

Indian Ocean tuna – purse seine (Dongwon Industries) FIP Position Statement Ahead of the IOTC Annual Meeting 2023

Drafted with agreement from all Indian Ocean tuna – purse seine (Dongwon Industries) FIP
Participants
May 2023

The submission of this position statement is on behalf of the [Indian Ocean tuna – purse seine \(Dongwon Industries\) Fishery Improvement Project \(FIP\)](#). The fishery targets bigeye (*Thunnus obesus*), skipjack (*Katsuwonus pelamis*), and yellowfin (*Thunnus albacares*) tuna with free-school (unassociated) and fish aggregating devices (FAD) -associated purse seine sets. The fleet of two purse seine vessels are flagged to the Republic of Korea. The fleet operates mainly in the EEZs of the Seychelles, and Mauritius, and the Indian Ocean (IO) high seas. The fishery is managed regionally by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC).

This FIP aims to meet the rising global demand for tuna and other large pelagics in a sustainable manner. This can be achieved by assuring sustainable stock status for all the target tunas that is consistent with the maximum sustainable yield (MSY). Through overall strengthening of management systems at the national and international levels, improvements can be made to ensure sustainable and equitable management of target and vulnerable species, FADs, habitats, and fishery ecosystem by utilising best scientific information available. The fishery has entered assessment under the [Marine Stewardship Council](#) (MSC) with the end goal is to achieve certification under the Fisheries Standard by the latest 2025.

As a FIP, we are concerned with the status of the tuna stocks in the Indian Ocean and their effective management. We operate in this region and the sustainability of these stocks is integral to not only our business, but also to the overall marine environment.

IOTC must ensure the uninterrupted, sustainable management of the tuna stocks and marine ecosystems under its purview. There are several critical measures and issues that require immediate attention by IOTC this year. We therefore strongly urge that the IOTC acts in May 2023 at the annual meeting of the IOTC Commission to:

1. Adopt without delay in amendments to Resolution 21/01 to ensure an effective rebuilding plan for yellowfin tuna to reduce the total catch by at least 22% (relative to the 2020 level) that gives full effect to the advice of the IOTC Scientific Committee.
2. Ensure that catches of skipjack tuna in 2023 do not exceed HCRs in Res. 21/03 (513,572 t).
3. Ensure bigeye catches do not exceed the limit set by Management Procedure Res. 22/03.
4. Build on the measures in Res. 23/02 on the management of drifting FADs by:
 - a. Requiring clearer rules for FAD activation and deactivation of FAD buoys.
5. Amend Resolution 17/05 to require fins naturally attached for sharks, irrespective of how they are landed.
6. Ensure CPC compliance with the prohibition on the use of large-scale driftnets on the high seas and urge accelerated implementation of Res. 17/07 that prohibits the use of such driftnets in the entire IOTC area of competence.



The Indian Ocean tuna – purse seine (Dongwon Industries) FIP looks forward to the continued leadership of the IOTC in the Indian Ocean, a region rich in tuna resources that are in need of continued science-based conservation and management. Many thanks for taking time to read our position statement.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the FIP coordinator, Emily Wardrop at e.wardrop@keytraceability.com