



## International Game Fish Association

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The International Game Fish Association (IGFA) is a non-profit organization that represents recreational anglers throughout the world. IGFA was established in 1939, has active members in 133 countries, is the governing body for international recreational fishing, and provides rules for ethical angling practices. Many of IGFA's members target the highly migratory species managed by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC).

IGFA has an International Committee of Representatives in nearly 100 countries, including most of the IOTC Contracting Party nations, who have been chosen for their integrity, fishing knowledge and concern for sportsmanship and conservation. These international representatives report to IGFA on issues affecting our interests and are a primary way that IGFA participates in the international recreational fishing community.

IGFA wishes to express our appreciation to IOTC for arranging the 15th Session of the Commission and our gratitude to the city of Colombo, Sri Lanka for hosting. While the IGFA is unable to be physically represented at this meeting, we feel it is important to submit a position statement and ask to include our position statement with the meeting papers distributed to members. Furthermore, we would like to request that permanent observer status be given to the IGFA. We hope that IGFA, as an observer, will be able to contribute to the management policies of the Commission so that our marine resources are managed in a sustainable manner for all users for years to come.

IGFA has numerous recommendations for this meeting:

- The Istiophorid species of billfish should be shown separately from swordfish.
- Regarding shark species, wire traces should be banned from the fishery, similar to the rule in Australia. In regards to the commission's request last year to ban the taking of species of sharks for recreational fishing, we feel that this is outside of the IOTC's jurisdiction.
- We hope to see quota's started in the IOTC area of competence and that coastal states and countries should be given priorities.
- The harvest of all species, especially recreationally important ones, should be set at a figure considerably below MSY.

All of the species that fall under the management of IOTC are vital to a healthy ocean ecosystem. It is important to remember that the commercial value of a species should not play a more important role in the management decisions than the overall health of the populations and securing their existence for future generations. Recreational fisheries contribute immensely to the economies of many countries. A depleted fishery has no future whereas a sustainable fishery will provide greater long term economic value to all of the IOTC Contracting Party nations.