

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103RD MEETING

**Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025**

PROPOSAL IATTC-103 C-1

CHAIR'S PROPOSAL

RESOLUTION C-25-xx

**ON TERMS OF REFERENCE OF AN *AD HOC* IATTC-WCPFC JOINT
WORKING GROUP ON SOUTH PACIFIC ALBACORE TUNA**

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

In its Resolution C-24-04 on South Pacific albacore tuna (SPALB), the Commission agreed that, in 2026, it would receive from the IATTC scientific staff and the Scientific Advisory Committee, proposed reference points compatible with those adopted by WCPFC. The Resolution also encouraged CPCs and the IATTC staff to work with SPC and WCPFC on the stock structure of SP ALB and to develop a harvest strategy throughout the stock's range.

Subsequently, in December 2024, the WCPFC requested its Chair to coordinate with the IATTC Chair about the possibility of establishing an IATTC-WCPFC Joint Working Group on South Pacific albacore tuna (SPAJWG) to facilitate coordination between the two commissions on the conservation and management of this stock.

The IATTC Chair prepared a set of draft of Terms of Reference (TORs) for the SPAJWG, which were circulated to the Commission's Members on March 10, 2025, asking for their comments, which were reflected in a revised draft. That draft was then shared with the WCPFC Chair and Secretariat. Both parties then agreed that the delegation of the United States, which had also produced a set of draft TORs as mandated by the WCPFC, would be entrusted with producing a consolidated version of these two texts.

The consolidated TORs were reviewed and revised during two joint informal meetings of members of IATTC and WCPFC on May 19 and July 31, 2025. Excepting the preamble, the draft resolution below reproduces exactly the text that was agreed during these meetings, with a view at their formal adoption by each Commission successively without further changes, the IATTC in September and the WCPFC in December. It is expected that the first meeting of the SPAJWG would take place during the first months of 2026, at a date to be jointly agreed.

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in Panama City at the occasion of its 103rd Meeting:

Considering the mandates for cooperation and coordination between the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) with respect to the south Pacific albacore tuna contained in, inter alia, IATTC Resolution C-24-04 and the recommendation adopted by the WCPFC at its 21st meeting instructing the Chair of the WCPFC to help develop Terms of Reference for the establishment of a Joint Working Group;

Recognizing the importance of South Pacific albacore as a tuna species harvested by members of both Commissions;

In accordance with the provisions of Article XXIV of the Antigua Convention and taking into account Article 22 of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean;

Agrees:

To establish an IATTC-WCPFC Joint Working Group on South Pacific albacore tuna (SPAJWG) to enhance cooperation between WCPFC and IATTC for South Pacific albacore tuna research and management, with the following terms of reference:

1. The SPAJWG shall be composed of representatives designated by Members of both Commissions and WCPFC Participating Territories, and who may be accompanied by such experts or advisors as each Member may deem appropriate. The SPAJWG may also include, as observers, representatives of relevant intergovernmental organizations as well as non-governmental organizations accredited to either Commission.
2. The functions of the SPAJWG shall be the following:
 - a. To develop a common understanding and approach for the conservation and management of South Pacific albacore in both convention areas;
 - b. To enhance the harmonization of harvest strategies and other conservation and management actions through, inter alia, the development of a workplan for the SPAJWG, which shall be developed at its inaugural meeting in the first half of 2026;
 - c. To develop compatible and/or harmonized management arrangements or measures for South Pacific albacore, as appropriate, across all fisheries, including the coordination of catch and/or effort levels between the two Commissions;
 - d. To coordinate scientific research and analyses and facilitate the collection and exchange of relevant fisheries data, scientific knowledge, and expertise;
 - e. To identify priority areas for improvement in monitoring, reporting, and data sharing;
 - f. To collaborate in the identification of ways to streamline the relevant decision-making processes within each Commission to ensure efficient progress towards the robust conservation and management of South Pacific albacore;
 - g. To undertake additional tasks related to South Pacific albacore, as appropriate and pursuant to corresponding requests from both Commissions;
 - h. To report to each Commission on the advances of its work.
3. Regarding the overlap area, the SPAJWG may consider recommendations for coordinated data collection, scientific work, and management in this area, taking into account decisions jointly taken by the two Commissions.

4. Each Commission will appoint a co-chair of the SPAJWG for the term each will determine.
5. The Secretariats of both Commissions will coordinate the adoption and implementation of all arrangements needed for the work of the SPAJWG. This includes the preparation, translation, and dissemination of meeting documents, information sharing, in a manner consistent with the applicable rules and procedures of each Commission. Unless otherwise provided for, the IATTC Secretariat shall be responsible for providing simultaneous English-Spanish interpretation for meetings of the SPAJWG, and the translation of meeting documents between the two languages, as appropriate.
6. Meetings of the SPAJWG will be convened by the Co-Chairs, consistent with the relevant rules of procedure of both Commissions, and in consultation with the Chair and Director of each Commission, in a format to be decided on a case-by-case basis (virtual, presential or hybrid), taking into account the matters to be discussed and *inter alia*, the availability of funding.
7. The SPAJWG shall adopt its conclusions and recommendations by consensus. If efforts to achieve consensus fail, the meeting reports shall so indicate and shall reflect the SPAJWG discussions.
8. The conclusions and recommendations adopted by the SPAJWG shall be submitted to both Commissions, as well as to their subsidiary bodies as appropriate.
9. In order to optimize its work, as appropriate, the SPAJWG, through the Co-Chairs:
 - a. will ensure coordination with other relevant subsidiary bodies of both Commissions, particularly with a view to seeking their inputs;
 - b. may seek appropriate inputs from all relevant stakeholders, such as inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations or natural persons such as scientists, researchers, managers, industries, etc.
10. These Terms of Reference shall enter into force at the time of their adoption by both Commissions, with the Terms of Reference and Workplan open for review by each Commission and revised as appropriate, annually.