

INTERNATIONAL DOLPHIN CONSERVATION PROGRAM
WORKING GROUP TO PROMOTE AND PUBLICIZE THE AIDCP
DOLPHIN SAFE TUNA CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

MINUTES OF THE 12TH MEETING

La Jolla California (USA)
3 November 2008

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Approval of the minutes of the 11th meeting
4. Actions to promote AIDCP dolphin safe tuna
5. Other business
6. Date and place of next meeting
7. Adjournment

APPENDICES

1. List of attendees
2. Report of the Chair

1. Opening of the meeting

The meeting was opened by the Chairman of the Working Group, Lic. Bernal Chavarría, of Costa Rica. The attendees are listed in Appendix 1.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

3. Approval of the minutes of the 11th meeting

The minutes of the 11th meeting of the group were approved without changes.

4. Actions to promote AIDCP dolphin safe tuna

The Chair read to the delegations a report (Appendix 2), which noted four responses received to the questionnaire sent by the Chair, from Costa Rica, Mexico, the United States, and Venezuela, which he described as extremely relevant but insufficient in the context of constructing a vision of possible consensus for a Plan for Publicizing and Promoting in accordance with the terms agreed at the 9th Meeting of the Working Group. Therefore, the Chair asked the Parties that have not done so to send their responses to the questionnaire. Also, the report details 10 actions identified by the Parties as recommendations for the content of that Plan.

After a very positive exchange of thoughts and opinions, the delegations welcomed the Chair's request regarding the Parties that have not done so to send their responses at least 60 days before the next meeting of the Group is held, so that the Chair would have the time necessary to make the consultations and coordination necessary for facilitating the goal of proposing a comprehensive, viable and substantive Plan for Promotion and Publicizing as has been planned. The Secretariat will remind the Parties to respond to the questionnaire.

5. Other business

Ecosystem Friendly Ecolabelling: Mexico reminded the Group of its initiative to institutionalize an

ecolabelling system which it had named “Ecosystem Friendly”, and asked if the Secretariat had made progress in the preparation of a document addressing this matter.

Mr. Brian Hallman, of the Secretariat, explained that the staff had done some work on the issue, but that it had not evolved to the point where it could be presented in a paper. He noted that the issue was very complicated and necessarily would involve the IATTC, since it was the Commission which had competence over several of the criteria which would need to be addressed in the determination of ecosystem safe tuna, for example tuna conservation issues and bycatch measures. He also commented that considerations such as whether the determination would be made on a trip-by-trip basis, and how catches by small vessels would be handled, needed to be addressed.

The meeting acknowledged that considerable work needed to be done before this issue could be advanced, and agreed that the IATTC needed to be closely involved in this initiative. In this regard, the working group considered that it might be useful to create a joint AIDCP-IATTC working group to study the idea in more detail. It also decided that the issue should be considered further in the next meeting of the Parties to the AIDCP, and asked the Secretariat to prepare a document to facilitate in that discussion.

6. Date and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the working group will be held in conjunction with the AIDCP meetings in June 2009.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m. on 3 November.

Appendix 1.

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Appendix 2.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

The Working Group to Promote and Publicize the AIDCP Dolphin Safe Tuna Certification System approved at its 9th Meeting held in October 2007 in La Jolla, sending to the Parties a questionnaire to be answered, whose aim is to allow the Presidency of this group to prepare a basis for discussion for the configuration of a Plan of Action that the parties may eventually adopt by consensus, towards achieving a greater depth and coverage of the promotion and publicizing of the International Dolphin Conservation Program.

During the 11th Meeting of the Working Group held in Panama City, the Chair reported that on 21 May 2008 the letter Ref: 0315-533 signed by the Director of the IATTC was received, in which the actions carried out by the Organization to promote and publicize the AIDCP are summarized, as well as its Dolphin Safe certification system, in the framework of the Working Group. It was also reported that with the exception of the letter dated 16 June 2008, sent by the National Commission for Aquaculture and Fisheries of Mexico, no response had been received to the questionnaire circulated. During the meeting, it was reported that the United States of America had sent a report related to two concrete publicizing actions through NOAA, carried out by the Department of State and the Department of Commerce, and that Party reported that in the interests of the AIDCP 3 concrete publicizing actions have been carried out, which are included in the respective minutes and Mexico made a verbal exposition of its response to the above-mentioned questionnaire. After that date, the Chair has received two additional contributions, one from Costa Rica dated 14 July 2008 and the other from the Bolivarian Government of Venezuela, dated 6 August 2008.

Considering that resolution A-02-05 by which this Working Group was created, visualized both the

“...strategy for publicizing the AIDCP dolphin safe label, and of ensuring the support of the program that sustains it”,

the questionnaire in question sought to evaluate the legal and logistical viability of a new Promotion and Publicity Plan that would have to be adopted by consensus. Although we recognize the quality of the contributions received, the lack of response to the questionnaire by the majority of the member countries of the Agreement, has impeded this Presidency in the preparation of a proposal for a Promotion and Publicity Plan and the consequent proposition of a program of actions for the eventual implementation of that product.

To be fair to the effort of the Parties that have sent their contribution in response to the questionnaire, it is important to stress that support for the International Dolphin Conservation Program as a management instrument is common in the responses, as well as acknowledgement of the effort by the Parties for its Development; however, the publicizing and promotion of the Dolphin Safe Certification System is passing through difficulties but not impediments, for guaranteeing its effectiveness, as an instrument that could facilitate access to consumer markets. The United States has expressly stated the difficulties of a legal nature that it has in its jurisdiction for the official recognition of the AIDCP Dolphin Safe label, a fact that in the transparency of circumstances, must be reckoned as a reality that is beyond the competences of this Working Group and is a matter to be dealt with in the Meeting of the Parties. However, that same State has stated its support for the International Dolphin Conservation Program and recognizes the authority that the other Parties have to carry out in their territory, Promotion and Publicity efforts for the various target groups.

As is known, the effectiveness of an ecolabel, depends both on the intrinsic solidity of the system, and on its recognition in the target market, which means the confluence of integrity and reputation. In reality, the AIDCP Dolphin Safe Certification system, has majority support for its integrity or its reputation but, aware of the limitation mentioned above, this Presidency considers that respecting Legality and until a Supreme Decision facilitates another course of action, we have to recognize in this Working Group that the formulation of a Promotion and Publicity Plan which aspires to a total coverage, it is viable for the purposes of the International Agreement for Dolphin Conservation, also, in the case of the AIDCP Dolphin Safe Certificate, is publicizing and promotion in The United States as one of the target markets, under the conditions of legality that have been explained at the various meetings, will not determine the access to that market, a matter that as has been stated must be evaluated by the Parties at their Plenary Meeting.

Meanwhile, in relation to the principle of Publicity contained in paragraph 5 of resolution A-01-02 no the Procedures for the Certification of AIDCP Dolphin Safe Tuna, which in its subparagraph "c" states:

"The Parties, through the Secretariat, may support the design and implementation of an international public education campaign to accomplish the objectives set forth within this section."

in particular that which is mentioned in subparagraph "b":

"...The Parties agree to disseminate objective information to, inter alia, importers, fishermen's organizations, and non-governmental organizations, using their own capabilities within their national and international markets, to support an accurate public perception of the AIDCP, in order to increase the broad understanding of the AIDCP and its objectives."

this Presidency considers that for reasons of competence, this Working Group has to continue working on obtaining the inputs necessary for defining the new program for promotion and publicity mentioned various times and in that regard it is proposed to the Working Group recommend sending a new and respectful petition to the Parties so that they may provide the information required in the questionnaire and any other that may be considered important.

Finally, I present to you a summary of the elements that the responses received recommend should be contained in a new Promotion and Publicity plan:

1. Preparation of educational Campaigns and information for the public in general on the importance, origin and objective of the use of the Dolphin safe label, as well as on the implementation of the AIDCP.

2. Carrying out of informational round tables at the level of the various state bodies involved in the matter of ecolabelling and the AIDCP.
3. Carrying out of cycles of conferences given by specialists in the subject.
4. Involve the industries in activities of promotion and publicizing of the AIDCP.
5. Preparation of educational and promotional materials on the AIDCP.
6. Diagnosis of actions undertaken internally and externally each party, in the Promotion and Publicizing of the AIDCP and its objectives.
7. Harmonizing joint strategies at the regional level among different parties.
8. Analysis of compatibility of the current ecolabels, in the light of the FAO guidelines on ecolabelling.
9. Alliances with similar environmental groups concerned about the conservation of the EPO for the recognition of the achievements of the AIDCP, as an input for publicity.
10. Publicizing and promotion efforts through diplomatic mechanisms.