

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

82ND MEETING

LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA (USA)
4-8 JULY 2011

RESOLUTION C-11-03

RESOLUTION PROHIBITING FISHING ON DATA BUOYS

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in La Jolla, California (USA), on the occasion of its 82nd Meeting:

Aware that many nations, including Members of the Commission, operate and deploy data buoys throughout the Eastern Pacific Ocean and oceans worldwide to gather information used to improve weather and marine forecasts, provide assistance to fisheries by collecting data on sea surface and subsurface temperatures, provide assistance to search and rescue efforts at sea, and collect critical data used to conduct research on meteorological and oceanographic topics and climate prediction;

Knowing that highly migratory species, in particular tunas, aggregate in the vicinity of data buoys;

Recognizing that the World Meteorological Organization and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission have determined that vandalism and damage to data buoys by fishing vessels are a significant problem in the Pacific Ocean and worldwide;

Concerned that vandalism or damage to data buoys results in significant loss of data critical to weather forecasting, to the study of marine conditions, to tsunami warnings, to support search and rescue efforts at sea, and that Members of the Commission expend considerable time and resources to locate, replace, and repair data buoys damaged or lost due to fishing activities or vandalism;

Alarmed that the loss of data critical to the study of marine conditions from vandalism or damage to data buoys undermines analyses by Commission scientists seeking better understanding of tuna habitat use and relationships between climate and tuna recruitment, and research by environmental scientists in general; and

Mindful that several data buoy programs publish information on the internet describing the type and location of such buoys;

Agrees:

To apply in the Antigua Convention Area the following measures regarding fishing on data buoys:

For the purpose of this Resolution, data buoys are defined as floating devices, either drifting or anchored, that are deployed by governmental or recognized scientific organizations or entities for the purpose of electronically collecting environmental data, and not in support of fishing activities, and which have been notified to the Commission by a Member or Cooperating non-Member of the Commission (CPC).

1. CPCs shall:

- a. Prohibit their fishing vessels from interacting with data buoys in the Antigua Convention Area. Interactions include, but are not limited to, encircling the buoy with fishing gear, tying up to or attaching the vessel, fishing gear, or any part or portion of the vessel, to a data buoy, or cutting its anchor line;
- b. Prohibit their longline and purse-seine fishing vessels from deploying fishing gear within one nautical mile of an anchored data buoy in the Antigua Convention Area;

- c. Prohibit their fishing vessels from taking on board a data buoy, unless specifically authorized or requested to do so by a CPC or owner responsible for that buoy;
 - d. Encourage their fishing vessels operating in the Antigua Convention Area to keep watch for data buoys at sea and require vessels to take all reasonable measures to avoid fishing gear entanglement or directly interacting in any way with drifting data buoys;
 - e. Require their fishing vessels whose gear becomes entangled with a data buoy to remove the entangled fishing gear with as little damage to the data buoy as possible.
2. CPCs are encouraged to require their fishing vessels to report to them all entanglements and provide the date, location, and nature of the entanglement, along with any identifying information on the data buoy. CPCs shall notify the Commission of all such reports.
 3. Fishing activities inconsistent with paragraph 1 shall be deemed to undermine the effectiveness of the resolutions adopted by the IATTC in accordance with Article XVIII of the Antigua Convention, and shall, for the purposes of paragraph (1)(h) of IATTC Resolution C-05-07, be considered to be engaging in fishing activities contrary to an IATTC conservation and management measure.
 4. Notwithstanding paragraph 1, scientific research programs notified to the Commission may operate fishing vessels within one nautical mile of a data buoy, provided they do not interact with the data buoy, as described in paragraph 1.