



May 2, 2024

ATTN: Heads of Delegation to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)

21 Environmental Organizations Call on the IOTC to End Overfishing of Yellowfin Tuna & Rebuild Stock

Yellowfin tuna in the Indian Ocean urgently needs effective management. IOTC's actions in 2021 did not meet the IOTC's own scientific guidance on what is required to rebuild the yellowfin tuna stock. As a result, the Indian Ocean yellowfin stock continues to be overfished with overfishing occurring.

Given the serious risk of further decline in the status of the yellowfin stock, we urge the Commission to **adopt science-based catch limits for yellowfin tuna that end overfishing and rebuild the stock**. Further, we urge the Commission to **agree on additional measures, such as Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) management measures and fisheries closures, aligned with latest scientific advice**.

In addition to the urgent need to rebuild the yellowfin tuna stock, the Commission must also address several issues that impact the health of all tuna stocks and the ecosystems in the Indian Ocean in 2024, including:

- **Adopt management procedures for swordfish and skipjack tuna** and begin development of a management procedure for blue sharks.
- **Establish a timeline for transition to fully biodegradable drifting FADs (dFADs)** that at minimum aligns with those of other RFMOs.
- **Adopt a comprehensive shark management measure**, including a requirement to land sharks with their fins naturally attached without exceptions.

We the undersigned agree that these critical issues can and must be addressed before and during the Commission's annual meeting.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Kind regards,

