

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

91ST EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

La Jolla, California (USA)

7-10 February 2017

RESOLUTION C-17-01

**CONSERVATION OF TUNA IN THE EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN
DURING 2017**

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in La Jolla, California (USA), on the occasion of its 91st Extraordinary Meeting:

Aware of its responsibility for the scientific study of the tunas and tuna-like species in its Convention Area and for formulating recommendations to its Members and Cooperating non-Members (CPCs) with regard to these resources;

Recognizing that the potential production from the resource can be reduced if fishing effort is excessive;

Aware that the capacity of the purse-seine fleets fishing for tunas in the Convention Area continues to increase;

Taking into account the best scientific information available, reflected in the IATTC staff's recommendations, and the precautionary approach;

Recognizing the importance of conservation measures taken by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) for the tuna stocks in that region and the stocks of highly migratory tunas in the Pacific Ocean;

Agrees:

To apply in the Convention Area the conservation and management measures for yellowfin and bigeye tuna set out below, and requests that the staff of the IATTC monitor the fishing activities of the respective CPC's flag vessels relative to this commitment, and report on such activities at the next meeting of the Commission;

1. These measures are applicable in 2017 to all CPCs' purse-seine vessels of IATTC capacity classes 4 to 6 (more than 182 metric tons carrying capacity), and to all their longline vessels over 24 meters length overall, that fish for yellowfin, bigeye and skipjack tunas in the Convention Area.
2. Pole-and-line, troll, and sportfishing vessels, and purse-seine vessels of IATTC capacity classes 1-3 (182 metric tons carrying capacity or less) are not subject to these measures.
3. All purse-seine vessels covered by these measures must stop fishing in the Convention Area for a period of 62 days in 2017. These closures shall be effected in one of two periods, as follows:
29 July to 28 September 2017, or from 18 November 2017 to 18 January 2018.
4. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 3, purse-seine vessels of IATTC capacity class 4 (between 182 and 272 metric tons carrying capacity) will be able to make only one single fishing trip of up to 30 days duration during the specified closure period, provided that any such vessel carries an observer authorized pursuant to the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP)
5. The IATTC establishes a total annual catch limit of the average level observed during 2013-2015 for yellowfin and bigeye (combined) caught by capacity class 4, 5, and 6 purse-seine vessels of 97,711 t for the fishery on floating objects, and 162,182 t on dolphins by Class-6 vessels. These catch limits include the activation of the capacity recognized for Guatemala and Venezuela at the 88th Meeting of the IATTC. The Director shall notify CPCs when the catch of yellowfin and bigeye by capacity class

4, 5, and 6 purse-seine vessels reaches 80% of the total catch limit in sets on floating objects or dolphins, respectively. At 90% of the total catch limit, the Director shall notify CPCs of an estimated closure date for the respective fishery, and at 100% the Director will announce the closure of the respective fishery. CPCs shall ensure that purse-seine vessels flying their flag stop making sets on floating objects or dolphins when the total limit is reached in the respective fishery.

6. The fishery for yellowfin, bigeye, and skipjack tuna by purse-seine vessels within the area of 96° and 110°W and between 4°N and 3°S illustrated in Figure 1 shall be closed from 0000 hours on 29 September to 2400 hours on 29 October.

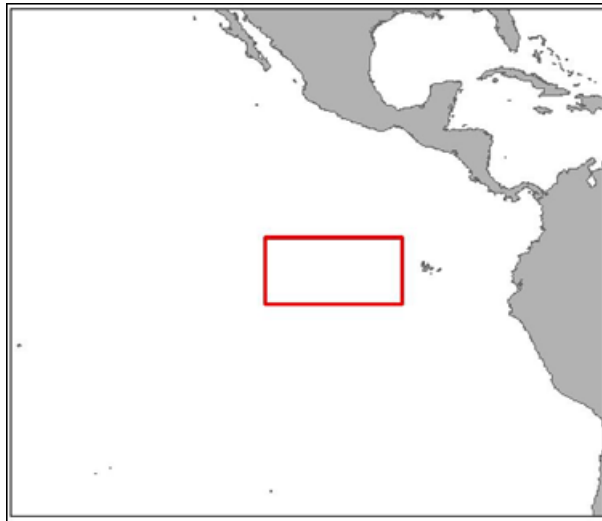


Figure 1. Closure area

7.
 - a. For each one of the closure periods, each CPC shall notify the Director, by 15 July, the names of all the purse-seine vessels that will observe each closure period.
 - b. Every vessel that fishes during 2017, regardless of the flag under which it operates or whether it changes flag or the jurisdiction of the CPC under which it fishes during the year, must observe the closure period to which it was committed.
8.
 - a. Notwithstanding the provisions of subparagraph 7a and 7b, a request by a CPC, on behalf of any of its vessels, for an exemption due to *force majeure*¹ rendering said vessel unable to proceed to sea outside said closure period during at least a period equivalent to the closure period prescribed in paragraph 3, shall be sent to the Secretariat
 - b. In addition to the request for an exemption, the CPC shall send the evidence necessary to demonstrate that the vessel did not proceed to sea and that the facts on which the request for exemption is based were due to *force majeure*.
 - c. The Director shall immediately send the request and the evidence electronically to the other CPCs for their consideration, duly coded in order to maintain the anonymity of the name, flag and owner of the vessel.
 - d. The request shall be considered accepted, unless an IATTC Member objects to it formally within 15 calendar days of the receipt of said request, in which case the Director shall immediately notify all CPCs of the objection.
 - e. If the request for exemption is accepted:
 - i. the vessel shall observe a reduced closure period of 30 consecutive days in the same year

¹ For the purposes of paragraph 8, only cases of vessels disabled by mechanical and/or structural failure, fire, or explosion shall be considered *force majeure*

during which the *force majeure* event occurred, in one of the two periods prescribed in paragraph 3, to be immediately notified to the Director by the CPC, or

- ii. in the event said vessel has already observed a closure period prescribed in paragraph 3 in the same year during which the *force majeure* event occurred, it shall observe a reduced closure period of 30 consecutive days the following year, in one of the two periods prescribed in paragraph 3, to be notified to the Director by the CPC no later than 15 July.

This exemption applies to the vessels of fleets that observe either of the closure periods prescribed in paragraph 3.

9. Each CPC shall, for purse-seine fisheries:

- a. Before the date of entry into force of the closure, take the legal and administrative measures necessary to implement the closure;
- b. Inform all interested parties in its tuna industry of the closure;
- c. Inform the Director that these steps have been taken;
- d. Ensure that at the time a closure period begins, and for the entire duration of that period, all the purse-seine vessels fishing for yellowfin, bigeye, or skipjack tunas that are committed to observing that closure period and that fly its flag, or operate under its jurisdiction, in the Convention Area are in port, except that vessels carrying an observer authorized pursuant to the AIDCP may remain at sea, provided they do not fish in the Convention Area. The only other exception to this provision shall be that vessels carrying an observer authorized pursuant to the AIDCP may leave port during the closure, provided they do not fish in the Convention Area.

10. China, Japan, Korea, and Chinese Taipei undertake to ensure that the total annual catches of bigeye tuna by their longline vessels in the Convention Area during 2017 do not exceed the following levels:

Metric tons	2017
China	2,507
Japan	32,372
Korea	11,947
Chinese Taipei	7,555

11. All other CPCs undertake to ensure that the total annual catches of bigeye tuna by their longline vessels in the Convention Area during 2017 do not exceed the greater of 500 metric tons or their respective catches of bigeye tuna in 2001^{2,3}. CPCs whose annual catches have exceeded 500 metric tons shall provide monthly catch reports to the Director.

12. Landings and transshipments of tuna or tuna products that have been positively identified as originating from fishing activities that contravene these measures are prohibited. The Director is requested to provide relevant information to CPCs to assist them in this regard.

13. Each CPC shall submit to the Director, by 15 July of 2018, a national report on its updated national compliance scheme and actions taken to implement these measures, including any controls it has imposed on its fleets and any monitoring, control, and compliance measures it has established to ensure compliance with such controls.

14. In order to evaluate progress towards the objectives of these measures, in 2017 the IATTC scientific staff will analyze the effects on the stocks of the implementation of these measures, and previous conservation and management measures, and will propose, if necessary, appropriate measures to be

² The Commission acknowledges that France, as a coastal State, is developing a tuna longline fleet on behalf of its overseas territories situated in the Convention Area.

³ The Commission acknowledges that Peru, as a coastal State, will develop a tuna longline fleet, which will operate in strict compliance with the rules and provisions of the IATTC and in accordance with the resolutions of the Commission.

applied in future years.

15. Subject to the availability of the necessary funding, the Director is requested to continue the experiments with sorting grids for juvenile tunas and other species of non-target fish in the purse-seine nets of vessels that fish on FADs and on unassociated schools, by developing an experimental protocol, including parameters for the materials to be used for the sorting grids, and the methods for their construction, installation, and deployment. The Director shall also specify the methods and format for the collection of scientific data to be used for analysis of the performance of the sorting grids. The foregoing is without prejudice to each CPC carrying out its own experimental programs with sorting grids and presenting its results to the Director.
16. For 2017, renew the program to require all purse-seine vessels to first retain on board and then land all bigeye, skipjack, and yellowfin tuna caught, except fish considered unfit for human consumption for reasons other than size. A single exception shall be the final set of a trip, when there may be insufficient well space remaining to accommodate all the tuna caught in that set. At its annual meeting in 2017, the IATTC will review the results of the program, including compliance, and decide whether to continue it.
17. The IATTC shall continue efforts to promote compatibility between the conservation and management measures adopted by the IATTC and WCPFC in their goals and effectiveness, especially in the overlap area, including by frequent consultations with the WCPFC, in order to maintain, and inform their respective members of, a thorough understanding of conservation and management measures directed at bigeye, yellowfin, and other tunas, and the scientific bases and effectiveness of those measures.
18. In 2017 and 2018 the results of these measures shall be evaluated in the context of the results of the stock assessments and of changes in the level of active capacity in the purse-seine fleet and, depending on the conclusions reached by the IATTC scientific staff, in consultation with the Scientific Advisory Committee, based on such evaluation, the Commission shall take further actions including substantial extension of closure days for purse seine vessels or equivalent measures at its meeting in 2017.
19. Except in cases of *force majeure* prescribed in paragraph 8, no exemptions will be allowed with regard to the closure periods notified to the Director in accordance with paragraph 7a, nor with regard to the fishing effort of the purse-seine fleets of the respective CPCs.