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INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION  
Scripps Institution of Oceanography  
La Jolla, California  
September 23, 1954

Memorandum

From: Director of Investigations  
To: All Commissioners  
Subject: Minutes of the meeting

I enclose herewith a copy of the minutes of the sixth meeting of the Commission held in San José, Costa Rica, on August 11, 1954.

Ten copies each of these minutes are being sent to Sr. Lic. Virgilio Aguiluz, Col. John L. Farley and Sr. Don Miguel A. Corro. Copies are also being sent to members of the U.S. Advisory Committee.

The Spanish version of these minutes will be transmitted in the near future.

  
M. B. Schaefer

MBS:gh

cc: U.S. Advisory Committee

## SIXTH MEETING

### INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

San José, Costa Rica

August 11, 1954

The sixth meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, the regular annual meeting for 1954, convened at the Casa Amarilla in San José, Costa Rica, beginning at 11:00 a.m. Wednesday, August 11, 1954.

Present were their Excellencies Don Mario Esquivel, Minister of Foreign Relations, Don Fernando Fournier, Vice-Minister of Foreign Relations, and Don Jorge Rossi, Minister of Economics and Finance; Sr. Lic. José L. Cardona-Cooper and Sr. Lic. Virgilio Aguiluz, members of the Costa Rican Section; Mr. Lee F. Payne and Col. John L. Farley, members of the U. S. Section; Sr. Walter A. Myers, member of the Panamanian Section; Dr. M. B. Schaefer and Sr. Antonio Landa, of the scientific staff. Also present were members of the Costa Rican Advisory Committee, official observers from Chile and the United States, and others.

His Excellency Don José Figueres, President of Costa Rica, sent a telegram of welcome and regret at not being able to attend the meeting.

Minister Mario Esquivel opened the session with the following address:

"President Figueres' Government has the honor of welcoming today the Honorable Delegates of the member countries of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission at a time in which the activities of this organization are developing successfully, for the benefit of science and industry, in one of the world's greatest fisheries. It is right that this Government may now benefit from the effective and promising findings of the Commission which some years ago the Founding Council of the Second Republic, with enthusiasm, faith and clear vision, helped to establish together with the United States of America. The Founding Council of the Second Republic signed the Fisheries Convention, by virtue of which this Commission was established, to study the multiple and complicated problems involved in the fisheries, so that the industry can maintain the highest levels of production.

"As Costa Rican Ambassador to Washington, I was honored by the Founding Council who appointed me to the Delegation which drafted the Fisheries Convention of 1949. My fellow delegates were Mr. Jorge Hazera, Mr. Eduardo Martin and Mr. José Luis Cardona. ~~The latter represents our Government on this~~ Commission today. Upon my return from Washington, and during the last days of the Junta's Government, I also had the honor of advancing the ratification of this Convention. Later on I was appointed to the Advisory Committee of the Costa Rican Section of the Commission, and from this honorary post I have followed with great interest the development of this organization.

"The above mentioned steps explain in detail the reasons for having the pleasure of addressing you, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, and on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and Industries, and extending a most cordial welcome, in the name of the Costa Rican Government, to the delegates who honor us today with their presence in this inaugural ceremony.

"Our country is especially pleased in having, for the first time, the Delegation of the Sister Republic of Panamá which today officially participates at a meeting of this Commission.

"Costa Rica receives Panamá with open arms. Panamá with its attitude, gives us a new example of continental solidarity. This event, so important in strengthening our complementary economy, encourages me to express one more the wish of my Government that Panamá join the community of countries, which in this part of America, have established the ODECA as a regional system. Costa Rica has maintained with great enthusiasm the thesis that Panamá belongs to the Central American family. Now, when Panamá comes to us, ready to contribute towards this conservation project, I cannot help but urge her very respectfully to become, as soon as possible, a part of Central America in order to protect the diverse interests - mainly the economical ones - which are, of necessity, the same in a territory which is politically divided but geographically and historically an indivisible whole.

"I must also express to Panamá the deep appreciation of my Government for the generosity with which the Sister Republic contributed to enrich the Gulf of Nicoya with one of the most valuable bait species for tuna fishing. The results of the transplanted of this species to our gulf will not be known for some time, but whatever the results may be, the Panamanian gesture will not be forgotten, and its memory will contribute to reinforce the fraternal links which unite us to such a noble Nation.

"I extend my greetings to the Delegates of the United States, expressing my admiration of their country. It is because of its universities and scientists that we are now piercing the secrets of the great masses of water that surround us. I beg of such distinguished Delegates to convey to their Government this fraternal message from Costa Rica and the will of its people and its Government to co-operate in all of the noble enterprises for the betterment of the economy of the continent.

"I also extend my greetings to the Diplomatic Representatives present here, who are fulfilling in a wonderful way their mission of co-operation with the Government of Costa Rica.

"I greet the Honorable Representatives of the Legislative Assembly, as well as the Honorable Representatives of the Municipality and of the Mayor of Puntarenas. I also greet the members of the fishing industry, and all the government employees and ladies and gentlemen who have honored us with their presence.

"Finally, I extend my warmest wish for the best success of the VI Meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission which begins today."

Sr. Walter Myers, Consul of Panamá and member of the Panamanian section of the Commission, then addressed the meeting as follows:

"At the initiation of the Sixth Meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, Panamá has become an active member. This step taken by my government has made me extremely happy because this meeting is taking place in a country which I love very much; because the Commission is made up of members of Costa Rica and the United States, and because my government has conferred on me the honor of being the representative in the first meeting in which Panamá is taking an active part in the deliberations.

"I am pleased to extend a cordial message which the Government of the Republic of Panamá sends to the distinguished representatives of the Illustrious Government of Costa Rica as well as to the members of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission. I am also pleased to express my most cordial wishes that the results of the Commission's work may be of positive benefit to the member countries, and that our objectives may be attained.

"I sincerely appreciate, from the bottom of my heart, the kind words of His Excellency Mario Esquivel, Minister of Foreign Affairs, in which he invited my government to adhere to the CDECA. These kind suggestions of His Excellency the Minister enjoy the complete acceptance on the part of our diplomatic representation in this Sister Republic, and I offer to pass them on to the Ambassador, Colonel Manuel Pino R., who, I am sure, will accept them with warm sympathy and enthusiasm, and, in turn, will pass them on to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Panamá, Colonel José Antonio Remón Cantera, through the proper channels."

"Panamá's gesture in granting permission to Costa Rica to obtain anchovetas from its coastal waters, which were lacking in this country's waters, show our spirit of co-operation with the Sister Republic.

"I come to this meeting with the desire of acquainting myself, as much as possible, with all the matters which are going to be discussed, and also with the desire of co-operating, as much as my limited knowledge of these matters allows, and relying on the experience of my distinguished colleagues, so that our deliberations may be of positive benefit to the countries we represent.

"In expressing my appreciation for the invitation extended to my country, I wish to state that it would be an honor for us if the next annual meeting would take place in Panamá, and that other sister republics of our continent be present."

Mr. Lee F. Payne, on behalf of the U.S. Section, addressed himself to the Ministers and Government of Costa Rica, thanking them for the splendid welcome

and hospitality to the visitors from the United States.

He said that this is a particularly auspicious occasion because it is marked by the attendance for the first time of a delegation from the Republic of Panamá, which has adhered to the Convention during the past year. The adherence of Panamá to the Convention represents an important step toward the co-operation of all nations having an interest in the tropical tuna fisheries. It is hoped that other such nations will join us in this research work, so important to the conservation of the tuna fisheries.

Mr. Cardona-Cooper said a few words of welcome, and read telegrams of welcome from the President of the Republic and from various other officials of the Government of Costa Rica.

Following this, the Minister of Foreign relations declared the inaugural session closed, whereupon the Ministers, members of the diplomatic corps, and others not wishing to attend the business meeting of the Commission left the room.

#### Approval for publication of Annual Report for 1953

Chairman Payne took up the first point on the agenda, approval for publication of the Annual Report for the calendar year 1953. Copies of the Report, in English, had been mailed to all Commissioners, for review and comment, some months previously, and several suggestions had been incorporated in the final draft. Dr. Schaefer apologized for not having the Spanish version yet available, which was due to the Commission's translator not having completed the translation. He assured the Commissioners that it would be a true translation of the English version.

It was moved, seconded, and unanimously passed that: The Annual Report for the year 1953, as drafted by the Director of Investigations, be approved for publication.

#### Program of Investigations for Fiscal 1954-55

The Commission had recommended a budget of \$225,000 for research during this fiscal year. Contributions by member governments will, however, amount to only \$115,595. It has been necessary, therefore, to prepare a revised program of investigations capable of being accomplished with this amount of money. The Director had prepared such a revised program for the consideration of the Commissioners. The items of this revised program were:

##### 1. Research on bait-fishes

- 1) Continue investigations in the Gulf of Nicoya.
  - a) Evaluation of success of reintroduction of anchovetas.
  - b) Studies of life history and ecology of anchovetas and other bait species.
- 2) Commence investigations in the Gulf of Panamá on the life history, ecology, and population dynamics of the anchovetas.
- 3) Continue studies of bait fishes from other areas by means of samples collected by the commercial fleet.
- 4) Continue collection of logbook data on abundance and yield of bait fishes, by baiting areas.

5) Complete tabulation and evaluation of historical logbook data on the capture of bait species.

2. Research on tropical tunas

- 1) Complete analysis of historical and current statistical data and logbook information, and their interpretation in terms of the dynamics of the tuna populations, so far as existing ancillary biological information permits.
- 2) Continue collection, compilation and analysis of statistical data and logbook information to measure the current abundance and yield of the tuna stocks on a continuing basis.
- 3) Conduct limited studies on biology and life history of tunas, with particular reference to elucidation of the population structure.
  - a) Racial investigations by morphometry.
  - b) Market-measurements for size composition and rates of growth in different areas and seasons.
  - c) Studies of spawning areas and spawning seasons by examination of gonads of specimens in the commercial catch.
  - d) Co-operation with California State Fisheries Laboratory in studies of migration by tagging.
  - e) Co-operation with Scripps Institution of Oceanography in basic research on racial analysis by chemico-genetic techniques (paper chromatography).
  - f) Studies of the distribution, migrations, spawning, and other aspects of the biology of the tunas in co-operation with Scripps Institution of Oceanography.
  - g) Preliminary investigations of food and feeding habits of tunas.
- 4) Conduct limited investigations into the relationships of the tunas to the oceanic environment.
  - a) Studies of the physical, chemical and biological oceanography of the Eastern Pacific, in co-operation with other agencies:
    - (1) Analysis of data from "Shellback" expedition.
    - (2) Participation in studies off Baja California ("Pelagic Area Studies").
    - (3) Evaluation of existing data from other sources.
  - b) Studies of the distribution of tunas in relation to the environment.
    - (1) Measurements from the logbook data of the fishing fleet.
    - (2) Experimental fishing for sub-surface tunas (in co-operation with Scripps Institution and California State Fisheries Laboratory).
  - c) Integration of results of oceanographic studies with results of biological and statistical investigations.

After discussion, it was moved, seconded, and unanimously adopted that: The revised program of investigations recommended by the Director for the fiscal year 1954-55 be approved and adopted.

Research program and budget recommended for fiscal year 1955-56, and share of expenses to member governments.

Dr. Schaefer had transmitted to the Commissioners, on May 24, 1954, detailed recommendations for research which should be carried on during the fiscal year 1955-56, together with a detailed estimate of the funds required to conduct this

work, amounting, in total, to \$367,202.

The program and budget were discussed at some length. It was indicated that the proposed program is very similar to that recommended during previous years. It includes initiating important additional work at sea, on the biology, ecology, and population structure of the tropical tunas, necessary for proper interpretation of the catch statistics and as a basis for the Commission to make effective recommendations for the conservation of the fishery. In the case of yellowfin tuna, it appears that management recommendations may be required in the near future, for which this additional research is vital. It is also extremely important that the Commission initiate adequate research into the effects of meteorological and oceanographic factors on the success of the tuna fishery; this has been recognized by the Appropriations Committee of the U. S. Senate, which has recommended that the "Commission should make an intensive study of the effects of temperature and weather changes on the location of tuna." Research of this sort requires costly work at sea. The proposed program and budget provides for a modest start on this important line of investigation. Provision is also made for necessary expansion in research on the bait-fishes, the conservation of which is of vital importance to the several governments and to the tuna fishing industry.

Mr. Myers, of Panamá, stated that it would be necessary to ascertain the cost to his government before the program and budget could be approved. The Chairman, therefore, took up at this time the matter of proportion of contributions by member governments for the joint expenses of the Commission during fiscal year 1955-56. It was indicated by the statistics that the utilization of tropical tunas by Costa Rica during the past year is 0.2% of the total catch, and that the utilization by Panamá, as defined by the resolution of the last annual meeting, is zero. The contribution of Costa Rica should, then, be 0.2% or \$500, whichever is the greater; the contribution of Panamá should be \$500. It was then moved, seconded, and unanimously adopted that: The joint expenses of the Commission for fiscal year 1955-56 shall be in the following proportions: United States 99.8%; Costa Rica 0.2% or \$500, whichever is the greater; Panamá \$500.

After further brief discussion of the proposed program it was moved, seconded, and unanimously approved that: The Commission approves the program of investigations for the fiscal year 1955-56 prepared by the Director of Investigations and previously transmitted to the Commissioners; to carry out this program of investigations a budget is recommended for the period July 1, 1955 through June 30, 1956 in the amount of \$367,202.

It was further moved, seconded, and unanimously adopted that: There be transmitted to the responsible official of the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee a copy of the recommended program and budget with a covering memorandum indicating that the Commission is making provision for the important research recommended by the Committee in its report on the Commission's appropriations for 1954-55.

It then being close to noon, a recess was declared until 2:00 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 2:00 p.m.

### Presentation and discussion of research underway during the past year

At the request of the Chairman, Dr. Schaefer reviewed in some detail the investigations which have been conducted by the staff during the past year. He exhibited various charts and graphs to illustrate the results of these investigations. Considerable progress has been made on elucidating the dynamics of the tuna populations, as affected by the amount of fishing. A good start has been made on determining how oceanographic factors, particularly upwelling, influences the concentration of tunas. Limited progress was indicated in elucidating the life history and population structure of the tropical tunas. Important advances have been made in working out the biology and ecology of the anchoveta, the most important bait species. An experiment on rehabilitating the anchoveta population of the Gulf of Nicoya by transplantation from the Gulf of Panamá shows encouraging signs of success.

The Commissioners and others present asked a number of questions about the material presented. These were duly discussed.

### Election of Chairman and Secretary

Sr. Lic. Virgilio Aguiluz of Costa Rica was nominated as Chairman of the Commission for the following year. This nomination was seconded and unanimously approved.

Col. John L. Farley was nominated as Secretary of the Commission for the following year. This nomination was seconded and unanimously approved.

### Place of next annual meeting

Mr. Walter Myers, of Panamá, on behalf of his government, invited the Commission to hold its next regular annual meeting in Panamá. This invitation was accepted with great appreciation.

There being no further business to come before the sixth meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, it was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.