

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

16TH MEETING

La Jolla, California (USA)

02-06 June 2025

DOCUMENT SAC-16 INF-G

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED AT THE PREVIOUS SAC
MEETING: PROGRESS AND OUTCOMES

At its annual meetings, the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) makes recommendations to the Commission, many of which involve actions by the staff. This document lists the recommendations currently requiring action by the staff and/or the Commission, and their current status: **green**: completed; **yellow**: in progress, incomplete; **orange**: planned, but pending funding; **red**: no action. For the full recommendations made by SAC-15, see [here](#).

| | Recommendation, SAC-15 | Status (16 May 2025) | |
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| 1. TROPICAL TUNA (YELLOWFIN, SKIPJACK AND BIGEYE) | | | |
| 1.1 Bigeye | | | |
| | That the current conservation measures for tropical tunas contemplated in Resolution C-21-04 be extended for a duration and in the conditions to be stipulated by the Commission. | The Commission adopted Resolution C-24-01 , extending the tropical tuna conservation measures established in Resolution C-21-04 for an additional two years (2025-2026). | Green |
| a) | That the Enhanced Monitoring Program be extended until the IATTC Secretariat transfers the program to the traditional sampling programs, or should the case be, to the CPCs, provided that the quality and reliability of the information are guaranteed, which shall be assessed by the IATTC staff and the SAC. During the period of extension of the Enhanced Monitoring Program, ensure that the IATTC Secretariat transfers, as soon as possible, the methodological and operational bases acquired during previous years to the CPCs, in order to make the continuity of this program viable. Recommends | As stated in paragraph 7 of Resolution C-24-01, the EMP will remain active subject to the available of funds and the budgetary approval by the Commission. To date, funding has not been secured for the continuation of the EMP in 2026 and beyond. Document SAC-16-05 presents a proposal prepared by the scientific staff in response to the task outline in paragraph 8 of Resolution C-24-01. This task requires the staff to analyze the components, actions, technical feasibility, implications for scientific output and budget needed to merge objectives and actions of the EMP and the Traditional Port Sampling, including any suggested improvement to the latter. | Yellow |

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| | that the IATTC staff evaluate and report to the SAC in 2026 on the improvements to the traditional port sampling program and the requirements for its implementation by CPCs in their national programs. | | |
| b) | That the IATTC Secretariat maintain the human capital responsible for providing advice to the CPCs on enhanced monitoring. | See a). | |
| c) | That the Commission assess, based on a report of the scientific staff for the next meeting of the Commission in 2024, the elements included in paragraph 11 of Res. C-21-04. | The staff provided a summary of the scientific work underlying its recommendations for the conservation of tropical tunas in Section 1.1 of Document IATTC-101-04 , which the Commission considered when adopting Resolution C-24-01. | |
| 2. TEMPERATE TUNAS | | | |
| 2.1 North Pacific albacore tuna | | | |
| a) | Recognizing that the IATTC staff have collaborated with the ISC ALBWG to complete the request to relate fishing intensity into catch and effort, and recognizing the variability of these relationships, that the Commission consider the relationships in document SAC-15 INF-T and their variability, and that the IATTC staff collaborate with the ISC ALBWG to re-evaluate these relationships when necessary. | At the ISC Albacore Working Group Workshop in March 2025 (Taipei, Chinese-Taipei), the ISC ALBWG, with participation from the staff, analyzed the relationships between fleet-specific spawning potential ratios and catch/effort for the portions of the Japanese longline fishery that targeted North Pacific Albacore Tuna. The results suggest that the Japanese longline fleets targeting NP ALB (Area 2, Quarters 1 and 4) may be managed using either effort or catch controls, with effort controls resulting in greater variability than the catch controls. | |
| b) | Recognizing that the IATTC staff have collaborated with the ISC ALBWG to complete the request to develop criteria for identifying exceptional circumstances in document SAC-15 INF-S, that the IATTC staff collaborate with the ISC ALBWG to inform the SAC and the Commission when these exceptional circumstances occur. | At the ISC Albacore Working Group Workshop in March 2025 (Taipei, Chinese-Taipei), the ISC ALBWG, with participation from the staff, reviewed the current version of the exceptional circumstances criteria for NPALB. One minor change was made to the previous version, as requested by the ISC25 Plenary. The ISC ALBWG agreed to include the current exceptional circumstances document as an annex to the assessment report and to evaluate whether exceptional circumstances occurred as part of the stock assessment process. | |

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| 2.2 South Pacific albacore tuna | | | |
| a) | Recognizing that for SPALB, catch and effort have increased substantially in recent years, that WCPFC has adopted interim reference points, and that the Commission has not adopted any Resolutions on SPALB, that the Commission consider interim reference points and interim limits on catch and/or effort for SPALB that are compatible with the work of the WCPFC while a harvest strategy is being developed. | <p>At the 14th meeting of the SAC in 2023, the staff proposed interim limit and target reference points for tuna, billfish and other highly productive fishes in the EPO (Document SAC-14 INF-O). These RPs could be considered for SPALB.</p> <p>Resolution C-24-04 on South Pacific Albacore Tuna was adopted at the 102nd Meeting of the IATTC in 2024. Paragraph 1 states:</p> <p><i>At the annual meeting in 2026, reference points that are compatible with the work of the WCPFC, as recommended by the IATTC scientific staff in consultation with the Scientific Advisory Committee, shall be proposed and considered.</i></p> <p>According to the resolution, the staff will present recommendations on reference points for SPALB at IATTC at the SAC meeting in 2026.</p> | |
| b) | Recognizing that WCPFC has begun the management strategy evaluation process for SPALB, the SAC recommends that the Commission coordinate with the WCPFC on a joint effort and process to develop and explore a range of harvest strategies for consideration. | In December 2024, WCPFC CPCs directed its Chair, working in coordination with the delegation of the USA and the WCPFC Secretariat, to coordinate with the IATTC Secretariat and the IATTC Chair to develop Terms of Reference for the creation of a joint working group, which would, inter alia, coordinate on the issue of harvest strategies for SPALB, taking into account the positive precedent of the PBF JWG. The first programmed step is the development of draft terms of reference for the SPALB JWG, eventually followed by an informal meeting of the group before the formal adoption of its TORs by each Commission. The IATTC Chair in coordination with the Director and the IATTC staff has developed and submitted to the consideration of the Commission such draft terms of reference, which have been proposed to the WCPFC. The process of consultations between the two organizations has started aiming at reaching an informal agreement on the terms of reference as well as on a workplan | |

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| | | and timeline to be submitted to each Commission in their upcoming annual meetings (IATTC in September, WCPFC in December) for their formal endorsement. | |
| c) | That the Commission encourage CPCs and the IATTC staff to participate in the upcoming WCPFC Science Management Dialogues to develop a harvest strategy for SPALB throughout the range of the stock. | <p>Resolution C-24-04 on South Pacific Albacore Tuna was adopted at the 102nd Meeting of the IATTC in 2024. Paragraph 3 states the following:</p> <p><i>CPCs and IATTC scientific staff are encouraged to participate in WCPFC science management dialogues to develop a harvest strategy for south Pacific albacore throughout the stock's range.</i></p> <p>Three members of the IATTC staff attended the WCPFC Science Management Dialogue in September 2024. Participation from IATTC CPCs was very limited. There was discussion regarding the formation of a joint working group (JWG) process between WCPFC CCMs and IATTC CPCs to harmonize management measures for SPALB.</p> | |
| 2.3 South Pacific Swordfish | | | |
| | That CPCs be requested to support the scientific staff on the provision of data on the south Pacific swordfish fishery, aimed at updating the baseline stock assessment to be submitted to the 2026 SAC. | To prepare data for the planned 2026 assessment of South Pacific swordfish, a Workshop on Data and Scientific Research on SP Swordfish is being jointly planned between Ecuador, Chile and IATTC staff. The workshop is tentatively planned for 17-19 June, Chile. | |
| 2.4. Pacific Bluefin tuna | | | |
| a) | (a) That CPCs and IATTC staff collaborate with the ISC to improve monitoring of discards and the recruitment monitoring index for PBF. | The IATTC staff maintains active participation in the activities of the ISC PBF WG. | |
| b) | That the Joint IATTC-WCPFC-NC Working Group and the Commission consider the importance of the adult longline index in any future management measures. | See staff's recommendations on PBF in Section 1.2 of SAC-16-11 . | |
| c) | Recognizing the Commission adopted an interim harvest strategy to maintain the stock | See staff's recommendations on PBF in Section 1.2 of SAC-16-11 . | |

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| | above 20%SSB0, and that the management strategy evaluation (MSE) results are expected in 2025, that the Commission consider a long-term harvest strategy with reference points at that time. | | |
| 3. MAHI MAHI | | | |
| a) | That the Commission encourage CPCs to report the catches of mahi mahi and its discards from all their tuna fleets, including classes 1-5 and the longline fleet. | A 2nd Workshop on Data Improvement , focused on small-purse seiners, was held in February 2025. The staff recommended that data on dorado is also reported, including, when possible/as feasible, discards. | |
| b) | Recommends that the IATTC staff continue to provide general guidance and technical advice to CPCs on mahi mahi-related research, as appropriate and within its scope | IATTC staff held meetings with stakeholders during their participation at the Workshop on Management of Fleet Capacity in the Antigua Convention Area and delivered a presentation on the assessment and management of dorado in Santa Marta, Colombia (July 2024). The staff also provided feedback on a proposed logbook format from CeDePesca. Additional, staff participated virtually and presented at the Ecuador FIP action plan workshop (April 2024) and at the OSPESCA workshop on regional coordination on dorado FIPs (November 2024). Informal communications were also maintained through calls or e-mails with CeDePesca, WWF, OSPESCA and various CPCs. In April 2025, staff participated virtually in the 10th Binational Dorado/Perico Workshop between Ecuador and Peru, presenting on stock assessment and options for dorado data reporting. | |
| 4. MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVALUATION (MSE) | | | |
| | That the development of management strategies for tropical tunas in the EPO continue to be supported. That the Commission consider a management procedure for BET, including reference points based on the MSE results expected in 2025-2027. | The development of management strategies for tropical tunas is ongoing. The 4 th IATTC tropical tuna MSE workshop was held in March 2025, the 5 th IATTC tropical tuna MSE workshop is planned for May 30-31, which has been proposed as an opportunity to hold the 1 st meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group to Strengthen Dialogue among Scientists, Managers and Other Stakeholders on MSE, following Resolution C-24-08. A candidate | |

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| | | management strategy for BET will be presented at SAC-16 (SAC-16-06). | |
| 5. DATA COLLECTION AND PROVISION | | | |
| a) | That the Commission support the proposed enhancement of the Regional Tuna Tagging Program (RTTP) with wide spatial coverage to allow for estimation of growth, natural mortality and abundance; and while maintaining a priority for tropical tunas, also include swordfish and sharks to the extent practicable (see proposal E.4.b in SAC-15 INF-E.b). | At its 101 st Meeting, the Commission contributed 330,000 USD funds to the proposal. However, the remaining funds required to operationalize the tagging program have not yet been secured. | |
| b) | In coordination with the RTTP, that opportunistic tagging programs be carried out in collaboration with CPCs and relevant stakeholders. | See a). | |
| c) | That the Commission notes the importance and need of having operational data from the longline fleet in order for stock assessments of tuna and other associated species covered by the Antigua Convention to be completed. | See staff recommendations Section 4 (SAC-16-11). | |
| d) | That CPCs that maintain tuna longline fleets operating in the EPO provide the scientific staff with historical operational data to enable the implementation of the Scientific Plan with respect to the construction of indices of abundance and useful information for stock assessments of tropical and temperate tunas. | See staff recommendations Section 4 (SAC-16-11). | |
| 6. ECOSYSTEM CONSIDERATIONS | | | |
| | That a program of dialogue be established between scientific staff, managers, fleet managers, and captains of the tuna fleets of the CPCs, with respect to: (a) Identification and evaluation | A formal program has not been developed yet. However, the IATTC staff participated (organized by external entities) or organized skippers workshops to improve dialogue between the fleet and the staff. During these workshops, voluntary and anonymous | |

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| | <p>of changes in fishing strategy triggered by conservation measures and climate change, and</p> <p>(b) Implementation of new methods on best practices for release of bycatch species that the Commission determines requires follow-up.</p> | <p>skippers' surveys were conducted (an effort that began informally in 2020). The number of skippers participated in the survey in 2024-2025 is 208 (about 400 skippers participated in the 2020-2023 period).</p> <p>The skippers' surveys in 2024-2025 focused on three main topics of interest for the SAC and the Commission: i) fishing strategy changes; ii) biodegradable FADs; and iii) best handling and releasing practices.</p> | |
| 6.1. Elasmobranchs (sharks and rays) | | | |
| a) | In response to paragraph 13 of Resolution C-23-07, that the Commission consider that the 18 shark species listed below comprise the draft list of species under the purview of the Commission and, if adopted, consider prioritizing them for research and management. | <p>The list of 18 species of sharks was adopted in Annex 4 of Resolution C-24-05.</p> <p>Resolution C-24-05 also requested the IATTC staff, in collaboration with the SAC and the EBWG, to develop and recommend a research plan for 8 of these species (see Workplan on Sharks, SAC-16-07).</p> | |
| Family | Species | Common name | |
| Alopiidae | <i>Alopias pelagicus</i> | Pelagic thresher | |
| Alopiidae | <i>Alopias superciliosus</i> | Bigeye thresher | |
| Alopiidae | <i>Alopias vulpinus</i> | Common thresher | |
| Carcharhinidae | <i>Carcharhinus brachyurus</i> | Copper shark | |
| Carcharhinidae | <i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i> | Silky shark | |
| Carcharhinidae | <i>Carcharhinus galapagensis</i> | Galapagos shark | |
| Carcharhinidae | <i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i> | Oceanic whitetip shark | |
| Carcharhinidae | <i>Prionace glauca</i> | Blue shark | |
| Galeocerdonidae | <i>Galeocerdo cuvier</i> | Tiger shark | |
| Lamnidae | <i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i> | Shortfin mako shark | |
| <i>Lamnidae</i> | <i>Isurus paucus</i> | <i>Longfin mako shark</i> | |
| Lamnidae | <i>Lamna ditropis</i> | Salmon shark | |
| Lamnidae | <i>Lamna nasus</i> | Porbeagle shark | |
| Rhincodontidae | <i>Rhincodon typus</i> | Whale shark | |
| Sphyrnidae | <i>Sphyrna lewini</i> | Scalloped hammerhead | |
| Sphyrnidae | <i>Sphyrna mokarran</i> | Great hammerhead | |
| Sphyrnidae | <i>Sphyrna zygaena</i> | Smooth hammerhead | |
| Pseudocarchariidae | <i>Pseudocarcharias kamoharai</i> | Crocodile shark | |

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| b) | Recommends that the IATTC staff develop a draft list of ray and mobulid species under the purview of the IATTC for consideration by the EBWG and the SAC. | The staff developed a proposed list of Ray species under the purview of the IATTC (see SAC-16-08). | |
| 6.2. Best Handling and Release Practices (BHRPS) | | | |
| a) | That the Commission provide a position on the development pathways for the work plan, elaborated by the scientific staff (EB-02-03), on the provision of guidelines or protocols for best handling and release practices (BHRP). | To date, the Commission did not provide a position on the BHRPs workplan developed by the staff. However, an update of the BHRPs for sharks was requested under Resolution C-24-05, which is provided by the staff in SAC-16-10 . Additional BHRPs have been prepared by the staff in 2025, and are available in EB-03-05 (sea turtles) and EB-03-06 (seabirds). The proposed BHRPs received feedback from CPCs, subject matter experts and industry representatives. | |
| b) | That manta sorting grids, considered in the handling and release guidelines of Resolution C-15-04 Annex 1, point 5, be discussed as an alternative and voluntary mitigation measure by CPCs. | Manta sorting grids were not discussed as an alternative by the Commission and C-15-04 Annex 1 was not revised. Manta grids have been voluntarily installed on several vessels operating in the IATTC and WCPFC. A large-scale tagging study across the region is still underway to assess post release rates when the grids are used. Revisions to the best handling and release recommendations are now planned for 2026, when the tagging program is also planned for completion. | |
| 6.3. Sorting grids | | | |
| a) | That the scientific staff provide an evaluation of the conservation value of sorting grids and conduct a comparative analysis of the catch between sets with and without the use of sorting grids for fish in order to detect changes in the composition of the target and non-target catch. | The IATTC staff prepared document SAC-16 INF-M , which includes a comparative analysis on the sorting grids used in the EPO tropical tuna purse-seine fishery. | |
| b) | That a workshop be held in Ecuador with IATTC scientific staff, industry, and fishing technicians in order to: | No workshop was held in Ecuador with the IATTC scientific staff, industry and fishing technicians. If organized, the requested sorting grid workshop should consider the information | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn about prototype sorting grids used during fishing maneuvers, use, experiences, benefits and problems. Analyze the possibility of quantifying the amount of fish that are extracted by this method as well as their survival or condition, by means of the design of an experiment and/or sampling during sets in which the grids are used (e.g., through the use of underwater cameras). | presented in Document SAC-16-INF-M, along with the existing literature, as well as expand the participation to all relevant stakeholders and experts in the field. | |
| 6.4. Climate change | | | |
| | That the IATTC scientific staff continue its work on climate change. | The staff created ToRs for future climate change workshops provided in IATTC-102 INF-B , which were briefly presented at the 102 nd Meeting of the IATTC. Preliminary staff recommendations on the main goal, scoping, and framework were developed for the proposed climate change workplan provided in CC-01-01 and CC-01-02 . These recommendations were presented and discussed at the 1 st Climate Change Workshop in February 2025. During the workshop external speakers presented on their experiences in developing climate resilient fisheries workplans for their organizations. Based on workshop discussion, the staff revised the recommendations (SAC-16 INF-P) | |