

**Request for Endorsement on Signing of Memorandum of Understanding Concerning the  
Continuation of the IOTC-OFCF Project from 2022  
between the OFCF and the FAO under which the IOTC falls**

This is to request the WPDCS to endorse the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (hereinafter referred to as "the FAO") and The Overseas Fishery Cooperation Foundation of Japan (hereinafter referred to as "the OFCF"), concerning the continuation of the IOTC-OFCF project (hereafter The Project) from Japanese Fiscal Year 2022 with the purpose of tuna fisheries statistics improvement of IOTC coastal member countries.

The IOTC Secretariat and the OFCF will, in the same manner as before, discuss details of activities of the Project based on the recommendations provided by the Commission, and its subsidiary bodies (the Scientific Committee and the WPDCS) and the Project will conduct these activities as needed and appropriately in the IOTC coastal member countries.

Outline of the Project is described as follows:

The Project has been conducted since 2002 in accordance with the agreement between the IOTC Secretariat and the OFCF with the purpose of tuna fisheries statistics improvement of IOTC coastal member countries.

The Project has assisted IOTC coastal member countries, by 1) sending fact-finding mission to find out status of data collection, 2) conducting sampling programs in the priority areas, 3) holding seminars and workshops, 4) improving database system, and 5) conducting activities to obtain historical data, since 2002 (Phase I to V) for the last two decades.

The Phase VI started in 2020. However, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Project was not able to conduct on-site activities of the coastal member countries. Therefore, in 2020, the Project printed species identification cards (tunas and tuna-like species, marlins, sharks, seabirds and sea turtles) in Portuguese for on-board observers and port sampling enumerators, and distributed them to Republic of Mozambique and Portugal.

In 2021, the Project plans 1) to translate the identification cards of tunas & tuna-like species and marlins into Thai and Swahili by March 2022 and 2) to distribute already printed cards to countries that request them.

In 2022, upon the approval on the signing of the MOU, the IOTC Secretariat and the OFCF will discuss details of activities to formulate a proper activity plan for the IOTC coastal member countries.