

Indian Ocean Tuna Fishery Position Statement

IOTC Annual Meeting 2026

Drafted with agreement from all FIP & MSC Participants

April 2026

FCF Co., Ltd., together with its associated Longline-based [Fishery Improvement Projects \(FIPs\)](#) and [Marine Stewardship Council \(MSC\)-certified fisheries](#), represents a significant portion of the longline tuna supply chain operating in the Indian Ocean. As active participants in global tuna markets and sustainability initiatives, we are committed to ensuring that tuna fisheries are managed in a manner consistent with long-term sustainability, science-based decision-making, and international best practices.

Through our involvement in FIPs and MSC-certified fisheries, we have invested substantial effort and resources to improve fisheries performance, strengthen monitoring and compliance systems, and support the adoption of effective harvest strategies.

We recognize the important role of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) in ensuring effective and science-based management of tuna fisheries. Continued progress in strengthening compliance, monitoring systems, and harvest strategies is critical. We therefore strongly urge the IOTC to take the following actions at its May 2026 Annual Commission Meeting:

Tuna Stock Conservation

- Adopt a TAC for yellowfin tuna for the period of 2026-2028 that does not exceed the median MSY estimate of 421,000 tonnes, and adopt measures to ensure this TAC is not exceeded, as recommended by the IOTC Scientific Committee.
- Implement effective measures to ensure that skipjack and bigeye tuna catches do not exceed the catch limits established by the Harvest Control Rule for skipjack and the Management Procedure for bigeye.

Effective Management Procedures (Harvest Strategies)

- Sufficiently fund and accelerate the adoption of robust management procedures for yellowfin tuna and albacore.

Bycatch Mitigation and Shark Protections

- Amend Res. 25/08 to require shark fins to be naturally attached for all landings without exceptions or alternatives.
- The SC established criteria for the conduct of experimental fishing trials to assess the effects of leader materials on the mortality of vulnerable shark species (per para 17 of Resolution 25/08), if such trials take place, ensure that they are done so only in accordance with the criteria.
- Adopt updated best practices for safe handling and release of mobulids and adopt best practices for safe handling and release for cetaceans, including use of safe release devices, as recommended by the SC.

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- Amend Res. 23/07 on seabird mitigation measures to reflect up-to-date scientific advice and align the specifications to meet the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) standards.
- Amend Res. 12/04 on sea turtles to include scientifically proven mitigation measures and safe handling and release devices and require identification of sea turtles at species level as recommended by the SC.

Electronic Monitoring and Reporting and Observer Coverage

- More fully embrace the use of electronic monitoring to increase observer coverage from the minimum 5% level for all gear types.
- Adopt measures to begin increasing observer coverage (human and/or electronic) from the minimum 5% and progress toward 100% coverage in industrial tuna fisheries.

Vessel Monitoring Systems and Port State Measures

- Strengthen Res. 16/11 to be consistent with the FAO Port State Measures Agreement, including by adopting provisions for prioritizing vessels for inspection and including ports of CPCs outside the IOTC Agreement Area.
- To improve compliance with tuna conservation measures, adopt amendments to Res. 15/03 to strengthen the IOTC VMS, including by requiring simultaneous near real-time position reporting and ensuring systems are tamper-proof.

Transshipment Regulation

Amend IOTC at-sea transshipment Res. 25/05 to further strengthen the regulation of transshipment:

- Add recommended data fields from the FAO Guidelines, Annex I, to the IOTC transshipment declaration including, among others, vessel owner and company contact information, master contact details, intended location (at-sea position or port), and the amount of catch remaining on board after transshipment operations.
- Require all reporting to be electronic and in near real-time, but no greater than 24 hours after event, and that all transshipment declarations be submitted to flag State and IOTC Secretariat.
- Require all vessels authorized to conduct at-sea transshipment to have IMO number and operational automatic identification systems (AIS), and that VMS position data are provided to IOTC Secretariat in near-real time.

FCF looks forward to continued leadership from the IOTC in advancing science-based management and strengthening governance of tuna fisheries in the Indian Ocean.

We remain committed to supporting sustainable fisheries management and to working collaboratively with governments, industry, and stakeholders to ensure long-term sustainability of tuna stocks and marine ecosystems.