**FISH AGGREGATING DEVICES (FADs)**

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*(Prepared by the Aquatic WG)*

DRAFT DECISIONS

**FISH AGGREGATING DEVICES**

***Directed to Parties***

14.AA Parties are encouraged to:

1. Address the potential negative impacts of FADs, including on CMS-listed species, such as sharks, rays, turtles, marine mammals, which may get entangled in such devices, as well as the impact on marine ecosystems, such as pollution, beaching, ghost fishing, and their transformation into marine debris;
2. Ensure that FADs deployed within their jurisdiction or by vessels for which they are a flag state are:
	1. Of non-entangling nature, designed to reduce the likelihood of them being lost, and, to the extent possible, subject to regular inspection and maintenance to avoid loss,
	2. marked, monitored, maintained and retrieved in an environmentally sound manner by the fisheries concerned,
	3. located, where possible, away from shipping routes or areas where they will be in conflict with other fisheries and migratory routes for CMS-listed species,
	4. deployed at times of the year and in locations where their beaching is less likely, according to relevant scientific advice, and
	5. disposed of appropriately when they are no longer required;
3. Where they are a flag state for FAD fisheries and/or FAD deploying vessels:
	1. ensure, whenever possible and feasible, that natural biodegradable materials are used in the construction of FADs, noting that more research is needed on this topic,
	2. ask fisheries to use real-time lost gear reporting to track rates of loss, identify high risk locations and gear types, and promote retrieval, particularly in sensitive marine habitats or areas of high importance for food security, where it is environmentally safe to do so;
4. Continue working with and within relevant fisheries organizations to promote the adoption of conservation and management measures to ensure the sustainability of FAD fisheries, including a progressive ban of entangling FAD designs to eliminate ghost fishing and related impacts;
5. Develop solutions to reduce loss or prevent dumping, as well as ensure the full retrieval and proper disposal of FADs;
6. Promote the progress of ongoing scientific work within relevant fisheries organizations for the development of biodegradable FADs;
7. Include terms on environmental control measures in fishing licences and in development of related guidelines aimed at mitigating the impacts on CMS-listed species;

1. Support inclusion of effective steps to address fishing gear as part of the new global plastics treaty, including abandoned, lost and otherwise discarded fishing gear;
2. Conduct clean ups to remove abandoned, lost and otherwise discarded FADs from the sea including ghost nets;
3. Work within relevant fisheries organizations to promote effective design, construction and use of FADs to reduce the risks to CMS-listed species;
4. Report to the Conference of the Parties at its 15th meeting on the progress in implementing this Decision.

***Directed to the Scientific Council***

14.BB The Scientific Council is requested to, subject to the availability of external resources:

1. Evaluate the relationship between FADs and marine debris and establish principles for best practice to avoid their loss, entanglement with marine wildlife, and beaching in corals, mangroves and other aquatic and coastal habitats, and that seek to reduce their contribution to plastic pollution. This should include liaison with the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF), further to their work on improving FAD design, and the relevant fisheries organizations;
2. Consider a possible case study area looking at FADs as a source of marine debris, for example in the Mediterranean Sea, to:
3. look at compliance with existing regulations,
4. recommend environmental management and control measures to avoid gear loss, and
5. explore ways of improving the environmentally sound retrieval of lost FADs;
6. Report to the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the progress in implementing this Decision.

***Directed to the Secretariat***

14.CC The Secretariat shall, subject to the availability of external resources, support the Scientific Council in implementing Decision 14.BB.