

For an improved management of drifting fish aggregating devices (FADs) in purse seine fisheries

RECALLING Resolution 5.031 *Precautionary tuna management through target and limit reference points and improved drifting Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) management* (Jeju, 2012), which already highlighted concerns regarding drifting fish aggregating devices (FADs);

ALARMED by the state of life in the ocean, including the over-exploitation of fish stocks, in particular tuna, for which an increasing number of stocks are over-exploited, in part due to illegal, unreported, unregulated and unmanaged fishing;

NOTING that the use of FADs has increased substantially worldwide since 2012, both in high seas and within Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs);

NOTING WITH CONCERN that FADs are known to lead to high levels of the juvenile take of bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*) and yellowfin tuna (*T. albacares*) which can affect stock viability;

CONCERNED by the other adverse impacts of FADs on marine life, including the significant amount of bycatch and pollution caused by lost or abandoned FADs, which then become marine debris that can cause significant mortality of marine wildlife; and

FURTHER CONCERNED by the need for improved management measures for FADs and the lack of transparency in monitoring of the conservation measures already adopted by Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) for FADs, both within EEZs and in high seas;

RECOGNISING THAT transparency in monitoring of the conservation measures adopted by RFMOs for FADs, both within EEZs and in high seas, can be improved; and

ALSO RECOGNISING government and sectoral efforts to collaborate with scientific institutions to advance the composition and design of FADs, as well as their operation and deployment, to minimise the aforementioned impacts;

The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2020, at its session in Marseille, France:

1. ENCOURAGES governments to:

a. strictly manage and monitor the use of drifting FADs; and

b. drastically reduce the number of FADs used by their fleets in order to assist the recovery and rebuilding of tuna populations;

2. URGES all RFMOs to:

a. establish a record of FADs with unique identifiers and require constant real-time satellite tracking of all deployed FADs from setting to recovery;

b. collaborate to immediately establish a science-based FAD deployment limit per vessel;

c. request FAD owners to remove them from the water once they reach the end of their life and approach sensitive habitats (in partnership with coastal communities or authorities) and to avoid the use of materials such as plastics that are harmful to the marine environment; and

d. impose the use of methods to prevent entanglements of non-commercial species (non-entangling FADs, purse seine mesh size, geographical restriction of installation sites, etc.) and take necessary steps to minimise catch of non-target species;

3. CALLS ON states, industry and the NGO community to work with existing labelling and certification programmes, or as needed, consider establishing new programmes or labels for canned tuna that reflect best practices; and

4. ENCOURAGES all relevant actors to continue advancing scientific knowledge to improve construction, management, operation and deployment of FADs.