

## Indian Ocean tuna - longline (Bumble Bee & FCF) FIP Position Statement Ahead of the IOTC Special Session 2023

January 2023

The submission of this position statement is on behalf of the [Indian Ocean tuna - longline \(Bumble Bee & FCF\) FIP](#). The fishery targets albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*), bigeye (*T. obesus*) and yellowfin (*T. albacares*). The pelagic longline vessels are flagged to China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Seychelles and Oman and fish on the high seas of the Indian Ocean and within the EEZ's of Mauritius, Seychelles, and Madagascar. The fishery is managed regionally by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC).

This Fishery Improvement Project aims to meet the rising global demand for tuna and other large pelagics in a sustainable manner by assuring catches do not exceed sustainable levels, promoting the ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management and strengthening policy and governance systems in the region. The end goal is to achieve certification under the [Marine Stewardship Council](#) Fisheries Standard by the latest 2024.

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. We strongly urge the IOTC and its members takes action in February 2023 at the Special Meeting of the IOTC Commission to:

1. Develop and implement science-based limits on FAD deployments and/or FAD sets, consistent with management objectives for tropical tunas.
2. Allow the IOTC Scientific Committee to use submitted FAD tracking data for scientific purposes. These data are currently used only for FAD limit compliance purposes.
3. Require the use of biodegradable materials in the construction of FADs to minimize use of synthetic/plastic materials in FAD construction. Establish a timeline for transitioning to 100% biodegradable.
4. Develop and adopt FAD marking guidelines, including requiring the marking of the buoy and the FAD structure.
5. Develop and adopt FAD tracking and recovery policies, as called for in RES. 19/02, that consider utilizing supply vessels in FAD recovery efforts.
6. Adopt clearer rules for FAD ownership and activation, as well as for deactivation of FAD buoys.

As a member of Indian Ocean Tuna – Longline (Thai Union) FIP engaging in proactive tuna fisheries improvement activities in the Indian Ocean, we urge you to ensure that your government fully supports action on the above issues at the February 2023 Special Meeting of IOTC Commission, and that Malaysia's positions will testify to your support for addressing these issues.

The Indian Ocean tuna - longline (Bumble Bee & FCF) FIP looks forward to the continued leadership of the IOTC in the Indian Ocean, a region rich in tuna resources that need 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.

Kind regards,



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