

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION
COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE (CAF)
INTERSESSIONAL MEETING

(by video conference)
24 July 2025

CHAIR'S REPORT

AGENDA

	Documents
1. Opening of the meeting	
2. Adoption of the agenda	
3. Information regarding the AIDCP Budget (Document AIDCP-50-01 and AIDCP-50-02 and impact on the IATTC budget	
4. Conclusions	
5. Adjournment	

Annexes

1. List of participants

The intersessional meeting was held by videoconference on 24 July 2025. This was the second of three meetings to be held prior to the 12th meeting of the CAF, scheduled to take place in person on 28 and 29 August 2025 in Panama City.

1. Opening of the meeting

The meeting was opened by the Chair of the Committee, Ms. Rachael Wadsworth, of the United States. She commented that this meeting would focus on reviewing the documents that served as reference for the Meeting of the Parties to the AIDCP to request the IATTC to allocate contributions to the observer program budget on a 50-50% basis between the two institutions.

During the meeting, the necessary quorum was reached for it to be deemed formal, and 15 Members ended up participating: Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, the United States, Guatemala, Japan, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, El Salvador, Chinese Taipei, the European Union, and Venezuela.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The provisional agenda was adopted with clarification by the Director, Dr. Arnulfo Franco, that a brief presentation on the development of the AIDCP budgets in recent years would be included at the beginning of the meeting, which he made right away.

3. Information regarding the AIDCP Budget (Document AIDCP-50-01 and AIDCP-50-02 and impact on the IATTC budget

Mr. Enrique Ureña, Coordinator of the IATTC Observer Program, presented document AIDCP-50-01, which contains an analysis of the forms completed by observers and the proportion of tasks performed for the benefit of the AIDCP and the IATTC, respectively. According to this analysis, the current rate (30%) of the IATTC's contribution to the observer program budget, leaving the AIDCP with a contribution of 70%, does not reflect the cost of the tasks performed by observers for the benefit of the IATTC.

The Director of the IATTC then presented document AIDCP-50-02. He explained that this document provides information on the percentage of time spent by each IATTC staff member on tasks arising from the Antigua Convention and the AIDCP, respectively. This updated analysis is based on the responses provided by each staff member to a detailed questionnaire that was used to verify and refine a similar assessment carried out in previous years, but with the introduction of more precise variables regarding the work carried out within the framework of the IATTC and the AIDCP. This allowed for a more detailed and accurate assessment of the percentage of time and resources dedicated by IATTC staff members, including the Director, to the performance of their functions in the service of the IATTC or the AIDCP. He highlighted that the results of this assessment were used to prepare the AIDCP budget for 2026.

He recalled that, in addition to endorsing the percentage adjustments relating to the Secretariat's staff costs, the Meeting of the Parties to the AIDCP concluded, on the basis of the material presented by the Secretariat, that a 50-50 split would be more appropriate than the previous 30-70 split and that, in any case, the IATTC contribution, in the Secretariat's view, should not be less than 40% of the AIDCP observer program budget.

The above presentations prompted a brief discussion, which focused mainly on the following two points:

- The relationship between the Antigua Convention and the current process:

As stated by Nicaragua, the percentage adjustments under discussion, and in particular the increase in the IATTC's contribution to the observer program budget, are merely a consequence of the full implementation of the provisions of the Antigua Convention, for which no effect had been sought until now.

Guatemala likewise emphasized the paradigm shift resulting from the provision of Article XIV, paragraph 3, which stipulates that "*The Commission shall maintain separate accounts for the activities carried out under this Convention and under the AIDCP. The services to be provided to the AIDCP and the corresponding estimated costs shall be specified in the Commission's budget. The Director shall provide to the Meeting of the Parties to the AIDCP for its approval, and prior to the year in which the services are to be provided, estimates of services and their costs corresponding to the tasks to be carried out pursuant to that Agreement.*" As Guatemala pointed out, and in line with Nicaragua's statement, the proportion of these tasks relating to the observer program has decreased and, while in the past a 30% contribution from the IATTC was sufficient, more recently the obligations arising from this provision have not been met, since the services and costs corresponding to the IATTC in relation to both scientific research and compliance are much higher, making it necessary to adjust the percentages under discussion.

- Consideration by the IATTC of the percentage adjustments proposed by the AIDCP Meeting of the Parties:

The United States indicated that it could not support at this time a recommendation to increase the percentage of the IATTC's contribution to the observer program budget. That decision should be taken by the Commission in the context of the overall budget, after analysis of the IATTC budget at the third intersessional meeting of the Committee. In this regard, it mentioned that a deficit could already be anticipated, given that some Members have indicated that they cannot make a contribution greater than that made in 2023. In addition to the institutional and operational implications of this situation for the Secretariat, it would mean a lack of funding for scientific research and other activities recommended in the Secretariat's proposed budget for 2026. It would therefore be very important to analyze the advisability of such a reallocation of costs when the IATTC budget cannot cover it without cuts in other items. Finally, he noted that the IATTC budgets have increased from approximately US\$5.3 million in 2006 to much higher amounts in subsequent

years, leading the Secretariat to request a budget of approximately US\$10 million for 2026, in contrast to AIDCP funding, which has remained frozen at the same levels established in 2006 (US\$14.95 per cubic meter of well volume), in addition to the rejection of repeated proposals to update the remuneration of observers.

Taking advantage of this reference to the IATTC budget, Colombia requested that, at the next meeting, the Secretariat, in addition to the budget it has proposed and presented, also present a budget without any increase, at the same level as the 2023 budget. It requested that, in this presentation, the Secretariat describe the institutional and operational impacts of the difference in funding levels between these two budgets and highlight what should be prioritized in a budget maintained at the 2023 level. It also requested that this information be circulated well in advance of the meeting, taking into account the need to preserve its confidential nature. The Secretariat clarified that the information would be made available to Heads of Delegation on a restricted access web page.

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, the Committee acknowledged that it could not reach a consensus decision on the issue of percentage adjustments to the IATTC's contributions to the AIDCP budget. The meeting concluded with outlining the next steps at the third intersessional meeting scheduled for 7 August 2025, in which the IATTC budget proposal for 2026 presented by the Secretariat would be reviewed, together with a revised and detailed budget, with the impacts that the respective cuts would have on the Secretariat and its operation, as well as on scientific research and other activities, and with a description of possible priorities.

5. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m., San Diego time, on 24 July.

List of Participants

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