



Advice of the LDRAC on a management scheme of the use of FAD and by catch mitigation by tuna purse-seine fisheries (by WG 1)

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- Recalling the Agreement for the implementation of the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the conservation and management of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks;
- Further recalling the FAO International Plan of action for the Management of Fishing Capacity;
- Considering the situation of excess fishing capacity in certain tropical tuna fisheries and continued expansion of global tuna fisheries in important fishing areas;
- Considering that FADs use is an important parameter in terms of purse seiners capacity and the need for it to be assessed to be included in capacity management plans and overall fisheries management;
- Considering that some tropical tuna stocks are globally in a relatively healthy situation but that uncertainties exist about the situation of the stocks and that the level of exploitation in all oceans must be carefully monitored for all tuna fleets;
- Considering that the use of FADs is global and represents a substantial proportion of the tropical tuna purse-seine catch, making up roughly 63% of the global catch, and that precise data on their effects on the ecosystem must be collected and submitted to RFMOs;
- Considering that other fisheries such as Pole and line and other purse seine local fisheries have significantly increased the use of anchored floating objects in recent years, with little information of their effects on the ecosystem;
- Considering that regulation by certain RFMOs¹ of purse-seine fishing on FADs must be improved and that further regulation of the use of FADs – as in the

¹ RFMO management measures in place:
WCPFC: CMM 2008-01.
IOTC: Resolution 10/01
ICCAT: Recommendation 11/01



Indian Ocean where FAD management plans are being discussed – must be based, as for any other gear, on the best scientific knowledge and recommendations, implementing the precautionary and ecosystem-based approaches and include binding capacity management schemes;

- Considering that, currently, none of the management measures recommended by the RFMOs prohibits the use of FADs in the purse-seine fisheries and that the most common form of management in FAD fisheries has been temporary closures of FAD fishing currently being enforced in all oceans;
- Acknowledging the proactive role of European operators who were the first adopting voluntary a time/area closure on FADs fishing the Atlantic and Indian Ocean in 1997 and the scientific research that has been developed at the industry initiative with the National scientific bodies (AZTI, IEO and IRD) since 2005;
- Considering that, although the figure of by-catch of non-tuna species in terms of percentage of the overall catch in FAD fisheries is relatively small compared to other gears, the potential effects of FADs on non-tuna species, on tuna stock productivity, behaviour and biology and on the pelagic ecosystem need still more research and monitoring;
- Mindful, however, that the absence of adequate scientific information shall not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take conservation and management measures;
- Considering the EU purse-seine fleet's commitment to the sustainability of the fishery and the EU stakeholders' (industry and scientists) proactive role launching several research initiatives in order to mitigate adverse effects of FADs and explore solutions to improve the sustainability of the fishery as a whole;
- Noting that more accurate monitoring of FAD fishing has been implemented at national level in France and Spain (since 2010).
- The LDRAC agrees that tropical tuna FAD fishing should be better managed for all fleets and gives the advice that such management should consist in adopting an international FAD management plan at the level of the RFMOs that would require:
 1. Collecting on a continuous basis and submitting in timely manner to relevant RFMOs FAD-related data in order to accurately evaluate and closely monitor the use of FADs, the precise tuna catch-at-size by species composition, by-catch rate for each of the fisheries involved and their potential effect on tuna stocks, dependent and associated species and the pelagic ecosystem



- (such data should encompass the number of FADs per vessel and/or vessel groups and their technical characteristics, set type, the amounts of by-catch kept on board, of discards and of animals released alive, as well as the information allowing to quantify the use of FADs);
2. Assessing accurately the effects of FADs and of their utilisation on tuna resources, on tuna behaviour and associated and dependent species and on the pelagic ecosystem, including the increase of fishing capacity and efficiency;
 3. Improving management procedures to accurately monitor the number, type and use of FADs deployed or equipped with buoys by any vessel;
 4. Developing technical measures to mitigate all possible negative effects of purse-seine fishing on FADs on the ecosystems, and the catches of juvenile tunas;
 5. Fishermen to adopt tools and/or strategies to reduce as much as possible, even eliminate when possible, incidental entanglement of animals in their FADs and incidental by-catch of non target species;
- The LD RAC supports the development of an EU policy for a sustainable exploitation of tropical tuna by purse seiners using FADs, in light of the best scientific advices and implementing the precautionary and ecosystem-based approaches, that would:
 - Provide a regulatory framework for FAD management plans developed by member States, the compilation of by-catch mitigation measures in addition to those adopted in the RFMOs, the use of FADs designed to eliminate as much as possible or even eradicate the entanglement of turtles and sharks and any other best practices proved to be adapted to the purse-seine fleet.
 - Provide for the evaluation of the use of FADs in relation to fishing capacity and effort. In terms of overall marine ecosystem impact of FADs use, its potential efficiency and fishing effort increase must be accurately assessed and managed as any other fishing capacity and effort parameter, through adjustments schemes by RFMOs on a fishery per fishery basis.
 - This global policy should be promoted by the EU across all tuna RFMOs (IATTC, ICCAT, IOTC, AND WCPFC) to be implemented by all tuna purse-seine fleets fishing for tropical tunas
 - Furthermore, the LDRAC has collected the annexed documentation to document the feasibility and the support by the sector of such a global sustainable FAD fishing policy.
 - **Annex 1: Description of the MADE program**



- Dagorn L, 2011. An update of the EU MADE project. IOTC-2011-WPEB07-52

- **Annex 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2e: Description of the current actions led by EU fleets on a voluntary basis**
 - OPAGAC/ANABAC. Code of good practices on sustainable fishing with FADs for the Spanish Purse Seine fleet.
 - ANABAC FAD projects
 - OPAGAC FAD projects
 - Rapport d'avancement ORTHONGEL sur le CAT « DCP éco »
 - Rapport d'avancement ORTHONGEL sur le CAT « Requins »

- **Annex 3a, 3b: EU fleets FAD management plan**
 - FADs Management Plan SG MAR oct 2010 (Spain)

- **Annex 4: RFMOs FAD fishing current regulations register**