

OUTCOMES OF THE 20th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT¹, 26 AUGUST 2016

PURPOSE

To inform participants at the 12th Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch (WPEB12) of the decisions and requests made by the Commission at its 20th Session, held from 23 – 27 May 2016, specifically relating to the work of the WPEB.

BACKGROUND

At the 20th Session, the Commission **CONSIDERED** and **ADOPTED** 12 proposals as Conservation and Management Measures (consisting of 12 Resolutions and 0 Recommendations²), as detailed below:

Resolutions

- Resolution 16/01 *On an interim plan for rebuilding the Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna stock*
- Resolution 16/02 *On harvest control rules for skipjack tuna in the IOTC area of competence*
- Resolution 16/03 *On the second performance review follow-up*
- Resolution 16/04 *On the implementation of a Pilot Project in view of Promoting the Regional Observer Scheme of IOTC*
- Resolution 16/05 *On vessels without nationality*
- Resolution 16/06 *On measures applicable in case of non-fulfilment of reporting obligations in the IOTC*
- Resolution 16/07 *On the use of artificial lights to attract fish*
- Resolution 16/08 *On the prohibition of the use of aircrafts and unmanned aerial vehicles as fishing aids*
- Resolution 16/09 *On establishing a Technical Committee on Management Procedures*
- Resolution 16/10 *To promote the implementation of IOTC Conservation and Management Measures*
- Resolution 16/11 *On port state measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing*
- Resolution 16/12 *Working Party on the Implementation of Conservation and Management Measures (WPICMM)*

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 2016–054 (i.e. 27 September 2016).

DISCUSSION

The Commission also made a number of general comments on the recommendations made by the Scientific Committee in 2015, which have relevance for the WPEB. At the time of writing, the final report has not been approved so all text and paragraph numbers refer to the *draft* report of the Commission pending final agreement by all parties (IOTC–2016–S20–R):

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² Provisional until approval of the final version of the S20 report

Sharks

Para. 22. The Commission **NOTED** the standing of catch statistics for the main species of sharks, by major fisheries (gears), and **EXPRESSED** concern over the lack of information submitted by CPCs on total catches, discards, catch and effort and size data of sharks in the IOTC database, despite their mandatory reporting status.

Para. 23. The Commission strongly **ENCOURAGED** CPCs comply with IOTC data requirements as requested per Resolution 15/01 and 15/02, given the gaps in available information in the IOTC database and the importance of basic fishery data in order to assess the status of stocks and for the provision of sound management advice.

On the use of artificial lights to attract fish

Para. 116. The Commission **ADOPTED** Resolution 16/XX On the use of artificial lights to attract fish. This Resolution prohibits fishing vessels and other vessels including support, supply and auxiliary vessels flying the flag of an IOTC Contracting Party or Cooperating Non-Contracting Party (collectively CPCs) from using, installing or operating surface or submerged artificial lights for the purpose of aggregating tuna and tuna-like species beyond territorial waters.

On the implementation of a pilot project in view of promoting the Regional Observer Scheme of IOTC

Para. 113. The Commission **ADOPTED** Resolution 16/04 On the implementation of a pilot project in view of promoting the Regional Observer Scheme of IOTC. This Resolution creates a pilot project aiming to enhance the implementation of the Resolution 11/04 on a Regional Observer Scheme and to raise the level of compliance to the implementation of Resolutions 15/01 and 15/02, respectively on the recording of catch and effort data by fishing vessels in the IOTC area of competence and on mandatory statistical reporting requirements for IOTC Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting parties (CPCs).

The complete report of the 20th Session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission is not yet available for download from the IOTC website but will be made publically available shortly after the final version has been agreed by correspondence.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the WPEB:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2016–WPEB12–04 which outlined the **provisional** outcomes of the 20th 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 WPEB meeting.
- 2) **NOTE** the 12 Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) adopted at the 20th Session of the Commission (consisting of 12 Resolutions and 0 Recommendations).