

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

94TH MEETING

Bilbao (Spain)

22-26 July 2019

DOCUMENT IATTC-94-02

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 10TH MEETING OF THE
SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**A. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(SAC)**

1. TROPICAL TUNAS

1.1. Conservation

The SAC requests that the IATTC staff present to the meeting of the SAC in 2020 a set of options for management measures for tropical tunas, consistent with the staff's work plan to improve the stock assessments of tropical tunas.

1.2. Stock assessments

- a. The SAC supports the staff's work plan to improve the stock assessments of tropical tunas in time for the Commission to consider management measures for 2021 and subsequent years.
- b. The SAC recognizes that the current schedule of annual benchmark or update assessments of bigeye and yellowfin tunas makes it difficult for the IATTC staff to perform the necessary research to improve those assessments, as well as to develop assessments for other stocks requested by the Commission. Therefore, the SAC recommends that the IATTC staff develop, and present to the SAC, an alternative assessment schedule, with benchmark or update assessments scheduled in coordination with the management schedule, and indicator analyses in the intervening years to assess whether additional management measures are required.
- c. The SAC recommends that the IATTC staff continue working with CPCs to review data reporting, in terms of the quantity and quality required for the improved stock assessments.
- d. The SAC recommends that the IATTC staff continue its collaboration with the WCPFC in stock assessments.

1.3. Management Strategy Evaluation

The SAC supports the IATTC staff's work plan (SAC-10-01a) to move forward with Management Strategy Evaluation workshops in 2019 and 2020 for tropical tunas with stakeholders, scientists, and managers. Therefore, the SAC recommends that the Commission continue to provide funds to support this work.

2. DORADO

The SAC recommends that the IATTC staff continue working with CPCs on research on the stock status of dorado (*Coryphaena hippurus*) in the EPO.

3. DATA

3.1. Electronic monitoring

- a. The SAC recommends that the Electronic Monitoring (EM) initiatives implemented on purse seiners, both Classes 1-5 and Class 6, which will improve data collection for the purse-seine fleet, are also tested in the longline fleet.
- b. The SAC requests that the staff prepare a proposal on EM minimum standards and data collection and reporting requirements for both purse-seine and longline fleets, to be reviewed at the next meeting of the SAC.

3.2. FAD data

- a. The SAC reiterates the importance of all CPCs providing to the IATTC staff the same raw buoy data received by the original users, in accordance with the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Working Group on FADs of May 2018, adopted by the SAC at its 9th meeting.
- b. The SAC recommends that the IATTC staff review the data collection procedures associated with the fishery on floating objects, to identify indicators that adequately represent the number of effective floating objects, levels of deployment, and losses.
- c. The SAC recommends that the information on [FAD form 09-2018 Ver. 2](#) be recorded by the observer on purse-seine vessels with an observer aboard, and that the captain be required to provide the observer with the identification code of the FADs and, as appropriate, the other information in Annex 1 of Resolution C-18-05. On purse-seine vessels without an observer aboard, the captain shall be responsible for recording the information on the form.

3.3. Longline CPUE

The SAC recommends that the staff continue investigating with CPCs issues related to longline CPUE, and to continue investigating the joint longline standardized CPUE index.

4. PROGRESS REPORTS ON RECOMMENDATIONS BY WORKING GROUPS

The report on the progress and outcomes of recommendations adopted by previous SAC meetings ([SAC-10-02](#)) was found to be very useful by the SAC. However, the SAC recommends that the IATTC staff also include in future reports the progress and outcomes of the recommendations by working groups adopted by the SAC .

B. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON BYCATCH AS ENDORSED BY THE SAC

GENERAL

1. Request the IATTC scientific staff to develop a list of minimum standards for electronic monitoring on purse-seine and longline vessels, for the consideration of the SAC (*redrafted and incorporated in the recommendations of the SAC as recommendation 3.1.b – see above*).
2. Request the IATTC scientific staff to analyze the available operational-level longline observer data for bycatch at the 2020 WG meeting, during the "Summary Report on Bycatch in the EPO" presentation.

BYCATCH MITIGATION

3. Encourage collaboration of CPCs to supply data for IATTC Class 1-5 purse-seine vessels and artisanal fisheries according to procedures currently being developed by IATTC scientific staff in collaboration with other organizations.
4. Encourage additional research on Mobulids, including post-release survival, genetics, and population studies.

5. The WG supports the request of the IAC (Inter-American Convention for the Preservation and Conservation of Sea Turtles) in the development of IATTC conservation measures to reduce bycatches and mortality of leatherback turtles (*Dermochelys coriacea*), including circle hooks, fish bait, spatial management and safe handling and release.
6. The WG recommends that the IATTC staff work with the IAC to assess the vulnerability of leatherback turtles in the EPO using different management scenarios.
7. The WG encourages additional studies to determine impacts of gillnets illumination on catch composition in additional locations.

PURSE-SEINE BEST PRACTICES

8. In the near future, move toward the use of non-entangling FADs without any netting and encourage research on biodegradable materials.
9. Promote the application of proven best practices of bycatch release on purse seiners and encourage research to develop safe-handling techniques to improve the post-release survival rates of sensitive fauna.
10. Additional electronic tagging experiments should be conducted in order to evaluate post-release survival rates.

SEABIRDS

11. The WG requests a review and update of the mitigation options in Resolution C-11-02, including potential harmonization with WCPFC seabird regulations and ACAP guidelines.

MARINE MAMMAL SAFE HANDLING AND RELEASE GUIDELINES

12. The WG requests that marine mammal identification guides and safe handling and release guidelines be posted on the IATTC website.