

# Yellowfin tuna Indian Ocean

 Fishery:  Indian Ocean  IOTC  Sri Lanka  Drifting longlines

## IDENTIFICATION



### SCIENTIFIC NAME

*Thunnus albacares*

### SPECIES NAME(S)

Yellowfin tuna

### STOCK IDENTIFICATION

An assessment unit is considered to exist in the Indian Ocean by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC, 2014).



### RELATED LINKS:

- [Indian Ocean Tuna Commission \(IOTC\)](#)

## ASSESSMENT

### Strengths

The stock assessment has been carried out regularly using a range of assessment methods. The IOTC has recently adopted precautionary management, which includes the use of interim target and limit reference points and calls for the use of harvest control rules and management strategy evaluation.

Sri Lanka is working on developing a vessel monitoring and observer program. A National Plan of Action for Sharks was published in 2014. Sri Lanka complies with a number of IOTC management measures. The incidental capture of sea birds and marine mammals does not appear to be an issue in Sri Lanka's tuna fisheries.

### Weaknesses

Yellowfin tuna in the Indian Ocean are overfished and undergoing overfishing. Catches have been over recommended level since 2011. Recent advice calls for a 20% reduction but only a 5-15% reduction (depending on the fleet) has been adopted by the Commission (2016). IUU fishing and piracy has been a major issue in the Indian Ocean and there are compliance issues with regard to the quality of reported data {IOTC 2013b}. The Commission has taken recent action to continue addressing these issues but the success of these measures is not yet known. A number of bycatch species, including sharks, sea turtles and sea birds are incidentally captured in fisheries targeting yellowfin tuna. Observer coverage rates are low in fisheries targeting yellowfin tuna.

Yellowfin tuna in the Indian Ocean are overfished and undergoing overfishing. Currently, there is no catch limit for yellowfin tuna in Indian Ocean. Catches have been over recommended level since 2011. Recent advice calls for a 20% reduction in catches but this has yet to be adopted. IUU fishing and piracy has been a major issue in the Indian Ocean and there are compliance issues with regard to the quality of reported data {IOTC 2013b}. A number of bycatch species, including sharks, sea turtles and sea birds are incidentally captured in fisheries targeting yellowfin tuna. Observer coverage rates are low in fisheries targeting yellowfin tuna. There have been continuing issues with the accuracy of logbook data from Sri Lanka. IUU fishing has led to the issuance of a Red Card from the EU. The lack of an observer program has hindered accurate recording of all bycatch. Several sharks and rays are reported as incidentally captured in Sri Lanka's tuna fisheries.

## SCORES

### Management Quality:

| Management Strategy | Managers Compliance | Fishers Compliance |
|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| ≥ 6                 | ≥ 6                 | < 6                |

### Stock Health:

| Current Health | Future Health |
|----------------|---------------|
| 7.6            | 7.6           |

## FIPS

- Sri Lanka tuna and swordfish - longline:

Stage 3 , Progress Rating C , Type: Fip , Evaluation Start Date: 18 May 2018

## MSC

No related MSC fisheries

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### RETAILERS & SUPPLY CHAIN

- Work with IOTC Members and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties to:
  - Ensure full compliance with Resolution 17/01, the interim rebuilding plan for yellowfin tuna.
  - Improve data collection (i.e. catches, effort, size) for all gear types, for both target and bycatch species, and reporting through measures such as electronic logbooks.
  - Develop and implement comprehensive, precautionary harvest strategies with specific timelines for all tuna stocks, including the adoption and implementation of limit and target reference points, harvest control rules, monitoring strategies, operational objectives, performance indicators, and management strategy evaluation.
  - Strengthen compliance processes and make information on non-compliance public and continue to provide evidence of compliance with all IOTC Conservation and Management Measures in a timely

manner.

- Implement a 100% observer coverage requirement for at-sea transshipment activities, as well as other measures that ensure transshipment activity is transparent and well-managed, and that all required data are collected and transmitted to the appropriate bodies in a timely manner.
- Increase compliance with the mandatory minimum 5% longline observer coverage rates by identifying and correcting non-compliance.
- Implement a 100% observer coverage requirement – human and/or electronic – within five years for longline fisheries. Adopt a 100% observer coverage requirement for purse seine vessels where it is not already required and require the use of the best-available observer safety equipment, communications and procedures.
- Adopt effective measures for the use of non-entangling FAD designs as a precautionary measure to minimize the entanglement of sharks and other non-target species, and support research on biodegradable materials and transition to their use to mitigate marine debris.
- More effectively implement, and ensure compliance with, existing RFMO bycatch requirements and take additional mitigation action, such as improving monitoring at sea, collecting and sharing operational-level, species-specific data, and adopting stronger compliance measures, including consequences for non-compliance for all gear types.
- Ensure all products are traceable back to legal sources. Verify source information and full chain traceability through traceability desk audits or third party traceability certification. For fisheries without robust traceability systems in place, invest in meaningful improvements to bring the fisheries and supply chain in compliance with best practices.