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 Fisheries

EU presses for Indian Ocean tuna fisheries management changes

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

Four proposals submitted to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission to improve tuna fisheries management

The European Union has made four proposals for next month's Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) session in an effort to improve tuna fisheries management in those waters.

The IOTC Scientific Committee reports that the stock and level of fishing in the Indian Ocean are not sustainable, so the EU will promote a three-year plan for the management of yellowfin tuna, bigeye tuna and skipjack tuna that would bring catches in line with scientific advice. Implementing multi-species management measures, the EU stated, would be a first for the IOTC.

Also, the EU calls for a scheme for boarding and inspecting high-seas fishing vessels to combat IUU fishing (illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing), which it deems as the most significant threat to sustainable fisheries management. Most IOTC measures, the EU stated, support this proposal. The multinational organization also wants the regional fishery management organization (RFMO) to improve its compliance process, which it says is a "weak point" for the group.

Lastly, the EU urged the IOTC to readdress issues and policies surrounding fish aggregating devices, or FADs: how the devices are marked, how users deal with plastic pollution and the overall number of



The European Union has made four proposals for the next Indian Ocean Tuna Commission session, which takes place next month (photo by Shemlongakit, via Wikimedia Commons).

FADs deployed, among others. The EU – along with Comoros, Oman, Kenya, Seychelles and the Philippines – objects to a special resolution (23/02) against IOTC members fishing on drifting FADs, which was adopted in February by a majority vote. Saying that many provisions of the resolution are unclear, the EU said “all efforts should be exhausted to reach consensus.”

A promotional banner for the Responsible Seafood Summit. On the left is the logo for Responsible Seafood Summit, featuring a stylized eye and the text "Responsible Seafood SUMMIT". To the right of the logo is the text "SAINT JOHN NEW BRUNSWICK CANADA OCTOBER 2-5 2023". Further right is a red button with the word "REGISTER" in white. On the far right is the logo for the Global Seafood Alliance, featuring a globe and the text "Global Seafood ALLIANCE". The background of the banner is dark blue with a faint world map and several red airplane icons.

(<https://events.globalseafood.org/responsible-seafood-summit>).



Fisheries in Focus: Tunas and billfishes are improving on the IUCN Red List – and it's thanks to effective fisheries management

Sustainable Fisheries UW offers a rundown of the IUCN Red List and how tunas and billfishes benefit from strong fisheries management.



Global Seafood Alliance

The IOTC is responsible for managing fisheries for tuna and tuna-like species in the Indian Ocean and adjacent seas. It was established in 1993 and entered into force in 1996. The EU, a member since 1995, is joined by Australia, Bangladesh, China, Comoros, Eritrea and France on behalf of its overseas territories, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Seychelles, Somalia, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Thailand, the United Kingdom and Yemen.

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