

RESOLUTION 13/10

ON INTERIM TARGET AND LIMIT REFERENCE POINTS AND A DECISION FRAMEWORK

The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC),

BEING MINDFUL for Article XVI of the IOTC Agreement regarding the rights of Coastal States and of Article 87 and 116 of the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea regarding the right to fish on the high seas;

RECALLING that Article 6, paragraph 3, of the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea of December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (UNFSA), establishes the application of precautionary reference points as a general principle for sound fisheries management;

FURTHER RECALLING that Annex II, of UNFSA provides guidelines for the application of precautionary reference points in the conservation and management of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks, including the adoption of provisional reference points when information for establishing reference points is absent or poor;

NOTING that Article 7.5.3 of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries also recommends the implementation of stock specific target and limit reference points, *inter alia*, on the basis of the precautionary approach;

NOTING that recommendations 37 and 38 of the Performance Review Panel, adopted by the Commission as Resolution 09/01, indicate that pending the amendment or replacement of the IOTC Agreement to incorporate modern fisheries management principles, the Commission should implement the precautionary approach including, *inter alia*, precautionary reference points, as set forth in the UNFSA;

NOTING Resolution 12/01 *On the implementation of the precautionary approach* that recommends adoption of provisional reference points, and that the Scientific Committee proposed provisional values at its 14th Session;

RECALLING ALSO that the IOTC Scientific Committee has initiated a process leading to a management strategy evaluation (MSE) process to improve upon the provision of scientific advice on Harvest Control Rules (HCRs);

ACKNOWLEDGING that continuing dialog between scientists and managers is necessary to define appropriate HCRs for the IOTC tuna and tuna-like stocks;

ADOPTS in accordance with paragraph 1 of Article IX of the IOTC Agreement, that:

1. When assessing stock status and providing recommendations to the Commission, the Scientific Committee should apply the following interim target and limit reference points for the species of tuna and tuna-like species listed in Table 1. B_{MSY} refers to the biomass level for the stock that would produce the Maximum Sustainable Yield; F_{MSY} refers to the level of fishing mortality that produces the Maximum Sustainable Yield.

Table 1. Interim target and limit reference points.

Stock	Target Reference Point	Limit Reference Point
Albacore	$B_{MSY}; F_{MSY}$	$B_{LIM} = 0.40 B_{MSY}; F_{LIM} = 1.40 F_{MSY}$
Bigeye tuna	$B_{MSY}; F_{MSY}$	$B_{LIM} = 0.50 B_{MSY}; F_{LIM} = 1.30 F_{MSY}$
Skipjack tuna	$B_{MSY}; F_{MSY}$	$B_{LIM} = 0.40 B_{MSY}; F_{LIM} = 1.50 F_{MSY}$
Yellowfin tuna	$B_{MSY}; F_{MSY}$	$B_{LIM} = 0.40 B_{MSY}; F_{LIM} = 1.40 F_{MSY}$
Swordfish	$B_{MSY}; F_{MSY}$	$B_{LIM} = 0.40 B_{MSY}; F_{LIM} = 1.40 F_{MSY}$

2. These interim target and limit reference points shall be assessed and further reviewed by the Scientific Committee and the results presented to the Commission for adoption of species-specific limit reference points. If applicable, the Scientific Committee should endeavor to apply the interim reference points in the provision of advice on the status of stocks and on recommendations for management measures.

3. The Scientific Committee shall assess, as soon as possible and more particularly through the management strategy evaluation process (MSE) process, the robustness and the performance of the interim reference points, specified under paragraph 1 and other reference points based on the guidelines of International agreements taking into account: i) nature of these reference points – target or limits, ii) the best scientific knowledge on population dynamics and on life-history parameters, iii) the fisheries exploiting them, and iv) the various sources uncertainty.
4. In addition the Scientific Committee shall develop and assess potential harvest control rules (HCRs) to be applied, considering the status of the stocks against the reference points assessed in paragraph 3 for albacore, bigeye tuna, skipjack tuna, yellowfin tuna and swordfish. Based on the results of the MSE and considering the guidelines set forth in the UNFSA, and Article V of the IOTC Agreement, the Scientific Committee will recommend to the Commission HCRs for these tuna and tuna-like species, which among other factors shall be based on the following objectives:
 - a) For stocks which assessed status will match with the lower right (green) quadrant of Kobe Plot, aim at maintaining the stocks in a high probability within this quadrant;
 - b) For stocks which assessed status will match with the upper right (orange) quadrant of the Kobe Plot, aim at ending overfishing in a high probability in a short a period as possible;
 - c) For stocks which assessed status will match with the lower left (yellow) quadrant of the Kobe plot, aim at rebuilding these stocks in as short a period as possible;
 - d) For stocks which assessed status will match with the upper left quadrant (red), aim at ending overfishing in a high probability and at rebuilding the biomass of these stocks in as short a period as possible.
5. Bearing in mind Article 64 of UNCLOS and Article 8 of UNFSA, the entirety of this Resolution is subject to Article XVI (Coastal States' Rights) of the IOTC Agreement for the Establishment of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, and Article 116 of the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea regarding the right to fish on the high seas;
6. This Resolution supersedes Recommendation 12/14 *On interim target and limit reference points*.