

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

WORKING GROUP ON BYCATCH

7TH MEETING

La Jolla, California (USA)

5-6 May 2017

RECOMMENDATIONS

- In order to obtain more information on bycatch by longline vessels, consider to increase the current 5% to 20% observer coverage based upon the recommendation of the IATTC scientific staff, as well as request the submission of the operational-level data recorded by observers at board.
- Develop and adopt a general format for reporting on the implementation of FAO Guidelines to reduce sea turtle mortality in fishing operations, as mandated by Resolution C-07-03, as well as improving compliance with the submission of reports.
- Ensure that such reports are made available to CPCs through a controlled-access page on the IATTC website.
- Analyze the level of implementation of Resolution C-07-03 regarding the application of measures to reduce the sea turtles bycatch, with a view to its updating, if necessary.
- Foster cooperation with the Inter-American Convention for the Protection of Sea Turtles (IACC), and in particular:
 - i. Strengthen cooperation between the two organizations in marine turtle protection activities; continue to invite the IAC to participate in the IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee and recommend that the IATTC participates in relevant meetings of the IAC.
 - ii. To recommend that IATTC and IAC Secretariats work together to continue supporting training in best practices for safe handling and release of marine turtles caught incidentally.
 - iii. Encourage sea turtle bycatch mitigation experimentations, for example through using nets illumination and reducing the time that nets are submerged.
 - iv. Encourage the IATTC to collaborate with the IAC scientific committee to identify bycatch hotspots in leatherback inter-nesting areas.
- In relation to seabirds bycatch:
 - i. Posting on the IATTC website already developed existing tools and guides for example for the use and removal of hooks from incidentally caught birds.
 - ii. Improve the level of information provided in annual reports (species, zero incidental catch, stratified data).
 - iii. Analyze the level of implementation of Resolution C-11-02, for example, regarding mitigation measures used, materials used, etc. with a view to its updating, if necessary.
 - iv. Consider, as an alternative mitigation method, the use of hooks shielding devices.
- Encourage pilot projects with electronic observers, mainly on longline vessels, and suggest CPC to include in their national reports summary information on the use of electronic observers.
- Recommend that the Working Group continue meeting at least once annually.