
PROGRESS MADE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF WPEB16 AND SC23

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PURPOSE

To provide participants at the 17th Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch (WPEB) with an update on the progress made in implementing those recommendations from the previous WPEB meeting which were endorsed by the Scientific Committee (SC), and to provide alternative recommendations for the consideration and potential endorsement by participants as appropriate given any progress.

BACKGROUND

At the 16th Session of the WPEB, participants agreed on a series of actions to be taken by participants, CPCs, and the IOTC Secretariat on a range of issues. The subsequent table developed and agreed to by the WPEB was provided to the SC for its endorsement at its December 2020 meeting. This paper provides a summary of the progress made on this list of requests so that the working party can evaluate progress made and to agree on the next steps to be taken for each issue.

DISCUSSION

The Rules of Procedure of the Scientific Committee include the following seven core tasks, which are to be supported by the various Working Parties.

- a) recommend policies and procedures for the collection, processing, dissemination and analysis of fishery data;
- b) facilitate the exchange and critical review among scientists of information on research and operation of fisheries of relevance to the Commission;
- c) develop and coordinate cooperative research programmes involving Members of the Commission in support of fisheries management;
- d) assess and report to the Commission on the status of stocks of relevance to the Commission and the likely effects of further fishing and of different fishing patterns and intensities;
- e) formulate and report to the sub-commission, as appropriate, on recommendations concerning conservation, fisheries management and research, including consensus, majority and minority views;
- f) consider any matter referred to by the Commission;
- g) carry out other technical activities of relevance to the Commission.

Recalling that the SC, at its 16th Session adopted a set of reporting terminology SC16.07 (para. 23), which was subsequently endorsed by the Commission at its 18th Session in 2014 (S18, para 10), to further improve the clarity of information sharing from, and among the science bodies, the following two term levels should be noted when interpreting the Reports and Appendix I to this paper:

Level 1: From a subsidiary body of the Commission to the next level in the structure of the Commission:

RECOMMENDED, RECOMMENDATION: Any conclusion or request for an action to be undertaken, from a subsidiary body of the Commission (Committee or Working Party), which is to be formally provided to the next level in the structure of the Commission for its consideration/endorsement (e.g. from a Working Party to the Scientific Committee; from a Committee to the Commission). The intention is that the higher body will consider the recommended action for endorsement under its own mandate, if the subsidiary body does not already have the required mandate. Ideally this should be task specific and contain a timeframe for completion.

Level 2: From a subsidiary body of the Commission to a CPC, the IOTC Secretariat, or other body (not the Commission) to carry out a specified task:

REQUESTED: This term should only be used by a subsidiary body of the Commission if it does not wish to have the request formally adopted/endorsed by the next level in the structure of the Commission. For example, if a Committee wishes to seek additional input from a CPC on a particular topic, but does not wish to formalise the request beyond

the mandate of the Committee, it may request that a set action be undertaken. Ideally this should be task specific and contain a timeframe for the completion.

In addition to the Recommendations endorsed by the SC at its 22nd Session, the SC also made several requests which, although are not passed to the Commission for its endorsement, are considered actions which the Scientific Committee has the mandate to issue. The revised recommendations are contained in [Appendix I](#) for the consideration and potential endorsement by the WPEB16.

RECOMMENDATION

That the WPEB **NOTE** the progress made in implementing the recommendations and requests of the 16th Session of the WPEB, and consider whether revised recommendations need to be sent to the SC for its consideration.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Progress made on the Recommendations and Requests of WPEB16

APPENDIX I

Progress made on the recommendations and requests of WPEB16 and SC23

WPEB16 Rec. No.	Recommendation from WPEB15	SC23 Rec. No.	Recommendation adopted by the SC23	Endorsed at S24/5	Progress/Comments
WPEB16. 01 (para. 154)	The WPEB RECOMMENDED that an intersessional meeting of a subgroup of cetacean bycatch specialists and other interested scientists continue work on these issues prior to the next WPEB meeting.	No Rec. Para. 66	The SC NOTED the intent of the WPEB to liaise with the International Whaling Commission (IWC) on matters relating to cetacean bycatch in the Indian Ocean including the introduction of a sub-Working Group which will be dedicated to discussing cetaceans to better understand the levels of bycatch in the Indian Ocean, potential mitigation measures and methods for overcoming data deficiencies.	N/A	Update: The WPEB continues to liaise with the IWC on matters relating to cetacean bycatch and recently organized another meeting to discuss the details of this collaboration
WPEB16. 02 (para 158)	The WPEB RECOMMENDED that the SC consider and endorse the WPEB Program of Work (2021–2025), as provided in Appendix XIX	No Rec. Para 157	The SC NOTED the proposed Program of Work and priorities for the SC and each of the working parties and AGREED to a consolidated Program of Work as outlined in Appendix 35a-g and in accordance with the IOTC Strategic Science Plan 2020-2024. The Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of each working party will ensure that the efforts of their respective working parties are focused on the core areas contained within the appendix, taking into account any new research priorities identified by the Commission at its next Session.	N/A	Update: [Completed]

<p>WPEB16.03 (para 162)</p>	<p>The WPEB RECOMMENDED that the Scientific Committee consider the consolidated set of recommendations arising from WPEB16 provided at Appendix XX, as well as the management advice provided in the draft resource stock status summary for each of the seven shark species, as well of those for marine turtles and seabirds:</p> <p>Sharks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Blue sharks (<i>Prionace glauca</i>) – Appendix IX ○ Oceanic whitetip sharks (<i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i>) – Appendix X ○ Scalloped hammerhead sharks (<i>Sphyrna lewini</i>) – Appendix XI ○ Shortfin mako sharks (<i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i>) – Appendix XII ○ Silky sharks (<i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i>) – Appendix XIII ○ Bigeye thresher sharks (<i>Alopias superciliosus</i>) – Appendix XIV ○ Pelagic thresher sharks (<i>Alopias pelagicus</i>) – Appendix XV <p>Other species/groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Marine turtles – Appendix XVI ○ Seabirds – Appendix XVII ○ Marine mammals – Appendix XVIII 	<p>SC23.04 (para. 134)</p> <p>SC23.05 (para 135)</p> <p>SC23.06 (para 136)</p> <p>SC23.07 (para 137)</p>	<p>The SC RECOMMENDED that the Commission note the management advice developed for a subset of shark species commonly caught in IOTC fisheries for tuna and tuna-like species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue shark (<i>Prionace glauca</i>) – Appendix 23 • Oceanic whitetip shark (<i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i>) – Appendix 24 • Scalloped hammerhead shark (<i>Sphyrna lewini</i>) – Appendix 25 • Shortfin mako shark (<i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i>) – Appendix 26 • Silky shark (<i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i>) – Appendix 27 • Bigeye thresher shark (<i>Alopias superciliosus</i>) – Appendix 28 • Pelagic thresher shark (<i>Alopias pelagicus</i>) – Appendix 29 <p>The SC RECOMMENDED that the Commission note the management advice developed for marine turtles, as provided in the Executive Summary encompassing all six species found in the Indian Ocean:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine turtles – Appendix 30 <p>The SC RECOMMENDED that the Commission note the management advice developed for seabirds, as provided in the Executive Summary encompassing all species commonly interacting with IOTC fisheries for tuna and tuna-like species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seabirds – Appendix 31 <p>The SC RECOMMENDED that the Commission note the management advice developed for cetaceans, as provided in the newly developed Executive Summary</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Update: Completed</p>
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			encompassing all species commonly interacting with IOTC fisheries for tuna and tuna-like species: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cetaceans – Appendix 32		
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WPEB16 Report	WPEB REQUESTS	Update/Progress
WPEB16 (para 13)	The WPEB also NOTED that data for all bycatch species (including raised catches and discards, time-area catches and size-frequency data) is often incomplete or not reported according to IOTC standards, and this has an impact on the ability of this group to undertake its work, and REQUESTED the IOTC Compliance Committee to take this into due consideration.	Update: At the Compliance Committee meeting of 2021, the issue of CPC compliance with Resolution 17/05 (Mandatory statistics of shark fisheries) was discussed. The CoC NOTED that overall compliance with the Resolution stood at 41% in 2020 with lower compliance for length-frequency (15%) and catch and effort data (22%). The CoC NOTED the difficulties faced by CPCs who do not target sharks in providing size frequency data for sharks as they are released soon after hauling as well as noting the difficulties with species identification. CoC18.01 (para 37) The CoC RECOMMENDED that the difficulties faced by CPCs in complying with shark data, for the CPCs who do not have a shark fishery or have banned the landing of sharks in national legislation, be raised by the Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics (WPDCS) and the Working Party on the Implementation of Conservation and Management Measures (WPICMM).
WPEB16 (para 43)	The WPEB REQUESTED that CPCs submit their NPOA to Secretariat for upload onto the NPOA portal.	Update: [Ongoing] The Secretariat continues to follow up with CPCs on the status of their NPOAs. Any new NPOAs brought to the attention of the secretariat have been included in document IOTC-2021-WPEB17(AS)-08
WPEB16 (para 97)	The WPEB NOTED that the nominal catch data utilized in the assessment included estimations of SMA catch from certain CPCs, based on limited information on shark catches and species composition data submitted to the IOTC Secretariat, which has included the species-specific shark catches from Japan including SMA from 1964 to 1993. The WPEB NOTED the request from Japan that these data should not be used in the stock assessment for key shark species in the Indian Ocean until Japan clarifies its credibility and agrees with its usage for stock assessment purposes.	Update: Japan has continued to clarify these data and have submitted revised datasets. One of these datasets was presented at the Data Preparatory meeting and has been incorporated into the blue shark stock assessment conducted in 2021. A later dataset submitted prior to the assessment meeting has not been incorporated due to the lack of time prior to the meeting.