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PERMANENT WORKING GROUP ON FLEET CAPACITY
27TH MEETING

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DOCUMENT CAP-27-01

**UTILIZATION OF VESSEL CAPACITY UNDER RESOLUTIONS C-02-03,
C-12-06, C-12-08, C-15-02 and C-24-07**

This document, as the previous ones that have been submitted to the meetings of the Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity in past years, contains updated data on the capacity of the purse-seine fleet in the Eastern Pacific Ocean and pending issues that should be addressed, now including also capacity requests that were not comprised in the list endorsed by the Commission in 2016.

It also includes information pertinent to the implementation of Resolutions [C-12-06](#) and [C-12-08](#) on capacity loans or concessions and chartering of vessels with temporary transfers of capacity and on the sealing of wells, respectively.

1. INTRODUCTION

The document submitted last year to the Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity (document CAP-26-01 REV) contains a summary of the origin, background, and evolution of the issue of capacity within the Commission.

In brief, it may be concluded that the scheme established by Resolution C-02-03, as supplemented by Resolution C-15-02, has succeeded in keeping the overall capacity of the fleet largely stable and in preventing any uncontrolled growth of that capacity.

However, despite the adoption of a Plan for Regional Management of Fishing Capacity in June 2005 and of a set of Elements for implementing a fleet capacity management plan in the IATTC in June 2016, the scheme as implemented has proved unable to attain the capacity target established in Resolution C-02-03. Moreover, a number of issues that had not been foreseen at the outset — including several of a very practical nature — arose in the following years, most of which remain unresolved.

The intersessional meeting of the Working Group, held on 29 and 30 January 2026, gave Members the opportunity to review an inventory of these persistent and challenging problems, together with a preliminary, general indication of the possible options for resolving them, particularly those requiring an urgent, concrete, and satisfactory solution. This inventory, prepared by the IATTC staff solely to facilitate discussion and without prejudice to the identification of other issues or to the position of Members in that respect, is attached as Annex 5.

As a follow-up, a tentative inventory of possible options for resolving these issues is attached as Annex 6, solely for the purpose of facilitating the discussion and without prejudging the identification of other options or the reformulation of those identified in this document.

2. UTILIZATION OF WELL VOLUME TO DATE

The active purse-seine capacity on the Regional Register on 30 June 2026 is 290,570 m³. The capacity of inactive or sunk or vessels under construction vessels is 5,965 m³, and the capacity available as a result of movements of vessels on the Regional Register is 6,328 m³, for a potential total of 302,863 m³. In June 2002, when the Resolution entered into force, the active capacity was 218,482 m³, while the sum total of

the active and inactive capacity, plus that included in paragraph 10 of the resolution, was 273,467 m³; although the current operative capacity is below that level (Figure 1), this represents an increase in the potential total capacity of 29,396 m³. It should be further noted that these numbers do not take fully into account the capacity requests in the footnote to the Resolution, which two of the three countries mentioned, Peru and Colombia, have utilized partially, with the approval of the Commission.

The following are the main reasons for this increase in the potential total capacity.

First, the addition of several vessels to the Regional Register in the months following the adoption of Resolution C-02-03 and subsequently, as agreed by the Commission to correct omissions by several delegations at the meeting at which the resolution was adopted.

Second, the increased capacity deriving from the actual measurement and confirmation of the wells volume of the vessels on the Regional Register, which in its great majority was merely estimated in 2002. In order to finalize this process and prevent any further increase, during its 89th IATTC Meeting held in Guayaquil, Ecuador, the Commission adopted Resolution C-15-02, which established a deadline for confirming capacity through such measurement, as follows:

“For the purposes of interpretation of paragraph 6 of Resolution C-02-03 with regard to the deadlines for confirming capacity, as of 1 January 2017 the well volume reflected on the Regional Vessel Register will be considered confirmed for vessels currently included in the Register. In the case of new vessels, the well volume notified at the time the vessel is added to the Register will be considered confirmed”.

Third, consistent with the provisions of Resolution C-02-03, the Commission adopted several decisions that led to an increase of the potential total capacity. Pursuant to paragraph 10 of the Resolution, 5,000 m³ of well volume were granted to Peru in June 2011 to be used only by Peruvian-flag vessels operating only in waters under the jurisdiction of Peru, a restriction that was removed by the Commission in July 2014; the situation of some Colombian and Ecuadorian vessels was regularized in June 2013, and a number of capacity requests or disputes were resolved by the Commission in 2014, as described in the [minutes of its 88th meeting](#).

At its 91st Meeting (Extraordinary), the Commission approved the activation of the capacity of Guatemala (3,762 m³) and Venezuela (1,688 m³) that had been restored to them by the Commission at its 88th Meeting (Extraordinary).

At the 94th Meeting of the Parties, the Commission approved the activation of the capacity for the vessel Maria Del Mar (281 m³) (Flag: Ecuador) which is currently on the Inactive/Sunk PS Capacity List.

In 2021, a letter (0274-410 on 01 July 2021) was circulated regarding the vessel Milena A (Flag: Ecuador) barely missing the deadline of Resolution C-15-02 for confirmation of the vessel's well volume and since there was no objection to this modification this vessel from 996 m³ to 1,217 m³ which was an increased by 221 m³.

In the past, there have been several requests for changes in the capacity of vessels on the Regional Register that have sunk or been scrapped, with well volumes greater than those originally recorded in the Regional Register by the respective flag CPC and with which the vessels operated until they sank or were scrapped. This type of situation cannot arise any longer since Resolution C-15-02 stipulates that *“as of 1 January 2017 the well volume reflected on the Regional Vessel Register will be considered confirmed for vessels currently included in the Register”*. In addition, it should be noted that these provisions have been applied literally, excluding the possibility after 1 January 2017 of any correction in the amount of the registered capacity of a previously unconfirmed vessel, even if this correction would have been made before the date upon the request of the respective flag State and the presentation of the appropriate documentation. The only change made afterwards were those derived from the restructuring of the wells of a vessel and any increase in total wells volume had to be covered by capacity made available to it by the flag State or through a process of temporary loan or compensated through the sealing of wells.

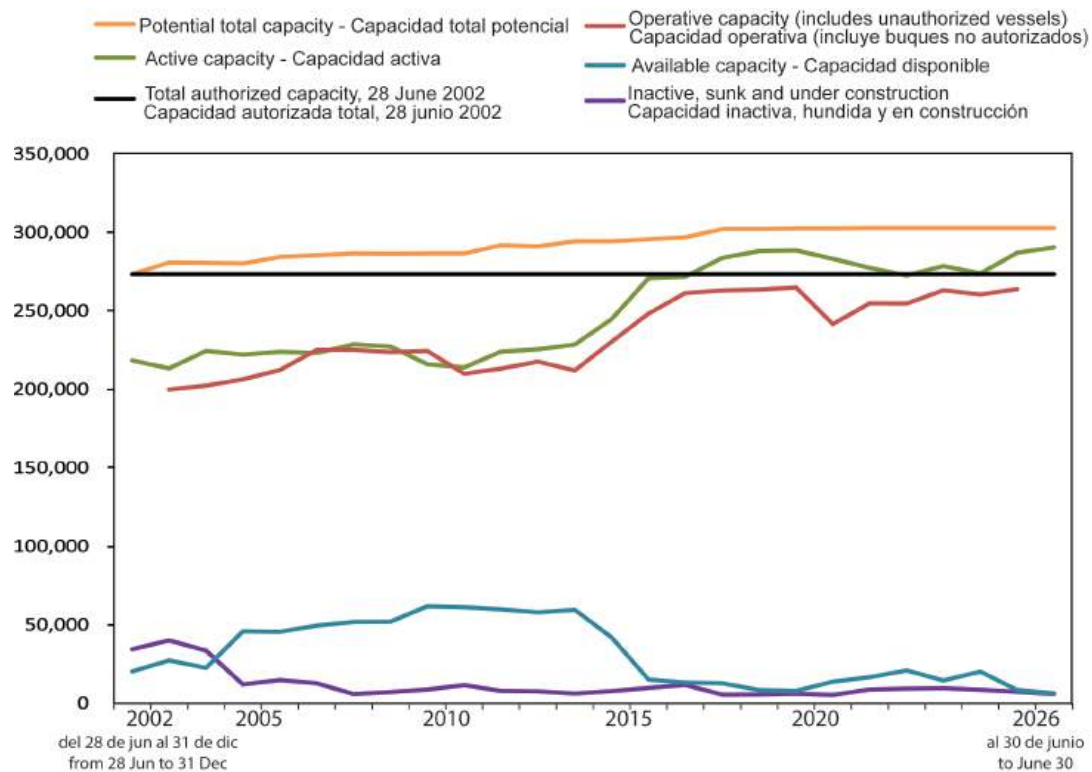


FIGURE 1. Active, inactive, available, potential total, and operative capacity, in cubic meters (m³) of well volume, 2002-2026 ([see glossary in the Appendix](#)).

Figure 2 illustrates the evolution of the operative capacity of the fleets during 2002-2025.

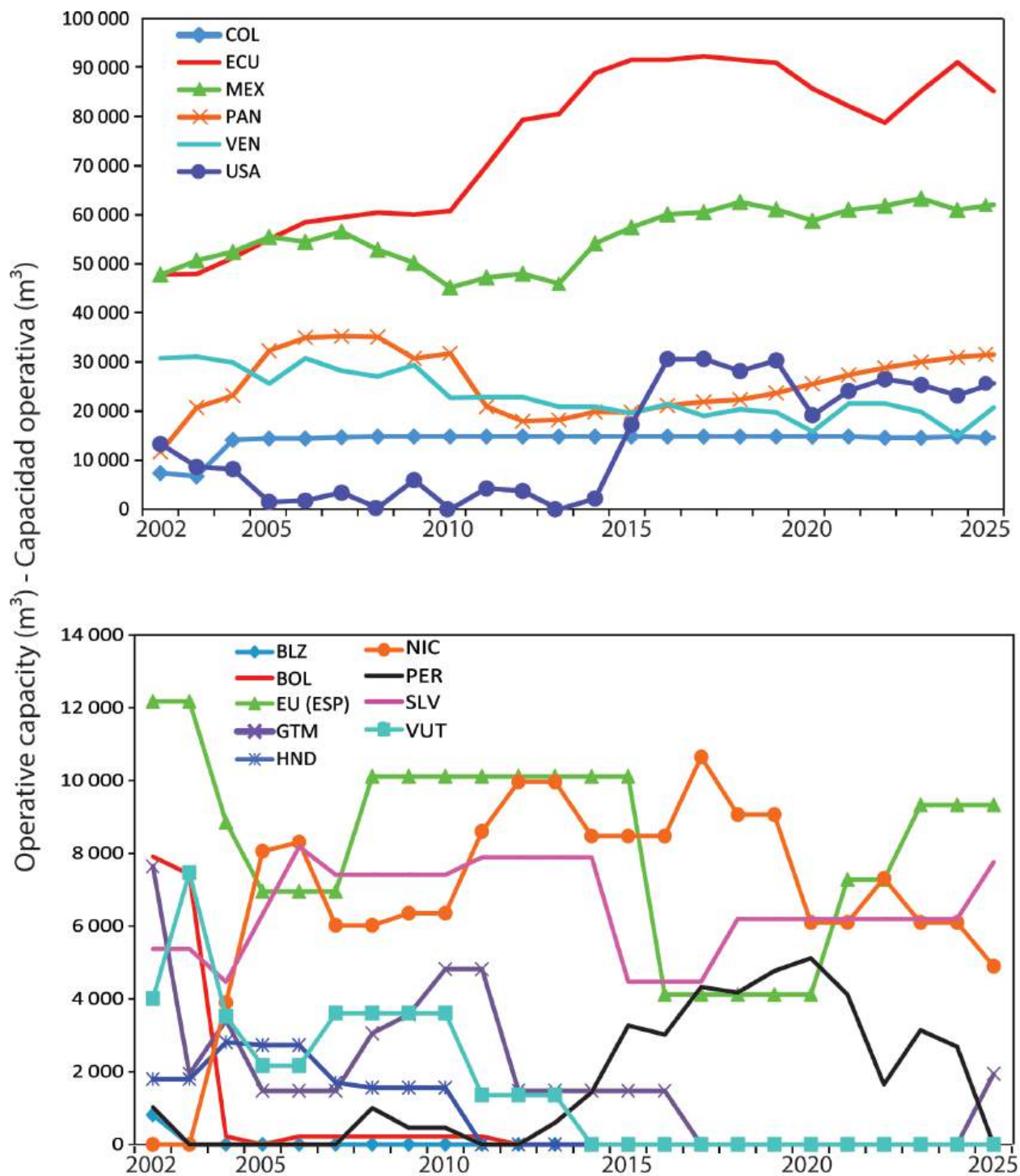


FIGURE 2. Operative capacity of purse-seine fleets that fished in the EPO during 2002-2025 with current capacities (a) greater than and (b) less than 14,000 cubic meters of well volume.

3. EXCEPTIONS FOR ADDING NEW VESSELS TO THE REGIONAL REGISTER

Although the current system is not based on national capacity limits, paragraph 10 of Resolution C-02-03 and Resolution C-11-12 allow certain countries to add to their fleet new vessels that are not on the Register. The current situation regarding these exceptions is:

	Limit (m ³)	
	Provided	Remaining
Costa Rica	9,364	3
El Salvador	861	0
Guatemala	1,700	0
Nicaragua	5,300	0
Peru	8,195	454
TOTAL	25,420	457

4. CAPACITY LOANS OR CONCESSIONS AND CHARTERS

Resolution C-12-06, approved in June 2012, establishes the rules of procedure regarding loans or concessions of capacity and chartering vessels with temporary transfer of capacity. The table details the agreements of this type recorded as of 30 June 2026.

Capacity loans or concessions and chartering of vessels with temporary transfer of capacity carried out in accordance with Resolution C-12-06				
Year started	Loaning/conceding CPC	Receiving CPC	Vessel	Well volume (m ³)
CAPACITY CONCESSIONS				
CAPACITY LOANS				
2017	GTM	PAN	<i>Chacao</i>	1,633
	GTM	PAN	<i>Ljubica</i>	2,000
2022	BOL	ECU	<i>Chiara</i>	222
	GTM	ECU	<i>Emilio</i>	1,488
2023	CRI	ECU	<i>Alina</i>	542
	CRI	PAN	<i>Contadora I</i>	1,907
	CRI	PAN	<i>Esthercho</i>	1,170
2024	BLZ	ECU	<i>Ria de Aldan</i>	220
	SLV	ECU	<i>Ria de Aldan</i>	131
2025	CRI	ECU	<i>Don Bartolo</i>	559
	CRI	ECU	<i>Doña Maruja</i>	514
	CRI	ECU	<i>Drennec</i>	1,642
	CRI	ECU	<i>Maria José</i>	971
	CRI	ECU	<i>Rocio</i>	1,401
	CRI	ECU	<i>Yelisava</i>	655
	ECU	NIC	<i>Andrea I</i>	1,404
	ECU	PAN	<i>Medjugorje</i>	23
	ECU	PAN	<i>Valentina C</i>	855
2026	SLV	ECU	<i>Chiara</i>	322
	ECU	PAN	<i>Intertuna Tres</i>	2,100
	ECU	PAN	<i>Valentina C</i>	453
VESSEL CHARTERS WITH TEMPORARY CAPACITY TRANSFERS				
2012	GTM	PAN	<i>Reina de la Paz</i>	2,100

	PAN	ECU	<i>Maria Del Mar A</i>	2,304
	PAN	ECU	<i>Milena A</i>	1,217
2016	PAN	ECU	<i>Connie Jean Two</i>	742
2022	NIC	ECU	<i>Maria Eulogia</i>	1,217
2023	PAN	ECU	<i>Dalmacia C</i>	454
2024	PAN	ECU	<i>El Marquez</i>	486

5. PERMANENT TRANSFERS OF CAPACITY

The following permanent transfers of capacity between CPCs, were recorded from 01 August 2025 through 30 June 2026:

Permanent transfers of capacity between CPCs				
Date recorded	Donor CPC	Receiving CPC	Vessel / Company	Well volume (m ³)
06 December 2025	Nicaragua	Ecuador	Andrea 1	1,404
26 December 2025	Ecuador	Panama	Medjugorje	10

6. SEALED WELLS

Resolution C-12-08, approved in June 2012, contains a protocol for sealing fish wells on purse-seine vessels. The following cases were recorded as of 30 June 2026:

Vessel	Flag	Capacity (m ³)		Well volume sealed or disabled (m ³)
		Total	On Register	
<i>Bernardita B</i>	ECU	352	302	50
<i>Drennec</i>	ECU	1,915	1,840	75
<i>Eileen Marie</i>	ECU	607	508	99
<i>Elizabeth F</i>	ECU	755	623	132
<i>Pacific Tuna</i>	ECU	1,242	1,083	159
<i>Rosa F</i>	ECU	756	682	74
<i>Montserrat</i>	MEX	1,273	751	522
<i>Theresa Janene</i>	MEX	1,269	944	325
<i>Tokiwa</i>	MEX	1,036	540	496
<i>Intertuna Tres</i>	PAN	3,275	3,095	180
<i>Txopituna Dos</i>	PAN	1,881	1,781	100
<i>Lucile</i>	VEN	1,582	1,381	201
<i>Via Avenir</i>	VEN	1,422	1,383	39

Paragraph 5 of the resolution states that: “Any vessel with one or more of its wells sealed to reduce its well volume recorded on the Regional Vessel Register shall be required to carry an observer from the International Dolphin Conservation Program (IDCP) on board”.

Consequently, all these vessels, including those smaller than Class 6, must pay the required fee for the AIDCP on-board observer program. This fee is assessed based on their total capacity, including sealed wells. In the case of vessels smaller than Class 6, Resolution AIDCP A-18-01 establishes that the amount of the fee “shall be the equivalent of the quota of a Class 6 vessel with the minimum capacity corresponding to its class(508 m³)”.

Another requirement of Resolution C-12-08 is that “The well must be physically sealed in a tamper-proof manner, and in such a way that it does not communicate with any other space on the vessel and that its use for any other storage is prevented. The inspection and verification of the vessel’s sealed wells for the first time shall be carried out by vessel’s flag government”.

Finally, it should be recalled that, to all purposes, including, for instance, closure periods, the reduction of the operative capacity of a vessel as a result of sealing wells does not change the vessel’s capacity class, which is based on the total capacity of its wells, sealed or unsealed.

7. PENDING CASES OF CAPACITY REQUESTS, CLAIMS, AND CONTESTED ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS

A. The pending cases according to the 2014 list:

During the 88th IATTC meeting (extraordinary) in October 2014, Members and Cooperating Non-Members were given the opportunity to state all their requests and claims including those related to contested administrative decisions. Their record in the minutes of the meeting allowed then the establishment of a list of pending cases, which, because of the spirit and principles of the other commitments embodied in the various instruments adopted by the Commission in relation to capacity (see the Introduction above) could be considered as final and closed. Discussion confined to the cases so listed continued during the 89th IATTC meeting in June-July 2015, and, thereafter, at all meetings of the Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity and of the Commission.

For ease of consideration, and in no order of importance, merit, or priority, these pending cases are classified in the following four categories:

- a. Requests by coastal Members based on the footnote to Resolution C-02-03;
- b. Claims arising from contested administrative decisions on capacity transfers and/or differences in the implementation of Resolution C-02-03;
- c. Requests for new increases in capacity by EPO coastal and non-coastal countries.
- d. Other cases, including cases such as new vessel measurements, national administrative errors, etc.

The following table provides a list of these cases as referred to in the 2016 *Elements for Implementing a Fleet Capacity Management Plan in the IATTC* and considered at each successive meeting of the Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity under the agenda item: “*Review of pending capacity claims, disputes, adjustments, and requests according to the list presented at the 89th meeting of the IATTC and referred to in document CAP-17 INF-A REV (14 May 2016)*”. The table has been updated to take into consideration that some of the original cases have since been resolved and thus removed from the list.

Country	Cubic meters	Details
a. Requests based on footnote in Resolution C-02-03		
Peru	5,851	Part of 14,046 m ³ in footnote to Resolution C-02-03. Already granted 5,000 m ³ in 2014.
Costa Rica	7,058	Part of 16,422 m ³ in footnote to Resolution C-02-03.
Colombia	4,772	Part of 14,046 m ³ in footnote to Resolution C-02-03. Already granted 2,024 m ³ in 2013.
SUBTOTAL	17,681	
b. Claims rising from contested administrative decisions		
Bolivia	5,830	Capacity which was allegedly transferred to Colombia without Bolivia's approval.
Vanuatu	1,358	For the vessel <i>Esmeralda C</i> , which was allegedly transferred to Panama without Vanuatu's approval.
Venezuela	3,805	From vessels <i>Jane IV</i> (1,250 m ³), <i>Baraka</i> (1,287 m ³) and <i>Templario I</i> (1,268 m ³) request still pending for the future if the status of the tuna stocks allows it. All these vessels are on Regional Register under Panamanian flag.
SUBTOTAL	10,993	
c. New requests		
El Salvador	2,105	Special needs and requirements of developing coastal countries
Nicaragua	4,200	“ “ “ “ “ “
Honduras	3,000	“ “ “ “ “ “
Guatemala	9,000	“ “ “ “ “ “
Mexico	2,000	“ “ “ “ “ “
SUBTOTAL	20,305	
d. Other cases		
Ecuador	220	<i>Eli</i>

	176	<i>Ljubica M.</i>
	908	<i>Monteneme</i>
	1,534	<i>Isabel IV</i> (never on the Regional Register)
	850	<i>Victoria A.</i> (never on the Regional Register)
SUBTOTAL	3,688	
TOTAL	52,667	

B. Other cases not included in the 2016 list:

In subsequent years, the consideration of this matter in the Working Group and in the Commission has shown clearly that there was no consensus to regard the original 2016 list as closed. .

(a) An omission in the list:

In 2005, following an agreement reached at the highest level between the parties concerned, at Lanzarote, Spain, Spain transferred 1,860 m³ of capacity to El Salvador. After the entry into force of the Antigua Convention in 2010, the European Union replaced Spain as a Member of the Commission.

A divergence of views between El Salvador and Spain — as to whether the transfer was temporary, as stated in a 2005 exchange of letters, or permanent, as recorded at the time in the Regional Vessel Register — was brought to the attention of the Commission and its members by a letter from the European Union, which was duly circulated, with the request that the annotation in the Register be corrected.

A few days later, this matter was brought to the attention of the Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity.

As reported in the minutes of its 14th meeting, held in Veracruz, Mexico, on 8 June 2013:

"El Salvador requested the inclusion in the agenda of an item to address the matter of the letter circulated by the European Union regarding the change in the IATTC Regional Vessel Register to reflect a capacity loan of 1,860 cubic meters (m³) by the European Union (Spain) for the Salvadoran-flag vessel Montealegre. The European Union requested that the matter be dealt with bilaterally, and this was agreed."

This decision was then applied literally. No step was taken to modify the annotation in the Regional Vessel Register, and the issue was not included in the list of pending capacity claims, requests, or disputes for further consideration by the Capacity Working Group and the Commission.

This situation has now persisted for some 13 years, with no indication ever given by the European Union or by El Salvador as to its status — whether it had been resolved bilaterally, remained in progress, or could be reopened at any time by either party.

Since the Working Group and the Commission have undertaken a thorough review of all pending capacity-related issues, it was important to take the opportunity afforded by the preparation of this document to recall the existence of this specific case.

(b) New and additional claims and requests:

In recent years, several Members and Cooperating Non-Members have submitted additional claims or requests, either through their representatives in the Working Group or by formal correspondence addressed to the Commission through its Director.

These new claims and requests, as of today's date, are presented in the following table:

Country	Cubic meters	Details
a. New requests		
Belize	2,638	Special needs and requirements of developing coastal countries
Bolivia	5,000	Special needs and requirements a developing landlocked country
		“ “

Panama	3,000	Special needs and requirements of a developing coastal country
Vanuatu	12,500	Requested devolution of capacity previously held and transferred to another flag
SUBTOTAL	23,138	
B. Other cases		
Ecuador	178	<i>Fernandes II</i> – never on the Regional Register
SUBTOTAL	178	
TOTAL	23,316	

Annex 1

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

1. **Active capacity.** See Resolution [C-02-03](#). The total well volume, in cubic meters, of vessels that are on the IATTC Regional Register and are authorized to fish in the EPO. May change status to inactive at any time during the year.
2. **Available capacity.** The total well volume, in cubic meters, that a Member or Cooperating Non-Member (both referred to as “CPC”) has available for allocation to vessels as the result of: (a) vessels being removed from the Regional Register; (b) changes of flag, considering that a CPC may choose to retain for future use the right to the capacity of a vessel that is transferred to another flag; (c) non-allocated residuals from transfers and movements of vessels on the Regional Register; (d) the capacity limits specified in paragraph 10 of Resolution [C-02-03](#).
3. **Inactive/sunk capacity.** See Resolution [C-02-03](#). The total well volume, in cubic meters, of (a) vessels that are on the IATTC Regional Register and have declared that they will not fish during a given year but retain the right to become active provided they remain on the Regional Register, or (b) vessels that have sunk. May change status to active only at the beginning of the year.
4. **Operative capacity.** Operative capacity of purse seine vessels for a completed year is the total cubic meter well volume of all vessels which fished for tuna in the EPO in that year¹. The following criteria apply in the selection of operative capacity for a completed year:
 - Vessels include those that made at least one EPO set with catch during that year.
 - Only one quarter of the capacity of vessels operating under the special allowance in paragraph 12 of resolution C-02-03 is added to the total, since these vessels will have effectively fished for approximately one quarter of the fishing year only.
 - If a vessel’s capacity changes during the completed year, then the capacity at the end of the year is used.The calculation of operative capacity for a year that has not yet been completed is the same as that for a completed year, except it is based on the vessels that are expected to fish, which include vessels that made at least one EPO set with catch during that year or during the previous year.
5. **Potential total capacity.** The sum of active capacity, inactive/sunk capacity, and available capacity. The total well volume, in cubic meters, that would be operating in the EPO if all CPCs activated all their vessels and used all their available capacity (including inactive/sunk capacity) to bring new vessels into the fishery.
6. **Capacity disputes.** Disputes that arise when a vessel changes flag, and both the vessel’s previous flag CPC and its new flag CPC claim the vessel’s capacity as their own.
7. **Vessels authorized to fish.** The vessels currently listed on the Regional Vessel Register as active pursuant to Resolution C-24-07.
8. **Total capacity of vessel.** The total well volume of a vessel, including the volume of any sealed wells.
9. **Sealed well.** Any space aboard a vessel, intended for freezing, maintenance, or storage of fish, access to which has been blocked to prevent its use for these purposes.
10. **Capacity loans or concessions.** Temporary loan or concession by a CPC of an available well volume capacity for use by a vessel of another CPC’s flag, as regulated by Resolution C-12-06 *Rules of procedure regarding capacity loans or concessions and chartering of vessels with temporary transfers of capacity*.
11. **Vessel charters with temporary capacity transfer.** Vessel charters which include the temporary transfer of the capacity of the chartered vessel from the CPC granting the charter (“chartering CPC”) to the receiving

¹ See tables 1 and 2ab in Appendix 3

CPC (“charterer CPC”), as regulated by Resolution C-12-06 *Rules of procedure regarding capacity loans or concessions and chartering of vessels with temporary transfers of capacity* It’s

- 12. Permanent transfer of capacity.** When a CPC permanently transfers a defined portion of its available capacity to another CPC, or when a vessel changes flag and retains the associated capacity with the consent of the flag CPC of origin.
- 13. Vessel under construction:** A vessel under construction to which the corresponding capacity in cubic meters of well volume has been allocated and which may, for that reason, be included in that category in the IATTC Regional Vessel Register.

Annex 2

Utilization of capacity in the calculation of the number of days of closure

The tropical tunas are managed following a harvest strategy based on fishing at the level that corresponds to maximum sustainable yield (F_{MSY}). The stock assessments calculate the F multiplier, which is the fishing mortality corresponding to F_{MSY} relative to the average fishing mortality over the last three years in the stock assessment, which is usually the three years prior to the year in which management is being decided for the following year (i.e. there is a two-year lag). The F multiplier is the amount that fishing mortality needs to be adjusted to achieve MSY. The three-year average is used because fishing mortality can fluctuate from year to year due to factors unrelated to fishing effort and the estimates of fishing mortality for the final year in the assessment are uncertain.

The F multiplier is adjusted for increases in capacity. Since the F multiplier is based on the average of the last three years in the assessment, the increase in capacity is calculated based on the average capacity for the same three years. The current capacity is based on the most recent estimate of capacity for the current year. For these calculations, the operative capacity as described above is used.

Adjusted F multiplier = F multiplier / (current capacity / average capacity)

The number of days of closure is calculated based on multiplying the current days open by the adjusted F multiplier with appropriate adjustments for the *corralito*.

Annex 3

TABLE 1. Numbers and well volumes, in cubic meters, of purse-seine and pole-and line vessels of the EPO tuna fleet. The data for 2024 and 2025 are preliminary. (* The data provided for pole and line vessels for these years are reported under total catch because there is no information available by individual vessel; therefore, the total number of LP vessels and well volume is not available.)

TABLA 1. Número y volumen de bodega, en metros cúbicos, de buques cerqueros y cañeros de la flota atunera del OPO. Los datos de 2024 and 2025 son preliminares. (* Los datos de buques cañeros de estos años se presentan combinados bajo captura total porque no se dispone de información por buque individual; por lo tanto, no se dispone del número total de buques cañeros ni del volumen de bodega.)

	PS		LP		Total	
	No.	Vol. (m ³)	No.	Vol. (m ³)	No.	Vol. (m ³)
1991	152	124,062	22	1,997	174	126,059
1992	158	116,619	20	1,807	178	118,426
1993	151	117,593	15	1,550	166	119,143
1994	166	120,726	20	1,726	186	122,452
1995	175	123,798	20	1,784	195	125,582
1996	180	130,774	17	1,646	197	132,420
1997	194	147,926	23	2,127	217	150,053
1998	202	164,956	22	2,216	224	167,172
1999	208	178,724	14	1,642	222	180,366
2000	205	180,679	12	1,220	217	181,899
2001	204	189,088	10	1,259	214	190,347
2002	218	199,870	6	921	224	200,791
2003	214	202,381	3	338	217	202,719
2004	218	206,473	3	338	221	206,811
2005	220	212,419	4	498	224	212,917
2006	225	225,166	4	498	229	225,664
2007	227	225,359	4	380	231	225,739
2008	219	223,804	4	380	223	224,184
2009	221	224,632	4	380	225	225,012
2010	202	210,025	3	255	205	210,280
2011	208	213,237	3	339	211	213,576
2012	209	217,687	4	464	213	218,151
2013	203	212,087	3	268	206	212,355
2014	226	230,379	2	226	228	230,605
2015	244	248,428	1	125	245	248,553
2016	250	261,474	*	*	250	261,474
2017	254	263,018	*	*	254	263,018
2018	261	263,666	*	*	261	263,666
2019	261	265,085	*	*	261	265,085
2020	243	241,631	*	*	243	241,631
2021	241	254,972	*	*	241	254,972
2022	244	254,720	*	*	244	254,720
2023	252	263,295	*	*	252	263,295
2024	238	260,573	*	*	238	260,573
2025	230	263,955	*	*	230	263,955

TABLE 2a. Well volume (cubic meters) of purse-seine (PS) vessels that fished in the EPO, by year and flag.²

TABLA 2a. Volumen de bodega (metros cúbicos) de buques cerqueros (PS) que pescaron en el OPO, por año y bandera.⁴

		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
BLZ	PS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BOL	PS	222	222	222	222	222	222	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
COL	PS	14,439	14,689	15,110	14,860	14,860	14,860	14,860	14,860	14,860	14,860	14,860	14,860	14,860	14,860	14,860	14,860	14,590	14,590	14,860	14,590
ECU	PS	58,580	59,517	60,519	60,096	60,840	70,014	79,391	80,611	88,957	91,651	92,832	92,391	91,658	91,057	87,210	82,234	78,820	85,275	91,171	85,258
EU (ESP)	PS	6,955	6,955	10,116	10,116	10,116	10,116	10,116	10,116	10,116	10,116	4,120	4,120	4,120	4,120	4,120	7,281	7,281	9,330	9,330	9,330
GTM	PS	1,475	1,475	3,056	3,575	4,819	4,819	3,575	1,475	1,475	1,475	1,475	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,940
HND	PS	2,729	2,870	1,559	1,559	1,559	547	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MEX	PS	55,046	57,859	52,920	50,254	45,224	47,274	48,054	46,062	54,206	57,502	60,146	60,551	62,659	61,146	58,854	61,072	61,880	63,389	61,043	62,155
NIC	PS	8,308	6,023	6,023	6,353	6,353	9,685	9,966	9,966	8,478	8,478	8,478	10,648	9,066	9,066	6,099	6,099	7,316	6,099	6,099	4,901
PAN	PS	35,007	40,046	36,711	31,225	32,599	25,443	17,976	19,251	19,865	19,794	21,174	22,649	22,361	23,719	25,564	27,390	28,865	30,035	31,002	31,578
PER	PS	0	0	1,000	1,000	458	0	0	599	1,437	3,268	3,019	4,325	4,175	4,767	5,118	4,124	1,649	3,142	2,686	0
SLV	PS	8,184	7,415	7,415	7,415	7,415	7,892	7,892	7,892	7,892	4,473	4,473	4,473	6,202	6,202	6,202	6,202	6,202	6,202	6,202	7,761
UNK	PS	0	494	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
USA	PS	1,763	3,395	292	5,952	0	4,275	3,735	0	2,203	17,219	30,619	30,677	28,201	30,367	19,174	24,152	26,559	25,386	23,233	25,693
VEN	PS	30,788	29,684	27,083	29,403	22,747	24,007	22,862	20,890	20,890	19,592	21,448	19,066	20,364	19,781	16,986	21,558	21,558	19,847	14,947	20,749
VUT	PS	2,163	3,609	3,609	3,609	3,609	3,609	1,360	1,360	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		225,166	225,359	223,804	224,632	210,025	213,237	217,687	212,087	230,379	248,428	261,474	263,018	263,666	265,085	241,631	254,972	254,720	263,295	260,573	263,955

² The amount and numbers provided are estimates. Moreover, each vessel is included in the total for each flag under which it fished during the year, but is included only once in the “Grand total”; therefore this grand total may not equal the sums of the individual flags.

⁴ Los montos y números indicados son estimaciones. Además, se incluye cada buque en los totales de cada bandera bajo la cual pescó durante el año, pero solamente una vez en el “Total general”; por consiguiente, los totales generales no equivalen necesariamente a las suma de las banderas individuales.

TABLE 2b. Numbers of purse-seine (PS) vessels that fished in the EPO, by year and flag.⁵

TABLA 2b. Número de buques cerqueros (PS) que pescaron en el OPO, por año y bandera.⁵

		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
BLZ	PS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BOL	PS	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
COL	PS	13	14	15	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	13	13	14	13
ECU	PS	85	83	84	85	86	96	103	102	111	112	114	114	113	114	109	106	103	109	113	105
EU (ESP)	PS	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	4	4	4
GTM	PS	1	1	2	2	3	3	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
HND	PS	3	4	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MEX	PS	56	58	51	46	39	41	42	40	45	47	49	51	53	51	48	51	52	53	50	50
NIC	PS	7	5	5	5	5	7	7	7	6	6	6	7	6	6	4	4	5	4	4	3
PAN	PS	26	29	27	24	24	19	13	14	14	14	15	16	16	17	19	19	20	21	20	21
PER	PS	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	2	3	7	6	9	9	11	11	9	5	8	5	0
SLV	PS	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4
UNK	PS	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
USA	PS	2	4	2	10	0	5	3	0	9	23	27	27	31	29	23	17	25	23	15	15
VEN	PS	22	22	19	21	17	18	17	15	15	14	15	13	14	14	12	15	15	14	10	14
VUT	PS	2	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		225	227	219	221	202	208	209	203	226	244	250	254	261	261	243	241	244	252	238	230

⁵ The amount and numbers provided are estimates. Moreover, each vessel is included in the total for each flag under which it fished during the year, but is included only once in the “Grand total”; therefore this grand total may not equal the sums of the individual flags.

⁵ Los montos y números indicados son estimaciones. Además, se incluye cada buque en los totales de cada bandera bajo la cual pescó durante el año, pero solamente una vez en el “Total general”; por consiguiente, los totales generales no equivalen necesariamente a las sumas de las banderas individuales.

Annex 4

Comparison of estimated operating capacity to actual operating capacity (as determined when the data for the whole year is available).

Year	Date	Report	Estimated capacity (m³)	Actual capacity (m³)	Estimation error (Estimated/Actual)
2012	8 May	IATTC-83-05c	214,422	217,687	0.99
2013	7 April	IATTC-85-03d	214,979	212,087	1.01
2014	2 May	IATTC-87-03d	215,608	230,379	0.94
2015	19 April	IATTC-89-04d	236,089	248,428	0.95
2016	17 April	IATTC-90-04d (REV)	255,972	261,474	0.98
2017	30 April	SAC-08-11	263,283	263,018	1.00
2018	25 March	SAC-09-15	260,289	263,666	0.99
2019	14 April	SAC-10-19	263,858	265,085	1.00
2020	10 May	SAC-11-15	262,213	241,631	1.09
2021	10 May	SAC-12-16	262,213	254,972	1.03
2022	15 May	SAC-13-14	254,340	254,720	1.00
2023	14 May	SAC-14-14	255,872	263,295	0.97
2024	9 June	SAC-15-13	264,004	260,573	1.01
2025	1 June	SAC-16-11	258,471	263,955	.98
2026	7 June	SAC-17-10a	271,912		

INFORMAL WORKING DOCUMENT

QUESTIONS ON THE MANAGEMENT OF THE FLEET CAPACITY IN THE ANTIGUA CONVENTION AREA: A TENTATIVE INVENTORY.

More than 25 years have passed since the Commission has addressed the issue of the “capacity of the fleet”, including through the establishment in 1998 of a working group specifically dedicated to this matter.

Over the years, numerous questions have arisen – both through discussions and exchanges of views and as a result of practical circumstances and management needs – most notably to the maintenance of the IATTC Regional Vessel Register since 2002.

The purpose of this document is to provide an inventory of the questions that have been raised or may be raised, based on the practical experience accumulated over the last decades. It is meant to be merely a tool to assist in the upcoming consideration of these issues. It is intended solely as a tool to support consideration of these issues. The document is drafted in a neutral manner and does not reflect any position of IATTC Members, the Commission or of its Secretariat. Nor does it prejudice how the Capacity Working Group may choose to organize and conduct its discussions, or the outcomes of those discussions.

The document is structured in four sections, progressing from the most general to the most specific and practical questions.

- The **original general framework**: the initial commitment to limiting the growth of the fleet and reducing its capacity
- The **metrics**: measuring “fishing capacity” and “capacity of the fleet”
- The **scheme established in Resolution C-02-03** – general issues:
- The **scheme established in Resolution C-02-03** – practical and specific issues

Each section begins with a general introduction to the issues concerned, followed by a non-exhaustive list of questions that may be raised and addressed.

A. The original general framework: the initial commitment to limiting the growth of the fleet and reducing its capacity:

In summary, the policy of the IATTC has been to implement, at the regional level, the collective commitment adopted at the global level and embodied in the FAO International Plan of Action on

for the Management of Fishing Capacity (IPOA Capacity), adopted nearly 27 years ago and which aimed to reduce fishing capacity where excessive.

Several questions may be raised, without prejudging their appropriateness or usefulness:

1. Do the current conditions of the resources and fishing activities in the EPO, nearly three decades later, still justify a diagnosis of excessive fishing capacity?
2. If such a diagnosis were still considered justified, is the historically defined target level of capacity still appropriate in practice, or should it be reviewed and possibly revised in accordance with paragraph 4 of Resolution C-02-03,¹?
3. Should the target level refer to the “operative” capacity rather than taking into account the total amount of “active” or “potential” capacity (see glossary)?
4. How should the issue of potential new entrants in the purse seine fishery be addressed in the light of their rights under the Antigua Convention?
5. Should Resolutions C-02-03 and C-15-02 be reviewed and revised?

B. The metrics: measuring “fishing capacity” and the “capacity of the fleet”:

In summary, following the presentation of the results of the April 1998 meeting of the FAO Technical Working Group on the Management of Fishing Capacity, the negotiators of the IPOA Capacity were confronted with the highly complex challenge of the practical application of the proposed definitions of “*fishing capacity*”, “*target fishing capacity*” and “*limit capacity*”. Ultimately, such definitions were not included in the IPOA Capacity, and, at the regional level, the IATTC instead, at its 61st meeting in June 1998, shifted its reference to the “*capacity of the purse seine fleet in the Pacific Ocean*”, pragmatically equating this concept with the overall size of the fleet as it existed at that time.

The size of the fleet was initially expressed in terms of carrying capacity measured in metric tons. The Commission subsequently moved away from this reference and adopted cubic meters as the

¹ “To review on a regular basis, and modify, if necessary, the methods for estimating fishing capacity and the target level of 158,000 m³, established in the resolution on fleet capacity of 19 August 2000, for the total capacity of the purse-seine fleet, taking into account the level of the stocks of tuna and other relevant factors.”

relevant metrics, primarily for reasons of stability and precision. This shift reflected the fact that that well volume is derived from the vessel's physical structure of the vessel, which can be altered only through "restructuring", whereas capacity expressed in metric tons represents the maximum quantity of fish that may be landed and can therefore vary over time depending on a range of factors. At present, carrying capacity expressed in metric tons serves only to determine a vessel's classification, from Category 1 through Category 6.

In addition, it should be recalled that the term "*purse seine fleet*" refers to all purse seine vessels authorized to fish in the Antigua Convention area, regardless of their individual characteristics or the gear and fishing techniques they employ. In the same manner, all such vessels are currently required to be included in the IATTC Regional Vessel Register, since the Commission has never to date applied the provisions of paragraph 2 of Annex I of the Antigua Convention which stipulate that "*The Commission may decide to exempt vessels from the requirements of paragraph 1 of this Annex on the basis of their length or other characteristic.*"

As indicated above, several questions may be raised, without prejudging their appropriateness or usefulness:

1. Is an approach essentially based on the size of the purse seine fleet as of 2002 still valid?
2. Should the reference to the fleet be broadened (for example, by including other gears, such as longline) or, conversely, narrowed (for example, by excluding certain components of the fleet such as artisanal and small-scale vessels, possibly using the categorization into classes from 1 to 6 as a reference)?
3. Should there be an effort to move away from the use of a single, simplified metrics and return to the original approach focused on "fishing capacity", seeking a more accurate measurement of the fishing effort generated by that capacity, rather than relying on an overall criterion such as cubic meters of wells volume, which does not account for differences in vessels characteristics or for efficiency gains resulting from technological developments?
4. Should there be an effort to revive and further develop an alternative approach to the scheme established in Resolution C-02-03, that would be more closely aligned with the original concept of "fishing capacity"?
5. Should there be a renewed attempt to explore options to reduce the existing capacity, despite past unsuccessful efforts (for example, buybacks schemes)?
6. Should there be an effort to identify and explore other options to actively reduce the existing capacity, as measured in well volume, within the framework of Resolution C-02-03?

C. The scheme established in Resolution C-02-03 –general issues:

In summary, Resolution C-02-03 established a scheme centered on the use of cubic meters as a proxy for “capacity”. Over time, and with subsequent developments that completed the scheme initially set out in that resolution, it has become possible to differentiate two main categories of capacity, each of which is further subdivided into two subcategories:

- **Capacity measured in cubic meters of well volume and linked to specific vessels:**
 - ✓ Capacity that has been effectively measured and formally “confirmed” before 31 December 2016, in accordance with the procedures established and implemented by the Commission.
 - ✓ Capacity that has been “confirmed” automatically on 1 January 2017 through the implementation of Resolution C-15-02, without prior measurement, based solely on the application of a conversion factor from metric tons to cubic meters, referring to the carrying capacity declared by the flag Member in 2002, or, based on that resolution, as unilaterally notified by the flag CPC. This subcategory represents more than one third of the current fleet.
- **An undifferentiated amount of capacity measured in cubic meters of well volume linked to individual CPCs:**
 - ✓ capacity already recognized (for example, in Resolution C-02-03 itself)
 - ✓ capacity claimed and not yet linked to specific vessels.

As indicated above, several questions may be raised, without prejudging their appropriateness or usefulness:

1. Is it still acceptable that the capacity recorded in the Register bears no relationship to the actual capacity of at least part of the fleet?
2. Should “*confirmation*” of capacity preclude the possibility of subsequent correction?
3. Regarding the link between a vessel and its capacity, as measured by its actual well volume:
 - i. Should that capacity be recognized as an immutable characteristic of the vessel, with no possibility of being legally separated from it?
 - ii. Should capacity be recognized as being “owned” by the vessel owner rather than by the current flag CPC?
 - iii. Should vessels, in addition to being free to reflag, be able to retain and transfer their existing capacity, without the implicit or explicit consent of the original flag CPC?

D. The scheme established in Resolution C-02-03 – practical and specific issues:

As stated on several occasions, the Secretariat has, over the years – and particularly in the context of maintaining the IATTC Regional Vessel Register – encountered a number of very practical and concrete issues that can only be definitively addressed and resolved by the Commission.

From a methodological perspective, and without prejudging the conclusions of the Capacity Working Group, at least some of these issues – given the highly technical nature – would likely benefit from being addressed initially within a group of experts, prior to broader consideration by the Working Group itself, before being submitted to the consideration of the Commission.

(a) Criterion for the measurement of wells volume:

This priority given to the stability and preeminence of assessed capacity values –which led to the shift from metrics based on metric tons to cubic meters – had a general consequence: it resulted in a separation between, on the one hand, the recorded values, used exclusively for the purposes of the scheme established under Resolutions C-02-03 and C-15-02, and, on the other hand, the actual volume effectively available for storing fish. Three main categories of situations arising from this process can be identified:

- First, as noted above, Resolution C-15-02 introduced a procedure for the **automatic “confirmation”** of vessel capacity even where wells volume had never been measured. In such cases, the recorded capacity was derived solely from the application of a conversion factor from metric tons to cubic meters, based on the carrying capacity in metric tons originally notified by the relevant flag CPC at the time of the vessel’s initial inclusion in the Regional Vessel Register. In some instances, even a cursory examination reveals that the capacity recorded in cubic meters in the Regional Vessel Register bears no realistic relationship to the vessel’s actual carrying capacity in metric tons.
- To anchor the value of the well volume to the most stable elements of a vessel’s physical structure , the Commission decided that well volume should be measured on the basis of “**gross volume” rather than “net volume”**, on the grounds that net volume may vary as a result of modifications or adjustments to internal fittings, finishes and fixtures, without any change to the characteristics and location of the bulkheads that structurally define and separate the wells from each other and from other internal spaces of the vessel.
- A further step in the dissociation between capacity – as understood solely for the purpose of implementing Resolutions C-02-03 and C-15-02– and the physical reality of existing and accessible wells, was the practice of **linking capacity** to:
 - ✓ **sunk** vessels

- ✓ vessels under **construction**
- ✓ and finally, most recently, vessels with **pending restructuring**

In light of the above, the following questions may be raised:

1. Should the procedure for “**confirmation**” established in Resolution C-15-02 be maintained, or should it be reviewed and revised?
2. Should discrepancies between the “**confirmed**” **capacity** recorded in the Register pursuant to Resolutions C-02-03 and C-15-02 and the actual capacity of the vessel be disregarded or should they be corrected?
3. Could the use of a **conversion factor** serve to identify potential discrepancies between the recorded “confirmed” capacity and the actual capacity of a vessel? If so, should this conversion factor be:
 - i. the same conversion factor applied prior to 1 January 2017 to convert carrying capacity in metric tons into cubic meters?
 - ii. or a new and updated conversion factor?
4. If the Commission were to decide that a **new measurement** of capacity in cubic meters of well volume should be undertaken, should it apply to:
 - i. only those vessels whose capacity was automatically “confirmed” on 1 January 2017?
 - ii. also vessels presumed to have a capacity in well volume different from that recorded in the IATTC Regional Vessel Register, in view of their carrying capacity in metric tons? Or,
 - iii. all the purse seine vessels currently included in the IATTC Regional Vessel Register, without exception?
5. If the Commission were to call for a new measurement of the wells volume, what procedures should be followed, including, for example, whether the involvement of an independent third-party would be required?
6. Should the calculation of the wells volume continue to be based on “**gross volume**” rather than “net volume”? If so:
 - i. Should the definitions of “gross volume” and “net volume” be reviewed and clarified?

- ii. Should the calculation of the “gross volume” exclude all internal fittings within the wells, including for instance the thickness of insulation materials applied to the bulkheads, and take into account only the space defined by these bulkheads separating the wells between each other and from other internal spaces of the vessel?
 - iii. Should “restructuring” of wells with the consequent change in their volume be considered to occur only where there is a modification to the characteristics and location of the bulkheads, as illustrated in the vessel diagram?
7. Should the practice of linking capacity to sunk vessels, vessels under construction or vessels with programmed or pending restructuring be maintained? If so, should these three situations be treated uniformly, or should a differentiated approach be applied?
 8. Consistent with the original commitment to limit the growth of the fleet and, where appropriate, reduce its size, and without prejudice to other options that may be explored within the existing framework, should the Commission consider measures such as, inter alia:
 - i. Eliminating any **residual capacity** remaining after a reduction in a vessel’s well volume resulting from restructuring or conversion to the storage of other goods, such as fuel?
 - ii. Restricting the use of **capacity associated with a sunk vessel** to the replacement of that vessel only, without prejudice to additional conditions that might be imposed, such as requiring the replacement vessel to operate under the same flag and/or same ownership?
 - iii. Prohibiting the temporary or permanent transfer of **undifferentiated capacity** allocated to, or claimed by, coastal States and limiting its use to the development of their respective national fleets, in accordance with the original intent of the scheme?

(b) Which “wells” should be considered for the assessment of the total well volume of a vessel?

Within the framework of the development and implementation of the scheme initially established under resolution C-02-03 the term “wells volume” is understood to refer to the volume of fish wells. These may be functionally defined as the internal spaces of a vessel dedicated to holding fish caught during a fishing trip prior to landing. Fish wells include wells

that are temporarily unavailable for the storage of fish but can be restored to their initial function without delay, such as wells “sealed” in accordance with the provisions of Resolution C-12-08.

The practical implementation of the scheme has, however, given rise to a number of situations – some of which were not originally anticipated – that have created resulted uncertainties or ambiguities in determining which “wells” should be taken into account when calculating the total well volume of a vessel. These situations fall into two main categories:

- **Converted fish wells:** Fishing wells that are converted for the storage of goods other than fish, such as their conversion into fuel tanks. These cases are broadly comparable to “sealed” wells, the principal difference being that reconversion to their original function would generally be more costly and time-consuming than simply unsealing the well.
- **Freezing and rapid-chill chambers:** Situations arising from technological developments and the introduction in the fleet of vessels with new structural features, such as rapid-chill or freezing chambers. These chambers are similar to, but distinct from, fish tunnel freezers used in land-based processing plants. While they are primarily used as an intermediate step in handling the catch on board – bringing tuna on board and preparing it for storage – they may also be used to store fish prior to landing.

In this context, the Commission, at its 100th meeting in August 2022, decided the following:

“On the issue of purse seine vessels with freezing holds, the Commission established that in order for these holds not be taken into consideration when calculating the total capacity in cubic meters of wells volume of such vessels, strict control should be ensured that they are not used to store the fish but only for freezing them temporarily before their transfer to special refrigerated wells for their storage and the importance of controlling that they are empty before their arrival at port” (see Minutes, p.7)

Consideration of the above-described situations may give rise to the following questions:

1. Should the Commission include or exclude such spaces when calculating the total well volume of a vessel, while noting, as in the case of sealed wells, that the vessel is not operating at its full capacity?
2. Should the Commission adopt a differentiated approach to the treatment of converted fish wells and freezing or rapid chill chambers?

(c) Transfer of well volume:

In summary, the original vision underlying the scheme for managing fleet capacity – as expressed in particular in the first resolution adopted by Commission in October 1998 – was that the capacity to be managed, and whose growth should be limited or reduced, was intrinsically linked to concrete vessels and fleets, whether already existing or, in the case of certain Members, to be developed or expanded within the limits established by the Commission in the relevant resolution.²

Although this approach was maintained, both implicitly and explicitly, in Resolution C-02-03, in practice the limits established therein – intended to serve solely as ceilings for the development of national fleets – were rapidly treated as if they were capacity “quotas” instead and considered as “available capacity” of the relevant CPCs.

Subsequently, through the adoption of Resolution C-12-06 on temporary transfer of capacity resulting from loan or chartering (now amended and replaced by Resolution C-25-06), any available capacity may be temporarily transferred for use by vessels flying either the same flag or a different flag.

It should be acknowledged that the scheme established under Resolution C-12-06 has, in practice, the function smoothly and efficiently.

However, beyond permitting CPCs to transfer, in cubic meters, capacity that had originally been assigned to them as a ceiling for the development of their own fleets, the main practical issue is whether Resolution C-12-06, as currently drafted, ensures a proper balance between the rights of the parties involved in the transfer process. For example, on the one hand, the loaning CPC should not be unjustly deprived of its right to dispose of capacity it has agreed to transfer only on a temporary basis. On the other hand, the CPC receiving the transferred capacity should be able to rely on a reasonable degree of legal certainty and should not be exposed to the risk of suspension or termination of the transfer at any time solely at the initiative of the loaning CPC, as a result of the provision in the current resolution stating that “*Both CPCs involved shall agree that the vessel*

² Resolution C-98-11: “ 3. *The High Contracting Parties also acknowledge and affirm the right of several states without vessels currently fishing in the EPO, but with a longstanding and significant interest in the EPO tuna fishery, to develop **their own tuna fishing industries**. They further acknowledge that, in accordance with their legitimate rights under international law, several EPO coastal states, including France and Guatemala, have expressed an immediate interest in developing **their own tuna fishing industries**. ~~their own tuna fishing industries~~ **case is about what you n tuna fishing fleet in the EPO.***

4. *Other states, including Colombia, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, and Peru, have expressed their interest in increasing the carrying capacity **of their fleets** licensed to fish for tuna in the EPO.*

5. *Any state listed in Paragraph 3 seeking to enter the fishery through **the development of its own fishing fleet** in the EPO shall not be bound to a national capacity level for calendar year 1999.”*

may be removed from the Regional Register at any time at the request of either one of them, by means of a written communication to the Director.”

In this context, two overarching questions arise:

1. Should the Commission review and revise the current Resolution C-12-06 and the procedures it establishes?
2. If so, which provisions should be amended and in what manner?

(d) Capacity claims:

At their annual meetings, the Capacity Working Group and the Commission have reviewed a number of capacity claims, either identified in the annual document on the utilization of capacity or raised during the meetings themselves. For most of these claims, no consensus could be reached or, even when the claim was received favorably, no consensus was achieved on allowing the claimant to activate the recognized capacity.

Drawing on that experience, the following questions may be raised:

1. Should the continued **absence of an agreed plan** for managing fleet capacity remain a prerequisite for reaching consensus on capacity claims?
2. In the absence of such a plan, could **specific commitments** be required data instead, all such as, for example, a commitment by the claimant not to activate the recognized capacity prior to the adoption by the Commission of appropriate conservation and management measures, or other commitments to be defined – for instance, a commitment not to transfer that capacity, on a temporary or permanent basis, within a specified period?
3. For the consideration of capacity claims, should **an order of priority** be established? For illustrative purposes only, such an order could be based, inter alia, on one or more of the following alternative or combined approaches:
 - i. Giving priority to claims linked to **individual vessels**.
 - ii. Considering claims in the **chronological order** of their submission, giving priority to the claims registered in Resolution C-02-03.
 - iii. Giving priority to claims accompanied by **specific commitments**, the relevance of which to be decided by the Commission,

- iv. prioritizing claims on the basis of **other criteria or circumstances** to be discussed and determined by the Commission.

INFORMAL WORKING DOCUMENT

MANAGEMENT OF THE FLEET CAPACITY IN THE ANTIGUA CONVENTION AREA: A TENTATIVE INVENTORY OF OPTIONS

This document has been prepared initially for the 2nd intersessional meeting of the Capacity WG, which was suspended. It is a follow-up of the document prepared for consideration by the Capacity Working Group at its previous intersessional meeting (29-30 January 2026), and responds to a specific request from certain members.

Its purpose is solely to facilitate discussion by presenting the most comprehensive range of options possible, including some that might be considered as non-viable by members. This tentative inventory does not prejudice the identification by members of other possible options nor the way the options identified in this document are formulated.

Finally, it should be stressed that some of the options or sub-options described below are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

OPTION 0

Having considered the changes in circumstances since the adoption of the FAO International Plan of Action On the Management of Fishing Capacity (IPOA-Capacity), including the current state of stocks in the Antigua Convention area, the Commission decides that it is no longer necessary to manage capacity of the purse seine fleet through the scheme established by Resolution C-02-03 and related resolutions (C-15-02 and C-25-06).

OPTION 0.1

These resolutions are hereby repealed.

OPTION 0.2

This scheme is hereby replaced by the management scheme adopted in Resolution C-xx-xx.

*Note: Several sub-options exist for the replacement management scheme, including the **transferable fishing days scheme** proposed by the IATTC consultant or a scheme based on **catch limits** (as the current scheme for bluefin tuna for instance).*

OPTION 1

The scheme established by Resolution C-02-03 and related resolutions (C-15-02 and C-25-06) is maintained, but adjusted in its definition and/or implementation

OPTION 1.1

Substantive adjustments

Option 1.1.1. The Commission decides to adopt a definition of “capacity” based on effective fishing capacity, rather than on wells volume expressed in cubic meters or on maximum landed catch expressed in metric tons.

Option 1.1.2. The Commission decides to maintain the current definition of “capacity” but modifies the reference target capacity.

Option 1.1.2.1. The target capacity remains at 158,000 m³ but is redefined to refer to operative capacity rather than active or potential capacity.

OR

Option 1.1.2.2. The current target capacity is increased;

OR

Option 1.1.2.2. The target capacity is decreased by an amount commensurate with the increase in fishing capacity since the adoption of the original scheme, or as close an approximation as practicable.

Option 1.1.3. The Commission decides to:

Option 1.1.3.1. Continue to apply the capacity management scheme to all purse seine vessels;

OR

Option 1.1.3.2. to exclude from the application of the capacity management scheme purse seine vessels below Classes 5 and 6 and operating independently.

Option 1.1.4. The Commission decides:

Option 1.1.4.1. to continue to apply the current capacity management scheme under which each CPC may determine that the capacity attributed to a vessel is owned by the vessel owner or may alternatively be disposed of by the competent authorities of the flag CPC.

OR

Option 1.1.4.2. that the capacity allocated to a vessel cannot be dissociated from that vessel, including when the owner decides to re-flag the vessel, and unless the owner decides to use that capacity to replace that vessel with another.

OPTION 1.2

Implementation adjustments

Option 1.2.1. Capacity reduction: The Commission decides to adopt and implement measures to actively reduce the current capacity of the purse seine fleet through:

Option 1.2.1.1. the adoption and effective implementation of a buyback scheme; **and/or**

Option 1.2.1.2. The elimination of capacity not linked to, or utilized by, a purse seine vessel, through one or several of the following measures:

- the permanent elimination of the capacity of a vessel that has sunk **and/or**
- the elimination of the capacity released by a reduction in the well volume of a vessel, whether resulting from structural modification of the wells off from their conversion to a use other than fish storage; **and/or**
- the prohibition on CPCs from transferring, whether temporarily or permanently, to another CPC or to vessels flying flag of another CPC, the undifferentiated capacity recognized in their favor under the current scheme, on the original understanding that such capacity would be used exclusively for the development of their own fleets.

Option 1.2.2. Confirmation: The Commission decides to:

Option 1.2.2.1. Maintain the current scheme under which all confirmed capacity is fixed and unalterable solely for the purposes of implementing that scheme, irrespective of whether the confirmed capacity reflects the actual well volume of the vessels concerned.

OR

Option 1.2.2.2. Allow for the correction of confirmed capacity on the basis of a new measurement of well volume:

- in respect of all vessels.

OR

- only in respect of those vessels whose capacity was automatically confirmed as of 1 January 2017 in accordance with resolution C-15-02.

Option 1.2.2.3. The Commission decides that the measurement and confirmation of well volume shall be carried out by:

- the competent authorities of the respective flag CPC.

OR

- an independent third-party expert, either alone or with the participation of the IATTC Secretariat.

Option 1.2.3. Suspected discrepancy: The Commission decides that:

- (a) Whenever the confirmed well volume of a vessel is suspected to differ from its actual well volume, on the basis of an observed discrepancy between the confirmed figure and the volume of catch landed expressed in metric tons, a conversion factor shall be applied to verify the existence and extent of that discrepancy.
- (b) This conversion factor to be applied shall be:
 - the same conversion factor applied prior to 1 January 2017 to convert carrying capacity expressed in metric tons into cubic meters

OR

- a revised and updated conversion factor, to be established by a specially convened technical expert group.

OPTION 1.3

Response to practical issues

Option 1.3.1. Net vs gross volume: The Commission decides:

Option 1.3.1.1.

- (a) to adopt the **net volume** as the criterion for measuring well volume, and to repeal its previous decision to use gross volume as that criterion, and
- (b) That this criterion of the net volume shall be applied:

- on a one-time basis only, for the purpose of confirming the well volume of all vessels in the scheme,
OR
- on each occasion that the net volume of a vessel is modified as a result of internal alterations to its wells.

Option 1.3.1.2.

(a) to continue applying the **gross volume** criterion to measure the well capacity of each purse seine vessel;
and

(b) to measure this gross volume:

- taking into account solely the main bulkheads separating the wells from one another and from the other internal spaces of the vessel;
OR
- taking into account the insulation material applied to these bulkheads, with such measurement to be conducted:
- ✓ on a one-time basis only, for the purpose of confirming the well volume of all vessels in the scheme,
OR
- ✓ on each occasion that the gross volume of a vessel is modified as a result of alterations to the insulation material or its thickness.

Option 1.3.2. Which wells: For the purpose of measuring well capacity, the Commission decides to:

Option 1.3.2.1. Take into account all spaces used, or capable of being used, for storing fish.

OR

Option 1.3.2.2. Exclude from the measurement spaces that are:

- provisionally converted to store fuel or other goods, **and/or**
- used exclusively to blast-freeze fish prior to its transfer to other wells for storage until landing of the catch.

OPTION 1.4

Capacity claims

Option 1.4.1. Claims consideration: The Commission decides:

Option 1.4.1.1. That no claim shall be considered until a capacity management plan is adopted.

OR

Option 1.3.1.2. That a claim may be considered subject to specific conditions, including that the capacity claimed shall not be activated prior to the adoption of a capacity management plan or of other specific conservation and management measures.

Option 1.4.2. Claims priority: The Commission decides:

Option 1.4.2.1. That all claims shall be considered without any order of priority

OR

Option 1.4.1.2. That all claims shall be considered in accordance with the following order of priority a:

- priority shall be given to claims relating to individual vessels over claims relating to unallocated or undifferentiated capacity; **and/or**
- as between claims of the same category, priority shall be determined by the chronological order of their submission; **and/ or**
- priority shall be given to claims accompanied by specific commitments, for instance a commitment not to activate the claimed capacity prior to the adoption of a capacity management plan or of other specific conservation and management measures.

Option 1.4.2. Pending claims: The Commission decides:

Option 1.4.2.1. That the only pending claims it may consider are those registered at or prior to the 88th meeting of the Commission and subsequently listed in the documents prepared by the Secretariat.

OR

Option 1.4.1.2. That all claims may be considered, including new claims submitted after the 88th meeting of the Commission.