



# 2022 RFMO Review

---

GLOBAL TUNA ALLIANCE

# *Introduction*

This is the second Global Tuna Alliance (GTA) annual Regional Fishery Management Organisation (RFMO) Review, which describes our asks of the tuna RFMOs, presents our advocacy actions and summaries the outcomes from the meetings.

The review intends to provide a record of our work, and enable subsequent advocacy to build on successes and learn from obstacles encountered.

**Table 1: GTA Overarching 2022 Tuna RFMO Asks**

High-Level Ask	Detailed ask
<b>Comprehensive Harvest Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accelerate development and implementation of comprehensive, precautionary Harvest Strategies, including precautionary Reference Points and Harvest Control Rules</li> </ul>
<b>100% observer coverage/Electronic Monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% observer coverage requirement (human and/or electronic) in industrial tuna fisheries, including all those engaged in at sea transshipment, by 2024.</li> <li>Where lacking, adopt minimum standards for Electronic Monitoring (EM) data, and a work plan with milestones and deadlines for the implementation of best practice EM and e-reporting, with necessary mechanisms to ensure compliance.</li> </ul>
<b>Observer Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulatory authorities (flag and coastal states) and their respective observer programs should work together to implement the International Observer Bill of Rights (IBOR) at the RFMO level</li> <li>Alongside the IOBR, regulatory authorities (flag states and coastal states) and their respective observer programs should support the adoption of the WCPFC mandatory observer safety reforms by all tuna RFMOs.</li> </ul>
<b>FAD Management Best Practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RFMOs should adopt the measures identified in the GTA's <a href="#">position</a> on better FAD Management. While not comprehensive, these measures are critical to ensuring that at-sea FAD fishing is better-managed and more transparent.</li> </ul>
<b>At Sea Transshipment Best Practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt 100% observer coverage requirement (human and/or electronic) on all vessels engaged in at sea transshipment, by 2024.</li> <li>Adopt amendments to existing transshipment regulations to bring in line with best practices (GTA will expand with social/labour elements)</li> </ul>
<b>Port States Measures Agreement (PSMA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that all Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) have adopted PSMs that are aligned with PSMA requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>Fins Naturally Attached (FNA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen existing shark-finning measures by requiring that all sharks be landed with fins naturally attached and ensure adequate surveillance of compliance exists.</li> </ul>
<b>Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdictions (BBNJ)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RFMOs to actively participate in the upcoming rounds of BBNJ treaty negotiations to ensure the complementarity of their strategies with the area-based management tool (ABMT) and environmental impact assessment (EIA) ambitions of the BBNJ treaty.</li> <li>Tuna RFMOs to implement integrated, ecosystem-based management (IOM/EBM) to replace reliance on single sector management in isolated silos and the limited focus on the impacts on non-target, associated or dependent species.</li> </ul>
<b>Allocations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allocation is a critical component of fisheries management. While RFMOs have defined priorities and values, they have not systematized their application to resource allocation. As such, the actual allocation of tuna resources is shaped more by politics, rather than principles. We call on each RFMO to move from the current system of opaque allocations (where they exist) based on political negotiations to a systematic and transparent system of fair and equitable fishing opportunities to all participants according to international law.</li> </ul>

# IOTC

## Rebuild The Yellowfin Road

At the end of 2021, the IOTC Scientific committee took place. The focus was yellowfin and the management advice was:

- If catches are reduced to 60% of 2020 levels, there is >50% probability of being above Bmsy levels by 2023.
- If catches are reduced to < 80% of 2020 levels, there is a >50% probability of being above BMSY in 2030.
- If catches are reduced to less than 80% of 2020 levels, there would be a >50% probability of ending overfishing ( $F < F_{msy}$ ) by 2023 and also by 2030.

- The probability of breaching the biological limit reference point (0.4Bmsy) with 2020 catches is 7% by 2023 and 64% by 2030.
- The probability of breaching the F limit reference point (1.4 Fmsy) with 2020 catch is 52% by 2023 and 78% by 2030.

This is the most prescriptive advice we have seen, and it provided us with a robust framework to build our 2022 IOTC asks (Table 2).

**Table 2: GTA 2022 IOTC Asks**

<b>Harvest Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accelerate development and implementation of comprehensive, precautionary Harvest Strategies, including precautionary Reference Points and Harvest Control Rules</li> </ul>
<b>Yellowfin Conservation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We request the IOTC secretariat schedules adequate time to discuss yellowfin rebuilding proposals.</li> <li>• CPCs should agree a resolution that specifies how the yellowfin stock could be rebuilt in two generations</li> <li>• The resolution should apply to all fishing vessels targeting tuna and tuna like species in the Indian Ocean regardless of the length of the vessel and area of operation.</li> <li>• We encourage CPCs to discuss proposals in advance of the meeting.</li> <li>• If catches are reduced to &lt;70% of 2020 levels there is a &gt;67% probability of being above BMSY in 2030.</li> <li>• If catches are reduced to &lt;70% of 2020 levels there would be a &gt;67% probability of ending overfishing (<math>F &lt; F_{msy}</math>) by 2023 and also by 2030.</li> <li>• Accordingly, reduce yellowfin catches to below 302,837t.</li> <li>• In addition to the reduction in catch as set out above, the IOTC must ensure that all CPCs must comply with the resolution.</li> <li>• GTA recognises that as far as possible, all CPCs and gear types are now required to play their part in delivering catch reductions going forwards.</li> </ul>
<b>Electronic Monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2022 develop EM program minimum standards.</li> <li>• Require 100% observer coverage (human and/or electronic) in industrial tuna fisheries, including all those engaged in at sea transshipment, by 2024.</li> </ul>
<b>PSMA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amend Res. 16/11 to prioritize vessels for inspection in port and expand the measure to include ports of CPCs that are outside of the IOTC Convention Area.</li> </ul>

To support our Partners, we held three IOTC Working Group meetings, one each in February, March and April. These meetings aimed to provide a scheduled update of our IOTC advocacy, including engagement resources and opportunities.

We published an IOTC engagement resource pack for Partners. The pack contained template text for use in contacting the IOTC delegations and template text for use in contacting suppliers of Indian Ocean tuna to seek their engagement with the delegates. The pack also contained the latest contact details for delegations.

For the first time, we published a glossy IOTC 'headline' position statement. Previously we have used a plain written statement. We hope the new format was more engaging. The aim is for Partners to be able to use this in your engagement/discussions with delegates, suppliers etc.

To ensure delegates were able to hear directly from the market, we held an IOTC roundtable on 19th April. Five delegations indicated they would attend: UK, EU, Australia, Seychelles and Maldives. Germany also replied separately from the EU. GTA Partners Tesco, New England Seafoods and Lusamerica presented, and explained why their businesses were seeking action at the Commission meeting. The roundtable was recorded and you can view the highlights and the whole 30 minutes. In addition, you can also view Lusamerica's excellent short film.

We also wrote directly to the six objecting countries calling on them to work towards an effective rebuilding plan for yellowfin, noting that all delegates and gear types are required to play their part in delivering catch reductions going forward. We also requested a dialogue to better understand any barriers – but we received no replies.

Following the publication of the IOTC Conservation and Management Measures proposals, we published our response to the relevant ones. This was sent to all delegates.

Aligned with our efforts, the NGO Tuna Forum produced a collaborative letter signed by 58 companies (market partners of Forum members, including GTA Partners).

In early May, we had advertisements placed in the Economic Times, Ahmedabad Edition (circulation 6 million) and Krishak Jagat, India's National Agriculture Newspaper (circulation 2.5 million). India had objected to the last two yellowfin rebuilding plans and this was one way to highlight the issue.

The IOTC meeting took place from 16th to 20th May in the Seychelles. Due to COVID concerns, it was only in-person for Heads of Delegation plus one other. Observers, like the GTA had to access remotely. Daily updates were provided to Partners, and a summary of the outcomes can be found in the table below, and in a glossy document.

**ग्रामीणकालीन फसलों की बुवाई 71 लाख हेक्टे. से अधिक**

अर्थ: विश्वीय और स्थानीय बाजारों में मांग बढ़ने के कारण, हम इस क्षेत्र में उत्पादन को बढ़ावा देने के लिए 71 लाख हेक्टे. से अधिक क्षेत्रों में बुवाई कर रहे हैं।

क्र. सं.	राज्य	कुल बुवाई (हैक्टे.)	सुसिंचित (हैक्टे.)	असुसिंचित (हैक्टे.)	
1.	उत्तर प्रदेश	29.75	30.83	-1.12	-3.6
2.	झारखण्ड	20.38	17.21	3.17	18.4
3.	मिडिया प्रदेस	10.82	10.26	0.56	5.5
4.	बिहार	10.60	10.54	0.06	4.2
कुल		71.63	68.84	2.79	4.4

**Hey, Fisheries Minister!**

Now we have your attention, we'd like to direct your representatives to end overfishing of yellowfin tuna in the Indian Ocean by agreeing to rebuild the stock.

**WHAT is the situation?**  
Catch of Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna needs to be significantly reduced to end overfishing and allow the stock to rebuild.

**WHY is it important?**  
Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna is a global commodity, enjoyed all around the world but it remains overfished with overfishing continuing in 2022. 6 countries, including India, submitted to an agreed reform rebuilding plan. This plan history cannot repeat itself. It will end the overfishing of this stock that is at risk. The livelihoods of fisheries workers are at stake. Consumers want sustainable tuna, and if there is no agreed catch limit for Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna, we may never see that again.

**WHO is calling for this?**  
Consumers, scientists, NGOs and retailers are all asking for the same thing: The Global Tuna Alliance (GTA) is a collaboration of 40 members, wholesalers, retailers and processors of tuna. In 2020, all Partners of the GTA brought 1.2 the tonnes of tuna, which translates to USD \$1.3bn, that's one fifth of the global production. All Partners of the GTA also employ over 12 million people across 95 countries.

**WHEN is this happening?**  
At the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission meeting from the 16th May to the 20th May in Seychelles.

**HOW can you help?**  
Agree on a catch limit. Rebuild Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna. Protect the future livelihoods of fisheries workers.

**Partners:** The Global Tuna Alliance

Table 3: GTA 2022 IOTC Outcomes

Proposal	Outcome	Reason for failure	Consequence
Yellowfin Tuna	Proposal Withdrawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>India, Oman &amp; Somalia – maybe others) noted they would not accept any cuts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Another special session was agreed in principle for February.</li> <li>Anything agreed at that session, or at the 27th session, will begin in Jan 24 - so we face an additional 12 months fishing overfished yellowfin way above MSY.</li> <li>We estimate that catches could be around 440,000mt whereas MSY is 349,000mt. As a result the stock is likely to decrease further, necessitating larger cuts to rebuild.</li> </ul>
Skipjack HCR	Proposal Withdrawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EU &amp; Maldives were unable to agree on a joint text, but the primary reason for withdrawal was because some CPCs had said they would object to any cuts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The skipjack catch will continue to exceed the agreed harvest control rule TAC.</li> <li>This may have consequences on the MSC certified skipjack fisheries* as they have conditions to demonstrate that exploitation levels required under the HCR are being achieved. I have asked the MSC to clarify the situation.</li> </ul>
FAD Management Improvements	Proposal Withdrawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The EU's FAD proposal was withdrawn following several objections to a lack of dFAD closure, and the inclusion of aFADs in the proposed CMM.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Another special session was agreed. Details TBC.</li> <li>It was a huge missed opportunity to improve the management of FADs in the Indian Ocean.</li> </ul>
Strengthening Statistical Reporting	Proposal Withdrawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many coastal states refused to support it. The primary point of contention was a proposal for coastal fisheries to report catches monthly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This was a recommendation from SciCom.</li> <li>We may continue to struggle with poor data reporting.</li> </ul>
Strengthening the CPCs Compliance Assessment	Proposal Withdrawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blocked by India &amp; Somalia.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions will continue intersessionally. However, this discussion has been ongoing for four years now.</li> <li>The proposal would have established a framework of possible responses to non-compliance situations, grading of the different infractions according to their seriousness, ensuring an appropriate follow-up to infractions, improving overall compliance.</li> <li>Backward step in combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing</li> </ul>
Strengthening High-Seas Boarding To Combat IUU Fishing	Proposal Withdrawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blocked by India</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unclear what will happen to the proposal. EU may re-table.</li> <li>However, this proposal would have equipped the IOTC with a monitoring, control and surveillance tool able to improve compliance with CMMs.</li> <li>As above - this is a backwards step in combatting IUU.</li> </ul>

\*MSC confirmed that the Compagnie Française du Thon Océanique (CFTO) Indian Ocean Purse Seine Skipjack fishery; Echebatar Indian Ocean purse seine skipjack tuna & Maldives pole & line skipjack tuna would be at risk of suspension if the skipjack HCR issue remains unaddressed in 2026.

Proposal	Outcome	Consequence
<b>Bigeye Management Procedure</b>	<b>Adopted</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next step is for the SciCom to recommend a TAC for bigeye based upon the management procedure.</li> <li>• The big question is whether this will be adopted and how it is allocated.</li> </ul>
<b>Climate change measures</b>	<b>Adopted</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good proposal which aims support improving CPCs understanding of the impact of climate change on tuna stocks and the ecosystems of which they are part, and build the capacity of developing State CPCs to address the impacts of climate change on tuna stocks and fisheries, through the improvement of climate science in such states.</li> <li>• However, agreeing two special sessions whereby hundreds of delegates will fly across the globe does seem somewhat in conflict with the aims.</li> </ul>
<b>Transshipment improvements</b>	<b>Adopted</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good proposal. IOTC are aligned with the new measure adopted by ICCAT.</li> <li>• Will ensure the monitoring of the transshipment activities by large-scale longline vessels in the IOTC area of competence, including the control of their landings. It was a huge missed opportunity to improve the management of FADs in the Indian Ocean.</li> </ul>
<b>Developing electronic monitoring standards</b>	<b>Adopted proposals from EU &amp; Seychelles were merges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronic Monitoring standards will be developed - a key GTA ask.</li> <li>• Observer coverage levels were not raised, but this is a very positive first step.</li> </ul>

We published our post-meeting [reaction](#) and it was covered in the trade press including [SeafoodSource](#), [Undercurrent News](#) and [ATUNA](#).

During IOTC, we published a [statement](#) noting that a Japanese fund has invested in Oman Fisheries Co SAOG, one of the largest fisheries companies in Oman. We noted that Oman was one of the objectors to yellowfin rebuilding and urged the fund owners to use their influence to bring Oman 'back to the table'. This was covered in [Undercurrent News](#). We followed up by noting that the Fund is a Signatory of the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) and asked if the investment aligns with the aims of the PRI; in particular environmental and social responsibility. Finally, we further amplified the story by noting that a new large tuna and sardine canning complex, processing an estimated 30,000mt of seafood annually, will [begin operations](#) in Oman in 2024.

Following the meeting, MWC produced a [full wrap-up of all comms during the IOTC 2022 campaign](#).

Key outputs include:

- Average of 734 impressions per day over 50 days;
- 1.3% increase in Twitter engagement rate during the campaign;
- The yellowfin road meme was the most popular post with 5,374 impressions;
- Partners sharing content amplifies the campaign's messages.

The Report of the 26th Session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission was published in August. It was also noted that the IOTC will hold a Special Session from 3rd-5th February 2023 in Kenya to advance Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) issues. The aim of the Special Session is to adopt a conservation and management measure on FADs.

At the Long-Distance Advisory Council (LDAC) meeting on 26th October, the EU Head of Delegation provided an update on IOTC deliberations. He noted that the Commission meeting in May "was not half-full, rather completely empty", agreeing with our summary. We also learnt that during the autumn, there was a Head of Delegation meeting held to discuss the objections to yellowfin rebuilding plans. Unfortunately, only one objector attended, and another new country decided to object (apparently Bangladesh).

The 25th session of the IOTC scientific committee took place from 5th to 9th December 2022, in Seychelles. The new 2022 stock assessments were published for albacore and bigeye and the results are summarised below.

- Albacore is not considered to be overfished and overfishing is not occurring. Projections indicate that the current catch appears to be sustainable in the short term although the projections are based on models with much uncertainty.
- The bigeye stock is considered overfished and subject to overfishing. The TAC recommended from the application of the management procedure, which was adopted this year, is 80,583t per year for the period 2024-2025. This is 15% below the 2021 catch.



---

# IATTC

## Transparent Tuna

---

The 100th session of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) took place from 1st-5th August in Phoenix, Arizona. At the meeting, 20 of the 21 IATTC members were personally present. Daily updates were provided to Partners. Even though just a couple of proposals were approved this year, if we consider the progress from this meeting and the one from 2021, the improved rate of progress from the IATTC is undeniable, even though we still have a lot to work to do.

The week before the Commission meeting, the GTA hosted a roundtable for IATTC delegates, attended by representatives from Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, and Mexico. We presented our asks and expressed our support for some of the proposals submitted by CPCs. Also, we provided an engagement resource pack for Partners. The pack contained template text for contacting the IATTC delegations and template text for contacting suppliers of the Eastern Pacific Ocean to seek their engagement with the delegates. The pack also contained the latest contact details for delegations.

**Table 4: GTA 2022 IATTC Asks**

<b>Harvest Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adopt management objectives for bigeye in 2022.</li><li>• Adopt a comprehensive, precautionary harvest strategy for North Pacific albacore.</li></ul>
<b>Better FAD Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adopt the measures on biodegradable FADs, FAD marking and non-entangling FADs identified in the GTA's <u>position</u> on better FAD Management.</li></ul>
<b>PSMA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Members to opt into the PSM measure by designating ports.</li><li>• Support the implementation of the assistance mechanism for developing States.</li></ul>
<b>Electronic Monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adopt minimum standards for an electronic monitoring program in 2022.</li></ul>
<b>Transshipment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adopt 100% observer coverage requirement (human and/or electronic) on all vessels engaged in at sea transshipment, by 2024.</li><li>• Adopt amendments to existing transshipment regulations to bring in line with best practices.</li></ul>

The plenary designated Dr. Arnulfo Franco, from Panama, as the organization's new Director.

The major achievement of the 2021 meeting was the adoption of the measures for the conservation and management of tuna resources in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO), (Resolution C-21-04). In 2022, the Coordinator of Scientific Research gave an updated and detailed

presentation on the situation of the fisheries and the stocks in 2021, both in a document and through a comprehensive presentation made by the Coordinator of Scientific Research.

After five days of discussions and negotiations, the Commission could finally reach a consensus and adopt six resolutions: on compliance (C-22-02), on transshipments ([C-22-03](#)); on North Pacific albacore ([C-22-04](#)); on closures ([C-22-05](#)); as well as, based on two Chair's texts, on the Ecosystem and Bycatch Working Group ([C-22-06](#)) and on the Electronic Monitoring Working Group ([C-22-07](#)). Finally, the Commission adopted its budget for the year 2023 and each member's contribution amount, as reflected in [Resolution C-22-08](#).

Only two of the proposals adopted were part of the GTA asks: the transshipment proposal and the North Pacific Albacore harvest strategy. Also, the EM working group approval was in the direction of our asks. Full details on the proposals supported by the GTA, adopted and withdrawn, can be found [here](#).

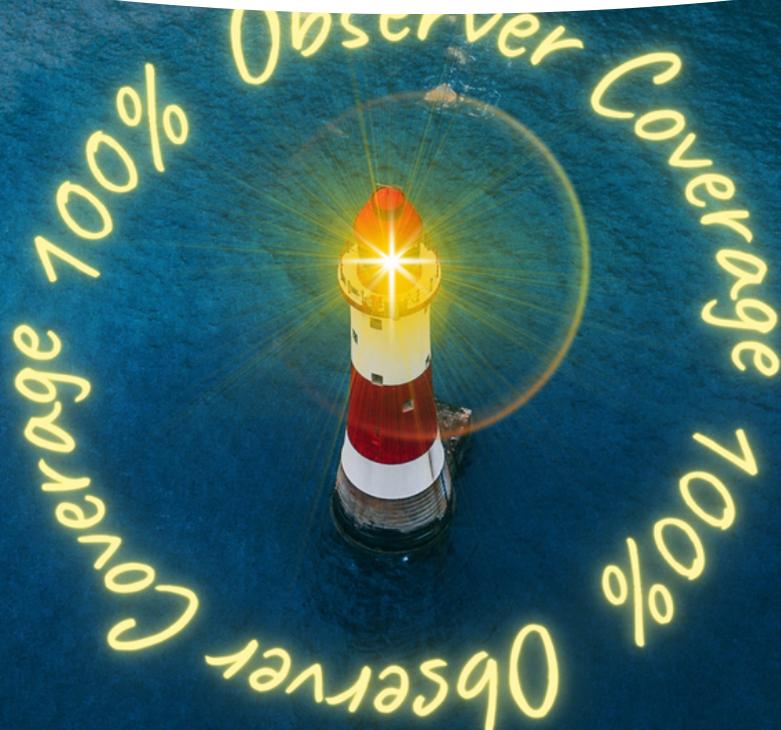
On the other hand, after the negotiations trying to accommodate the asks of all CPCs, many proposals aiming to improve transparency and accountability were rejected, mainly by the Asian countries.

It is important to highlight that last year the IATTC made considerable progress with adopting management measures and the Port State Measures, which most countries have been opting in to. Also, even though there were no proposals on FAD management, as we were asking for, the Commission is working on this through a working group.

Following the meeting, MWC produced a campaign review including the following key outputs:

- Average of 433 impressions per day over 30 days;
- The "100% observer coverage" was the most popular post with 1,021 impressions; and accounts retweeted it with 10,700 followers between them.
- Two press releases were published: one covering [GTA's asks, response to the proposals & roundtable](#), 28th July 2022, and then a [post-IATTC "Reaction"](#) press statement, 10th August 2022.
- The scale of the campaign was optimal considering the lower engagement we received from audiences for an RFMO meeting that was not dealing with anything too urgent/controversial.

The 101st meeting of the Commission will be held 7th-11th of August 2023 in Canada.



# ICCAT

## *It's time to act, ICCAT*

The 23rd Special Meeting of the Commission took place from the 13th-21st of November in Val do Lobo, Portugal, and daily updates were provided to Partners.

We hosted a [roundtable](#) meeting on Thursday, 3rd November, at 3pm BST. We invited ICCAT delegates from all the CPCs to attend. We had 38 attendees, with 22 delegates from Brazil, Canada, France, Liberia, Morocco, Senegal, Spain, Trinidad Tobago and the USA.

In addition, at the meeting, we were able to meet the UK, European Union and USA delegations to present our asks in person.

Also, we provided an engagement resource pack for Partners. The pack contained template text for contacting the ICCAT delegations and template text for contacting suppliers of the Atlantic Ocean to seek their engagement with the delegates. The pack also contained the latest contact details for delegations.

**Table 5: GTA 2022 ICCAT Asks**

<b>Tropical Tuna Conservation Measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise Recommendation 19-02 to ensure that the bigeye tuna stock is rebuilt, and yellowfin tuna catch is maintained within the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Adopting a bigeye TAC that guarantees stock rebuilding with a high probability (&gt;60%) of success within 15 years.</li> <li>◦ Adopting a precautionary yellowfin TAC that is aligned with the existing SCRS advice and allocated between fishing gears or CPCs.</li> <li>◦ Maintaining the agreed Atlantic-wide FAD closure and adopting additional measures to monitor and manage the use of FADs.</li> <li>◦ Agreeing on management objectives for managing the fishing mortality of juvenile vs. adult tunas, to address concerns related to juvenile catches.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Developing and adopting procedures to identify and sanction non-compliance with TAC allocations.</li> </ul>
<b>Harvest Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the development of management strategy evaluation (MSE) for all tropical tuna stocks, starting with western Atlantic skipjack</li> </ul>
<b>PSMA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt integration and coordination at a national level by the cooperation and exchange of relevant information between RFMOs, States, FAO and other international organizations (PSMA Article 5&amp;6).</li> <li>• Outline minimum standards for inspector functions (PSMA Article 13)</li> <li>• Outline minimum standards for inspection reports (PSMA Article 14 &amp; 15)</li> <li>• Require all inspection reports to be transmitted to flag State of the vessel and relevant States and parties, such as RFMOs, FAO, etc. (PSMA Article 14 &amp; 15)</li> </ul>
<b>Electronic Monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of minimum standards for electronic monitoring and 100% observer coverage (human and/or electronic).</li> </ul>
<b>Stock Assessments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commit to a future programme of triannual stock assessments for skipjack, bigeye and yellowfin.</li> </ul>

In 2022, full scientific stock assessments were carried out for four species: eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*), eastern and western skipjack (*Katsuwonus pelamis*), Atlantic swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*) and Northeastern Atlantic porbeagle shark (*Lamna nasus*). In total, 13 new Recommendations and 4 Resolutions were adopted covering relevant issues on Atlantic tuna and tuna-like species conservation and fisheries management.

The meeting this year was tough, and it appeared that we would not progress with many proposals in the first couple of days. By the second half of the meeting, the CPCs started to come to terms, agreeing on mostly bluefin tuna recommendations. For the first time in its history, ICCAT adopted a management procedure for Atlantic bluefin tuna. The TAC set for 2023-2025 was 2,726 and 40,570 metric tons for western and eastern Atlantic (and Mediterranean) stocks, respectively.

In 2021, the measure for North Atlantic shortfin mako sharks caught in association with ICCAT fisheries was adopted. So in 2022, ICCAT agreed on a similar measure for South Atlantic shortfin mako, starting in 2023, to end overfishing immediately and to gradually achieve biomass levels sufficient to support maximum sustainable yield (MSY) by 2070 with a probability ranging between 60 and 70% at least. The total annual fishing mortality was set to a maximum of 1,295t until new scientific advice is provided to the Commission in 2024.

The last day of the Commission was the most stressful, with the approval of the resolution by ICCAT on the development of initial conceptual management objectives for western Atlantic skipjack and the rollover of the tropical tunas' conservation measures just a couple of hours before the end of the meeting.

The rollover implies a Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for bigeye tuna of 62,000t for 2023 and the 72-day FAD fishing closure. The annual TAC for yellowfin will remain at 110,000t. In addition, to reduce the fishing mortality of juvenile bigeye and yellowfin tuna, a 72-day fishing closure and the limitation on using FADs in 2023 were also kept.

Also, the plenary adopted a plan for Mediterranean albacore, which implemented a 15-year rebuilding plan until 2036, establishing a TAC of 2,500t. In addition, ICCAT adopted catch limits for southern Atlantic albacore for 2023 to 2026, including a TAC of 28,000t for 2023 to 2026.

As a result of the rollover, CPCs will continue working to develop new management measures during the year based on inter-sessional meetings. The GTA summary of outcomes can be viewed [here](#).

Following the meeting, MWC produced a campaign review including the following key outputs:

- Average of 433 impressions per day over 30 days;
- The "1 month to go to ICCAT" was the most popular post with 4,413 impressions.
- The GTA published [one press release](#): "Global Tuna Alliance commends ICCAT's steps to improve the management of tropical tunas in the Atlantic", 7th December 2022.

Note: it is essential to consider that there was an overlap between ICCAT and WCPFC campaigns.

The 28th regular meeting of the Commission will be held from the 13th-20th of November 2023 in Egypt.



# WCPFC

## *Keep stocks 'in the green'*

The 18th Regular Session of the Commission, held in December 2021, ended in disappointment. Despite five days of negotiations, delegates were unable to establish workplans for significant tuna stocks, instead opting to delay and extend the timelines for key decisions. While we were pleased to see that agreement was finally reached on establishing a scientific-dialogue meeting, considerable work was required in 2022 to finalise the harvest strategies for skipjack and albacore – and thus maintain their MSC certifications.

Despite the WCPFC meeting taking place in late in the year, the GTA began advocacy planning early. One reason was that the WCPFC Science-Manager Dialogue (SMD) meeting was scheduled for August, and was crucial in providing an opportunity to confirm the 'settings' of the proposed skipjack and albacore management procedures.

**Table 6: GTA 2022 WCPFC Asks**

<b>Harvest Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accelerate action on comprehensive, precautionary harvest strategies across all tuna stocks to avoid the risk of suspension of MSC Certified tuna fisheries in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. Specifically, in 2022:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree revised workplan for setting Target Reference Points (TRP) for bigeye and yellowfin in 2023 - with adoption of interim TRPs this year.</li> <li>Adopt and implement without delay a management procedure for skipjack.</li> <li>Agree a revised workplan for setting a comprehensive, precautionary harvest strategy for South Pacific albacore in 2023.</li> <li>Establish the Science-Management Dialogue (SMD) as a permanent working group.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>PSMA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the CMM to cover all foreign flagged vessels seeking entry into a CCM's port (Article 3);</li> <li>Adopt integration and coordination and electronic exchange of relevant information between RFMO, States, FAO and other international organizations (PSMA Article 5, 6 &amp; 16).</li> <li>Require advance notice of port entry with a specific time frame and information to be provided (Article 8);</li> <li>Include denial of port entry and use provisions (Article 9, 11, 18)</li> <li>Final consideration is to require inspections of suspicious vessels in foreign ports at the request of a CCM with reasonable grounds to believe that a vessel has engaged in IUU fishing or fishing related activities, and is seeking entry in to, or is in the designated port of another CCM (Article 12). (Article 12)</li> <li>Members to opt into the PSM measure by designating ports.</li> <li>Accelerate action on developing the funding mechanism to assist Small Island Developing States to implement CMM 2017-02 on port State minimum standards.</li> </ul>
<b>Electronic Monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt a CMM for an Electronic Monitoring Program as well as associated Minimum Standards.</li> </ul>
<b>Labour standard for crew on fishing vessels</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support proposed CMM on Labour Standards for crew on fishing vessels</li> </ul>

In July we held our first SMD working group webinar which aimed to update GTA Partners who source from the Western and Central Pacific on the GTA engagement strategy, and provide background on latest state-of-play. While the major Western and Central Pacific Ocean tuna stocks are "in the green" - with no overfished stocks or overfishing occurring, to ensure this continues we were calling on the WCPFC to accelerate action to develop comprehensive management procedures (harvest strategies) across these stocks. This was the basis of our SMD [position statement](#).

During the working group webinar we also presented our engagement resource pack, which contains template text, and contact details, for Partners to use to reach out and engage with the lead scientists and fishery ministers from the countries in the Western and Central Pacific that they source tuna from. We also sent [letters](#) to each WCPFC fishery minister calling for progress to be made on harvest strategies.

The 18th Regular Session of the Scientific Committee took place in early August. We did not attend, but the draft [outcomes document](#) has been published. Interestingly, the report notes that the adoption of target reference points (TRPs) for bigeye and yellowfin tuna and a harvest strategy for South Pacific albacore may need to be delayed pending further work. This led to concern being expressed in relation to how such delays may impact MSC certification. Our message is getting through!

The WCPFC Science-Management Dialogue (SMD) meeting took place in August. We received replies to our outreach letters from two WCPFC members: Korea and New Zealand. Korea noted:

"I share your concerns that such discussions among the WCPFC member states are being prolonged at this point in time. I kindly inform you that the Republic of Korea will play more active role in order to reach an agreement over the agenda of developing MP [management procedure - another term for harvest strategy]."

The New Zealand Fishery Minister replied:

"I share your concern about the risk that Marine Stewardship Council certification of tuna fisheries in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean could be suspended if there is not sufficient progress on harvest strategies by the end of 2022."

"New Zealand is doing all it can to advocate within the WCPFC for progress and adoption of harvest strategies, in a context where decisions must be made by consensus. My officials would be happy to engage with you further on these issues".

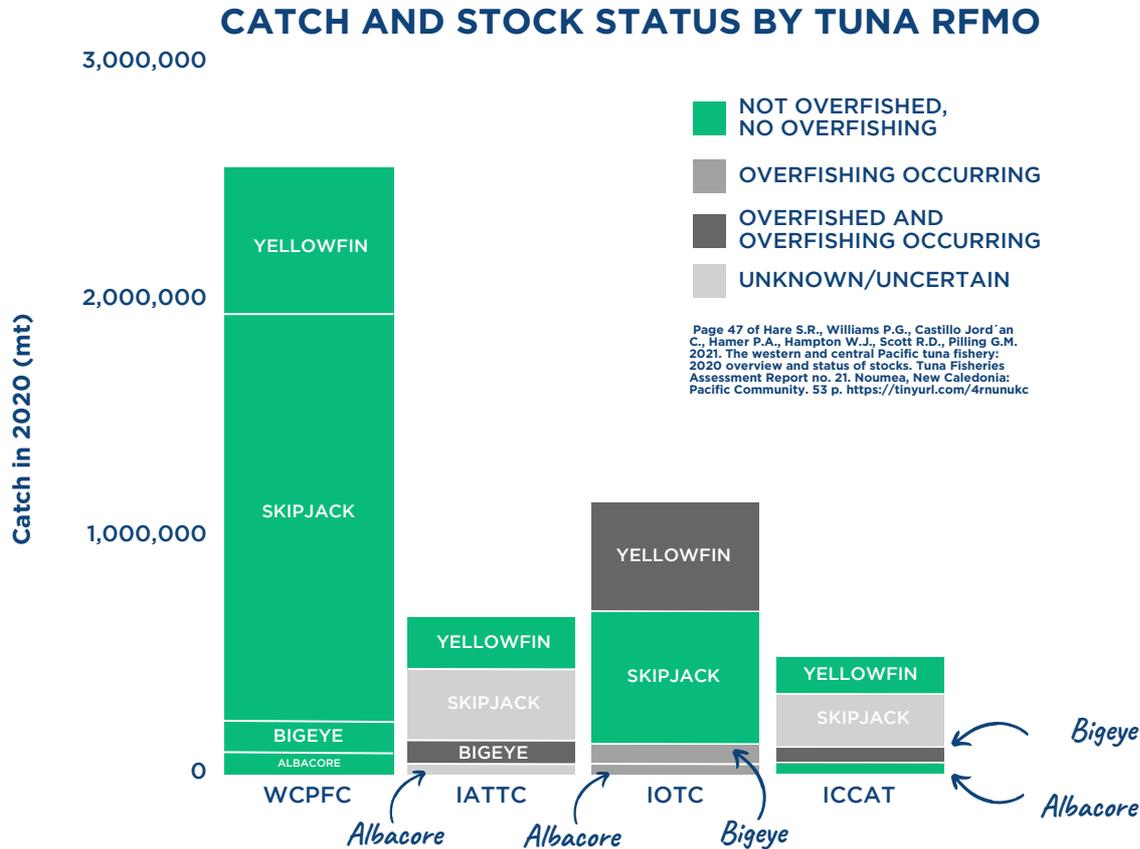
Daily updates on the SMD meeting were provided to members and we published a [report](#) of the outcomes. In summary, progress was made on identifying preferred harvest control rules (HCRs) for skipjack and we believe that this meant the WCPFC remained on track to adopt a skipjack harvest strategy at the Commission meeting. No progress was made on the adoption of a harvest strategy for south Pacific albacore, however.

Following the SMD meeting, GTA met with Agne Razmislaviciute-Palioniene, a member of the EU Fisheries Commissioner's Cabinet. We urged the EU to table a proposal for a skipjack harvest strategy to ensure it was discussed. This was positively received.

In October, the MSC published their revised standards. These include new requirements for fisheries that target RFMO managed stocks (e.g., tuna) to develop state-of-the-art harvest strategies, while allowing additional time for development and implementation. The GTA believe that this weakened MSC certification as a driver for harvest strategy implementation at the RFMOs. Accordingly, we changed our strategy from [#dontlosethelabel](#) to [#keepstocksinthegreen](#).

While the major Western and Central Pacific Ocean tuna stocks are "in the green" - with no overfished stocks or overfishing occurring - to ensure this continues we called on the WCPFC

to accelerate action and develop comprehensive management procedures (harvest strategies) across these stocks.



The first of two internal GTA WCPFC Working Group meetings was held on 19th October. During the meeting, our pre-proposal engagement resource pack was launched. This pack contained template text for individual GTA Partners to use in emails to WCPFC member fishery ministers/delegations in advance of the deadline for the submission of proposals. This was important as we needed to ensure proposals were submitted on the adoption of the management procedure for skipjack, for adopting a revised workplan for albacore, yellowfin and bigeye, and for a proposed measure on crew labour issues.

Aldi South produced a [video](#) calling for action featuring Anke Ehlers, Managing Director for Corporate Responsibility International. This was used by GTA in the run-up to WCPFC.

We hosted a WCPFC Roundtable meeting on Tuesday 15th November at 00:00 GMT. The aim of this event was to present our asks to WCPFC delegations. Waitrose presented their position, but we were disappointed that only 3 countries (Australia, New Zealand and Canada) attended.

The GTA and Pew also co-hosted a webinar on "The WCPFC: What is at stake for the Market". The aim was to inform, explain and engage the tuna supply chain on the 2022 WCPFC meeting and the decisions that could influence sourcing of sustainable tuna. We received 78 registrations and 32 attendees. All those who registered received a follow-up email, including the opportunity to sign-on to the [collaborative WCPFC letter](#) which was co-ordinated by the NGO Tuna Forum.

Finally, the GTA joined WWF, Pew and the Ocean Foundation in sending an [open letter](#) to the PNA urging them to support the adoption and implementation of a skipjack management procedure at WCPFC without delay; rather than call for a 6-year trial.

The WCPFC meeting took place from 28th November to 3rd December in Da Nang, Vietnam. Just before the meeting started, we were successful in getting a [blog](#) published by the World Economic Forum.

This gave us a potentially huge audience.

This was the first in-person meeting of the Commission for three years, and we made significant efforts to engage with delegations face-to-face. This included distributing GTA fortune cookies to every attendee. This proved to be a huge hit with many attendees taking photographs and posting on social media. It also provided an ice-breaker for the team when engaging.



We also hosted a cocktail reception on the Thursday evening. The timing could not have been better, as the discussions on harvest strategies had started to get going by that time, and there was a real need for a 'release'. Attendance was superb, and the event continued nearly an hour after we expected it to end. A huge thank you to the NGO Tuna Forum who funded the event.

Rather than give speeches, we played a [video](#) on continuous loop that MWC produced. Using quotes provided by GTA Partners, and NGO Tuna Forum member Partners, the harvest strategy asks from the market and the NGO community were prominently displayed.

Some of the feedback we received included:

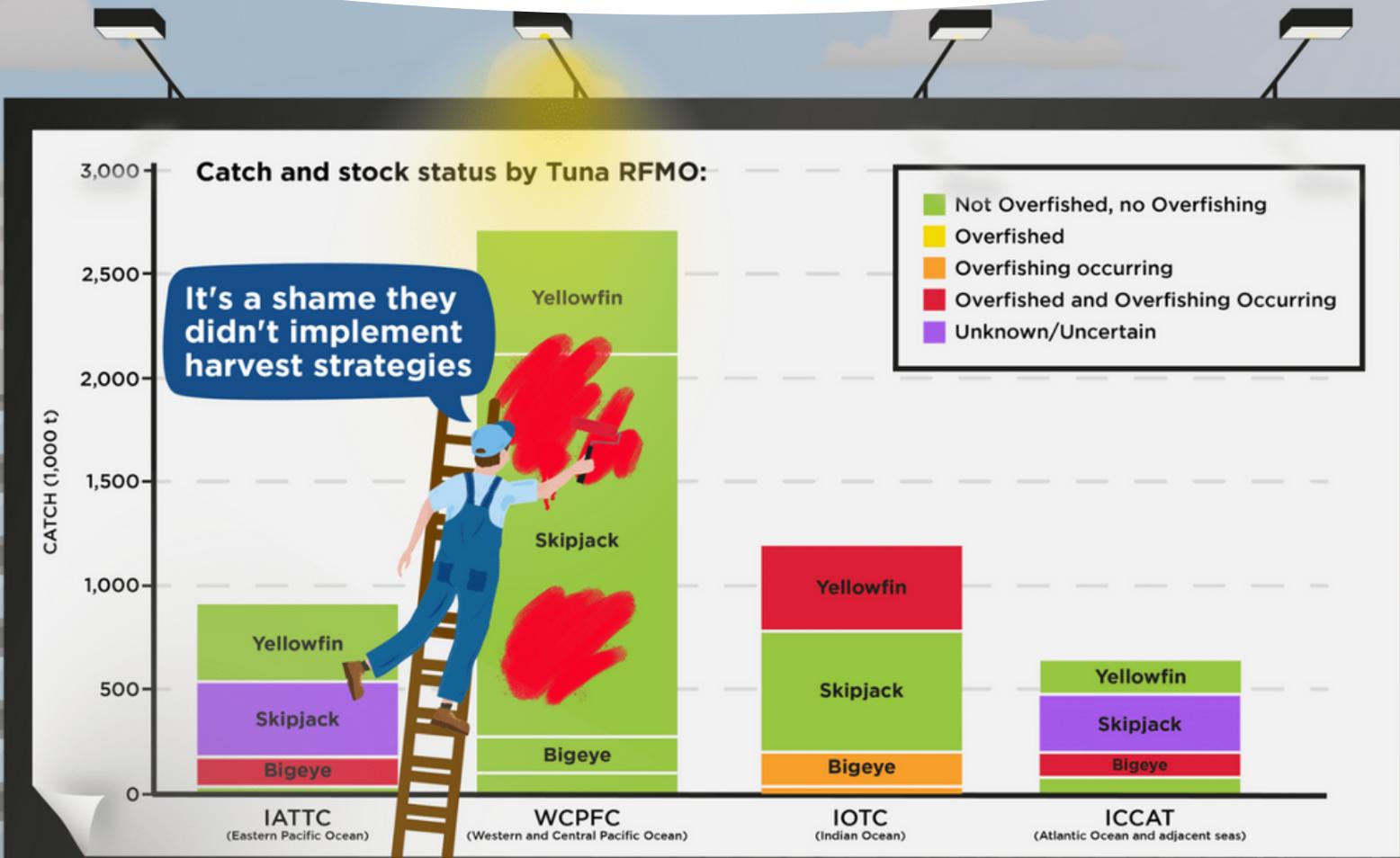
- "This is fantastic. Clear, collaborative and compelling."
- "Well done for the leadership to suggest the side event and video... and the excellent work by you, Robin and team to bring it all together."
- "Thinking back to 2016 when every NGO was doing their own thing and the market voice was soft and fragmented, I can only say, this initiative (advocacy letter, side event and video) represents a leap forward and the culmination of a lot of hard work."
- "The GTA is a prominent presence at an RFMO session .....seriously neat. Well done indeed for the light-hearted, incredibly intelligent touch! Way to effectively get the message across."

Daily updates from the meeting were provided, and a [GTA summary of outcomes](#) was published. We were pleased that the Commission reached agreement on a number of measures relating to harvest strategies. Significantly, the Commission agreed to adopt a harvest strategy for skipjack and Northern albacore. The Commission also reaffirmed its commitment to put in place harvest strategies for all tuna species before stocks fall below sustainable levels. However, Target Reference Points (TRPs) for bigeye and yellowfin were not agreed, with the Commission noting further work will be needed. Instead, a revised workplan was adopted to agree TRPs in 2024, and adopt management procedures in 2025.

The GTA was calling for the adoption of a measure for an Electronic Monitoring (EM) Program as well as associated Minimum Standards. Unfortunately, the Commission did not agree any such measures.

The GTA was calling on the Commission to support the proposed measure on Labour Standards for crew on fishing vessels. However, while the work of the Crew Welfare Intersessional working group was received with appreciation by the Commission, no measure was adopted. Instead, the Commission recognised the priority to be given to this work.

The 2023 Commission meeting will be held in the Cook Islands.





## CONTACT

Dr. Tom Pickerell  
Executive Director  
[tom@globaltunaalliance.com](mailto:tom@globaltunaalliance.com)

Albert Arias Arthur  
Director of Outreach and Engagement  
[albert@globaltunaalliance.com](mailto:albert@globaltunaalliance.com)

---

Brought to you by:

 **MINDFULLY WIRED**  
COMMUNICATIONS