

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE THIRTY-FIRST MEETING

March 3 and 5, 1975

Chairman: Mr. Robert Letaconnoux, France

Secretary: Mr. Gilberto Bergman Padilla, Nicaragua

## A G E N D A

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Consideration and adoption of the agenda
3. The 1975 fishery to date (Background Paper No. 1)
4. Considerations for the remainder of 1975 concerning the exploitation of yellowfin tuna (Background Paper No. 1)
5. The porpoise-tuna relationship and associated problems
6. Other business
7. Adjournment

## 1. Opening of the meeting

The meeting was brought to order in the West Coast Room, Royal Inn, San Diego, on March 3, 1975, at 10:15 a.m. by the chairman, Mr. Robert Letaconnoux of France. He welcomed the Commissioners, advisors, and observers, and said that he was glad that the meeting was being held in San Diego, a well-known tuna port. He stated that he hoped that the meeting would be successful, and expressed his gratitude to the government of the United States for its willingness to serve as host for the meeting and to the Director of Investigations and staff of the Tuna Commission for making preparations for it. He then called for the heads of each delegation to introduce themselves and the other Commissioners. This was followed by introduction of observers from the Republic of China, Ecuador, the Republic of Korea, Netherlands Antilles, and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). These persons are listed in Appendix 1.

## 2. Consideration and adoption of the agenda

The chairman pointed out that at the 30th meeting of the Commission the staff had recommended a yellowfin quota for 1975 of 130,000 short tons, with provisions for increasing it by increments, if the apparent condition of the stock warranted it; to the levels of catch observed in 1973 and 1974. The Commission, however, adopted a quota of 175,000 tons, with provisions to increase it by increments to 195,000 tons. The object of the 31st meeting is to review the status of the fishery during 1975 and, if conditions indicate that such should be done, revise the resolution adopted at the 30th meeting. He asked if there were any objections to the agenda as presented; there were none, so it was adopted.

## 3 and 4. The 1975 fishery to date and considerations for the remainder of 1975 concerning the exploitation of yellowfin tuna (Background Paper No. 1)

At the chairman's request, the fishery in 1975 was discussed by Dr. Joseph. He pointed out that the staff's assessment of the condition of the stock of yellowfin in the eastern Pacific Ocean has been based principally on general production models. Prior to the mid-1960's, when fishing was conducted relatively close to shore, the average maximum sustained yield (AMSY) was estimated to be about 95,000 tons. The present fishery within the Commission's Yellowfin Regulatory Area (CYRA) covers an area more than twice as large as previously, and the AMSY is now estimated to be between 150,000 and 180,000 tons. During the 1968-1972 period the average annual catch of 1-year olds amounted to about 15,000 tons, but in 1973 and 1974 the catches of 1-year-olds were about 45,000 and 60,000 tons respectively. The catch of 2-year-olds was poor in 1974, which indicates tentatively that the recruitment in 1973 was only average, and that the high catch of 1-year-olds in that year was due to unusually high vulnerability of these fish to the fishery. Very preliminary data for 1975 indicate that the catch of 2-year-olds will be average or better, so the recruitment in 1974 seems to have been better than average.

It appears now that the catch of 1-year-olds will be about average in 1975, though it is still too early to know due to the fact that these fish are caught in greatest numbers in March, April, and May. The staff recommends that the quota of 175,000 tons be retained, and if it appears that 1-year-olds will be abundant again in 1975 and that the 2- and 3-year-old fish are more abundant than they are now considered to be, that it be increased beyond that to a maximum of 185,000 or 195,000 tons.

With the present system of regulation it is virtually impossible to choose a closure date which is likely to result in a catch relatively close to the quota. The catch can be divided into the following three categories: (A) the unregulated catches made prior to the closure date; (B) the unregulated catches made after the closure date; and (C) the catches made by vessels which are partially or entirely exempt from regulations and the incidental catches of yellowfin made by regulated vessels. Categories B and C, particularly the former, have been increasing rapidly in recent years at the expense of Category A. In 1975, if the closure date is near the end of the week of March 2-3, the catch in Category A will be about 70 to 80 thousand tons. If the vessels are able to unload with only minor delays for the remainder of the year the catches in Categories B and C will be about 113,000 to 155,000 tons, making the total catch about 183,000 to 235,000 tons (providing the heavy concentration of effort does not reduce the catch per unit of effort, and hence the catch). If there are major delays in unloading the catch will be correspondingly less, of course, but this cannot be predicted. The solution to this problem is to amend the resolution passed at the 30th meeting so that there is no unregulated fishing after the closure date except by vessels which are partially or entirely exempt from the regulations. If this were the case the closure date would occur somewhat later, which would enable the staff to (1) set the date so that the catch would be relatively close to the quota and (2) set it slightly later if the condition of the stock appeared to warrant addition of previously approved increments to the quota.

The chairman thanked Dr. Joseph, and called for questions from the Commissioners. Mr. Loker of the U.S.A. asked which age groups make the greatest contributions to the total production of eggs. Dr. Joseph said that the fish first spawn as 1-year-olds, but contribute more eggs as 2-year-olds and more yet as 3-year-olds. Unfortunately, it is not known how many times per year the individual fish spawn. Mr. Loker noted that in one of the slides the age composition of the fish during the first two months of 1970 was very nearly the same as that of 1975, and wondered if this would furnish a good basis for prediction of the age composition of the catch for the rest of 1975. Dr. Joseph said that two months of data are not enough for a prediction, as 1-year-olds do not show up in appreciable numbers until March. Mr. Obarrio of Panama asked about the areas of yellowfin spawning, the areas of catch of the A and B groups (fish which first reach catchable size in appreciable numbers in the first and the second half of the year, respectively), and the areas of catch of the 1-year-olds relative to those of 2-, 3-, and 4-year olds, Dr. Joseph replied that spawning occurs over a wide area of the eastern Pacific

Ocean, but appears to be somewhat heavier than average in the vicinity of the Revilla-gigedo-Islands and off Panama and Costa Rica. Fish of both the A and B groups are caught as 1-year-olds in greatest numbers off Central America, but the areas of greatest concentration vary considerably from year to year, and many young fish are also caught in other areas. In general, older fish are caught further offshore. Tagging studies have shown that there is considerable movement of fish within the CYRA, and lesser interchange of fish across the border of the CYRA. Mr. Broadhead of the U. S. A. asked about the reliability of the preliminary data on size composition of the fish. Dr. Joseph said that although the data are not as good as they should be, they are still useful. Better data could be obtained if the resolution were amended, as suggested earlier, so that the closure date could be later in the year.

There was some discussion as to whether the press should be admitted to the meeting, and it was decided that reporters would be excluded, but that they would be given information on what had transpired after the meeting. The meeting was adjourned for lunch at 12:20 p.m.

The meeting was reconvened at 2:45 p.m. There was further discussion regarding the presence of the press at the meeting, and it was decided to admit reporters to the rest of the meeting.

The chairman summarized Dr. Joseph's talk, and suggested that the discussion should be directed toward whether or not to amend the resolution passed at the 30th meeting in regard to (1) the quota and (2) the system of permitting unregulated fishing after the closure date.

Mr. Tibbo of Canada asked about the relative abundance of the fish of the A and B groups and about difficulties in distinguishing them. Dr. Joseph said that the average annual numbers of recruits for these two groups are 20 to 22 and 15 to 18 million fish, respectively. The fish of the two groups can be distinguished easily as 1-year-olds, but this becomes progressively harder as they get older. For all practical purposes they are distinguishable only as 1-, 2-, and 3-year-olds. Mr. Van Campen of the U. S. A. said that there seemed to be a need to deal with discrete components of the fishery, and that the quota system did not lend itself well to this need. Dr. Joseph replied that the staff agreed that this is necessary, and the recent emphasis on age-composition studies is compatible to this need. Future studies may show in more detail how changes in fishing strategy can result in differential exploitation of various elements of the population to protect such entities as young fish, porpoises, etc. Ambassador Mercado and Mr. Diaz Rojo of Mexico expressed the concern of Mexico regarding possible overfishing of yellowfin, and endorsed Dr. Joseph's suggestion regarding amendment of the resolution passed at the Commission's 30th meeting. Mr. Diaz Rojo asked about the usefulness of the age-composition data for the first two months of 1975 as an indicator for the age composition of the catches for the entire year. Dr. Joseph said that the

data for January-February are poor for this purpose. The peak of the small-fish fishery occurs in early April, so by then the staff would have a good idea of the abundance of 1-year-olds in the catches for the entire year. Mr. Diaz Rojo said that it seemed to him to be risky to make decisions based on so little data. Dr. Joseph agreed, and stated that this is one of the reasons why he thinks the resolution should be amended. Mr. Nanne of Costa Rica stated that his country was also very concerned about conservation, and agreed with Mr. Diaz Rojo concerning amendment of the resolution.

Mr. Van Campen stated that the facts do not support the concern expressed by the delegates of Mexico and Costa Rica regarding possible overfishing. Dr. Joseph, had stated that the AMSY is about 150,000 to 180,000 tons, and thus to Mr. Van Campen it would seem justifiable to fish a little harder to determine if the AMSY is actually even higher. A few years ago the staff had thought the AMSY was about half this, and if it were not for resistance by the Commissioners to this conservative attitude the quota might still be at this level. Although tropical tunas do not occur to any great extent off the United States, the United States has pioneered the fishery in the eastern Pacific Ocean and has a greater financial investment in it than any other country, and hence is also deeply concerned with the conservation of this resource. If overfishing occurs it is customary to blame this on the United States; actually the blame should rest on all the countries which have fished in the eastern Pacific Ocean in proportion to their catches. Dr. Joseph said that if the quotas had been determined entirely by the staff they would not still be half of what they are now. Instead they would have been increased gradually each year, though perhaps not quite as rapidly as has actually been the case. If it weren't for the situation regarding heavy catches of small fish during 1973 and 1974 the staff would be less reluctant to experiment with further increasing the quota.

After some discussion it was agreed that a decision on the quota was in order. Everyone agreed that this should remain at 175,000 tons, but that the Director be given authority to increase it to 195,000 tons if the stocks indicated such action to be warranted.

The chairman stated that it was appropriate to discuss amendment of the resolution of the 30th meeting as recommended by Dr. Joseph. Mr. Van Campen requested that Dr. Joseph clarify the reasons for his concern regarding the recent high catches of young fish, since the staff admittedly is not certain of the relationship between spawners and recruits for yellowfin. Dr. Joseph explained that the staff is not sure that heavy exploitation of young fish will result in depletion of the resource, but that he believes the risk is sufficiently great that considerable caution should be exercised. He said that in several other fisheries sharp alteration of the age composition of the stock had been followed very soon by drastic reduction in the population size, and hence the catch. Ambassador Mercado asked how the quota could be increased from 175,000 to 195,000 tons after the closure date if the evidence accumulated later showed that such action was warranted. Dr. Joseph replied that it would not be possible to do this, and added that if it is found out later that there will be appreciable delays in

unloading the fish there will be nothing that can be done to lengthen the season, and the catch could thus be less than 175,000 tons. Thus the proposed amendment to the regulation would result in greater flexibility to respond to conditions which are not predictable. Mr. Van Campen asked what the closure date would be if the resolution were amended, and Dr. Joseph stated that if the quota were 175,000 tons the closure would occur on about April 15, and if it were 195,000 tons the closure would occur about 2 1/2 or 3 weeks later.

Mr. Diaz Rojo said that he was in favor of amending the resolution so as to prohibit unrestricted fishing after the closure date. Mr. Van Campen said that such an amendment is a serious matter for the United States, as its vessels would be affected far more than those of some of the other nations, whose vessels are partially <sup>or</sup> completely exempt from regulation for various reasons. Many vessel owners had made their plans for the year based on the resolution as adopted at the 30th meeting. Also, there could be problems in enforcing a modified type of regulation. He said that the United States Commissioners were not prepared at that time to vote on the matter because they had not yet gotten opinions from all segments of the United States fishing industry. The United States delegation had planned to discuss enforcement at the intergovernmental meeting, and the outcome of that discussion could influence the United States decision regarding amendment of the resolution. He thus proposed that other parts of the agenda be discussed, and that the intergovernmental meeting be held the following day. After that further discussion could be held on amendment of the resolution. This was agreed upon unanimously.

#### 5. The porpoise-tuna relationship and associated problems

Mr. Van Campen stated that this item was put on the agenda at the request of the United States, as the government of that country is determined that the incidental mortality of porpoises during fishing operations be reduced to insignificant levels. He read a statement, which appears as Appendix 2 of these minutes. The United States requested that 1,000 tons of the yellowfin quota be reserved for fish caught by two cruises to be conducted by United States vessels during the closed season for the purpose of conducting research in methods for further reducing mortalities of porpoises incidentally caught while fishing for tunas. The other Commissioners preferred to withhold comment on this proposal until they had read the United States statement, which would be available the following day.

#### 6. Other business

Mr. Young of Canada pointed out that in the minutes of the 30th meeting of the Commission, in the section containing a description of the work of the ICCAT, Dr. Rodriguez Martin of that organization was reported as having said that the 3.2-kg minimum size limit for yellowfin in Atlantic Ocean was an effective regulation. The minutes reported accurately what Dr. Rodriguez Martin had said,

but with more recent data it is now known that the minimum size limit has not been as effective as was believed at that time, and he thought that this fact should be noted in the minutes of the present meeting. The chairman asked Dr. Miyake of the ICCAT to comment on this matter. Dr. Miyake said that 56 percent of the weight of yellowfin caught in 1973 by baitboats based at Tema, Ghana, consisted of undersized fish; most of these vessels are Japanese, and the Japanese government has given its assurance that the situation will be corrected.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

3 and 4. The 1975 fishery to date and considerations for the remainder of 1975 concerning the exploitation of the yellowfin tuna (Background Paper No. 1)

After the intergovernmental meeting the IATTC meeting was reconvened at 11:45 a.m. on March 5.

The chairman summarized the results of the first part of the Commission meeting. It had been agreed that the quota would remain at 175,000 tons, with the possibility of increasing it to 195,000 tons, but the question of whether or not to amend the resolution passed at the 30th meeting of the Commission so as to eliminate unrestricted fishing after the closure date was still to be resolved.

Mr. Van Campen stated that the United States was opposed to this change because the stock of yellowfin seems to be in good condition, because the United States vessel owners have made their plans for 1975 on the basis of regulations conforming to the recent resolution, and could not change these plans without economic hardship, and because most of the United States vessels which have been built recently and which are now being built have been designed on the premise that unregulated fishing will be permitted after the closure date by vessels which are in port at the time of the closure and which are able to return to sea within the grace period. The last unregulated trip is a kind of guarantee to United States fishermen that they can fill their vessels at least once each season, and is thus equivalent to the special allocations that some of the other countries enjoy. The problem of the Commission staff in choosing the closure date is recognized, but nevertheless the staff has been able to do sufficiently well that the catch has always been fairly close to the quota. The United States will seriously consider a revised system of regulation which eliminates unregulated fishing after the closure date, and be prepared to discuss this at the next meeting of the Commission. In 1975, due to decreased demand for tuna, the fishermen who return to port just before the closure date will be under pressure to sell their fish at disadvantageous prices in order to be able to return to sea again within the 30-day grace period. It was therefore proposed that the grace period be either 30 days or 15 days after the vessel is unloaded,



whichever occurs later.

Dr. Joseph stated that a basic problem confronting the Commission is that the resource of fish is not large enough to provide adequate catches for all the vessels in the fleet. The annual catch per vessel capacity ton is now about 2 1/2 tons of fish, which is enough for the operators to do little more than break even. If each vessel were to get 3 tons of fish per vessel capacity ton, which would keep them in a better economic position, 500,000 tons of production will be needed each year, which is 150,000 tons more than was taken in 1975. Also, due to the construction of additional vessels, in the near future an additional 100,000 tons of production will be needed.

Ambassador Mercado and Mr. Diaz Rojo said that Mexico was very concerned about conservation, and thought that economic considerations should be secondary to prevention of overexploitation. They were therefore surprised that the United States insisted on maintaining the last trip and should want to change the grace period mentioned above. Mr. Nanne agreed with Ambassador Mercado and Mr. Diaz Rojo. Mr. Tibbo stated that Canada supported the United States in this matter for the same reasons that Mr. Van Campen gave, but said that he recognized that the changes would probably have to be made in the near future to eliminate unrestricted fishing after the closure date.

Ambassador Mercado suggested that if the resolution is not amended Dr. Joseph be given the authority, after the closure date, to announce that all vessels which were on their last unregulated trips would have to end those trips to prevent the total catch for the year from exceeding the quota. After further discussion on this and on the other proposals for amendment of the resolution it was agreed that none was acceptable to all, and that therefore the resolution would remain unchanged.

#### 5. The porpoise-tuna relationship and associated problems

The United States proposal in Appendix 2 was discussed, and the Commissioners agreed that this was acceptable for 1975, but further consideration would be required before such a proposal could be approved for subsequent years.

#### 6. Other business

Mr. Loker announced that Ambassador Castro y Castro of Mexico was absent from the meeting due to illness, and that his presence was severely missed. He suggested that the chairman send him a letter expressing the good will of all those present and the hope that he would recover quickly and attend the next Commission meeting. The chairman said that he had already prepared a telegram to that effect, and would read it to determine if it met the approval of the Commissioners. He did so, and it was approved unanimously.

Mr. Loker then told of a heroic act by Ambassador Mercado, in which he had volunteered to serve as a hostage on an airplane carrying terrorists from Nicaragua to Cuba. He proposed that the Director of Investigations of the Commission prepare a suitable scroll recognizing this act for presentation to Ambassador Mercado. This was also approved unanimously.

#### 7. Adjournment

The chairman expressed his pleasure at having had the opportunity to preside at a meeting in San Diego, and gave his thanks to Dr. Joseph and his staff, to the host delegation of the United States, and to Mr. Carlos Díez, the interpreter. Several others expressed similar sentiments, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

APPENDIX 1

APENDICE 1

ATTENDEES TO THE XXXI MEETING OF THE  
INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION  
San Diego, California, March 3, 1975

ASISTENTES A LA XXXI REUNION DE LA  
COMISION INTERAMERICANA DEL ATUN TROPICAL  
San Diego, California, 3 de marzo 1975

CANADA

Commissioners  
Delegados

E. B. Young  
S. N. Tibbo  
G. E. Waring

Advisers - Asesores

J. F. McAvoy  
B. M. Chatwin

COSTA RICA

Commissioner  
Delegado

Fernando Flores B.

Advisers - Asesores

Herbert Nanne E.  
Gabriela Myers  
Fran Leland

FRANCE - FRANCIA

Commissioner and Chairman  
Delegado y Presidente

Robert Letaconnoux

JAPAN - JAPON

Commissioner Alternates  
Delegados Suplentes

Koichiro Seki  
Shigenobu Kato

MEXICO

Commissioners  
Delegados

Arturo Diaz Rojo  
Joaquin Mercado  
Amin Zarur-Menez  
Pedro Mercado

Advisers - Asesores

Jesus Nieto  
Luis Garcia Cacho  
Ricardo Gutierrez Cabal  
Norma Cordero  
Salvador Lepe  
Alfonso Jurado Salazar  
Felix Iniguez

Observers - Observadores

Alejandro Martinez Ruiz  
Noemi Arce Guillen

NICARAGUA

Commissioners  
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Gilberto Bergman P., Secretary-Secretario  
Antonio Flores Arana

Adviser - Asesor

Octavio Gutierrez

PANAMA

Commissioner  
Delegado

Juan L. de Obarrio

Advisor - Asesor

Carolina T. Mouritzen

UNITED STATES - ESTADOS UNIDOS

Commissioners  
Delegados

John G. Driscoll, Jr.  
Wilvan G. Van Campen  
Robert C. Macdonald  
Donald P. Loker

Advisors - Asesores

John J. Royal  
O. E. Kerns, Jr.  
C. R. Carry  
Robert Kaneen  
Anthony Pisano  
Ralph Spinello  
Anthony Nizetich  
Gerald V. Howard  
Gordon C. Broadhead  
Barbara Keith  
Edward P. Silva  
George K. Alameda  
Janous J. Marks  
Edmund Gann  
Jack C. Bowland  
Peter Buchan  
August Felando  
O. A. Schulz  
Brian S. Hallman

Observers - Observadores

Luciano Brito  
C. G. Da Rosa  
Robert Young  
Cosimo A. Cutri, Sr.  
Cosimo L. Cutri, Jr.  
John F. Mauricio  
Brian J. Rothschild  
William Fox Jr.  
Daniel D. Huppert  
Norman A. Mendes  
Virginia G. Flagg  
E. A. Keen  
Andrew Sanfilippo  
William C. Miller  
W. H. Babcock  
Richard E. Zellers  
Manuel S. Andrade  
Susan Farrell  
George Sousa  
Victor Bernardino  
Vincent J. Guarrasi  
Arthur Ramsay  
Manuel S. Jorge  
John J. Silveira  
Pete Castagnola  
Joseph Madruga  
Bill Gillis, Jr.  
John D. Gonnerman  
Jack Tarantino  
Louis Castagnola  
Agostino Guidi  
Vito Romani  
Manuel A. Silva  
Mike Bono  
V. Jim Bozzo  
John Lococo  
George Rees  
Raymond G. Rosa  
Kenneth Hudson  
Jorge Sandoval  
Lester Baliger

ECUADOR

Observer - Observador

Raul Serrano

NETHERLANDS ANTILLES-ANTILLAS HOJANDESAS

Observer - Observador

Hendrik Clemente Girigorie

PERU

Observer - Observador

Eduardo Rosenfeld

REPUBLIC OF CHINA-REPUBLICA DE CHINA

Observer - Observador

Rong Tszong Yang

REPUBLIC OF KOREA-REPUBLICA DE COREA

Observer - Observador

Han Mo Kim

ICCAT - CICAA

Observer - Observador

Peter M. Miyake

Carlos Diez, Interpreter - Interprete

IATTC - CIAT

James Joseph, Director of Investigations

William H. Bayliff

Robert C. Francis

Joseph W. Greenough

Craig J. Orange

Patrick K. Tomlinson

Gary D. Sharp

Thomas P. Calkins

Michael Hunter

Regina A. Newman, Secretary-Secretaria

Kathy Lewandowski, Secretary-Secretaria

## APPENDIX 2

### United States Statement on Porpoise-Tuna Research

In recent years the United States Government has become increasingly concerned about the protection of marine mammal populations. It is the policy of the United States Government to protect and conserve marine mammals and to encourage their development to the greatest extent feasible commensurate with sound resource management and the maintenance of the health and stability of the marine ecosystem. This policy is reflected in the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972. Of particular concern to the United States is the mortality and serious injury of porpoise which occurs during purse seining for yellowfin tuna in the eastern tropical Pacific.

It is the goal of the United States that the incidental kill and serious injury of marine mammals occurring in the course of commercial fishing operations be reduced to insignificant levels approaching a zero mortality and serious injury rate. Regulations governing this matter applicable to U. S. fishermen have been issued and are now in effect.

The United States is carrying out research on the impact of tuna fishing on porpoise populations, and is working to develop types of gear and fishing methods which minimize harm to porpoise associated with yellowfin tuna. However, in order to accurately assess the impact of tuna fishing on porpoise populations, it is important that data be collected.

IATTC members have a common interest in conserving yellowfin tuna, and we believe also share a common interest in protecting and conserving porpoise which are involved in the fishing operations. In data presented to the Commission at previous Annual Meetings, the United States notes that many of the IATTC members, as well as non-members, catch a substantial portion of their yellowfin tuna in association with porpoise (see attached table). The United States also notes from other IATTC reports that fishing for yellowfin tuna in association with porpoise is a very efficient method and may even have contributed significantly to the present two-fold increase in yellowfin catch above early estimates of the yellowfin tuna maximum sustainable yield. It seems to the United States, therefore, that it is in everyone's best interest to ensure that the porpoise populations are conserved, if for no other reason than to ensure a maximum yield from the yellowfin tuna resource.

In this connection, the United States has initiated plans to discuss collection and analysis of data on porpoise with other nations involved in the yellowfin purse seine tuna fishery. An international methodology

workshop was planned for November, 1974, in La Jolla, California, but was canceled because of difficulties resulting from the short notice given. Your representatives were invited to this workshop, which has now been rescheduled for the fall of 1975, in La Jolla, Calif. You will be advised of the details as they become known. It is hoped that all countries will be represented in this scientific exchange and will continue to share an interest in the protection of marine mammal populations.

The United States research and regulations to reduce porpoise mortality are important to all countries who export tunafish to the United States. The provisions of the Marine Mammal Protection Act require that a ban be placed on the importation of commercial fish or products from fish which have been caught with commercial fishing technology which results in the incidental kill or incidental serious injury of ocean mammals in excess of U.S. standards. U.S. regulations have been promulgated which require that yellowfin tuna may not be imported if caught in a manner prohibited for persons subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S.

The United States program to develop fishing gear and technology which will protect porpoises has had dual benefits. We have found that gear and techniques which are effective in reducing the mortality of porpoises often contributes to a more efficient fishing operation, and as noted above, conserving porpoises most likely would result in improved yellowfin tuna production. This should interest all who fish for tuna by setting on porpoises.

The most effective research has been conducted aboard purse seine vessels in actual fishing operations, and it is our policy to continue this research in an effort to reduce the porpoise mortality to as near zero as possible.

In order to carry out an effective gear research program in 1975 the U.S. is requesting that 1000 tons of the IATTC quota be allocated for gear research in the Commission Yellowfin Regulatory Area. Part of this allocation would be used to schedule a 45-day gear fishing cruise in the CYRA beginning approximately June 1, 1975 or as soon thereafter as possible. The purpose of the cruise will be to test a purse seine net modification called the "porpoise apron" and the use of very small mesh netting in the purse seine net to reduce the possibility of porpoise becoming entangled during releasing operations. The "porpoise apron" provides for a shallow area just inside the circle of the purse seine so that the tuna are not as likely to escape while the encircled porpoise are being released.

The balance of the allocation will be used in August through October to conduct tagging, behavior, and additional gear testing of the "porpoise apron", small mesh netting, a "zipper" system for releasing porpoise, and the use of a searchlight system during sets of the net near sundown.

The U.S. proposes to make the results of these gear trials available to all member nations of the IATTC in order that they can be utilized to implement porpoise protection measures and refine fishing techniques.

The U. S. is implementing training sessions for U.S. fishermen to inform them of the U.S. law and of newly developed techniques and gear. We propose to make material from this program available to other nations which may wish to establish similar training programs for their fishermen.

Because we believe that IATTC members share a common interest in conserving and protecting marine mammals involved in purse seine fishing, we propose that the IATTC establish provisions for an annual allocation of yellowfin tuna for the purpose of porpoise/tuna research beginning in 1976, and that the IATTC member nations undertake a joint porpoise/tuna research program involving census, porpoise tagging, behavior and gear.

As I mentioned earlier, the U.S. has announced a workshop to be conducted at La Jolla in the Fall, 1975, and has requested that representatives from purse seine fishing nations attend. We further propose that representatives who attend be prepared to discuss the details of a joint program to be developed for presentation for the Commission's approval in 1976.

Attachment



TABLE 1. Estimated percentages of yellowfin and skipjack catch from porpoise schools in the CYRA and outside the CYRA (east of 150°W) by flag of vessel, 1970-1973. The estimates are based on single set-data from non-regulated and regulated trips combined.

TABLA 1. Porcentajes estimados de las capturas de atún aleta amarilla y barrilete obtenidos en cardámenes de delfines en el ARCAA y fuera del ARCAA (al este de los 150°W), por bandera de los barcos, 1970-1973. Las estimaciones están basadas en datos de caladas individuales de viajes tanto sin reglamentar como reglamentados.

FLAG - BANDERA	1970				1971				1972				1973				1974*			
	Yellowfin		Skipjack		Yellowfin		Skipjack		Yellowfin		Skipjack		Yellowfin		Skipjack		Yellowfin		Skipjack	
	Aleta amarilla	Barrilete	Aleta amarilla	Barrilete	Aleta amarilla	Barrilete	Aleta amarilla	Barrilete	Aleta amarilla	Barrilete	Aleta amarilla	Barrilete	Aleta amarilla	Barrilete	Aleta amarilla	Barrilete	Aleta amarilla	Barrilete	Aleta amarilla	Barrilete
Bermuda	---	---	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Canada	55.6	0.1	12.3	0.2	70.7	0.2	2.1	6.9	0.1	67.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	18.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Costa Rica	---	---	8.6	0.0	89.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Ecuador	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
France	---	---	10.7	5.3	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Japan	100.0	0.0	17.2	0.0	99.5	0.0	23.7	57.8	0.0	46.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	24.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mexico	24.4	1.7	20.9	0.0	47.7	0.0	0.4	86.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	46.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Netherlands	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Panama	61.3	0.0	18.8	0.2	96.6	0.2	32.5	34.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	61.6	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Peru	---	---	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	35.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Spain	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.2	0.0	0.0	38.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	61.6	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
U.S.A.	69.0	19.6	68.4	1.2	77.2	3.0	61.5	1.6	1.6	61.5	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	54.6	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7
Subtotals	64.2	15.0	59.2	1.0	73.6	2.9	57.8	0.0	0.0	57.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	52.6	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4
Outside CYRA, east of 150°W - Fuera del ARCAA, al este de los 150°W																				
Panama	100.0	---	---	---	100.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	97.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
U.S.A.	95.4	61.9	95.5	60.7	98.4	23.9	96.3	51.4	51.4	96.3	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5
Subtotals	95.4	62.5	95.5	60.7	98.5	28.6	96.3	22.5	22.5	96.3	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5
CYRA plus outside of CYRA - En el ARCAA y fuera del ARCAA																				
TOTALS	69.4	21.5	66.2	1.6	79.4	4.2	62.2	1.6	1.6	62.2	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	62.2	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6

\* unregulated only

