



## **Proposal for LDAC recommendation**

### **to invest more resources into cooperation in the Indian Ocean, beginning with IOTC's 27<sup>th</sup> Commission**

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Last Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) Special Session that took place from February 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> in Mombasa, Kenya ended up with a controversial vote on drifting fishing aggregating devices (FADs). All along the meeting, the atmosphere was tense, even hostile between two groups: those with and those without the fishing methods concerned. This climate did not allow any space for IOTC's delegations to work together toward a compromise for the realization of scientific advice and efficient fisheries management. This in turn led to the objection of the measures adopted, jeopardising the work and credibility of IOTC.

As part of the FAO, the IOTC must respect the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement, which requires cooperation in good faith between coastal states and fishing states. The LDAC believes that the European Union shall increase its investment in the Indian Ocean to create a favourable ground for this cooperation and understanding. Considering the recent agreement of a UN BBNJ Treaty and the recognition of the role of RFMOs in high seas, it is key to ensure IOTC's good governance, starting with the forthcoming 27<sup>th</sup> session of IOTC that will take place in Mauritius from May 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

The LDAC would be ready to be a facilitator and to support DG MARE to organise meetings with relevant coastal states and/or SFPAs partners in third countries when necessary.

In order to reduce the gap created last years between fishing nations and coastal states, the LDAC recommends that the European Commission:

- better collaborate with Indian Ocean countries throughout the year for better results within the Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (RFMO), the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), using its own network of external services, offices of representation, embassies and institutes, as well as concerned Member States'.
- use SFPAs and preferential trade agreements to better analyse and prepare for IOTC's negotiations and works towards reasonable proposals based on science with IOTC countries, notably Seychelles, Mauritius, and Madagascar, including by tabling common proposals to the IOTC.
- invest more resources in the science not only for strengthening European physical participation to RFMO's scientific meetings and workshops, but also for establishing regular exchanges with Indian Ocean's countries scientists, including by organizing events on fisheries and environment resources and by financing projects for sustainable fisheries.