideration and action of the WPDCS12:

General discussion on data issues

(Para. 81) **NOTING** that some CPCs provide little or no feedback regarding clarification sought on the data issues identified by the IOTC Secretariat or the science Working Parties, following communications from the IOTC Secretariat or actions recommended by the Working Parties, the SC **AGREED** that when this occurs and the IOTC Secretariat has access to alternative information, the IOTC Secretariat shall continue attempts to compile best scientific estimates of catch for those fisheries, using the information available, and present those estimates to the Working Parties and Scientific Committee for further review and endorsement. In this regard the SC **ENDORSED** the data review process presented in Appendix V of the WPDCS10 Report.

Review of length frequency data from longline fleets and likely impacts on the assessments

(Para. 91) The SC **AGREED** that further analysis was required to fully understand the recent changes in length composition reported by Taiwan,China – in particular whether there have been changes to the sampling protocols and selection of fish for sampling, and that the decline in the number of samples of small specimens of tropical tunas in particular may originate from high grading of catch onboard Taiwan,China longliners following the implementation of quotas on the Taiwan,China longline fleet in the Indian Ocean (i.e. only large specimens from the catch measured for length).

(Para. 92) The SC **AGREED** that additional work is required by Japan, in collaboration with the IOTC Secretariat, to understand the lack of coherence in the historical time series between the size frequency data, and catch-and-effort and nominal catch reported by Japan longline vessels.

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RECOMMENDATION

That the WPDCS:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2016–WPDCS12–03 which outlined the main outcomes of the 18th Session of the Scientific Committee, specifically related to the work of the WPDCS.
- 2) **CONSIDER** how best to progress these issues at the present meeting.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Consolidated set of recommendations of the 18th Session of the Scientific Committee (23–27 November 2015) to the Commission, relevant to the Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics.

Appendix B: Program of Work (2016–2020) for the IOTC Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics (WPDCS).

APPENDIX A

CONSOLIDATED SET OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 18th SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE (23–27 NOVEMBER 2015) TO THE COMMISSION RELEVANT TO THE WORKING PARTY ON DATA COLLECTION AND STATISTICS

Extract of the Report of the 18th Session of the Scientific Committee

(IOTC-2015-SC18-R; Appendix XXXVII, PAGES 172–174)

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSION

Report of the 11th Session of the Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics (WPDCS11)

SC18.19 (para. 72) The SC **RECOMMENDED** the Commission develop penalty mechanisms through the IOTC Compliance Committee to improve compliance by CPCs that do not currently comply with the submission of basic fishery data requirements as stated in Resolution 15/01 and 15/02.

Resolution 15/02 Mandatory statistical requirements for IOTC Members and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CPC's)

SC18.20 (para. 78) **NOTING** that the units of effort requested for longliners in IOTC Resolution 15/02 and 11/04 are not consistent as the former requests numbers of hooks and the latter numbers of sets, the SC **RECOMMENDED** that provisions in Resolution 15/02 are amended to include a requirement for longline fleets to report effort in terms of both number of hooks and number of sets, and that reporting of effort in terms of number of sets is also requested from surface purse seine fleets in addition to the current requirements to report effort as fishing days.

Further analysis of length frequency data from longline fleets and likely impacts on the assessments (Taiwan, China)

SC18.21 (para. 79) The SC **RECOMMENDED** further analysis to fully understand the recent changes in length composition reported by Taiwan, China – in particular whether there have been changes to the sampling protocols and selection of fish for sampling – and that the decline in the number of samples of small specimens of tropical tunas in particular may originate from high grading of catch onboard Taiwan, China longliners following the implementation of quotas on the Taiwan, China longline fleet in the Indian Ocean (i.e. only large specimens from the catch measured for length).

Summary discussion of matters common to Working Parties (capacity building activities – stock assessment course; connecting science and management, etc.)

Meeting participation fund

SC18.24 (para. 98) The SC **RECOMMENDED** that the IOTC Rules of Procedure (2014), for the administration of the Meeting Participation Fund be modified so that applications are due not later than 60 days, and that the full Draft paper be submitted no later than 45 days before the start of the relevant meeting. The aim is to allow the Selection Panel to review the full paper rather than just the abstract, and provide guidance on areas for improvement, as well as the suitability of the application to receive funding using the IOTC MPF. The earlier submission dates would also assist with Visa application procedures for candidates.

Capacity building activities

SC18.25 (para. 99) The SC **AGREED** that, while external funding is helping the work of the Commission, funds allocated by the Commission to capacity building are still too low, considering the range of issues identified by the SC and its Working Parties, and **RECOMMENDED** that the Commission consider allocating more funds to these activities in the future.

SC18.26 (para. 100) The SC **RECOMMENDED** that Commission further increases the IOTC Capacity Building budget line so that capacity building training on data analysis and applied stock assessment approaches, with a priority being data poor approaches, can be carried out in 2016.

IOTC species identification guides: Marine mammal and Best practice guidelines for the safe release and handling of encircled cetaceans

SC18.27 (para. 102) The SC **RECOMMENDED** that the Commission allocate funds in its 2016/2017 budget, to produce and print the IOTC best practice guidelines for the safe release and handling of encircled

cetaceans. The guidelines could be incorporated into a set of IOTC cetacean identification cards: “*Cetacean identification for Indian Ocean fisheries*”.

IOTC Secretariat staffing

SC18.28 (para. 106) **NOTING** the very heavy and constantly increasing workload on the IOTC Secretariat, and the current staffing capacity to respond to requests for assistance by countries, the SC strongly **RECOMMENDED** that at least three (3) additional staff (Science/Data) be hired to join the IOTC Secretariat to work on tasks including but not limited to 1) science and capacity building to improve understanding of IOTC processes; and 2) data quality/exchange improvement, to commence work by 1 January 2017. Funding for these new positions should come from both the IOTC regular budget and from external sources to reduce the direct financial burden on the IOTC membership.

APPENDIX B

PROGRAM OF WORK (2016–2020) FOR THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES

The SC **NOTED** the proposed Program of Work and priorities for each of the Working Parties and **AGREED** to a consolidated Program of Work as outlined in Appendix XXXIV. 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. (IOTC–2015–SC18–R, Para. 153)

Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics (WPDCS)

(Extracts from IOTC–2015–WPDCS11–R: Appendix V)

The following is the Draft List of Priorities for the Development of a Program of Work by the IOTC WPDCS (2015–2019) and is based on the specific requests of the Commission and Scientific Committee. The Draft List of Priorities is presented in Table A, noting that the Programme of Work and timeline for implementation would be developed by the SC once it has agreed to the priority projects across all of its Working Parties:

Table A. High priority topics, by project for data collection and statistics in the Indian Ocean.

Topic	Sub-topic and project	Rank
Data requirements and data collection protocols, including ROS	Artisanal fisheries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop minima data requirements for the routine collection of data at the landing place, through sampling by enumerators ➤ Develop General Guidelines for data collection from artisanal fisheries; including development of a set of indicators to be used to assess the quality of data collection and management systems for artisanal fisheries ➤ Develop/Amend Fisheries specific data collection protocols, by country, where necessary ➤ Assist implementation of pilot sampling activities in countries/fisheries not/insufficiently sampled in the past; priority to be given to the following fisheries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Coastal fisheries of Indonesia ➤ Coastal fisheries of India ➤ Coastal fisheries of Pakistan ➤ Coastal fisheries of Sri Lanka ➤ Coastal fisheries of Yemen ➤ Coastal fisheries of Madagascar ➤ Coastal fisheries of Comoros ➤ Coastal fisheries of Tanzania ➤ Coastal fisheries of Thailand ➤ Coastal fisheries of Malaysia ➤ Feasibility study of electronic monitoring for coastal fisheries. Priority to be given to the following fisheries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I.R. Iran ➤ Thailand (coastal purse seine) ➤ Indonesia 	1
Industrial fisheries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop General Guidelines for data collection by at-sea observers; including development of a set of indicators to be used to assess the quality of data collection and management systems for industrial fisheries ➤ Organize a Regional Workshop on the Implementation of the IOTC Regional Observer Scheme (all IOTC CPCs having industrial fisheries) 		

Topic	Sub-topic and project	Rank
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop/Amend fisheries specific at-sea observer data collection protocols, by country, where necessary ➤ Assist implementation of at-sea observer schemes in countries/fisheries not/insufficiently monitored in the past; including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of existing observer schemes and arrangements • Coordination of country/fishery specific Training Sessions and Workshops on the ROS • Assistance to data management and reporting <p>Priority to be given to the following fisheries:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. I.R. Iran (driftnet; purse seine) ii. Sri Lanka (purse seine; drifting gillnet & longline) iii. Indonesia (longline) iv. Pakistan (driftnet) v. India (longline) vi. Mauritius (purse seine; longline) 	
Compliance with IOTC Data Requirements	<p>Data support missions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identification of indicators to assess performance of IOTC CPCs against IOTC Data Requirements; evaluation of performance of IOTC CPCs with those Requirements; development of plans of action to address the issues identified, including timeframe of implementation and follow-up activities required. Priority to be given to the following fisheries: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. I.R. Iran ii. Indonesia iii. Pakistan iv. Yemen v. Tanzania vi. Madagascar vii. Mauritius viii. Sri Lanka ix. Indonesia 	2
Review Size Data Longline Fisheries	Assistance to historical review of length frequency data for longline fisheries, in particular longliners from Taiwan,China and Japan.	3
Yemen catch data review	Review the historical catch series, and catches for most recent years, for Yemeni fisheries, particularly in relation to catches of tropical tuna and neritic tuna species.	4
Mauritius albacore size frequency sampling	Port Louis in Mauritius is one of the main landing places for albacore in the Indian Ocean. This activity addresses previous concerns from the IOTC Scientific Committee regarding the quality of size data for albacore available for the longline fleet of Taiwan,China. The main objective of this activity is to provide alternative length frequency data through sampling of lengths of albacore at the landing place. The feasibility and usefulness of sampling will be assessed at the end of the pilot-project.	5
Implementation Data Collection Sport Fisheries	Produce a catalogue of sport fisheries in the Indian Ocean; facilitate collection and reporting of data from sport clubs; training of local staff (TORs Appendix VI)	6
IOTC Data Summary	Further development of Web Based online querying procedures for the dissemination of IOTC datasets, including graphical representation of that information through charts and maps, etc. (Phase II)	7