INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103RD MEETING

Panama City, Panama
01 – 05 September 2025

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. General presentation of proposals submitted by Members on resolutions and others
4. Recommendations to the Commission
    a) The fishery in 2024 and status of the tuna stocks and recommendations by the Commission staff for their conservation and management
    b) Other recommendations by the Commission staff
    c) Report and recommendations of the 16th meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee
5. Review of the Commission staff's research: Strategic Science Plan (2026-2030)
6. Reports of subsidiary bodies and working groups:
    a. 3rd Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Electronic Monitoring
    b. 3rd Meeting of the Permanent Working Group on Ecosystem and Bycatch
    c. 9th Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on FADs
    d. 12th Meeting of the Committee on Administration and Finance
    e. 26th Meeting of the Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity
    f. 16th Meeting of the Committee for the Review of Implementation of Measures Adopted by the Commission
    g. 10th Meeting of the IATTC – WCPFC/NC Joint Working Group on the management of Pacific bluefin tuna
7. Climate change
8. Discussion of resolutions and recommendations
9. Implementation of Article XII.1 of the Antigua Convention
10. Election of Chair and Deputy Chair of the Commission
11. Election of Chairs of subsidiary bodies and working groups
12. Other business
13. Place and date of next meeting
14. Adjournment

APPENDICES

1.	List of attendees	
2.	**RESOLUTIONS**	
2a	Conservation measures for tropical tunas in the eastern Pacific Ocean during 2026 and 2027-2028	C-25-01
2b	Amendments to the IATTC rules of procedure	C-25-02
2c	Simplification of the IATTC legal framework including reporting obligations	C-25-03
2d	Terms of Reference of an *ad hoc* IATTC-WCPFC Joint Working Group on South Pacific Albacore Tuna	C-25-04
2e	Creation of a Working Group on Dorado	C-25-05
2f	Amendments to Resolution C-12-06 on rules of procedure regarding capacity loans or concessions and chartering of vessels with temporary transfers of	

	capacity	C-25-06
2g	Amends and replaces Resolution c-24-06 on fish-aggregating devices	C-25-07
2h	Conservation measures for the protection and sustainable management of sharks [*amends and replaces Resolution C-24-05 and previous resolutions*]	C-25-08
2i	Conservation measures for shark species, with special emphasis on the silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*), for the years 2026- 2028	C-25-09
2j	Financing for FY 2026	C-25-10

3.		**PROPOSALS (not adopted)**
3a	B-1	**KOR, USA.** Protection of cetaceans
3b	D-1	**CAN.** Climate Change
3c	G-1	**USA, FRA/OT.** Boarding and inspection procedures
3d	I-1	**ECU.** Interim reference points for swordfish in the IATTC area
3e	J-1	**ECU.** Conservation measure to establish a management strategy for tropical tuna fisheries in the eastern Pacific Ocean
3f	L-1	**EUR**. Amendment to Resolution C-19-08 on scientific observers for longline vessels
3g	M-1	**VAR**. Progress in the implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM).
3h	O-1	**VAR.** Amendment to paragraph 5c of Resolution C-14-03 [on the special sustainable development fund to strengthen the institutional capacity of developing countries and territories]
3i	P-1	**VAR.** Rules for the establishment of contributions for the participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with observer status at meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies

4	**REPORTS**
4a	Report and recommendations of the 16th Meeting of the SAC
4b	Report of the 3rd Meeting of the Working Group on Electronic Monitoring
4c	Report of the 3rd Meeting of the Permanent Working Group on Ecosystem and Bycatch
4d	Report of the 9th Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on FADs
4e	Report of the 12th Meeting of the Committee on Administration and Finance
4f	Report of the 26th Meeting of the Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity
4g	Report of the 16th Meeting of the Committee for the Review of Implementation of Measures
4h	Adopted by the Commission
4i	Report of the 10th Meeting of the IATTC – WCPFC/NC Joint Working Group on the management of Pacific bluefin tuna

5	**OTHER**
5a	Statement by the Chair of the IATTC, Mr. Andres Arens
5b	Statement by the Director of the IATTC, Dr. Arnulfo Franco
5c	Statement by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Panama (acting), Amb. Carlos Guevara Mann
5d	Statement by Bolivia on capacity
5e	Statement by Vanuatu on capacity

The 103rd meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) was held in Panama City, Panama, on 1-5 September 2025. The attendees are listed in **Appendix 1**.

1. Opening of the meeting

The meeting began after an opening ceremony with speeches by the Chair of the IATTC, Dr. Andrés Arens, the Director of the IATTC, Dr. Arnulfo Franco, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Panama (acting), Ambassador Carlos Guevara Mann; the text of these speeches is reproduced in Appendices 5 a, b, and c.

The Chair of the IATTC, Mr. Arens, thanked Panama for the kind invitation to hold the 103rd meeting of the IATTC in that city. He noted with satisfaction the presence in the room of representatives of 20 Members, with the sole absence of Kiribati, as well as the participation of four of the five Cooperating non-Members: Bolivia, Chile, Indonesia and Liberia, with only Honduras absent.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The provisional agenda was approved without changes. The following was noted:

a) Ecuador's request for an opportunity to briefly discuss the agenda of the Working Group on Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE), which held its first informal meeting in May. It was agreed that this would be done under item 6 of the agenda.

b) Requests from Bolivia and Vanuatu to make formal statements on their capacity requests. It was agreed that they could raise this matter when the report of the Working Group on Capacity is presented or make their statements as they have done previously under agenda item 12, "Other business".

3. General presentation of proposals submitted by Members on resolutions and others

Before the general presentation of the proposed resolutions began, the Members considered the procedural matter of the deadline for submitting and publishing the proposals. In response to a question raised by Korea, the Secretariat confirmed that all proposals had been received 21 days before the IATTC meeting, in line with the rules of procedure. However, several delegations pointed out that this limit as a trigger for internal translation and publication processes was insufficient time for proper review of the proposals. It was therefore proposed that the IATTC rules of procedure be amended to extend the deadline for submission of proposals from 21 to 30 days before the meeting, and the deadline for publication by the Secretariat from 10 to 17 days. These amendments were subsequently included in a text by the Chair and adopted as Resolution C-25-02.

Similarly, the suggestion put forward by Mexico and Guatemala that documents submitted by delegations in both languages may be published by the Secretariat as preliminary documents to expedite the review process was accepted, without exempting the Secretariat from its task of validating the translation.

Following a well-established practice, Members were given the opportunity to present their proposed resolutions. Nineteen proposals were presented, allowing the process of consideration and discussion to begin before reaching agenda item 8. All these proposals are published on the Commission's website. Those that did not result in the adoption of a resolution are included in their latest version in the appendices of these minutes.

4. Recommendations to the Commission

4 a) The fishery in 2024 and status of the tuna stocks and recommendations by the Commission staff for their conservation and management

Dr. Alexandre Aires-da-Silva, IATTC Coordinator of Scientific Research, made a detailed presentation of the item under consideration, based on document IATTC-103-01a, which describes the status of the fishery in 2024.

In general terms, he mainly emphasized the following points:

Overview of catches:

- In 2024, record-high tuna catches were achieved in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) surpassing 1 million tons and exceeding the 10-year average by 40%.
- The purse-seine fleet accounted for 86% of the catches, the longline fleet for 9%, and 5% was caught using other fishing gears.
- Skipjack tuna (SKJ) accounted for 43% of the catches, yellowfin tuna (YFT) for 35%, and bigeye tuna (BET) for 12%.

Trends by species:

- Yellowfin tuna: Catches have been high for the past three years (2022–2024), reaching over 294,000 tons in, which is 20% above the 10-year average. Fishing associated with dolphins remains the primary method of harvesting. It was noted that 2025 could be an exceptional year for yellowfin fisheries, with catches exceeding those of the last three years.
- Skipjack tuna: A record high of 645,000 tons was recorded in 2024, which is double the 10-year average. Approximately 55% of the total skipjack tuna catch is certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC).
- Bigeye tuna: On average during the period 2022-2024, catches of bigeye tuna in the floating-object fishery decreased by 36% compared to pre-2022 levels, when the individual vessel threshold (IVT) measure was implemented. The IVT's effectiveness is confirmed by a reduction in fishing mortality, not just in catches. However, an increase in bigeye catches is expected in 2025 due to strong recruitment associated with El Niño events in 2023 and 2024.
- Longline Catch per Unit Effort (CPUE): At the end of 2024, the longline fleet, especially that of Japan and Korea, began to see an increase in bigeye tuna catch, which could be a beneficial effect of the IVT measure. The IATTC scientific staff is using longline operational data to improve the reliability of abundance indices.

Dr. Aires-da-Silva then presented the IATTC staff's recommendations for the conservation and management of the main temperate and tropical tuna species, highlighting the following:

- **Conservation measures:** The scientific staff acknowledged that the 2025 and 2026 measures are already in force; however, if the Commission wishes to adjust them, the results of the assessments would allow for a maximum reduction of 10 days of the closure period. It was also assessed that eliminating the “corralito” would only allow for a three-day reduction.
- **Individual vessel thresholds (IVT) and Enhanced Monitoring Program (EMP)**: The implementation of the EMP has led to a significant reduction in juvenile bigeye tuna mortality. Therefore, the scientific staff recommends its continuation or, preferably, the adoption of an Integrated Port Sampling Program (IPSP) that would provide more reliable and detailed estimates.
- **Tuna tagging program:** Dr. Aires-da-Silva emphasized that if the Commission wishes to assess the skipjack tuna stock in 2029, a tropical tuna tagging program must be implemented and funded as soon as possible, as it is the only way to obtain a reliable abundance index for these species.

This presentation prompted a series of questions and comments from Members, highlighting the following points:

- Venezuela expressed concern about the increase in juvenile bigeye tuna catches in 2025. It also expressed concern that this could encourage fleets fishing with FADs to target dolphin-associated fisheries, especially given that yellowfin tuna stocks appear to be healthy. Dr. Aires-da-Silva explained that the current situation of large yellowfin catches in 2025 is due to strong recruitment,

which increases fish availability. High catches in 2025 do not raise concerns about current measures or those recommended by the staff.

- Guatemala requested an assessment of the differentiated impact of a 10-day reduction of the closure period as opposed to a 15-day reduction. Dr. Aires-da-Silva indicated that the difference would not be significant. However, it is important to ensure that any reduction is implemented in short increments that allow the scientific staff to evaluate its effects. He noted that a maximum reduction of ten days would be consistent with similar reductions adopted by other RFMOs. In response to a question from Guatemala, Dr. Aires-da-Silva clarified again that a recent analysis confirmed the impact of the "corralito" on bigeye tuna corresponds to an average of three days of closure in the EPO, with no significant effect on other species, but without taking into account the other benefits provided by the "corralito" in a broader context, for example in relation to biodiversity in general within the framework of the BBNJ process, given the imminent entry into force of the Agreement.
- China asked whether the healthy status of tuna stocks could also imply an increase in the catch limits established for the longline fleet. Dr. Aires-da-Silva responded that an increase in fishing mortality is possible and could be considered within the framework of a comprehensive management strategy.
- Ecuador expressed satisfaction with the scientific work carried out and the recommendations made by the staff, and supported the options presented therein, further highlighting that they align with the precautionary approach.
- The United States referred specifically to the tuna tagging program and inquired about the remaining funds from the previous year and their use. Dr. Aires-da-Silva replied that they were available and earmarked as "seed funding" as part of a campaign to raise the funds needed to implement the program.

4b. Other recommendations by the Commission staff

The Scientific Research Coordinator, Dr. Aires-da-Silva, presented Document IATTC-103-01b, which includes staff recommendations on management and data collection. This document covers the following main areas of work: 1) Tuna management; 2) Non-target species; 3) Data collection; 4) Tuna tagging; 5) Data from large longline vessels; 6) Ecosystem considerations; 7) Fish-aggregating devices; 8) Observer coverage on purse-seiners and longliners.

4c. c) Report and recommendations of the 16th meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee)

Director Dr. Arnulfo Franco reported on the 16th SAC meeting, which he chaired and which was held in June 2025. He drew the participants' attention to the following:

- The recommendations that were adopted by the SAC for consideration and approval by the Commission. The text of these recommendations can be found in document IATTC-103-02 (Appendix 4a).
- The recommendations of the Bycatch and FAD Working Groups, as discussed and approved by the SAC, can be found in the SAC recommendations document mentioned in the previous paragraph.

The recommendations issued by the SAC were generally endorsed by the Commission.

5. Review of the Commission staff's research: Strategic Science Plan (2026-2030)

The Coordinator of Scientific Research, Dr. Alexandre Aires-da-Silva presented the IATTC Strategic Science Plan for 2026-2030. He addressed the following topics in his presentation:

- **Achievements and challenges of the previous plan (2019-2025)**

Dr. Aires-da-Silva highlighted the achievements of the previous plan, including the completion of assessments for three species of tropical tuna and the development of risk analyses considering multiple models. Significant progress was also made in carrying out three tagging campaigns that enabled the

assessment of the skipjack tuna (SKJ) stock. Opportunities for improvement were also identified, primarily regarding the inability to complete the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) for bigeye and yellowfin tuna as planned. This was due to the departure of the scientist responsible for coordinating this matter and the subsequent need for additional time to develop candidate strategies.

- **Goals of the new plan (2026-2030)**

Stock assessments and MSE: The main objective is to complete Management Strategy Evaluations (MSEs) for the three tuna species by 2030. The scientific staff was reorganized so that the three stock assessment scientists now share responsibility for the MSE of their respective species.

Tagging program: Dr. Aires-da-Silva emphasized the critical importance of a new tropical tuna tagging program for the stock assessment of skipjack tuna, as there is no other method for obtaining a reliable index of abundance for this species.

Research and collaboration: The plan includes continuing studies on tuna biology and behavior. It also involves collaborating with other RFMOs and entities on assessments for transpacific species, such as bluefin tuna and billfish. Additionally, ecology and climate change issues will be addressed, and a proposed Integrated Port Sampling Program (IPSP) aims to improve data collection.

Achotines Laboratory: Dr. Aires-da-Silva emphasized that this laboratory is the only facility in the world that has successfully bred yellowfin tuna in captivity for nearly 30 years. This offers great potential for research and obtaining external funding.

Dr. Aires-da-Silva's presentation was well-received and prompted comments from the delegations, including the following:

Project prioritization: The European Union and Mexico emphasized the importance of prioritizing the activities outlined in the Strategic Science Plan. They argued that the budget is limited and not all projects are equally urgent. The European Union recommended allocating resources to stock assessment and fisheries management, the Commission's "core business", and postponing or eliminating lower-priority projects. Dr. Aires-da-Silva acknowledged that prioritization was necessary, as the volume of work requested by the Commission has become unsustainable with the current resources available.

Project funding: Mexico suggested actively seeking external funding for conducting non-essential projects, such as those relating to dolphins or genetic studies, which are financed with extra-budgetary resources, a practice that has been used successfully in the past. Venezuela argued that science should not be limited by economic considerations, especially given the tuna industry's years of high profits, and criticized the practice of requesting more work from the Secretariat without allocating the necessary funds.

Fleet growth: In response to questions about the implications of increasing the capacity of the longline fleet, Dr. Aires-da-Silva replied that an increase in fishing mortality could be considered, given that tropical tuna stocks are currently healthy. This could take several forms: a reduction in closure days, an increase in catch limits, etc. However, any increase in this fleet's capacity should be considered within the framework of a management strategy that includes implementing a management plan for that capacity.

6. Reports of subsidiary bodies and working groups

a) Report of the 3rd Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Electronic Monitoring

The Co-Chair of the Group, Mr. Colin Brinkman, of the United States, presented a report on the third meeting held on 25 August 2025, highlighting that a discussion paper was presented by the Co-Chairs (WGEM-03-01) proposing an order of topics to be discussed by the working group going forward, including: interim minimum data collection standards and priorities and implications; financial implications for implementation of interim standards and priorities; EMS objectives and scope; institutional structure; management considerations (except goals and scope, and financial considerations); final data collection

standards and priorities; technical standards; financial considerations for standard implementation and final priorities.

He highlighted that The Nature Conservancy made some presentations that can be found here: Piloto de Monitoreo Electrónico en Palangre Industrial y Artesanal and The Nature Conservancy Electronic Monitoring presentation. Finally, he stated that, despite the adoption of provisional standards for EM (Resolution C-24-09) in 2024, no voluntary data has been submitted to the Secretariat.

The Group concluded that moving beyond the voluntary data submission model was necessary. To achieve this objective, it was proposed that two intersessional meetings be held, and that work be done to develop a non-voluntary implementation scheme.

In his capacity as Co-Chair of the Group, Mr. Guillermo Morán, of Ecuador, noted that the need for more time to review complex documents was discussed. It was proposed that work be carried out by correspondence to prepare a document to be considered at a special meeting in 2026. He added that two virtual intersessional meetings are planned and that funds will be sought to pay for simultaneous interpretation.

b) Report of the 3rd Meeting of the Permanent Working Group on Ecosystem and Bycatch (EBWG)

In his capacity as Co-Chair of the Working Group on Ecosystem and Bycatch (EBWG), Mr. Manuel Correia, of Venezuela, presented his report on the 3rd meeting of the Group, which was held in La Jolla, California, on 26-27 May 2024. He noted that the Group adopted several recommendations forwarded to the 16th meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and incorporated into the SAC's recommendations. The Director, in his capacity as SAC Chair, had already reported these recommendations to the Commission under agenda item 4c. A summary report of the meeting is available on the IATTC website: EBWG-03 Meeting Report.

During the presentation of this report, the European Union emphasized that this Working Group, the SAC, and other bodies with scientific and technical mandates should focus on science and avoid procedural and legalistic discussions. These discussions have recently consumed a lot of time during meetings, distracting attention from the substantive issues on the agenda.

On the other hand, Mexico reiterated that associated or dependent species that are not the primary focus of the Commission and its Secretariat should only be addressed if they interact with tuna and tuna-like species fisheries. For instance, the report on sharks should focus solely on their bycatch.

The Commission endorsed the report and its recommendations.

c) Report of the 9th Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on FADs

Dr. Josu Santiago, the Chair of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on FADs, presented his report on the Group's 9th meeting, which was held on 28-29 May 2025 in La Jolla. He also gave a presentation on the adopted recommendations. The text of the report, including the recommendations, is included as Appendix 4e of these minutes.

There were no comments, and the Commission endorsed the report that had already been submitted to the SAC.

d) Report of the 12th Meeting of the Committee on Administration and Finance (CAF)

In her capacity as Chair of the 12th meeting of the CAF, Ms. Rachael Wadsworth, of the United States, presented her report (Appendix 4f). She noted that the meeting was held on 28-29 August in Panama City. She reported that three intersessional meetings were held via videoconference in June, July and August, and confirmed that the corresponding reports are available online.

The CAF continued to discuss the issues raised at the intersessional meetings, including the projected budget for 2026, the AIDCP's proposal to adjust the IATTC's contribution percentage to the AIDCP Observer Program, and the proposed budget reductions. During these meetings, the Secretariat was asked to develop additional budget scenarios, which were presented to the CAF.

Under item 4 on its agenda, the CAF heard a presentation from the auditor Moss Adams, which merged with Baker Tilly. Consistent with the previous agreement not to maintain a relationship with the same auditor indefinitely, the Committee reviewed a list of potential auditors for 2026 for the review of fiscal year 2025 and their respective quotes. This information was provided on the Commission's restricted-access website. Guatemala, with the support of the United States, emphasized the need to periodically change the companies selected for this task as a matter of good administrative and financial management, and proposed hiring Lavine, Lofgren, Morris & Engelberg, CPAs due to its experience, staff, and service costs.

Under item 5 of its agenda, the CAF heard a presentation by the Secretariat and the Director of the IATTC on document CAF-12-01, which includes several budget scenarios for 2026. The CAF also requested and reviewed additional budget scenarios requested by Committee members. The Committee could not reach a consensus on this item and left it for consideration by the Commission's plenary.

Under agenda item 6, the Committee heard a presentation by the Secretariat on document CAF-12-02 (Special Fund for promoting institutional capacity-building under Resolution C-14-03) and document CAF-12-03 (Regional program of observers for transshipments at sea under Resolution C-22-03). Regarding the extension of the contract with MRAG for transshipment observers, several Members requested additional information on price increases and asked for a reduction. Thanks to the Secretariat's efforts to accommodate the reduction requested by Members, the Commission was able to approve a three-year extension of the contract.

Regarding the special Fund for promoting institutional capacity-building of developing Members, the Committee noted that, as of July 2025, the available resources in the Fund amounted to US$ 607,488. The Committee reviewed proposals for activities to be financed by the Fund in 2025–2026 and did not object to their implementation. It was determined that the fund's current availability, considering the commitments for 2025 and those projected for 2026, can be perfectly covered by this availability.

With regard to item 7 on its agenda, the Committee concluded that, due to lack of time, it would consider the issue of revising the Commission's financial regulations in the future.

Following the presentation of the report by the Chair of the CAF, several Heads of Delegation meetings were necessary (including in their capacity as Parties to the AIDCP), in order to reach consensus on the various components of the IATTC budget for 2026, as follows:

- The Commission approved a budget of US$ 9,250,111 for 2026. This includes the IATTC's contribution to the AIDCP Observer Program (US$ 815,168) and US$ 460,000 for the Integrated Port Sampling Program. On an exceptional basis and for this year only, it was decided not to allocate budgetary resources to the Fund for promoting institutional capacity-building of developing Members. Guatemala requested that it be noted that it agreed with the non-allocation of budgetary resources to the Special Fund for the strengthening of institutional capacities in developing countries based on the Secretariat's statement regarding the adequacy of the Fund's resources to cover expenses in accordance with Resolution C-14-03. It also recalled that the approval of the budget does not exempt the Director and his staff from the obligation to make the most austere use possible of budget appropriations, which will be evaluated at the time of budget implementation.
- The Commission also agreed that Member contributions would remain the same as in 2023, totaling US$ 8,519,111 with the shortfall of US$ 731,000 funded as follows: a) the sum of USD$ 500,000 will be made available from the contribution that Panama will make under its payment arrangement for arrears, b) the sum of USD$ 231,000 will be made available from the tuna tagging fund.

- The Commission approved the budget for the observer program for transshipments at sea in the amount of US$ 1,037,191, with a contribution of US$ 900,000 by the participants to be allocated according to the agreed formula, as well as the signing of a contract with MRAG for 2026-2028. The contract has fixed costs of US$ 450 per day at sea up to 1,800 days, and US$ 380 for any days beyond 1,800; US$ 390 per day of travel by the observer and US$ 630 per day of training for new observers.

In addition, the Commission approved the creation of a special extra-budgetary fund to cover the cost of the Regional Tuna Tagging Program to be implemented by IATTC scientific staff, up to a total of USD$ 1,800,000.00, as per the budget attached to these minutes, which is hereby authorized for implementation as soon as the respective funds are available. This extraordinary, extrabudgetary fund will be financed by a mandatory, one-time contribution of USD$6.16 per cubic meter registered in the IATTC Regional Vessel Registry, under the conditions indicated in paragraph 41 of Resolution C-25-01.

e) Report of the 26th Meeting of the Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity

Mr. Julio Guevara, of Nicaragua, the Chair of the Working Group, presented the report of the Group's 26th meeting (see Appendix 4g). He noted that the Group adopted the following four recommendations:

- **Preparation of informational documents:** That the Commission request the Secretariat to prepare documents on the technical, quantitative and legal aspects of freezer tunnels and the sealing of wells for fuel storage, inter alia, to be used as reference by the Working Group in its future consideration of these matters.
- **Updating of documents:** That the Commission request the Secretariat to update document CAP-12-04 and, taking into account the status of resources, explore opportunities for resolving the capacity requests listed in that document.
- **Capacity discrepancies:** That the Commission instruct the Director to work with CPCs to review differences and possible conversion factors between landings in metric tons and vessel capacity in cubic meters of well volume, taking into account existing rules on confidentiality and/or disclosure of information.
- **Double-checking procedure:** That the Commission request the Secretariat to develop a proposal for a double-checking procedure that would include possible advanced verification methods to prevent cases of fraudulent capacity transfer requests.

The delegations of EU, US and Japan clearly indicated that no change in the Register of vessel capacity will be possible until a full capacity management plan is adopted by the Commission.

The Commission adopted all these recommendations.

f) Report of the 16th Meeting of the Committee for the Review of Implementation of Measures Adopted by the Commission (COR)

The Chair of the Committee, Mr. Antonio Vázquez, of El Salvador, presented his report, the text of which is included in Appendix 4g of these minutes. He noted that all Members of the Commission were present, except for Kiribati. Bolivia, Indonesia, and Liberia were present as Cooperating non-Members, while Honduras and Chile were absent. However, he noted that the Chilean delegation was present at the Commission's plenary meeting.

He emphasized that several areas of opportunity had been identified to improve the presentation of material for the Commission's analysis. It was also recognized that the CPCs' working materials and reports needed to be submitted in a timely manner to give the Secretariat sufficient time to review them and prepare them for the COR's consideration.

He reported that the Committee reviewed possible cases of non-compliance for 2024, as well as pending cases for 2019-2023.

Regarding the IUU Vessel List, Mr. Vásquez reported that Panama had withdrawn the nomination of a Venezuelan vessel from the provisional IUU list following an exchange between the two parties concerned, taking into account that the vessel had already been sanctioned by its flag State, among other things. He added that this case prompted a discussion about various aspects of the nomination process, including deadlines. It was agreed that interested Members would discuss the issue among themselves and propose an amendment to Resolution C-19-02.

Requests from Bolivia, Chile, Honduras, Indonesia, and Liberia for renewal of their status as Cooperating non-Members were all positively recommended to the Commission. The Chilean delegation clarified that its absence from the Committee meeting was due to budgetary issues and not a lack of interest or willingness.

Finally, he reported that the Committee adopted the following recommendations:

Recommendations to the Secretariat:

1. To update the document *Possible infractions reported by governments as under investigation or unanswered (2019-2023)* with information from the *Final Compliance Report* from the corresponding year, the Secretariat comments and CPC updates on the follow up actions, to facilitate the COR review. The Final Compliance Reports should be listed in chronological order in one part of the password protected compliance webpage.
2. To ensure that the *Provisional Compliance Overview* and the *Draft Provisional Compliance Report* are updated and comprehensively address the implementation of all conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission (e.g. Resolution 24-02 paragraph 3).
3. To include in the "Secretariat's comments" section of the *Draft Provisional Compliance Report*, information on instances when a CPCs response is insufficient for the Secretariat to assign the status of "Resolved".
4. To add a dropdown list that includes the different compliance statuses from Annex 2 in Resolution C-22-02, to the *Draft Provisional Compliance Report* worksheet to facilitate the COR review.
5. To include, as the first table in the *Provisional Compliance Overview*, an updated color-coded overview table of possible non-compliance cases like the one included in the presentation of the *Provisional Compliance Overview* at the COR16.
6. To ensure that the presentation on the *Provisional Compliance Overview* is posted on the password protected COR webpage fifteen days prior to the meeting and follows the same order as the *Provisional Compliance Overview* document.
7. To ensure strict adherence to the procedures and deadlines established in Resolutions adopted by the Commission to provide CPCs sufficient time for review of COR-related information and documentation. All data or reports submitted after the deadline shall be automatically reflected in the *Provisional Compliance Overview* and the *Draft provisional Compliance Report* as a "Not Resolved" and reviewed at the COR meeting.
8. To develop and present at the COR17, a document on the review of infraction trends, identifying the thematic areas and Resolutions that require special attention as identified in the *Priority elements of a draft Work Plan for the COR.[CAD]*
9. When the Secretariat notifies the CPCs of a possible infraction, and it becomes necessary to clarify the observer's report, this shall be executed through an additional document attached to the report explaining the reason for the changes made as a result of the normal review process.
10. To ensure that purse seine observers from the observer program receive appropriate training to record accurate information on FAD material design, specifically for deployed FADs, noting that

the COR has dealt with a large number of FAD material possible non-compliance cases in recent years.

11. To redact the vessel names in documents and reports that are displayed on screen and to virtual attendees during the COR meeting.

12. To ensure that the Draft Provisional Compliance Overview and the Draft Provisional Compliance Report provides information on the implementation by CPCs of obligations in relation to paragraph 3 of Resolution C-24-02 for sport catch of PBF by all CPCs.

Recommendations to the Committee:

13. Following the conclusion of the next COR meeting, to make public a summary of the *Final Compliance Report,* excluding confidential information, after ensuring sufficient time for review by the CPCs.
14. To conduct intersessional work to further develop the *Categorization of Non-Compliance Status and the Follow up Actions* document, using document COR16-INF-A as a basis. The Chair will lead this process, with the support of the Secretariat and seek input from all interested CPCs, to produce a document for discussion during the next special biennial meeting of the COR in 2026.
15. To ensure sufficient time is allocated for the specific point in the COR agenda in future years to review pending cases from previous years.
16. To review Resolutions and paragraphs provisionally marked "Resolved" in the Provisional Draft Compliance Report by the relevant CPC to ensure the status reflects COR consideration.

Recommendations to CPCs:

17. To ensure strict adherence to the procedures and deadlines established in Resolutions adopted by the Commission, in particular data submission, recalling that the delay submission of this information compromises the capacity of the Secretariat to prepare the relevant compliance reports and documents.

18. To provide the Secretariat with updates and information on the status or progress of outstanding possible non-compliance cases from the previous years where the CPC has stated that an investigation has started or for which the possible case of non-compliance is otherwise not marked as "resolved".

19. To include in the *Standard questionnaire on compliance with IATTC resolutions* an explanation when assigning a "Non-Applicable (N/A)" or "Compliant" status to a given obligation. The online/automated version of the questionnaire, when available, should not allow submission unless such explanation is provided.

Recommendations to the Commission:

20. To consider the Cooperating Non-Member status renewal request of Bolivia, Chile, Honduras, Indonesia, Liberia, properly considering the absence of Honduras and Chile from the COR16 meeting and outstanding possible non-compliance cases for Honduras and Chile for the 2024 period.
21. To review and amend as appropriate, among others, paragraph 4 of Resolution C-19-02 to extend the period of the application of this provision, as well as to improve and clarify the process of elaboration of the IUU vessel list.
22. To amend Annex 2 of Resolution C-22-02 to:
    a. Refine the definitions and criteria for all Possible Non-Compliance Issues Statuses to ensure objective and consistent application.
    b. Introduce a distinct status of "non-compliant" to be assigned in instances where a possible non-compliance issue has been substantiated and confirmed.

23. To consider it a possible very serious non-compliance case if a vessel has exceeded its Active FAD Limit by a significant number or if a vessel is over its Active FAD limit for more than 10 days.

The Commission adopted all the recommendations of the Committee for the Review of Implementation of Measures Adopted by the Commission (COR).

g) 10th Meeting of the IATTC – WCPFC/NC Joint Working Group on the management of Pacific bluefin tuna

Mr. Josh Moreira, Co-Chair of the Joint Working Group, presented his report on the results of the 10th meeting held in July 2025 in Toyama, Japan (Appendix 4 j), and recalled that the text of the Co-Chairs' report, as approved by the meeting, is published on the IATTC website: Summary of the10th Session of the Joint IATTC and WCPFC NC Working Group Meeting on the Management of PBF. The next meeting of the Working Group will be held in Nagasaki, Japan, in July 2026. He noted that an intersessional meeting of the Group would most likely be needed to facilitate the selection of a harvest strategy, similar to the one held in Monterey, California, in February 2025.

Mr. Moreira invited Mr. Brad Wiley from the IATTC staff to discuss the progress of developing a Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS) that would cover both organizations. Mr. Wiley reported that work is progressing and that budgetary issues and the possibility of a common system for both organizations are being analyzed. He mentioned that the Group's report includes a draft resolution for establishing the system, which is expected to be presented to the Commission at its 2026 annual meeting after further refinement.

Then, several delegations took the floor to highlight the following points:

- Japan noted that the Joint Working Group had developed a template to standardize reports on bluefin tuna fisheries and farming in accordance with paragraph 2 of resolution C-24-03, which takes into account elements of the Resolution, and stressed that it would be beneficial for this to be considered in the Commission's work. Japan also emphasized the importance of the next meeting of the Working Group and encouraged all interested CPCs to participate in the meeting.
- In addition to noting the healthy status of bluefin tuna stocks, Mexico emphasized that a decision has not yet been made regarding whether there should be a common system for the entire Pacific or if each commission should have its own. Mexico added that budgetary considerations are the main factor in deciding this matter.
- The United States referred to the intersessional meeting mentioned by Mr. Moreira and expressed interest in hosting it; potential venues are already being considered.
- In addition to expressing gratitude for the information provided, the European Union requested that due attention be given to Resolution C-24-03 and its implementation to ensure effectiveness.
- Pew expressed gratitude to the United States and Japan for their support in organizing these important meetings for the proper use of the resource.

7. Climate change

Dr. Jon López, from the IATTC staff, referred to the progress made on the climate change work plan in the eastern Pacific. He noted that the first workshop, which focused on discussing and defining the work plan's main objective and scope, was held via videoconference on 24-26 February 2025.

He recalled that the work plan seeks to support the development of appropriate, science-based conservation and management measures aimed at ensuring climate-resilient fisheries within the framework of the Antigua Convention and the IATTC; and that, as recommended by the staff, "*the IATTC should make all efforts to ensure that the resources required for an appropriate development and implementation of the workplan are made available, including through extrabudgetary funding whenever feasible.*"

There were no comments from the delegations.

8. Discussion of resolutions and recommendations

➢ Adopted Resolutions

The following resolutions were adopted:

- Resolution C-25-01 Conservation measures for tropical tunas in the eastern Pacific Ocean during 2026 and 2027-2028
- Resolution C-25-02 Amendments to the IATTC rules of procedure
- Resolution C-25-03 Simplification of the IATTC legal framework including reporting obligations
- Resolution C-25-04 Terms of Reference of an *ad hoc* IATTC-WCPFC Joint Working Group on South Pacific Albacore Tuna[1]
- Resolution C-25-05 Creation of a Working Group on Dorado
- Resolution C-25-06 Amendments to Resolution C-12-06 on rules of procedure regarding capacity loans or concessions and chartering of vessels with temporary transfers of capacity
- Resolution C-25-07 Amends and replaces Resolution c-24-06 on fish-aggregating devices
- Resolution C-25-08 Conservation measures for the protection and sustainable management of sharks [*amends and replaces Resolution C-24-05 and previous resolutions*]
- Resolution C-25-09 Conservation measures for shark species, with special emphasis on the silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*), for the years 2026- 2028
- Resolution C-25-10 Financing for FY 2026

➢ Proposals submitted but not approved:

The results at the end of the presentation and discussion of these proposals, which failed to achieve the consensus necessary for their adoption, were as follows:

Prop.	Subject	Comments
B-1 KOR and USA	Protection of cetaceans	Prior to the efforts of its co-authors to incorporate the comments received, this proposal **failed to achieve the necessary consensus** for its adoption. The main objection, particularly from Mexico, was that it followed the model of WCPFC's CMM 24-07, which does not reflect the particular circumstances of the EPO or the provisions of the AIDCP.
D-1 CAN	Climate Change	Canada **withdrew** this proposal with the intention of resubmitting it at a future meeting. Due to lack of time, it was deemed more important to prioritize discussion of the other proposals.

[1] The Commission also took note of the provisional work plan developed jointly with the WCPFC, as set out in document IATTC-103 INF-B, without comment or objection, on the understanding that it would be considered and adopted at the first Joint Working Group meeting in 2026.

G-1 USA and FRA-OT	Boarding and inspection procedures	This proposal **failed to achieve the necessary consensus** for adoption, primarily due to opposition from China. China's delegation read a statement noting that the proposal falls under the provisions of the 1995 New York Agreement, to which China is not a Party, and that it contravenes the principle of exclusive flag State jurisdiction over its vessels, as set forth in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.
I-1 ECU	Interim reference points for swordfish	Despite lively discussions and interest in adopting it, the proposal **failed to achieve the necessary consensus**. It was agreed that the proposal would be reconsidered next year.
J-1 ECU	Management strategies	This proposal **failed to achieve the necessary consensus** for adoption. Ecuador indicated that it would review the proposal during the intersessional period and possibly present it again next year.
L-1 EUR	Observers for longline vessels	This proposal **failed to achieve the necessary consensus** for adoption, primarily due to the stance taken by Japan, China, who emphasized the challenges and costs associated with increasing the agreed-upon coverage of 5%, especially for human observers.
M-1 VAR	Ecosystem approach	There was **not enough time** to complete the discussion process initiated by the co-authors of this proposed resolution in order to submit a revised version.
O-1 VAR	Fund to strengthen the institutional capacity of developing countries and territories	There was **not enough time** to review this proposal, which will be presented for discussion at the next meeting.
P-1 VAR	Contributions for the participation of NGOs	There was not enough time to consider this proposal, which will be presented for discussion at the next meeting.

9. Implementation of Article XII.1 of the Antigua Convention

Following a meeting of Heads of Delegation and several consultations, the Chair of the IATTC reported that consensus had been reached on reappointing the Director for a further four-year term from August 2026 to August 2030. In accordance with Article XII, paragraph 1, the Chair verified the consensus, and the Commission confirmed the decision by acclamation. The Director expressed his gratitude and discussed his plans for the coming years, which include strengthening the performance of the Commission's staff, improving transparency and cooperation, and ensuring the continued development and provision of the best science for the benefit of the Commission and its Members.

10. Election of Chair and Deputy Chair of the Commission

By consensus, the Commission decided to renew the terms of Mr. Andrés Arens and Mr. Julio Guevara as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively.

11. Election of Chairs of subsidiary bodies and working groups

The Commission also decided to renew the mandates of all the Chairs of its subsidiary bodies and working groups, including those elected on a provisional basis (MSE Working Group). Additionally, the Commission noted that, as stipulated by the Antigua Convention, Mr. Antonio Vásquez, of El Salvador, remains Chair of the Review Committee (COR) for a two-year term, with 2025 being the first year.

Working Group or Committee	Chair(s)
Administration and Finance	Rachael Wadsworth
Fleet Capacity in the EPO	Bernal Pacheco
Ad hoc Permanent WG on FADs	Josu Santiago
Ecosystem and Bycatch	Yonat Swimmer and Manuel Correia
Electronic Monitoring	Colin Brinkman and Guillermo Morán
Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE)	Juan Carlos Quiroz y Shana Miller
IATTC-WCPFC on South Pacific Albacore Tuna	Guillermo Morán
IATTC-WCPFC/NC on Pacific Bluefin Tuna	George Madeira

12. Other business

Under this agenda item, the Commission heard statements from Bolivia and Vanuatu (case of the vessel *Esmeralda C*) regarding their capacity requests. These statements are included in their entirety in Appendices 5d and 5e. Ecuador also referred to its request to include the vessel *Victoria A* in the IATTC Regional Vessel Register as an inactive/sunken vessel. Due to a lack of consensus, all of these cases remain pending and will continue to be reflected as such in the annual capacity utilization document prepared for consideration at the next Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity and Commission meetings where it is to be noted that some cases, such as that of Vanuatu, have already been recommended favorably by the Working Group on Capacity, as recorded in the minutes of its sixteenth meeting held on October 30, 2014 [2] and that this case, like the others considered in this manner, does not require evaluation by the Committee, but rather consideration by the Commission. The members agreed that the case of Vanuatu should be reviewed at the next meeting of the Commission in 2026.

Regarding the specific case of the vessel *Esmeralda C*, the Commission recalled that the Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity, at its 15th and 16th meetings, recommended that the request of Vanuatu regarding the well volume of 1,358 m³, be considered favorably as restitution.

The Commission recognized that this matter remains pending and agreed that it shall be addressed at its 104th Meeting.

13. Place and date of next meeting

The Commission thanked the European Union for offering to host the 104th meeting of the IATTC, the location of which is still to be determined. It was agreed that the Commission and its subsidiary bodies would hold their meetings during the first two weeks of September 2026.

[2] "The Working Group recognized that the recommendations that it had issued at its 15th meeting regarding the various cases reviewed and resolved continue in force and would not be subject to revision or modification. Consequently those cases would not be addressed again at this meeting of the Working Group but by the 88th Extraordinary Meeting of the IATTC. These recommendations are described in the minutes of the 87th Meeting of the Commission, as follows: a. Consider favorably the request by Guatemala that it be granted as a replacement the amount of 3,762 m3 that was transferred without its consent. b. Consider favorably the requests by Ecuador (Roberto M; 1,161 m³), Vanuatu (Esmeralda C; 1,358 m³), and Venezuela (Napoleón I; 1,668 m³) that they be granted as restitution of the amounts corresponding to well volumes that were transferred without their consent; and c. Consider favorably the requests by Costa Rica (7,058 m³), Nicaragua (4,200 m³) and El Salvador CAP-16 Report - DRAFT (2,105 m³), in their character of developing coastal countries."

14. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the 103rd meeting of the IATTC on 5 September 2025 at 7 p.m., Panama City time.

APPENDICES

1 List of attendees

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2. RESOLUTIONS

2a. Conservation measures for tropical tunas in the eastern Pacific Ocean during 2026 and 2027-2028

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103rd MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025

RESOLUTION C-25-01

CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR TROPICAL TUNAS IN THE EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN DURING 2026 AND 2027-2028[1]

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

Aware of its responsibility for the scientific study of the tunas and tuna-like species in its Convention Area and for formulating recommendations to its Members and Cooperating Non-Members (CPCs) with regard to these resources;

Recognizing that the potential production from the resource can be reduced if fishing effort is excessive;

Concerned that the capacity of the purse-seine fleets fishing for tunas in the Convention Area continues to increase;

Taking into account the best scientific information available, reflected in the IATTC staff's recommendations, and the precautionary approach; and

Recalling the need to take into account the special circumstances and requirements of the developing countries of the region, particularly the coastal countries, as recognized in the Antigua Convention, in particular in its Preamble and its Article XXIII, paragraph 1;

Recalling that Article VII, paragraph 1(c) of the Antigua Convention provides that the Commission shall *"adopt measures that are based on the best scientific evidence available to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the fish stocks covered by this Convention and to maintain or restore the populations of harvested species at levels of abundance which can produce the maximum sustainable yield..."*;

Recognizing the importance of the Integrated Port Sampling Program, as a data collection tool to provide the best scientific estimates available for bigeye tuna catch

Agrees:

To apply in the Convention Area the conservation and management measures for tropical tuna set out below, and to request that the staff of the IATTC monitor the fishing activities of the respective CPCs' flag vessels relative to this commitment, and also report on such activities at each annual meeting of

Note: the previously posted text had some typos that have been corrected.

[1] This resolution shall remain in force for the years 2027 and 2028, provided that the provisions of paragraph 1 may be applied with respect to the possible extension of its period of validity.

the Commission:

1. These measures are applicable from 00:00 hours on 1 January 2026 and will expire on to 24:00 hours on 31 December 2026, except for the second closure period referred to in paragraph 3, which extends until 24:00 hours on 11 January 2027, unless the scientific advice provided by the staff and the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) in 2026 through the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) process confirms the effectiveness of the measures in place. In this case, the Resolution would remain in force until 24:00 hours on 31 December 2028, except for the second closure period referred to in paragraph 3, which would extend until 24:00 hours on 11 January 2029, and also except for the additional days of closure that would be added pursuant to paragraph 4 to that second closure period. These measures are applicable to all CPCs' purse-seine vessels of IATTC capacity classes 4 to 6 (182 metric tons carrying capacity or more), and to all their longline vessels over 24 meters length overall, that fish for yellowfin, bigeye and skipjack tunas in the Convention Area; except for the provisions of paragraph 41, which are applicable to all active purse-seine vessels on the IATTC Regional Vessel Register (RVR).

2. Pole-and-line, troll, and sportfishing vessels, and purse-seine vessels of IATTC capacity classes 1-3 (181 metric tons carrying capacity or less) and longline vessels less than 24 meters length overall, are not subject to these measures, except those related to the management of Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs).

MEASURES FOR PURSE-SEINE FLEETS

3. All purse-seine vessels covered by these measures must stop fishing in the Convention Area for a period of 64 days in each year covered by this Resolution.

    a. For purse-seine vessel class 5 and 6, these closures shall be observed in one of two periods, as follows: from 00:00 hours on 6 August to 24:00 hours on 8 October, or from 00:00 hours on 9 November to 24:00 hours on 11 January of the following year.

    b. Class 4 purse-seine vessels shall observe a closure of 64 consecutive days, at any time of the year, at the discretion of the vessel owner, who shall notify the flag CPC in writing, and the latter to the Director of the IATTC, of the start date of the closure at least 30 days in advance. These provisions for class 4 vessels shall apply on an exceptional basis during the period of validity of this Resolution, and the IATTC scientific staff shall evaluate their effects for review by the CCA and the corresponding recommendation to the Commission.

4. For the years 2026 and 2027–2028, should the resolution remain in force in accordance with paragraph 1, CPCs shall ensure that vessels that exceeded during the previous year the annual catch limit of 1,200 metric tons of bigeye tuna shall increase during the following year by 10 additional days the closure period established in paragraph 3 of this resolution.

    If during this same period a vessel exceeds the annual catch limit of 1,500 metric tons of bigeye tuna, they shall increase the closure by 13 days; if it exceeds the annual catch limit of 1,800 tons of bigeye tuna, it shall increase its closure by 16 days; if it exceeds the annual catch limit of 2,100 metric tons, it shall increase its closure by 19 days; and if it exceeds the annual catch limit of 2,400 metric tons, it shall increase its closure by 22 days, in addition to the closure stipulated in paragraph 3 of this resolution.

    For class 5 and 6 purse-seine vessels, the additional days of closure pursuant to this paragraph shall be added, as appropriate, to the beginning of the closure for vessels observing the first period and to the end of the closure for vessels observing the second period, so that the closure of the first period shall always end on 8 October and the second period shall always begin on 9 November of each year. For class 4 purse-seine vessels, the additional days of closure must be added consecutively to their chosen days of closure.

    The IATTC Secretariat shall send to the CPCs by 1 March 2026 the names of the vessels that must

observe additional closure days in accordance with this paragraph.

5. Each CPC shall strengthen the sampling and control system for tuna catches through, among others, the utilization of on-board observer data, logbooks, port sampling and information from tuna processing facilities, to facilitate to the operators and captains the monitoring of their catches and a better compliance with the objectives of this Resolution.

6. CPCs shall be responsible for the compilation and submission of the final data on the annual catches of bigeye tuna made by individual vessels flying their flag during the current year and such data shall be reported to the Secretariat no later than 15 February of the following year.

7. Recognizing the scientific value of the Integrated Port Sampling Program (IPSP) as described in SAC-16-05, the program shall be implemented and remain active with the necessary budgetary support from the Commission for the duration of this Resolution.

8. For 2026 and following years, if applicable, as soon as possible, after the conclusion of each trip, the IATTC staff will transmit to the flag CPC their best estimate of a vessel's catch for that trip, together with an accounting of the data and the methodology used to arrive at the estimate. The flag CPC will then determine the amount of bigeye catch that will be attributed to a vessel for a given trip per paragraph 11.

9. The sampling in port and processing plants may prioritize vessels that have reached an average catch between the years 2017 to 2019 greater than five hundred (500) tons of bigeye tuna per year, according to the data received by the Secretariat.

10. CPCs shall ensure that the processing plants data for vessels flying their flags for any fish caught in the IATTC Convention Area be provided to its fisheries authorities in real time (i.e., within 10 days from the first day of unloading until the last day of grading by size), with copy to the IATTC staff.

11. The CPCs will be responsible for estimating the catch of bigeye tuna of each vessel flying its flag at the end of each trip, to the extent that one or more data sources are available to the CPC in the days immediately after the conclusion of the trip and discharge (e.g., observer estimates, ship's log data, well sampling, cannery data). The duty to estimate the catch of the vessel will be the responsibility of the flag CPC.

12. In the event that the *status quo* conditions, as represented by the average annual catches of bigeye tuna during the three-year period 2017-2019 (66,906 t – Best Scientific Estimate [BSE]), are not offset by this measure, or taking into consideration the results of any new stock assessments for bigeye, the IATTC scientific staff shall propose to the Commission an update of its recommendations for these conservation measures, including, among others, an increase of the numbers of closure days.

13. If the implementation of this measure has positive effects that demonstrate an improvement of the status of the bigeye tuna stock, the scientific staff shall analyze the conservation measures in force in order to submit to the Commission for consideration new measures that consider, among others, reducing the number of closure days or eliminating the "*corralito*."

14. The fishery for yellowfin, bigeye, and skipjack tuna by purse-seine vessels within the area of 96º and 110ºW and between 4°N and 3°S, known as the "*corralito*", which is illustrated in Figure 1, shall be closed from 00:00 hours on 9 October to 24:00 hours on 8 November.

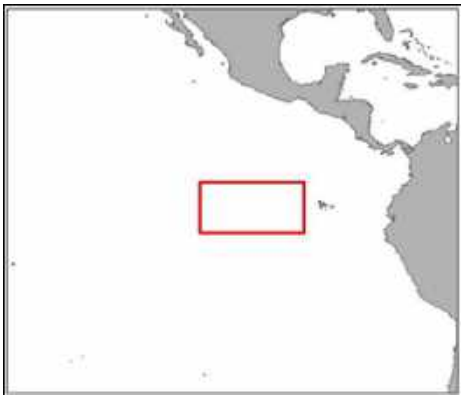


Figure 1. Closure area

15. a. For each one of the closure periods stipulated for class 5 and 6 purse-seine vessel in paragraph 3 of this Resolution, each CPC shall notify the Director, by 15 July of each year, the names of all the purse-seine vessels that will observe that closure period, also identifying those that must observe additional closure days pursuant to paragraph 4 of this resolution.

b. Every vessel that fishes, regardless of the flag under which it operates or whether it changes flag or the jurisdiction of the CPC under which it fishes during the year, must observe the closure period to which it was committed.

16. a. If a *force majeure*[1] event renders a class 5 or 6 vessel[2] unable to proceed to sea outside one of the two closure periods during a period of at least 75 continuous days, a CPC may request an exemption for a reduced closure period as provided in paragraph 3 and subparagraph 16b. If an exemption is granted, the vessel will be required to observe a reduced closure period as outlined below in subparagraph 16e. A request for exemption due to *force majeure* shall be sent by a CPC to the Secretariat within 30 calendar days of the end of the period of inactivity due to *force majeure*. Requests submitted after this time will not be considered.

b. In addition to the request for exemption, the CPC shall send the evidence necessary to demonstrate that the vessel did not proceed to sea during said continuous period, which closure period the vessel observed, and that the facts on which the request for exemption is based were due to *force majeure*.

c. After the timely receipt of both the request and supporting information required in subparagraph b, the Director shall immediately send the request and the evidence electronically to the other CPCs for their consideration, duly coded in order to maintain the anonymity of the name, flag and owner of the vessel.

d. The request shall be considered accepted unless an IATTC Member objects to it formally within 15 calendar days of the receipt of said request, in which case the Director shall immediately notify all CPCs of the objection.

e. If the request for exemption is accepted:

i. the vessel shall observe a reduced closure period of 40 consecutive days in the same year during which the *force majeure* event occurred, in one of the two periods prescribed in paragraph 3, to be immediately notified to the Director by the CPC, or

ii. in the event said vessel has already observed a closure period prescribed in paragraph 3 in the same year during which the *force majeure* event occurred, it shall observe a reduced closure period of 40 consecutive days the following year, in one of the two periods prescribed in paragraph 3, to be notified to the Director by the CPC no later than 15 July of that year.

iii. vessels that benefit from the exemption must carry an observer from the International Dolphin Conservation Program (IDCP) on board.

iv. The exemption shall only apply to the 64-day closure period stipulated in paragraph 3 of this Resolution, not to the additional periods stipulated in paragraph 4.

17. Each CPC shall, for purse-seine fisheries:

a. Before the date of entry into force of the closure, take the legal and administrative measures necessary to implement the closure;

b. Inform all interested parties in its tuna industry of the closure;

c. Inform the Director that these steps have been taken;

d. Ensure that at the time a closure period begins, and for the entire duration of that period, all the purse-seine vessels fishing for yellowfin, bigeye, and/or skipjack tunas that are committed to observing that closure period and that fly its flag, or operate under its jurisdiction, in the Antigua Convention Area are in port, except that vessels carrying an observer from the International Dolphin Conservation Program (IDCP) on board may remain at sea, provided they do not make a set or deploy, retrieve, visit or check a FAD in the Convention Area. The only other exception to this provision shall be that vessels carrying an observer authorized pursuant to the AIDCP may leave port during the closure, provided they do not fish in the Convention Area.

[1] For the purposes of paragraph 16, only cases of vessels disabled in the course of fishing operations by mechanical and/or structural failure, fire or explosion, shall be considered force majeure.

[2] This exemption applies to the vessels of fleets that observe either of the closure periods prescribed in paragraph 3.

MEASURES FOR THE FISHERY ON FISH-AGGREGATING DEVICES

18. For the purposes of this Resolution, the definitions contained in Annex I shall apply.

19. CPCs shall ensure that purse-seine vessels flying their flag have no more than the following number of FADs, as defined in Annex I (consistent with Resolution C-19-01), active at any one time:

Class 6 (1,200 m^3 and greater):	340 FADs
Class 6 (< 1,200 m^3):	210 FADs
Classes 4-5:	85 FADs
Classes 1-3:	50 FADs

20. A FAD shall be activated exclusively onboard a purse-seine vessel.

21. For the purposes of this resolution, a FAD is considered active when it:

    a. is deployed at sea; and

    b. activation of the satellite buoy has occurred, and the satellite buoy is transmitting its location and is being tracked by the vessel, its owner, or operator.

22. Deactivation of a satellite buoy attached to a FAD may only be done in the following circumstances: complete loss of signal reception; appropriation of a FAD by a third party; temporarily during a selected closure period; for being outside of:

- the area between the meridians 150° W and 100° W, and the parallels 8° N and 10°S;
- the area between the meridian 100° W and the coast of the American continent and the parallels 5° N and 15°S;

or transfer of ownership. CPCs shall report, or require their vessels to report, deactivations to the Secretariat using the specific data fields indicated in Annex II. The reports shall be submitted at monthly intervals with a time delay of at least 60 days, but no longer than 90 days after the deactivation. The FAD Working Group, based on advice from the IATTC scientific staff, shall provide to the SAC and the Commission advice on any required adjustments.

23. Remote reactivation of a satellite buoy at sea shall only occur in the following circumstances: to assist in the recovery of a beached FAD; after a temporary deactivation during the closure period; or transfer of ownership while the FAD is at sea. CPCs shall report, or require their vessels to report, any remote reactivation to the Secretariat using the specific data fields indicated in Annex III. The reports shall be submitted at monthly intervals with a time delay of at least 60 days, but no longer than 90 days after the remote reactivation.

24. The IATTC scientific staff and the Working Group on FADs will also, to the extent possible, review the variation in levels of aggregation, mortality, change in fishing strategy, and durability of FADs built with biodegradable materials or with designs and materials that present less risk for the environment.

25. In order to support the work of the IATTC scientific staff in analyzing the impact of FAD fisheries, while protecting business confidential data, CPCs shall report, or require their vessels to report, daily information on all active FADs to the Secretariat. The information provided shall be identical in form and content to the raw satellite buoy data provided by the buoy manufacturers to the original users (i.e., vessels and vessel administrators), as specified

in the Annex IV of this Resolution. Reporting shall occur at monthly intervals and with a time delay of at least 60 days, but no longer than 90 days.

26. In order to provide the IATTC scientific staff with valuable information to feed their work, as agreed in 2023, CPCs shall continue reporting, or require their vessels to report to the IATTC, utilizing a format developed by the IATTC staff and approved by the Commission, complete VMS data for all vessels required to carry VMS pursuant to Resolution C-14-02. The information reported to the Secretariat shall include, at a minimum, the information specified in Paragraphs 2(a) of and 2(b) of that Resolution. Where the flag CPC requires more frequent polling rates, CPCs are encouraged to submit higher-frequency VMS data. Reporting shall occur every two months and with a time delay no longer than 90 days. Data collected pursuant to this paragraph shall be treated in accordance with Resolution C-15-07 on data confidentiality policy and procedures.

27. Each CPC shall ensure that:

    a. its purse-seine vessels do not deploy FADs during a period of 15 days prior to the start of the selected closure period;

    b. all its Class-6 purse-seine vessels recover within 15 days prior to the start of the closure period a number of FADs equal to the number of FADs set upon during that same period.

28. a. In compliance with Resolution C-23-04, to reduce the entanglement of sharks, marine turtles or any other species, CPCs shall ensure that, as required as of 1 January 2025, the design and construction of any FADs to be deployed or redeployed (i.e., will be placed in the water) in the IATTC area of competence shall comply with the following specifications in accordance with Annex I of that resolution:

    i. the use of mesh net shall be prohibited for any part of a FAD;
    ii. only non-entangling FAD materials and designs shall be used

    b. CPCs, with the support of the Commission and its staff and in consultation with all stakeholders, as appropriate, shall ensure that the design and use of biodegradable non- entangling FADs are made in compliance with the provisions of Resolution C-23-04 and its Annex I.

29. The Scientific Advisory Committee and the *Ad hoc* Permanent Working Group on FADs shall review the progress and results of the implementation of the FAD provisions contained in this Resolution and make recommendations to the Commission, as appropriate.

MEASURES FOR THE LONGLINE FISHERY

30. China, Japan, Korea, United States, and Chinese Taipei undertake to ensure that the total annual catches of bigeye tuna by their longline vessels in the Convention Area during the period in which this Resolution remains in force do not exceed 55,131 metric tons, distributed at the following levels:

Country	Metric tons
China	2,507
Japan	32,372
Korea	11,947
Chinese Taipei	7,555
United States	750

31. All other CPCs undertake to ensure that the total annual catches of bigeye tuna by their longline vessels in the Convention Area do not exceed the greater of 500 metric tons or their respective catches of bigeye tuna in 2001[3,4]. CPCs whose annual catches have exceeded 500 metric tons shall provide monthly catch reports to the Director.

32. A CPC referenced in paragraph 30 may make a single transfer of a portion of its bigeye tuna catch

limit to other CPCs that also have a bigeye tuna catch limit listed in paragraph 31, provided that the total transferred by any CPC does not exceed 30 percent of its catch limit. These transfers cannot be made to retroactively cover an overage of another CPC's catch limit. Both CPCs involved in a transfer shall, separately or jointly, notify the Director 10 days in advance of the intended transfer. This notification shall specify the tonnage to be transferred. The Director shall promptly notify the Commission of the transfer.

33. The CPC that receives the transfer shall be responsible for management for the transferred catch limit, including monitoring and monthly reporting of catch. A CPC that receives a one- time transfer of bigeye tuna catch limit shall not retransfer that catch limit to another CPC. The amount of bigeye transferred shall be considered without prejudice by the Commission for the purposes of establishing any future limits or allocations.

OTHER PROVISIONS

34. Landings and transshipments of tuna or tuna products that have been positively identified as originating from fishing activities that contravene these measures are prohibited. The Director is requested to provide relevant information to CPCs to assist them in this regard.

35. Each CPC shall submit to the Director, by 15 July, a national report on its updated national compliance scheme and actions taken to implement these measures, including any controls it has imposed on its fleets and any monitoring, control, and compliance measures it has established to ensure compliance with such controls.

36. In order to evaluate progress towards the objectives of these measures, the IATTC scientific staff will analyze the effects on the stocks of the implementation of these measures, and previous conservation and management measures, and will propose, if necessary, appropriate measures to be applied in future years.

37. Subject to the availability of the necessary funding, the Director is requested to continue the experiments with sorting grids for juvenile tunas and other species of non-target fish in the purse-seine nets of vessels that fish on FADs and on unassociated schools, by developing an experimental protocol, including parameters for the materials to be used for the sorting grids, and the methods for their construction, installation, and deployment. The Director shall also specify the methods and format for the collection of scientific data to be used for analysis of the performance of the sorting grids. The foregoing is without prejudice to each CPC carrying out its own experimental programs with sorting grids and presenting its results to the Director.

38. To renew the requirement for all purse-seine vessels to first retain on board and then land all bigeye, skipjack, and yellowfin tuna caught, except fish considered unfit for human consumption for reasons other than size. A single exception shall be the final set of a trip, when there may be insufficient well space remaining to accommodate all the tuna caught in that set.

39. The IATTC shall continue efforts to promote compatibility between the conservation and management measures adopted by the IATTC and WCPFC in their goals and effectiveness,

[3] The Commission acknowledges that France, as a coastal State, is developing a tuna longline fleet on behalf of its overseas territories situated in the Convention Area.

[4] The Commission acknowledges that Peru, as a coastal State, will develop a tuna longline fleet, which will operate in strict compliance with the rules and provisions of the IATTC and in accordance with the resolutions of the Commission.

especially in the overlap area, including by frequent consultations with the WCPFC, in order to maintain, and inform their respective members of, a thorough understanding of conservation and management measures directed at bigeye, yellowfin, and other tunas, and the scientific bases and effectiveness of those measures.

40. The IATTC shall support the enhancement of the Regional Tuna Tagging Program (RTTP) with wide spatial coverage to allow for estimation of growth, natural mortality and abundance; and while maintaining a priority for tropical tunas, also include swordfish and sharks to the extent practicable (see proposal E.4.b in SAC-16 INF-E). In addition, the RTTP shall collaborate and coordinate with opportunistic tagging programs conducted by CPCs and relevant stakeholders by means such as providing data on drifting FADs during the closure periods, with appropriate safeguards to protect business confidential information. IATTC staff shall use these data to continue prioritizing research concerning the stock structure(s) of yellowfin tuna.

41. Funding for the RTTP in the amount of $1.8M USD shall be provided through one-time assessed contributions to be paid by all purse-seine vessels listed as active on the IATTC RVR at any point during the calendar year 2026. All such vessels will pay an amount equal to $6.16USD per cubic meter of well capacity. Payment for such vessels is due by 30 June 2026, or for vessels entering the RVR after 15 January 2026 is due prior to the vessel's inclusion in the RVR, along with its AIDCP vessel assessment. If voluntary contributions are obtained in support of the RTTP, this amount will be deducted from the $1.8million USD and the assessed rate of payment per cubic meter will be recalculated. All the surplus resulting from the inclusion of new vessels on the RVR will be reported by the Secretariat to the CPCs in a timely manner, in writing, and will be used only for research projects to strengthen stock assessments

42. Subject to the availability of the necessary funding, the IATTC scientific staff shall continue research work on the relationship between the depth of nets deployed by tuna vessels and the catches of bigeye tuna, in order to determine its effect on an increase in fishing mortality in each area of operation. For the 2026 meeting of the IATTC SAC, the results of this work should be presented for their respective analysis and recommendations to the Commission.

43. In 2026 the results of these measures shall be evaluated in the context of the results of the stock assessments and of changes in the level of active capacity in the purse-seine fleet and, depending on the conclusions reached by the IATTC scientific staff, in consultation with the Scientific Advisory Committee, and based on such evaluation, the Commission shall take further actions including substantial extension of closure days for purse-seine vessels or equivalent measures, such as catch limits.

44. The IATTC shall continue efforts to develop harvest strategies for tropical tunas. The IATTC scientific staff shall prioritize and continue to establish the scientific basis, through Management Strategy Evaluation testing, to advise the Commission on initial candidate harvest strategies, starting with bigeye tuna. The staff, consulting with the ad hoc Working Group on Management Strategy Evaluation and the SAC, shall then present for the Commission's adoption in 2026 a candidate harvest strategy for bigeye tuna, including candidate management actions to be taken under various stock conditions.

45. Except in cases of *force majeure* prescribed in paragraph 16, no exemptions will be allowed with regard to the closure periods notified to the Director in accordance with paragraph 16a, nor with regard to the fishing effort of the purse-seine fleets of the respective CPCs.

Annex I

Definitions

For the purposes of this Resolution, the following definitions shall apply:

a. FAD (consistent with Resolution C-19-01): Anchored, drifting, floating or submerged objects deployed and/or tracked by vessels, including through the use of radio and/or satellite buoys, for the purpose of aggregating target tuna species for purse-seine fishing operations.

b. Satellite buoy: A buoy that uses a satellite network service to indicate its geographical position and is compliant with requirements in Resolution C-19-01 to be clearly marked with a unique identification code.

c. Activation of a satellite buoy: The act of initializing network service for receiving the satellite buoy's position. Activation is done by the buoy supplier company at the request of the vessel owner or manager. Following activation, the vessel owner pays for the communication service. The buoy can be transmitting or not, depending if it has been switched on.

d. Deactivation of a satellite buoy: The act of cancelling network service for receiving the satellite buoy's position. Deactivation is done by the buoy supplier company at the request of the vessel owner or manager. Following deactivation, the communication service is no longer paid for, and the buoy stops transmitting.

e. Reactivation of a satellite buoy: The act of re-initializing network service for transmission of a satellite buoy's position after deactivation. The procedure is the same as the one to be followed for activation of a satellite buoy.

f. Signal loss: The situation in which, without any intervention of the owner/operator/manager, a satellite buoy cannot be located by the owner on a monitoring device. The main causes of signal loss are buoy retrieved by another vessel or person (at-sea or on-shore), FAD sinking and buoy failure.

Annex II

Satellite Buoy Deactivation

CPCs shall report, or require their vessels to report, any deactivation of a satellite buoy to the Secretariat using the following data fields of the first communication of the buoy after being activated:

- date [YYYY/MM/DD],
- time [hh:mm],
- buoy identifier code,
- latitude [expressed in degrees and minutes in decimal values],
- longitude [expressed in degrees and minutes in decimal values],
- speed [knots], and
- reason of deactivation: signal loss, stolen FAD, beaching, temporarily during closure periods, transferred ownership, FAD outside the areas specified in paragraph 22 of this resolution, other (specify).

Annex III

Satellite Buoy Reactivation

CPCs shall report, or require their vessels to report, any remote reactivation of a satellite buoy to the Secretariat using the following data fields of the last communication of the buoy before being deactivated:

- date [YYYY/MM/DD],
- time [hh:mm],
- buoy identifier code,
- latitude [expressed in degrees and minutes in decimal values],
- longitude [expressed in degrees and minutes in decimal values],
- speed [knots], and
- reason of remote reactivation: recovery of a signal loss, after a temporary deactivation during the closure period, or transfer of ownership while FAD is at sea, other (specify).

Annex IV

Format of the information to be requested to satellite buoy manufacturers

a) Daily information on buoy location

The following data fields should be included for all the buoys and positions recorded during the day, in fishing company-specific csv files:

- date [dd-mm-yyyy],
- time [hh.mm],
- unique buoy identifier code [the format varies for each buoy manufacturer but is always an alphanumeric code],
- IMO of the vessel associated to the buoy and receiving the information,
- latitude [expressed as decimal degrees],
- longitude [expressed as decimal degrees],
- speed [knots],
- echosounder = on/off.

Additionally, whenever possible, the following information corresponding to each transmission will be included:

- Water temperature.
- Buoy in the water (only for those buoys with sensors that allow identifying buoys in the water)
- Activation and deactivation dates.
- Estate or transmission mode of the buoy (e.g. immediate information, retrieving, etc.)

Data should be received in csv files named "X-YYYY-MM-ZZZZZZZ.csv" where X is the code of the buoy manufacturer (M, S, Z, for Marine Instruments, Satlink, and Zunibal, respectively), YYYY is the year, MM the month, and ZZZZZZZ the name of the fishing company. A single csv file will be prepared for company, year and month.

b) Information on acoustic records

The following data fields must be included for all the buoys and acoustic records recorded daily, in fishing company-specific csv files:

- ZUNIBAL: company, unique buoy identifier code, date (date, time), type (position or sounder), latitude, longitude, speed, drift, total

- SATLINK: Company, unique buoy identifier code, Message Descriptor (MD), date (date, time), latitude, longitude, battery charge (bat), temp, speed, drift, layer1, layer2, layer3, layer4, layer5, layer6, layer7, layer8, layer9, layer10, sum, max, mag1, mag2, mag3, mag4, mag5, mag6, mag7, mag8.

- MARINE INSTRUMENTS: company, unique buoy identifier code, TransmissionDate, TransmissionHour, lat, lon, mode, light, poll, temperature, vcc, SounderDate, gain, layers, layerbits, maxdepth, sd1, sd2, sd3, sd4, sd5, sd6, sd7, sd8, sd9, sd10, sd11, sd13, sd12, sd14, sd15, sd16, sd17, sd18, sd19, sd20, sd21, sd22, sd23, sd24, sd25, sd26, sd27, sd28, sd29, sd30, sd31, sd32, sd33, sd34, sd35, sd36, sd37, sd38, sd39, sd40, sd41, sd42, sd43, sd44, sd45, sd346, sd47, sd48, sd49, sd50.

Data should be received in csv files named "X-YYYY-MM-ZZZZZZZ-Sounder.csv" where X is the code of the buoy manufacturer (M, S, Z, for Marine Instruments, Satlink, and Zunibal, respectively), YYYY is the year, MM the month, and ZZZZZZZ the name of the fishing company. A single csv file will be prepared for company, year and month.

2b. Amendments to the IATTC rules of procedure

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103rd MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025

RESOLUTION C-25-02

AMENDMENTS TO THE IATTC RULES OF PROCEDURE

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

Agrees:

To amend its rules of procedure as follows:

IATTC RULES OF PROCEDURE[1]

[…]

15. Any proposal or other relevant document to be discussed at a meeting shall be submitted to the Director not less than **thirty (30)** days before the opening of the meeting. These shall be posted on the Commission website immediately in their original language. The Director shall translate and circulate proposals to all CPCs at the latest **seventeen (17**) days before the beginning of the meeting.

[…]

[1] Adopted by the Commission at its 83rd meeting, June 2012; amended at its 87th (resumed) meeting, October 2014, at its 92nd meeting, July 2017, **and at its 103rd meeting, September 2025.**

2c. Simplification of the IATTC legal framework including reporting obligations

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103rd MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025

RESOLUTION C-25-03

RESOLUTION ON THE SIMPLIFICATION OF THE IATTC LEGAL FRAMEWORK INCLUDING REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

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

Affirming the importance of ensuring that the system of provisions defined by the Commission remains effective, updated and easily implementable*;*

Concerned that the current IATTC resolutions might contain provisions that are obsolete, contradictory or no longer applicable*;*

Noting the need to ensure a constant revision of the applicable norms to make sure that they are understood and implemented and that operators can comply with them without any unnecessary burden*;*

Recognizing that clear and updated rules are essential to improve the overall compliance,

Agrees as follows:

1. The Secretariat will carry out an assessment of the existing body of decisions and resolutions, including reporting obligations and data submission, and will draft a document with suggestions concerning the possible amendment, consolidation or elimination of those measures which are outdated, or which are no longer necessary. In the case of data submission requirements, the document will identify those which are no longer useful or are redundant.
2. This assessment and the resulting draft document with suggestions will be completed by the Secretariat by 15 May 2027 and presented to the Review Committee (COR) and to the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), as appropriate, for their consideration and recommendation to the Commission.
3. At its 2027 Annual Meeting, the Commission – on the basis of the analysis of the Secretariat and taking into account the outcome of the discussions of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies - will deliberate on the follow-up of this process and amend – where relevant – those measures which are outdated or no longer necessary.

2d. Terms of Reference of an ad hoc IATTC-WCPFC Joint Working Group on South Pacific Albacore Tuna

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103rd MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025

RESOLUTION C-25-04

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

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in Panama City, Panama, on 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.

2e. Creation of a Working Group on Dorado

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103rd MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025

RESOLUTION C-25-05

RESOLUTION ON THE CREATION OF A WORKING GROUP ON DORADO

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

Acknowledging that dorado (*Coryphaena hippurus*) has been identified as a highly migratory species in accordance with Annex I of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and is therefore regulated by the Agreement on Straddling and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks;

Bearing in mind that Article I of the Antigua Convention extends the scope of the IATTC to other species of fish caught by vessels fishing for tuna and tuna-like species, and that Article VII of the Convention empowers the Commission to adopt appropriate measures to reduce the catch of non-target species and to improve the sustainability of the fisheries in the Convention Area;

Considering that dorado is caught incidentally by purse-seine vessels operating in the Convention Area, as has been recognized by Resolutions C-04-05 and C-23-09;

Recalling that Resolution C-04-05 establishes measures for the prompt and unharmed release, to the extent practicable, of non-target species, including dorado, and recognizes their importance for artisanal fisheries, recommending the development of specific measures to mitigate bycatch;

Taking into account that three technical meetings on dorado have been held (October 2014, October 2015 and October 2016) with the objective of promoting synergy among IATTC Members for regional research on dorado; reviewing the current status of knowledge on dorado; identifying available data sets in the regional fisheries; and formulating a plan for future collaborative research, in consultation with the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and based on its technical recommendations to ensure scientific support;

Reaffirming the need to harmonize the measures adopted by the IATTC with national regulations, in accordance with the principle of compatibility established in Article V of the Antigua Convention and Article 7 of the Agreement on Straddling and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks;

Recognizing that, although Resolution C-23-09 promotes collecting data on dorado and creating a voluntary group to identify available information on dorado (*Coryphaena hippurus*) in the various fisheries of interest to the IATTC, no formal institutional mechanisms have been established within the IATTC to systematically coordinate these efforts;

Considering that, in document SAC-15 INF-R, the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) expressly recognizes the recommendation to create a working group, noting that this could improve data collection and strengthen the technical staff's ability to fulfill its scientific functions. However, the SAC has not followed up on the recommendation to establish a working group to coordinate these efforts and propose integrated management measures;

Considering that, through document SAC-16-07 on the IATTC Strategic Science Plan for 2026-2030, the

Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) establishes the need to carry out conventional stock assessments of priority species, including dorado, in collaboration with external organizations during 2026-2030;

Stressing that creating a working group on dorado would make it possible to consolidate available information, detect critical knowledge gaps, assess stock status and formulate technical recommendations for sustainable management, considering both its bycatch and its importance as a target species for artisanal fisheries;

Emphasizing that dorado is an essential source of income and food security for many artisanal fishing communities in the region, and that various international instruments, including the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries, promote the participation of these communities in decision-making processes;

Reaffirming the principle of the ecosystem and precautionary approach to fisheries management, as well as the need to promote equity, social inclusion and respect for traditional knowledge in regional fisheries governance,

Agrees:

1. To establish a multisectoral Working Group on Dorado (*Coryphaena hippurus*) (WGD) in the IATTC Convention Area with the participation of scientists designated by the Members, technical officers from fisheries authorities, representatives of the artisanal and industrial fishing industries, managers and observers.
2. The objectives of the Working Group shall be to:
    a. Systematize and analyze the existing information on the dorado fishery.
    b. Identify critical information gaps.
    c. Identify stock structure
    d. Establish priorities for data collection and scientific collaboration.
    e. Assist with stock status assessment, or appropriate stocks, to the extent possible.
    f. Formulate technical recommendations for the sustainable management of the resource.
    g. Propose the establishment of a management strategy for the dorado resource.
    h. Conduct regional technical/scientific workshops with stakeholders, leading to an updated dorado stock assessment, or appropriate stocks.
    i. Present a progress report at the annual meeting of the SAC and the IATTC, starting in 2026. The first WGD meeting shall be held within six months of the resolution's adoption. A progress report shall be presented at the next SAC and IATTC meetings, and a consolidated technical report shall be presented no later than two years after the resolution's adoption.
3. The IATTC Director will coordinate with interested CPCs and other stakeholders to identify the budget needed for assessing the dorado stocks. This work will be conducted with external financial, technical and scientific support. The IATTC staff will remain in charge of supervising the stock assessment within the limit of the IATTC budget.
4. To the extent possible, the Working Group shall collaborate with other similar working groups on dorado management established in other Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMO) of coastal States, as well as other relevant regional cooperation mechanisms.

2f. Amendments to Resolution C-12-06 on rules of procedure regarding capacity loans or concessions and chartering of vessels with temporary transfers of capacity

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103rd MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025

RESOLUTION C-25-06

AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION C-12-06 ON RULES OF PROCEDURE REGARDING CAPACITY LOANS OR CONCESSIONS AND CHARTERING OF VESSELS WITH TEMPORARY TRANSFERS OF CAPACITY

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

Recalling the conclusions and recommendations of the Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity;

Acknowledging that capacity loans are intended to allow vessels to enter the IATTC Regional Register and represent a collaborative step between CPCs to enable the development of the fishery of the loaning or conceding CPC,

Agrees:

To adopt the following rules of procedure regarding capacity loans or concessions and chartering of vessels with temporary transfers of capacity.

A. CAPACITY LOANS OR CONCESSIONS

1. A vessel that uses loaned or conceded capacity may be added to the IATTC Regional Vessel Register, using a specified amount of capacity, expressed in cubic meters of well volume, that the loaning or conceding Member or Cooperating non-Member ("CPC") has available. The vessel must fly the flag of the receiving CPC.
2. Both CPCs involved shall agree that the vessel 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. If the vessel is removed from the Regional Register, the capacity that it utilizes shall revert to the loaning or conceding CPC, and shall be used again by that CPC only, unless the loaning CPC notifies the Director otherwise. The receiving CPC shall have no right to the capacity utilized by the vessel if it is removed from the Regional Register.
3. If the vessel changes flag during the period of the loan or concession, it shall be automatically removed from the Regional Register, and the capacity shall revert to the loaning or conceding CPC. If there is agreement on a change of flag for the vessel to a third CPC, the loaning CPC and the third CPC shall follow the process of changing flag in accordance with the established procedures.
4. The receiving CPC, as the flag government of the vessel, shall be legally responsible for all the activities of the vessel associated with compliance with the rules, recommendations, and resolutions of the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP) and the IATTC.
5. The arrangement for the loan or concession of capacity, in order to be valid and effective, shall be notified in writing to the Director by the competent authorities of both CPCs, jointly or consecutively.

The Director shall report this arrangement in the monthly capacity reports, and it shall be noted in the Regional Register as part of the information associated with the vessel.

6. Both CPCs involved shall provide the Director with a copy of the documentation for the capacity loan or concession, which he shall keep confidential, unless both CPCs decide otherwise.

B. VESSEL CHARTERS WITH TEMPORARY CAPACITY TRANSFERS

7. In the case of vessel charters with temporary transfers of capacity, and in order for the corresponding flag change to be reflected in the Regional Register, the Director must receive a copy of the agreement for the temporary transfer of capacity, together with documentation showing that the CPC granting the charter ("chartering CPC") has suspended the vessel's flag or authorized the registration of the vessel under another flag, and that the receiving CPC ("charterer CPC") has granted or authorized the vessel to utilize, its flag. Once this information is received, the corresponding change will be made in the Regional Register.

8. All this documentation shall be kept confidential by the Director, unless both CPCs involved decide otherwise.

9. The charterer CPC, as the vessel's flag government, shall be legally responsible for all matters related to the activities of the vessel associated with compliance with the rules, recommendations, and resolutions of the IATTC and the AIDCP, from the time when the flag changes from the chartering CPC to the charterer CPC.

10. The Director must receive confirmation from both CPCs that, if the vessel is removed from the Regional Register, its capacity shall revert to the chartering CPC and may be used only by that CPC, unless both CPCs notify the Director otherwise. The charterer CPC shall not have any rights regarding the capacity of the vessel if it is removed from the Regional Register.

11. When the charter agreement terminates, the vessel with temporary transfer of capacity shall return to the chartering CPC, unless the chartering CPC informs the Director otherwise.

C. COMMON RULES FOR CATCH RECORDS WITH OR WITHOUT CHARTERING, WHEN THERE IS A CAPACITY LOAN OR CONCESSION

12. Unless otherwise agreed upon by the parties to the arrangement, catches reported in accordance with Resolution C-03-05 derived from loaned or conceded capacity, whether with or without chartering, shall be recorded statistically by the IATTC in proportion to the fraction of the loaned or conceded capacity used, as attributable to the loaning or conceding CPC for historical record purposes and participation in the fishery only.

2g. Amends and replaces Resolution c-24-06 on fish-aggregating devices

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103rd MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025

RESOLUTION C-25-07

AMENDS AND REPLACES RESOLUTION C-24-06 ON FISH-AGGREGATING DEVICES[1]

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

Considering that Document SAC-14-16 on the recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) to the Commission states the following with respect to fish-aggregating devices (FADs): *"Taking into account the importance of FAD recovery, the SAC requests that the Commission clarify if vessels other than authorized purse seiners could carry out this recovery and under what circumstances, and considers, should it be necessary, an update of Resolution C-99-07 on FADs";*

Noting that the fishery on FADs has grown in the last years, in catches of juvenile tunas, in particular yellowfin, in the purse-seine fishery in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO);

Noting that the activity on FADs is one of the main fishing strategies in recent years, making it important to devise solutions for FADs recovery in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO);

Concerned about the reduction in the average size of bigeye tuna caught by the purse-seine fishery in the EPO;

Concerned about the use of non-biodegradable materials in the construction of FADs that might be found abandoned and drifting in the EPO;

Reiterating the need to seek a viable solution to reduce incidental catches of juvenile bigeye and yellowfin tuna in the purse-seine fishery in the EPO;

Reaffirming its commitment to the application of the precautionary approach, which establishes that "*[t]he absence of adequate scientific information shall not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take conservation and management measures*" (Antigua Convention, Article IV, par. 2);

Recalling that under Resolution C- 22-03 (not applicable "*to troll vessels, pole-and-line vessels or vessels engaged in the transshipment of fresh fish at sea*" par. 3), except under the transshipment monitoring program established by the Resolution, "*all transshipment operations in the Antigua Convention Area of tuna and tuna species and sharks* (…) *must take place in port*." (par. 2);

Recalling that Resolutions adopted by the IATTC at its 61st and 62nd Meetings contained recommendations that the Parties prohibit the use of tender vessels whose role it is to deploy, repair, pick up, or maintain FADs at sea,

1. *Recommends* to the Members and Cooperating Non-Members (CPCs) under whose jurisdiction vessels operate in the EPO that:

[1] Resolution C-24-06 had amended and replaced Resolution C-23-03, which had amended and replaced Resolution C-99-07.

(a) CPCs will continue with the scientific working group established in accordance with Resolution C- 99-07 to carry out comprehensive research, in conjunction with the IATTC staff, to include, but not be limited to:

i. The relationship between catches of bigeye and yellowfin tuna and the maximum depth of FADs.

ii. The effect of the use of baited FADs on catch rates and size composition of the catch of tunas.

iii. Estimates of the natural mortality of the various populations of tunas.

iv. The establishment of a maximum number of sets on floating objects which the tuna fishery in the EPO can support.

v. The catches of tunas and associated and dependent species in the fishery on floating objects between 130ºW and 150ºW.

vi. The impact of permanent or temporary closure of areas to the use of FADs, especially in combination with other regulatory measures being considered by the Commission.

vii. The feasibility of a program to place observers on purse-seine vessels smaller than Class 6 (≤ 363 metric tons carrying capacity) and the appropriate level of observer coverage necessary to obtain reliable scientific information.

2. CPCs shall prohibit the use of tender vessels operating in support of vessels fishing on FADs in the EPO, without prejudice to similar activities in other parts of the world.

3. The Director shall continue research into the use of fishing gear and/or techniques to reduce the catch of small tunas and the bycatch of non-target species and continue to report to the Commission on the results of this research.

4. The Scientific Advisory Committee shall, in co-operation with the IATTC staff and fully involving the Ad Hoc Permanent Working Group on FADs, provide advice to the Commission in view of its 103rd Session on the potential benefits and modalities of implementation of a FAD register, coherently with the approach which is being implemented in other RFMOs.

5. To prevent drifting loss or stranding, CPCs are encouraged to initiate recovery programs of drifting FADs through cooperative initiatives among fishing vessels operating in the Convention Area or vessels implementing projects for the recovery of such FADs. Without restricting regular fishing operations of purse seine vessels fishing with FADs, such recovery activities shall be limited to the collection of drifting FADs for final disposal and not to perform any type of maintenance or adjustment. Except for authorized tuna purse seine vessels, these vessels shall not deploy FADs. Drifting FADs collected under the voluntary recovery program shall be taken on board and brought to port for recycling or disposal. The provisions of this paragraph shall be in effect until 31 December 2028, while the initial results are analyzed. This paragraph shall be applied without prejudice to the existing obligations of fishing vessels including those in other IATTC Resolutions.

6. CPCs that decide voluntarily to initiate these programs shall report all associated information on FAD recovery activities to the IATTC Secretariat, by either directly entering data into the IATTC/SPC Recovery database or by completing and submitting the FAD sighting form from Appendix 3 of FAD-09-INF-A, so that exclusively and for scientific purposes, the scientific staff, complying with rules of confidentiality, can analyze the data on a year- by-year basis and report these results to the *Ad Hoc* Permanent Working Group on FADs and the SAC, information which may be used exclusively for the corresponding purposes.

7. For the purpose of assisting FAD recovery efforts, CPCs shall require vessel owners and operators flying their flag to keep the FAD satellite buoys signal active when drifting south of 10°S Latitude and west of 100°W exclusively to share their position to FAD recovery programs or other vessels capable

of retrieving FADs as described in paragraph 5. These satellite buoys shall remain excluded from active dFADs limits pursuant to paragraph 19 of Resolution C-25-01, provided that:

i. The buoys only send location data for recovery purposes[2];

ii. The buoy location are provided by the buoy service providers;

iii. The location data shall be shared with a frequency of at least one position per day;

iv. The position shall not be visible for the owner of the dFADs and these "non-fishing dFADs" shall not be on;

v. The buoys of "non-fishing dFADs" shall emit location for at least 6 months when drifting in the area as defined in this paragraph;

vi. In 2027, the FAD WG and SAC should analyze dFAD recovery data and make an appropriate recommendation to the Commission for adjusting the length of time dFAD locations must be shared with FAD recovery entities.

[2] A field for "echosounder = on/off" shall be added to the required data fields in Annex IV of Resolution C-25-01

2h. Conservation measures for the protection and sustainable management of sharks [*amends and replaces Resolution C-24-05 and previous resolutions*]

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103rd MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025

RESOLUTION C-25-08[1]

CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF SHARKS

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

Recalling that the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks calls on States, within the framework of their respective competencies and consistent with international law, to cooperate through regional fisheries organizations with a view to ensuring the sustainability of shark stocks as well as to adopt a National Plan of Action for the conservation and management of sharks;

Recognizing further that some shark species are highly migratory, and that harmonized conservation and management, where appropriate, may help to ensure sustainable management at the regional level.

Noting that sharks are part of pelagic ecosystems and are caught by vessels fishing for tunas and tuna-like species in the Convention Area;

Recalling that under the Antigua Convention, "fish stocks covered by this Convention" means "stocks of tunas and tuna-like species and other species of fish taken by vessels fishing for tunas and tuna-like species in the Convention Area", and that under Article VIII, paragraph 1 (c), the Commission shall "adopt measures…to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the fish stocks covered by this Convention";

Considering that that Article VII, paragraph 1 (f) of the Antigua Convention establishes that the Commission shall "adopt, as necessary, conservation and management measures and recommendations for species belonging to the same ecosystem and that are affected by fishing for, or dependent on or associated with, the fish stocks covered by this Convention, with a view to maintaining or restoring populations of such species above levels at which their reproduction may become seriously threatened";

Recognizing the need to collect data on catches, effort, discards, and utilization, as well as information on biological parameters of the species managed by the IATTC, particularly sharks;

Noting that in its Consolidated Resolution on Bycatch (C-04-05), the IATTC requires that purse-seine vessels release unharmed non-target species, to the extent practicable, including sharks, and urges

[1] Amends and replaces Resolution C-24-05 which had amended and replaced Resolution C-23-07 which consolidated and replaced Resolutions C-05-03, C-16-04 and C-16-05

governments with vessels targeting species covered by the Antigua Convention to provide any required bycatch information as soon as possible. *Further noting* the IATTC staff's 2016 conservation recommendations for the release of sharks caught by purse-seine vessels and for prohibiting the use of shark lines by longline vessels targeting tuna and swordfish;

Aware that specific measures to be respected by vessels of all fishing gears are necessary for the conservation of sharks in the Convention Area;

Desiring to consolidate IATTC Resolutions C-05-03, C-16-04, C-16-05, and to strengthen shark conservation and management measures in the eastern Pacific Ocean;

Further considering the recommendations of the first meeting of the Permanent Working Group on Ecosystem and Bycatch (EBWG), which were endorsed by the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) at its 14th meeting, regarding the need to address best handling and release guidelines and to explore new bycatch release devices and collect more post-release survival data for non-target shark species impacted by fisheries under the purview of the IATTC, as well as the recommendation from the SAC the adoption of a conservation and management measure requiring sharks with fins naturally attached to the body until the point of the first landing;

Considering also the need to improve the identification process of the shark species caught by fishing vessels targeting species under the purview of IATTC, with a view to their management and the integral utilization of the catches;

Recalling that the EBWG recommends that a fishery conservation and management measure be adopted that requires sharks to keep their fins attached to the body until the first point of landing;

Addressing the need to consolidate and continue updating the management regime for sharks associated with fisheries developed under the Antigua Convention;

Agrees as follows:

DEFINITIONS

1. For the purpose of this Resolution:

Shark finning means the practice of removing any fin from a shark's body and discarding its body prior to landing.

Fin means any shark fin (including the tail) or a portion thereof.

Full utilization means retention by a vessel of all parts of the shark, except head and guts, as appropriate until the first point of landing.

Naturally attached means that all fins of the shark are fully or partially connected to the carcass of the shark by connective tissue or cartilage.

Buoy lines means individual lines or leaders that are attached to the float line or to the floats directly, and that are constructed of steel, metal, wire trace, or other materials[2]. Schematic diagram available at Annex 1.

Wire leaders means individual lines or leaders that are constructed of steel, metal, or wire trace, adjacent to the hooks and that are attached to the main line or a branch line. Schematic diagram available at Annex 1.

APPLICATION

2. This Resolution shall apply to all vessels operating pursuant to the IATTC Convention in the Convention Area.

NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

3. Members and Cooperating Non-Members ("CPCs") should establish and implement a national plan of action for conservation and management of sharks, in accordance with the *FAO International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks*.

RETENTION AND UTILIZATION

4. CPCs shall take the necessary measures to require that their fishers fully utilize all retained catches of sharks, with the exception of those species for which a retention ban has been adopted by the IATTC.

5. CPCs shall prohibit shark finning.

6. CPCs shall ensure that all sharks are landed with all fins naturally attached to the body. In order to facilitate on-board storage, shark fins may be partially sliced through and folded against the shark carcass as appropriate but shall remain naturally attached to the carcass until the first point of landing (see Annex 2).

7. Until the end of 2026, notwithstanding paragraphs 6, and other provisions in this Resolution, CPCs may take alternative measures to ensure that individual shark carcasses and their corresponding fins can be easily identified on board the vessel at any time, using one of the following methods:

   (i) each individual shark carcass and its corresponding fins are stored in the same bag, preferably a biodegradable one
   (ii) each individual shark carcass is bound to the corresponding shark fins using rope or wire; or,
   (iii) the shark fins and the corresponding shark are identically, uniquely, and numerically tagged in a manner that an authorized inspector can readily identify the matching of the shark fins to the corresponding shark.

8. Fishing vessels are prohibited from retaining on board, transshipping, landing or trading of any fins harvested or that have been removed on board in contravention of this Resolution.

9. Paragraphs 4 to 8 shall be reviewed, in consultation with IATTC scientific staff, and amendments shall be adopted by the Commission in 2026, as necessary. If no agreement is reached in 2026 on paragraph 7, paragraph 7 shall be replaced with the following text: Notwithstanding paragraphs 6, and other

[2] These are also commonly known as "shark lines."

provisions in this Resolution, CPCs may take alternative measures to require their vessels to have onboard fins that total no more than 5% of the weight of sharks onboard, up to the first point of landing. CPCs that currently do not require fins and carcasses to be offloaded together at the point of first landing shall take the necessary measures to ensure compliance with the 5% ratio through certification, monitoring by an observer, or other appropriate measures.

BYCATCH AND RELEASE

10. CPCs shall prohibit vessels targeting tuna and/or swordfish from using buoy lines.

11. CPCs shall require their vessels to promptly release unharmed all sharks (alive or dead) that are not retained, the extent practicable, as soon as they are seen on the line, entangled in the net, or brailed on the deck, taking due consideration the safety of any person on board, using the following procedures.

For purse seine vessels:

a. when seen entangled in the net, disentangle the sharks and release them into the ocean as soon as possible.
b. sharks brailed on deck must be returned to the water as soon as possible, either utilizing a ramp from the deck connecting to an opening on the side of the vessel, or through escape hatches. If ramps or escape hatches are not available, the sharks must be lowered with a sling or cargo net, using a crane or similar equipment, or as indicated in Annex 3 or any future revisions, as identified pursuant to paragraph 12.
c. prohibit the use of gaffs, hooks, or similar instruments for the handling of sharks.
d. prohibit the lifting of sharks by the head, tail, gill slits, or spiracles, or by using bind wire against or inserted through the body. Prohibit the punching of holes through the bodies of sharks (e.g., to pass a cable through for lifting the shark).
e. prohibit the lifting of whale sharks (*Rhincodon typus*) onboard the vessel and prohibit the towing of whale sharks out of a purse-seine net, e.g., using towing ropes.

For longline vessels:

f. leave the shark in the water, where possible.
g. use a line cutter to cut the branchline as close to the hook as possible, and so that less than 1 meter remains on the animal, to the extent practicable.

12. The IATTC Scientific Staff, in collaboration with the IATTC SAC and EBWG, shall continue to develop, taking into account the practicability for fishing vessels, and recommend to the Commission a comprehensive set of best handling and release practices for the safe release of sharks for inclusion in this measure in 2026. In the meantime, CPCs may elect to use the safe handling and release guidelines described in Annex 3 and as appropriate, the tools identified in Annex 3.1 of this Resolution.

RESEARCH

13. Among shark species, the list of species in Annex 4 shall be given priority for research. The IATTC Scientific Staff in collaboration with EBWG and CPCs, shall continue to review and recommend changes to Annex 4 to the Commission, as appropriate.

14. The scientific staff, in collaboration with researchers associated with CPCs, EBWG and SAC, shall continue evaluating – through a specific pilot study – the use of specific tools, such as velcro straps and harnesses to lift sharks by their caudal peduncle and present the results to the EBWG and SAC for consideration as a potential best practice for safe handling and release methods for sharks. Exceptionally, for this controlled pilot experience managed by the staff, the lifting of sharks by the tail will be permitted. Whale sharks shall be excluded from the pilot study.

15. The IATTC Scientific Staff, in consultation with the SAC and EBWG shall continue to develop and strengthen a data collection program for sharks associated with fisheries managed by the Commission, making use of existing research and data collection mechanisms and programs with a goal to implement and maintain a standardized program that includes the monitoring of shark catches in small scale, coastal fisheries, as identified in SAC-15-10, by 2026, taking into consideration the capacity requirements of those CPCs.

16. In 2026, the IATTC, Scientific Staff in collaboration with the IATTC SAC and EBWG shall develop and recommend to the Commission a Shark Research Plan that will prioritize research activities for Carcharhinus longimanus and C. falciformis, Sphyrna lewini, S. zygaena, Alopias pelagicus, Alopias supercilicious, Prionace glauca, and S. mokarran,and as appropriate, the other species listed in Annex 4. This Shark Research Plan will include timelines and financial considerations for stock assessments, ecological risk assessments, and recommended management strategy evaluations. This plan will also identify opportunities for collaboration with the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) for Pacific-wide stocks.

17. Beginning in 2027 and annually thereafter, the IATTC scientific staff, in collaboration with the SAC and EBWG, shall provide an update on the Shark Research Plan at the SAC and recommendations to the Commission, as appropriate.

18. The IATTC SAC with support from Scientific Staff and the EBWG shall review the information reported by CPCs annually and will, as necessary, provide recommendations to the Commission on ways to strengthen the conservation and management of sharks within IATTC fisheries, including consideration of the use of wire leaders, by vessels fishing tuna and tuna like species.

19. By 2027, CPCs will undertake, where possible, in cooperation with the IATTC scientific staff, actions to:
    a. identify ways to make fishing gears more selective, where appropriate, including research into alternative measures to wire leaders;
    b. improve knowledge of key biological and ecological parameters, life-history and behavioral traits, and migration patterns of key shark species;
    c. identify key shark mating, pupping, and nursery areas; and
    d. improve handling practices for live sharks to maximize their post-release survival.

REPORTING AND DATA COLLECTION

20. The Commission shall consider appropriate assistance to developing CPCs for the identification of shark species/groups and the collection of data on their shark catches.

21. Each CPC shall annually report data for catches, effort by gear type landing and trade of sharks, by species where possible, in accordance with IATTC reporting procedures, including available historical data, of the fisheries under the purview of the Commission.

22. CPCs are encouraged to provide aggregated information on trade, as available.

23. CPCs shall also provide to the IATTC, through observer programs, electronic monitoring programs or other means, the species identification, the number and status (dead/alive) of all sharks caught, in accordance with applicable monitoring requirements, including those caught incidentally and/or released by purse seine vessels of all capacity classes and longline vessels.

24. The IATTC Secretariat will develop a template for CPCs to report on the implementation of this Resolution for adoption by the Commission in 2026.

25. In 2026, CPCs shall use the annual compliance questionnaire to report on their compliance with this Resolution.

26. In 2027, CPCs shall use the reporting template provided by the Staff to annually report on its implementation of this Resolution. Reports for the previous year shall be submitted to the IATTC Secretariat, by June 30 of each year.

REPEAL AND ENTRY INTO FORCE

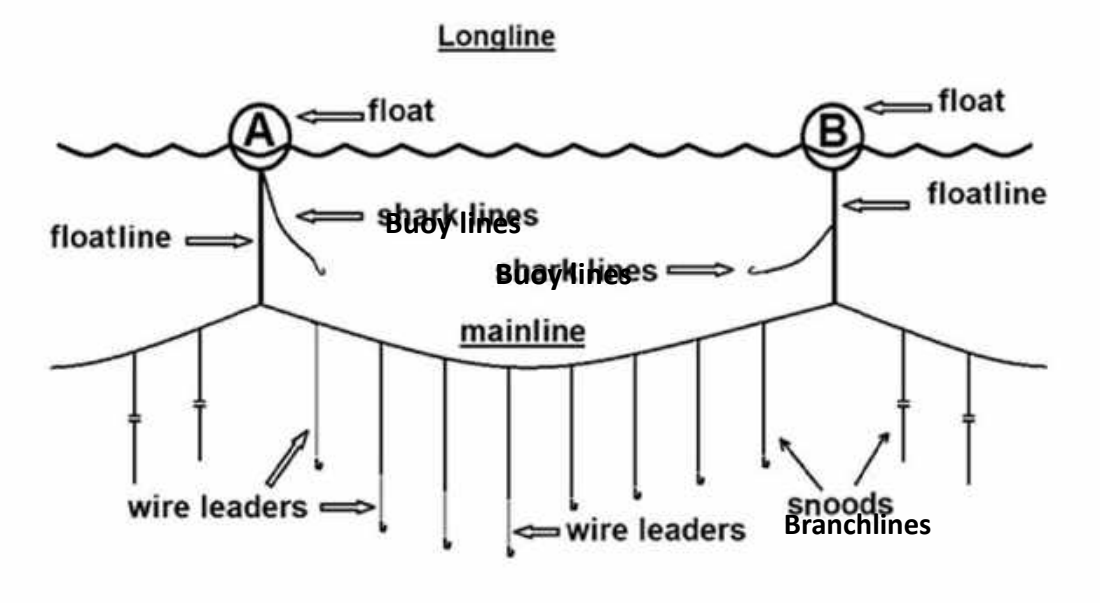
27. This Resolution shall replace Resolution C-24-05 upon its entry into force on January 1, 2026.

Annex 1

Schematic diagram of shark lines and wire leaders

Buoy lines: individual lines or leaders that are attached to the float line or to the floats directly, and that are constructed of steel, metal, wire trace, or other materials, and are deployed in the water column at depths shallower than the mainline[3].

Wire leaders: individual lines or leaders that are constructed of steel, metal, or wire trace, and that are attached to the main line or a branch line.



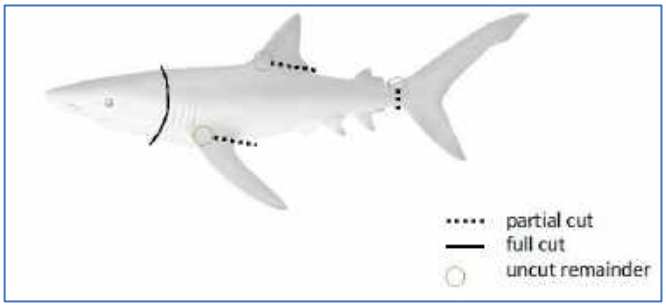
[3] These are also commonly known as “shark lines.”

Annex 2

Diagram of allowable partial cuts

Naturally attached means that all fins of the shark must be fully and/or partially connected to the body of the shark by connective tissue or cartilage, while at sea. In order to facilitate on-board storage, shark fins may be partially sliced through and folded against the shark carcass, but shall not be removed from the carcass until the first point of landing. Below is a schematic to guide fishers.

1. Only head and guts, as appropriate, may be removed at sea.
2. A partial cut at the level of the base of the dorsal fin and the base of the pectoral fins is permitted.
3. A partial cut at the level of the caudal peduncle of the base, allowing the caudal fin to be folded over the posterior area of the shark's trunk is permitted.
4. A full cut along the abdominal section is permitted in the case of the Blue Shark (*P. glauca)* in the process of gutting, provided the fins remain naturally attached.



Annex 3 **Best safe handling and release practices (BHRPs) for sharks**

Bearing in mind that the primary aim of release processes is to ensure the highest level of survival of sharks and that, whenever possible, prompt, and effective action will be taken to return the shark to the sea and prioritizing that the life and safety of the crew is not compromised and that crew members shall endeavor to avoid hazards in the safe handling and release operations for sharks.

To maximize the efficacy and utility of adopted BHRPs, CPCs should ensure crew are educated and trained by qualified staff on these practices regularly. Illustrated best handling and release practices should be available on the vessels.

All fisheries

SHOULD

- Release the shark in the water, if possible.
- Encourage the immediate release of sharks.

SHOULD NOT

- Attach sharks to vessel and drag while vessel operations are underway
- Hit or kick the shark
- Leave sharks laying on the deck, exposed to sun or air, except to the extent necessary to carry out these practices
- Insert hands into gill slits.

Purse-seine fishery

SHOULD NOT

- Roll sharks through the power block

For sharks entangled in the net:

- **SHOULD** Release the shark from the net, always preventing it from ascending to the power block.
  • Maneuver the animal into a stretcher/cradle or ramp and release it on the opposite side of the vessel.

When brailing sharks on board:

SHOULD

- According to the vessel's conditions, to the extent possible, use bycatch reduction devices (BRDs; e.g., hoppers or ramps) to ensure sharks are sorted on the main deck and do not go down the loading hatch.
- Release the shark as soon as possible. The recommended practice is to remove the shark from the brailer, hopper or ramps by grabbing it, without suspending it, by the caudal peduncle to place it on deck. This should be done manually whenever possible.
- Maneuver sharks into a stretcher/cradle or ramp immediately when possible and release it on the opposite side of the vessel from the net.

- Consider the use of a bycatch/waste ramp on the lower decks to facilitate fast and safe release of sharks that were not sighted on the main/working deck.

For whale sharks

SHOULD

- Leave whale sharks in the water for release.
- Release of whale sharks prior to brailing.
- If the whale shark is at the side of the vessel and its head is pointed towards the stern of the vessel, the shark should be released (by opening or cutting the net in front of the sharks mouth)
- If the head of the whale shark is pointed towards the bow of the boat, the crew in charge of the net hauling operation can maneuver the winch and the capstan to bring the whale shark close to the hull, then stand the animal on the net and roll it outside the bunt.

SHOULD NOT

- Land a whale shark on deck regardless of size
- Start a brailing process if it endangers the survival of the whale shark.
  Pull or drag whale sharks out of the net by the tail or caudal peduncle.

Longline fishery (also applicable to fisheries of other surface fleets other than purse seine)

SHOULD

For sharks captured by vessels with high freeboard (>2m):

- Slow the vessel to bring the sharks alongside for identification and removal of gear.
- Avoid removing hooks from sharks. If attempting to remove hooks use long-handled de-hookers for vessels with high freeboards.
- To the extent practicable and ensure that weights are removed, when cutting the line.
- Avoid bringing sharks on board for gear removal if possible. If sharks are brought on board for gear removal:
  - Use a dip net or lasso to help lift them onboard
  - Use a stretcher or cradle for handling and restraint for the safety of the crew and to reduce injury to the animal.
  - Maneuver shark using manual restraint of the pectoral fins and the caudal peduncle (this may require two crew members depending on the size of the animals

For all longline vessels (also applicable to surface fleet fisheries):

SHOULD NOT

- Drag sharks behind the vessel until the hook rips free of the jaw.
- Lift sharks onboard without the use of a dipnet and or second point of attachment to support the weight of the animal, noting it is not recommended to lift sharks onboard the vessel.
- Attempt to remove a hook from a live shark if the hook is not visible.
- Insert gaffs, hooks, or similar instruments into the bodies of live sharks
- Cut into the jaw for removal of the hook.
- Lift sharks onto the deck if possible.

Annex 3.1

Recommended tools for best handling and release practices

FOR PURSE SEINE FISHERIES

- Bycatch sorting/releasing devices for working/main deck (e.g., hopper with a door, ramp) • Stretcher/cradle

FOR LONGLINE FISHERIES

- Dipnet
- Short de-hooker (for sharks brought on board)
- Line cutter
- Short handled de-hooker (vessels with low [<2m] free-board)
- Long-handled line cutter (equal or in greater in length than the vessel's freeboard)
- Long-handled de-hooker (equal or in greater in length than the vessel's freeboard)

Annex 4

List of priority species for research and management

Familia	Nombre científico	Common name	Nombre común
Alopiidae	Alopias pelagicus	Pelagic thresher	Zorro pelágico
Alopiidae	*Alopias superciliosus*	Bigeye thresher	Zorro ojón
Alopiidae	*Alopias vulpinus*	Common thresher	Tiburón zorro pinto
Carcharhinidae	*Carcharhinus brachyurus*	Copper shark	Tiburón cobrizo
Carcharhinidae	*Carcharhinus falciformis*	Silky shark	Tiburón sedoso
Carcharhinidae	*Carcharhinus galapagensis*	Galapagos shark	Tiburón de Galápagos
Carcharhinidae	*Carcharhinus longimanus*	Oceanic whitetip shark	Tiburón punta blanca oceánico
Galeocerdonidae	*Galeocerdo cuvier*	Tiger shark	Tintorera tigre
Lamnidae	*Isurus oxyrinchus*	Shortfin mako shark	Mako de aleta corta
Lamnidae	*Isurus paucus*	Longfin mako shark	Marrajo carite
Lamnidae	*Lamna ditropis*	Salmon shark	Marrajo salmón
Lamnidae	*Lamna nasus*	Porbeagle shark	Marrajo sardinero
Carcharhinidae	*Prionace glauca*	Blue shark	Tiburón azul
Pseudocarchariidae	*Pseudocarcharias kamoharai*	Crocodile shark	Tiburón cocodrilo
Rhincodontidae	*Rhincodon typus*	Whale shark	Tiburón ballena
Sphyrnidae	*Sphyrna lewini*	Scalloped hammerhead shark	Cornuda común
Sphyrnidae	*Sphyrna mokarran*	Great hammerhead	Cornuda gigante
Sphyrnidae	*Sphyrna zygaena*	Smooth hammerhead shark	Cornuda cruz

2i. Conservation measures for shark species, with special emphasis on the silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*), for the years 2026- 2028

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103rd MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5-September 2025

RESOLUTION C-25-09

AMENDS AND REPLACES RESOLUTION C-23-08

CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR SHARK SPECIES, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE SILKY SHARK (*Carcharhinus falciformis*), FOR THE YEARS 2026-2028

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

Considering that Article VII, paragraph 1 (f), of the Antigua Convention indicates that the Commission shall "*adopt, as necessary, conservation and management measures and recommendations for species belonging to the same ecosystem and that are affected by fishing for, or dependent on or associated with, the fish stocks covered by [the] Convention*";

Recalling Article IV, paragraph 3, of the Antigua Convention, which states that "*where the status of target stocks or non-target or associated or dependent species is of concern, the members of the Commission shall subject such stocks and species to enhanced monitoring in order to review their status and the efficacy of conservation and management measures, revising those measures regularly in the light of new scientific information available*";

Recognizing that silky sharks (*Carcharhinus falciformis*) are the shark species most commonly caught as bycatch by purse-seine vessels in the Convention Area;

Recognizing that measures should be implemented to allow silky shark populations to rebuild in the Convention Area;

Aware of the need to establish conservation measures for the protection of sharks, especially the silky shark;

Recalling that Resolution C-19-05 requires the IATTC scientific staff to develop complete assessments of the silky shark stocks, but that due to a lack of data it has not been possible to conduct these and thus have indicators of the status of these species; and

Emphasizing the necessity of obtaining better data to achieve management measures in accordance with the variability of the fisheries, as well as to improve the understanding of fishing and pupping areas, catches and fishing effort that affect the fishing mortality of sharks by multi-species longline fleets, both artisanal and industrial, in the coastal countries.

Agrees as follows:

1. To continue the long-term sampling program (Project C.4.a), to the extent possible, in those shark fisheries related to tunas and tuna-like species in Central America with the goal of improving data collection for assessing indicators of silky shark stocks.

2. Members and Cooperating Non-Members (CPCs) shall prohibit retaining on board, transshipping, landing, or storing, in part or whole, carcasses of silky sharks (*Carcharhinus falciformis*) caught by purse-seine vessels in the IATTC Convention Area. CPCs shall require that their purse-seine vessels release live silky sharks whenever possible. However, if silky sharks are unintentionally caught and

frozen as part of purse-seine vessel's operations, if the flag CPC's governmental authorities are present at the point of landing, the whole silky shark must be surrendered to them. If the flag CPC's governmental authorities are unavailable, the whole silky shark surrendered may not be sold or bartered but may be donated for purposes of domestic human consumption. Silky sharks surrendered in this manner shall be reported to the Secretariat.

3. CPCs shall require all longline vessels whose fishing licenses do not include sharks as a fishing target but catch sharks incidentally, to limit bycatch of silky sharks to a maximum of 20% of the total catch by fishing trip in weight. The 20% limit is set as an interim limit in the absence of data and scientific analysis on which to base conservation and management measures, and will be revised, based on recommendations by the scientific staff, once improved species-level catch and composition data are available.

4. CPCs shall require their multi-species fisheries using surface longlines[1] to limit the catch of silky sharks of less than 100 cm total length to 20% of the total number of silky sharks caught during the trip.

5. CPCs that allow retention of silky sharks by their longline vessels, shall ensure compliance with the measures established in paragraphs 3 and 4 by means of control and inspection mechanisms, for Port CPCs and Flag CPCs, as applicable. At a minimum, such mechanisms shall require effective inspections at the time of first unloading in port or the submission of catch logbooks that will allow for species identification, verification of size when caught, and enforcement of applicable sanctions such as prevention of entry into markets of product caught in violation of this measure. Where applicable, internationally recognized certification and reporting procedures for the conservation of silky sharks may be used for fulfilling the obligations of this paragraph. CPCs shall inform the IATTC Secretariat of the use of said certification procedures. Data derived from these control and inspection measures shall be communicated to the Secretariat, in accordance with IATTC data submission requirements.

6. The IATTC scientific staff shall indicate to the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) the geographical location of the silky shark pupping areas in the Convention Area. CPCs shall require vessels to not fish in silky shark pupping areas, as may be adopted by the Commission, in accordance with the recommendation of the IATTC scientific staff, in coordination with the SAC.

7. For those multi-species fisheries using surface longlines that have captured more than 20% of silky sharks in weight on average in a year, CPCs shall prohibit the use of steel leaders during a period of three consecutive months each year. The average proportion of silky sharks in the catch will be calculated from data of the previous calendar year. New vessels entering the multi-species fisheries affected by this Resolution and those for which no data are available from the period immediately prior shall be subject to the provisions of this paragraph.

8. At the SAC meeting in the year 2027and at the subsequent meeting of the IATTC in 2027, the IATTC scientific staff shall present to the SAC an analysis of the unloading, observer, and long-term sampling program data on the catches of sharks in the fisheries in central America with which they shall also recommend any improvement of the resolution including an adjustment on the period of prohibition (paragraph 7).

9. CPC shall ensure that the closure period for not using steel leaders by their vessels subject to paragraph 7 coincide with the periods recommended on the basis of the analyses indicated in paragraph 8.

10. Vessels of less than 12 m length overall using manually operated fishing gear (*i.e.* without mechanical or hydraulic winches) and that do not deliver to motherships at any time during the fishing trip are excluded from the application of this resolution. For this excluded fleet, CPCs shall continue working with the Commission's scientific staff on the strengthening of data-collection programs, whose progress shall be presented at the meeting of the SAC in 2026 and in full in 2027.

[1] For the purposes of this resolution, surface longlines are those in which the majority of hooks fish at depths shallower than 100 meters and target species other than swordfish.

11. CPCs shall notify the Director, before 1 October of each year, the single period of restricted use of steel leaders referred to in paragraph 7 which will be observed for the calendar year.

12. CPCs shall keep a record of the vessels and the period to which each vessel operator or owner has committed for the enforcement of this resolution.

13. CPCs shall require the collection and submission of catch data for silky sharks, in accordance with IATTC data reporting requirements. CPCs shall also record, through observer programs and other means, for purse-seine vessels of all capacity classes, the number and status (dead/alive) of silky sharks caught and released and report it to the IATTC.

14. The Commission shall prioritize research by the scientific staff in the following areas:

    a. Identification of the pupping areas of the silky shark.

    b. Mitigation of bycatch of sharks, especially in longline fisheries, and survival of sharks caught by all types of gears, giving priority to gears with significant catches. Survival experiments should include studies of the effects on survival of shorter sets and the use of circle hooks.

    c. Improve handling practices for live sharks to maximize post-release survival.

    d. Establish the appropriateness of the percentage limit on silky sharks catch established in paragraphs 3 and 4.

15. This Resolution shall be reviewed by the scientific staff and at the meeting of the SAC in 2027, in order to evaluate the adequacy of the measures of this Resolution.

16. This Resolution shall enter into force on 1 January 2026 and shall be reviewed at the IATTC annual meeting in 2028.

2j. Financing for FY 2026

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103RD MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1 - 5 September 2025

RESOLUTION C-25-10

FINANCING FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026

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

Understanding the importance of ensuring sufficient funding for the Commission in a timely manner, so that it may continue to effectively develop and implement the agreed conservation and management program for the living marine resources of the IATTC Convention Area, and conduct the associated data collection and research;

Noting that non-payment of the agreed contributions may impair the Commission's ability to continue its operations;

Aware that the allocation of the costs of supporting the Commission among Members should be transparent, fair and equitable, stable, and predictable, but also should allow for redistribution of costs as new Members join;

Bearing in mind the decision of the Commission to revise Resolution C-15-05, whereby the Commission, at its 89th Meeting, had agreed on a formula for calculating the contributions of the Members to the Commission's budget for the years 2013-2017 and beyond, and without prejudice to new formula to be adopted;

Agreeing on the need to maintain on an exceptional basis the same level and distribution of contributions as for the fiscal year 2023;

Considering the relevant provisions of the Antigua Convention.

Noting that several non-Members derive benefits from catching or utilizing fish covered by the Convention, but do not make contributions to the Commission's budget;

Taking note of the Commission staff's proposals regarding the budget presented in Document CAF-12-01; and

Recognizing the need to seek economies in the operation of the Commission, in order to reduce costs;

Agrees:

1. To adopt a budget of US$ 9,250,111, which includes funding for the Integrated Port Sampling Program (IPSP) of US$ 460,000 for fiscal year (FY) 2026, for which the members will pay the sum of US$ 8,519,111 with the remaining balance of US$ 731,000 funded by the cumulative carryover.
2. That the Members shall contribute to the Commission's budget for FY 2026 in accordance with the following schedule:

	FY 2026 (US$)
Belize	46,071
Canada	133,226
China	285,562
Colombia	300,522
Korea	244,743
Costa Rica	152,049
Ecuador	1,848,566
El Salvador	116,650
United States	1,746,553
France	156,218
Guatemala	70,309
Japan	274,261
Kiribati	45,861
Mexico	1,155,882
Nicaragua	92,884
Panama	800,106
Peru	199,671
Chinese Taipei	235,794
European Union	362,641
Vanuatu	52,499
Venezuela	199,042
Total	**8,519,111**

3. PROPOSALS (Not Adopted)
3a. B-1 KOR,USA. Protection of Cetaceans

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103RD MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025

PROPOSAL IATTC-103 B-1_REV-1

SUBMITTED BY THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND THE UNITED STATES OFAMERICA

RESOLUTION C-25-XX
ON THE PROTECTION OF CETACEANS

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises) are known to play a vital role in maintaining healthy marine ecosystems but a number of species are threatened or endangered according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and there is evidence that purse seine and longline fishing gears interact with cetaceans, which may lead to injury or mortality of these animals.

This proposal seeks to ensure that there is a consistent and harmonized conservation and management measure for cetaceans across the Pacific Oceans, noting that Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) adopted at its 21st Regular Session of the Commission in 2024 a CMM for the protection of cetaceans which applies to not only purse seine vessels but also longline vessels.

While IATTC Resolution C-04-05 (Consolidated Resolution on Bycatch) requires purse seine vessels to release all non-target species in general, a stand-alone Resolution focused on the protection of cetaceans which encompasses longline fisheries as well would be necessary to effectively protect cetaceans in IATTC fisheries.

This proposal does not intend to affect or alter the existing and future rights and obligations under the AIDCP.

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

Recognizing the ecological and cultural significance of cetaceans in the Pacific Ocean;

Further recognizing that some cetacean species and populations in the Pacific Ocean are threatened or critically endangered;

Considering the adverse effects of fishing for tuna and tuna-like species on some populations of cetaceans in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) through capture, injury and mortality;

Mindful that cetaceans are particularly vulnerable to being encircled by purse seine nets, due to the propensity of tuna to form schools around them, or for toothed cetaceans to be attracted to the same prey as tuna;

Aware that longline fishing grounds overlap with the distributions of certain cetacean species and that cetacean interactions with longline fisheries are known to occur in the Convention Area;

Noting that the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), at its 21st Regular Session of the Commission in 2024, adopted Conservation and Management Measure (CMM) 2024-07 for protection of cetaceans from purse seine and longline fishing operations;

Mindful that IATTC and WCPFC should endeavor to adopt, to the extent practicable, consistent and harmonized conservation and management measures across the Pacific Ocean;

Conscious that the Agreement of the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP) aims to progressively reduce incidental dolphin mortalities in the purse-seine fishery to levels approaching zero and that the Agreement, its annexes and the measures adopted by its Parties set forth strict equipment and operational requirements;

Recalling that the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and the Working Group on Ecosystem and Bycatch (WGEB) have underscored the importance of improved understanding of incidental interactions with cetaceans in the Convention area and have recommended to develop Best Handling and Release Practices guideline

Recognizing that Article VII, paragraph 1 (f) of the Antigua Convention requires the Commission to "adopt, as necessary, conservation and management measures and recommendations for species belonging to the same ecosystem and that are affected by fishing for, or dependent on or associated with, the fish stocks covered by this Convention, with a view to maintaining or restoring populations of such species above levels at which their reproduction may become seriously threatened";

Recalling Article VII, paragraph 1 (g), of the Antigua Convention to "adopt appropriate measures to avoid, reduce and minimize waste, discards, catch by lost or discarded gear, catch of non-target species (both fish and non-fish species) and impacts on associated or dependent species, in particular endangered species;"

Agrees as follows:

1. CPCs shall prohibit their flagged purse seine vessels from setting a purse seine net on a school of tuna associated with a cetacean in the Convention Area, if the animal is sighted prior to commencement of the set.

This paragraph does not apply in the case of dolphins[1] encircled by vessels with a Dolphin Mortality Limit under the AIDCP.

2. CPCs shall require that, in the event that a cetacean is unintentionally encircled in the purse seine net, the master of the vessel shall:

(a) ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure its safe release (see Appendix 1 and Annex I). This shall include stopping the net roll and not recommencing fishing operation until the animal has been released and is no longer at risk of recapture; and

(b) through the logbook or any other means such as on-board observers, report the incident to the relevant authority of the flag CPC to the extent possible, including details of the species (if known) and number of individuals, location and date of such encirclement, steps taken to ensure safe release, and an assessment of the life status of the animal on release (including, if possible, whether the animal was released alive but subsequently died).

[1] For the purpose of this paragraph, "Dolphins" means species of the family Delphinidae associated with the fishery for yellowfin tuna in the AIDCP Agreement Area.

3. CPCs shall prohibit all longline and purse seine vessels flying their flag, including vessels fishing under charter arrangements, from , transshipping, landing, and, to the extent possible, retaining onboard, any cetacean, in whole or any part thereof, in the Convention Area.

4. CPCs shall require all longline vessels flying their flag, including those fishing under charter arrangements, to release, taking into account the safety of the crew, any cetacean that is caught or entangled by its fishing gear in the Convention Area as soon as possible and in a manner that results in as little harm to the cetacean as possible and utilizing the Best Practices for the Safe Handling and Release of Cetaceans set out in the Appendix 1 and Annex II, if possible.

5. In taking steps to ensure the safe release of the cetacean as required under paragraphs 2(a) and 4, CPCs shall require the master of the vessel to follow any guidelines adopted by the Commission for the purpose of this measure.

6. In applying steps under paragraphs 2(a), 4 and 5, the safety of the crew shall remain paramount.

7. CPCs shall provide their purse seine and longline operators with information on the Best Practices for the Safe Handling and Release of Cetaceans outlined in Annex I and II.

8. The Secretariat shall report annually on the implementation of this Resolution,on the basis of observer reports and any other reports and provide updates on the guidelines included in Appendix 1, Annex I and Annex II, as appropriate, within the framework of the best handling and release practice workplan of the Staff (EB-02-03) andthe Strategic Science Plan (SSP, IATTC-103-03a).

9. This Resolution is without prejudice to the existing provisions and any future provisions adopted under the AIDCP.

10. This Resolution shall enter into force on [July 1, 2026] and be reviewed at the Commission meeting in [2028].

Appendix 1

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR SAFE HANDLING AND RELEASE OF CETACEANS

The following are guidelines for best handling practices of marine mammals, specifically cetaceans, for purse seine and longline vessels fishing for tuna and tuna-like species in the Pacific Ocean:

GENERAL PROVISIONS:

Safety First: These guidelines should be considered in light of safety and practicability for crew. Crew safety should always come first. Cetaceans can be very powerful and hooked or entangled cetaceans can be unpredictable, therefore it is not safe to enter the water in order to release an animal.

Suggested Equipment: Vessels should have equipment on board to facilitate the release of cetaceans. For purse seine vessels, suggested equipment includes: canvas or net slings or stretchers for carrying or lifting, large mesh net or grid to cover hatches/hoppers, and tools for cutting/removing net. For longline vessels, suggested equipment includes long handled cutters and de-hookers. Long handled cutters should be safety cutters or have a safety blade to avoid injuring the animal.

Training: Crew should be provided with training on best practices for the safe handling and release of cetaceans, including the use of appropriate equipment carried on board for such purposes.

Notifications: Once a cetacean is observed inside a purse seine net or hooked or entangled on longline gear, immediately notify the captain or fishing master and ensure the crew knows what to do.

General Guidelines: For all gear types, keep animals in the water whenever possible. Removing a cetacean from the water is extremely stressful for the animal and can cause injury, so they should be released while in the water, wherever possible. However, cetaceans can be very powerful and hooked or entangled cetaceans can be unpredictable, therefore it is not safe to enter the water in order to release an animal. If it is necessary to land small cetaceans on deck in purse seine fisheries, always minimize time on deck and release cetaceans back to the water as soon as possible. When handling cetaceans, it is always best to handle with two or more people.

Annex I

GUIDELINES FOR THE SAFE HANDLING AND RELEASE OF CETACEANS PURSE SEINE GEAR

FOR LARGE CETACEANS **(***baleen whales and sperm whales*) :

1. Large cetaceans should remain in the water
2. Do not attempt to release large cetaceans by having crew in the water, to the extent possible
3. Release the animal as quickly as possible, without jeopardizing the safety of the crew

FOR SMALL CETACEANS **(***all toothed whales other than sperm whales*):

Do's:

If in purse seine net:

1. Facilitate release of cetaceans while they are still free-swimming using whatever means that are safe and practical (e.g. back down procedure[1], 'dolphin gate'[2]cutting net, etc.)

If in brail or on deck:

1. Cetaceans that cannot be released in the water without compromising the safety of the crew or the cetacean itself should be returned to the water as soon as possible, either utilizing a ramp from the deck connecting to an opening on the side of the vessel, or through escape hatches. If ramps or escape hatches are not available, cetaceans should be lowered with a sling or cargo net, using a crane or similar equipment, if available.
2. If entangled in netting, carefully cut the net away from the animal and release it to sea as quickly as possible with minimal or no netting attached to the animal.
3. If on deck, keep the animal in an upright position, with dorsal side up.
4. Be cautious of the tail, which is powerful and can cause injury. Lift from the mid-section of the cetacean when possible, and never from the tail.
5. Cease hauling until cetacean is released, release cetacean as soon as possible.
6. Release cetaceans away from fishing operations, when main engines are in neutral to minimize the risk of further entanglement. Maintain observation of released animals until they have disappeared from sight or are sufficiently distant from the vessel to ensure no further interaction before resuming fishing operations.

Don'ts:

1. Do not handle the animal in any way that could cause harm, including
    a. Do not cut or punch holes through the animal's body
    b. Do not use gaffs or sharp objects to grab, move, or hold the animal

[1] Backdown Procedure: The vessel goes astern, so the corkline becomes elliptical and the most forward end is pulled below the surface, thus facilitating escape.
[2] Dolphin gate: A prefabricated quick release rope detaches the corkline from the seine net, which sinks and creates an opening for escape

c. Do not leave the animal exposed to sunlight for extended periods on deck

d. Cetaceans breathe through their blowhole. Do not drag or pull the cetacean underwater in a manner that prevents it from surfacing to breathe. Do not cover or block the blowhole, or spray water in or near it, or allow water or other material to flow into the blowhole.

e. Do not push, pull, bend, or lift by tail, flippers, fins, flukes or beaks

f. Do not rest the cetacean on sharp or rough surfaces.

Annex II

GUIDELINES FOR THE SAFE HANDLING AND RELEASE OF CETACEANS LONGLINE GEAR

FOR LARGE CETACEANS (*baleen whales and sperm whales*) **:**

1. Large cetaceans should remain in the water
2. Do not attempt to release large cetaceans by having crew in the water, to the extent possible
3. Maneuver vessel to minimize tension on the fishing gear, to the extent possible
4. Release the animal as quickly as possible, without jeopardizing the safety of the crew

FOR SMALL CETACEANS (*all toothed whales other than sperm whales*)**:**

Do's:

1. Determine if the animal is hooked or entangled and prepare to remove the line.
    a. If entangled: To the extent possible, maneuver the vessel in a way that will reduce tension on the line. Use a long-handled line cutter to cut as much line off of or as close to the animal as you can.
    b. If hooked:
        i. Determine whether the hook is ingested or not. If the hook appears to be ingested, to the extent possible, maneuver vessel in a way that will reduce tension on the line. Use a long-handled line cutter to cut the line as close to the hook as possible, removing as much gear as possible
        ii. If the hook is not ingested:
            1. If using "weak"[3] circle hooks:
                a. To the extent possible, maintain tension on the line, giving the hook a chance to straighten and release the animal without the hook or trailing line attached.
                b. If the hook does not straighten, use a de-hooker to remove the hook and trailing line.
                c. If the hook is not straightened or removed, use a long-handled line cutter to cut the line as close as you can to the hook, removing as much gear as possible.
            2. If not using weak circle hooks: Avoid pulling sharply on the branchline. To the extent possible, maneuver vessel in a way that will reduce tension on the line. Use a long-handled line cutter to cut the line as close to the hook as possible, removing as much gear as possible.

Don'ts:

1. Do not handle the animal in any way that could cause harm

[3] Circle hooks with a wire diameter of 4.5 mm or less with an offset not to exceed 10 degrees.

a. Do not use gaffs or sharp objects to grab, move, or hold an animal

b. Do not cover or block the blowhole, or spray water in or near it, to allow uninterrupted breathing

c. Do not push, pull or lift by tail, flippers, fins, flukes or beaks

d. Do not drag or pull the cetacean underwater in a manner that prevents it from surfacing to breathe.

References:

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3b. D-1 CAN. Climate Change

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103RD MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025

PROPOSAL IATTC-103 D-1

SUBMITTED BY CANADA

RESOLUTION ~~C-24-10~~ C-25-XX
ON CLIMATE CHANGE ~~(Amendment to Res. C-23-10)~~

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Canada is proposing updating the Climate Change Resolution to reflect recent endorsements by the Science Advisory Committee (SAC). The first, the addition of a reference to the ongoing workplan. The second, the inclusion of the Terms of References to clearly outline and re-enforce the importance of the participatory workshops.

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

Committed to the objective of the Antigua Convention to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the fish stocks covered by the Convention;

Recognizing international initiatives to address climate change and its effects, including through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Paris Agreement, and the Glasgow Climate Pact;

Acknowledging the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change with specific reference to the Sixth Assessment Report (2022);

Aware that, in September 2022 the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Committee on Fisheries (COFI) highlighted the need for developing guidance on climate resilient fisheries management including a process to facilitate coordination and cooperation among RFMO/RFBs;

Mindful that climate change is leading to shifts in the distribution and abundance of fisheries, altering ecosystems, affecting livelihoods, and increasing uncertainty in food and economic security worldwide;

Recognizing that the Second World Ocean Assessment within the framework of the United Nations (2021) highlights the need to integrate climate change-related stressors, such as acidification, hypoxia and ocean warming, into fisheries management considerations;

Noting the importance of addressing the impacts of climate change on target stocks, non-target species, and species belonging to the same ecosystem as the target stocks in the Convention Area;

Acknowledging that several regional fisheries management organizations, including the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), the South Pacific Regional Fishery Management Organization (SPRFMO), the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) and the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) have taken action to prepare for the impacts of climate change on the fisheries under their jurisdiction;

Further acknowledging that both the 1st Meeting of the Permanent Working Group on Ecosystem and Bycatch and the 14th Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee recommended adding climate change as standing agenda items going forward;

Resolves as follows:

1. The Working Group on Ecosystem and Bycatch (EBWG) ~~in~~ since 2024 and annually thereafter shall include climate change as an agenda item at their annual meeting. Within this agenda item, the EBWG will evaluate any issue related to climate change and may provide advice to the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and the Commission regarding amendments to existing resolutions or proposed new resolutions that may be necessary because of climate change impacts on fisheries in the Convention Area.

2. The ~~Scientific Advisory Committee (~~SAC~~)~~ since 2024 and annually thereafter shall include climate change as an agenda item at their annual meeting. Within this agenda item, the SAC will highlight and consider the best scientific information available on the relationships between climate change, target stocks, non-target species, and species belonging to the same ecosystem or associated with the target stocks.

3. To the extent feasible, the IATTC scientific staff will take into consideration existing information on climate change when developing stock assessments and management strategy evaluations and will identify information needs to be implemented in the management of the resource. It will also discuss and propose plans for collection of existing information on climate change related variables that alter ocean water conditions relevant to the physiology and behavior of species and that determine species distributions, such as those related to warming, acidification and hypoxia. The SAC shall consider the recommendations of the IATTC scientific staff when formulating its recommendations to the Commission on how existing resolutions and proposed new resolutions can best promote resilience to climate change impacts on fisheries in the Convention Area.

4. The Commission will convene a virtual climate change workshop annually in the first quarter ~~of 2025~~ of the year to discuss progress on, and implementation of, the scientific staff's ~~proposed~~ workplan, as recommended in SAC-15-12[1]. The Terms of References to guide the series of workshops are outlined in Annex A.

5. The Commission since 2024 and annually thereafter shall include climate change as an agenda item at the ordinary annual meeting of the IATTC, considering climate-related SAC and EBWG Recommendations in its deliberations, as well as any other considerations regarding climate change impacts on species under the purview of the Antigua Convention and any related impacts on the economies of CPCs.

6. At the SAC meeting in 2024 and annually thereafter, the Director and Commission shall consider and

[1] Including updates to the main goal, scope and framework as found in SAC-16 INF-P.

present options to reduce the environmental and climate impacts of the activities of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, such as by providing hybrid options for meetings.

7. The scientific staff shall incorporate in the next edition of the science strategic plan the issue of climate change and its impact on target species, non-target species, and the EPO ecosystem in general.

8. This amendment to Resolution ~~C-23-10~~ C-24-10 shall be effective on January 1, ~~2025~~ 2026.

ANNEX A

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR WORKSHOPS ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE ANTIGUA CONVENTION AREA, INCLUDING ASSESSING AND MITIGATING ITS IMPACTS

1. The Workshops will set out to achieve, without excluding others:
    a. Scope and goals of work
    b. Climate-resilient fisheries framework
    c. Strategic tool identification and development, and
    d. Tactical tool identification and development, including management action
2. The Workshops will be organized and facilitated by the IATTC scientific staff.
3. The Workshops will be held by videoconference or in person, in order to facilitate participation of all relevant stakeholders from all CPCs.
4. The Workshops will be open to the participation of relevant stakeholders, such as scientists, fishery managers, fishing industry representatives, administrators, representatives of nongovernmental organizations, and fishers. Global experts may be invited to participate, as needed.
5. The Workshops will facilitate a structured process for the Commission to consider the activities and phases of the climate change workplan and its implementation.
6. The Workshops will enhance communication and foster mutual understanding on matters related to the assessment and mitigation of climate change effects and the promotion of climate-resilient fisheries among all relevant stakeholders.
7. The EBWG and the SAC will review the outcomes of the Workshops at its meetings and provide additional input if needed.
8. The outcomes of the Workshops, including any conclusions and recommendations that may have been reached, will be presented at the annual meeting of the Commission, for its consideration and endorsement as appropriate.
9. The IATTC scientific staff will present to the SAC an annual report for Workshops that have occurred since the previous SAC meeting. With the inclusion of any additional input from the SAC and other IATTC scientific staff recommendations as appropriate, which may include updates to the climate change workplan, this document will be presented afterwards to the Commission at its annual meeting, with a summary and assessment of all progress made to date.

3c. G-1 USA, FRA-OT. Boarding and Inspection Procedures

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103RD MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025

PROPOSAL IATTC-103 G-1 REV-1

SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED STATES AND FRANCE-OT

RESOLUTION ON BOARDING AND INSPECTION PROCEDURES

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Rationale: The Commission relies upon a number of monitoring, control, and surveillance activities to effectively manage fishing vessels in the Convention Area. High Seas Boarding and Inspection (HSBI) schemes are recognized as playing a critical role in ensuring effective enforcement of RFMO resolutions, a level playing field for participants, and sustainable fishing practices. Ensuring compliance with IATTC resolutions and recommendations is essential for the effective functioning of the Commission. The Commission has the opportunity to build upon the precedents and best practices set by other RFMOs that have established HSBI schemes.

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC):

Recalling that Article VIII(1)(n) of the Antigua Convention provides that the Commission shall promote the application of any relevant provision of the Code of Conduct and of other relevant international instruments including, *inter alia*, the International Plans of Action (IPOAs) adopted by the FAO in the framework of the Code of Conduct;

~~*Further n*~~*Noting* that Article VII (1)(i) of the Antigua Convention establishes a comprehensive program for data collection and monitoring which shall include such elements as the Commission determines necessary;

Further noting that Article VII (1) (v) of the Antigua Convention calls on the Commission to adopt measures or recommendations as may be necessary to achieve the objective of this Convention, including non-discriminatory and transparent measures consistent with international law, to prevent, deter and eliminate activities that undermine the effectiveness of the conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission;

Mindful that Article XVIII (4)(b) of the Antigua Convention requires each party to ensure that vessel owners and/or captains allow the Commission, in accordance with the rules of procedure adopted by the Commission in this respect, to collect and analyze information necessary for carrying out the functions of the Committee for the Review of Implementation of Measures Adopted by the Commission;

Recognizing that paragraph 28.7, among others, of the FAO IPOA to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing provides that States should cooperate in monitoring, control and surveillance, including through international agreements;

Further Recognizing paragraph 80.8 in the FAO IPOA IUU, described above, pertains to Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) and recommends that States consider the development within an RFMO, where appropriate, of boarding and inspection regimes consistent with international law, recognizing the rights and obligations of masters and inspection officers;

Taking into account that IUU fishing activities in the Convention Area undermine the effectiveness of

IATTC resolutions, and high seas boarding and inspection programs have been recognized by the international community as an important tool for combating IUU fishing;

Committed to a level playing field for IATTC Members and Cooperating Non-Members and sustainable fishing practices in the eastern Pacific Ocean;

Considering that other regional tuna fisheries organizations and other regional fisheries management organizations in the Pacific have adopted High Seas Boarding and Inspection schemes, the Commission has the opportunity to build on these efforts;

Further considering that three RFMOs that have overlapping Convention Areas with IATTC, the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC), and South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPRFMO), have High Seas Boarding and Inspection schemes;

Understanding that consistency between the WCPFC and the IATTC is useful for measures such as High Seas Boarding and Inspection, and that this Resolution strives for consistency with the WCPFC Conservation and Management Measure 2006-08;

Agrees that:

DEFINITIONS

1. For the purposes of interpreting and implementing these procedures, the following definitions shall apply:

   a. "Convention" means the 1949 Convention for the Establishment of an Inter- American Tropical Tuna Commission, and the Convention for the Strengthening of the IATTC Established by the 1949 Convention between the United States of America and the Republic of Costa Rica (Antigua Convention).

   b. "Commission" means the Commission established by the Convention, commonly known as the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC);

   c. "Member" means a member of the Commission as defined in Articles I (para. 7) and XXXI (para. 5) of the Antigua Convention. With regard to fishing entities that are Members of the Commission, paragraph 5 of this resolution shall apply.

   d. "Party" means High Contracting Party to the 1949 Convention for the Establishment of an Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, and Party to the Antigua Convention as defined in Article I (para. 6) of the Antigua Convention.

   e. "Authorities of the Inspection Vessel" means the authorities of the Member of the Commission under whose jurisdiction the inspection vessel is operating;

   f. "Authorities of the Fishing Vessel" means the authorities of the Member of the Commission under whose jurisdiction the fishing vessel is operating;

   g. "Authorized inspection vessel" means any vessel included in the Commission Register as authorized to engage in boarding and inspection activities pursuant to these procedures;

   h. "Authorized inspector" means inspectors employed by the authorities responsible for boarding and inspection included in the Commission Register and authorized to

      conduct boarding and inspection activities pursuant to these procedures.

PURPOSE

2. Boarding and inspection and related activities conducted pursuant to these procedures shall be for the purpose of ensuring compliance with the provisions of the Convention and any resolution

adopted by the Commission and in force.

AREA OF APPLICATION

3. These procedures shall apply on the high seas within the Convention Area.

GENERAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

4. Each Member of the Commission may, subject to the provisions of these procedures, carry out boarding and inspection on the high seas of fishing vessels engaged in or reported to have engaged in a fishery regulated pursuant to the Convention.

5. Unless otherwise decided by the Commission, these procedures shall also apply in their entirety as between a Party and a fishing entity that is a Member of the Commission, subject to and 45 days after a notification to that effect to the Commission from the Party concerned.

6. Each Member of the Commission shall ensure that vessels flying its flag accept boarding and inspection by authorized inspectors in accordance with these procedures. Such authorized inspectors shall comply with these procedures in the conduct of any such activities.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

7. These procedures shall be implemented in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner, taking into account, *inter alia*:

   a. such factors as the presence of observers on board a vessel and the frequency and results of past inspections; and

   b. the full range of measures to monitor compliance with the provisions of the Convention and agreed resolutions, including inspection activities carried out by the authorities of Members of the Commission in respect of their own flag vessels.

8. While not limiting efforts to ensure compliance by all vessels, priority for boarding and inspection efforts pursuant to these procedures may be given to:

   a. fishing vessels that are not on the IATTC Regional Vessel Register;

   b. fishing vessels reasonably believed to engage or to have been engaged in any activity in contravention of the Convention or any IATTC resolution adopted thereunder;

   c. fishing vessels whose flag Member does not dispatch patrol vessels to the area of application to monitor its own fishing vessels;

   d. fishing vessels without observers on board;

   e. large-scale tuna fishing vessels;

   f. fishing vessels with a known history of violating any conservation and management measure adopted pursuant to an international agreement or any country's national laws and regulations.

9. The Commission shall keep the implementation of these procedures under review.

PARTICIPATION

10. The Commission shall maintain a register of all authorized inspection vessels and authorities or inspectors. Only vessels and authorities or inspectors listed on the Commission's register are authorized to conduct boardings pursuant to this measure within the Convention Area.

11. Each Member that intends to carry out boarding and inspection activities pursuant to these procedures shall so notify the Commission, through the Executive Director, and shall provide

the following:

a. with respect to each inspection vessel it assigns to boarding and inspection activities under these procedures:

   i. details of the vessel (name, description, photograph, registration number, port of registry (and, if different from the port of registry, port marked on the vessel hull), international radio call sign and communication capability);

   ii. notification that the inspection vessel is clearly marked and identifiable as being on government service;

   iii. notification that the crew has received and completed training in carrying out boarding and inspection activities at sea in accordance with any standards and procedures as may be adopted by the Commission.

b. with respect to inspectors it assigns pursuant to these procedures:

   i. the names of the authorities responsible for boarding and inspection;

   ii. notification that such authorities' inspectors are fully familiar with the fishing activities to be inspected and the provisions of the Convention and resolutions in force; and

   iii. notification that such authorities' inspectors have received and completed training in carrying out boarding and inspection activities at sea in accordance with any standards and procedures as may be adopted by the Commission.

12. Where military vessels are used as a platform for the conduct of boarding and inspection, the authorities of the inspection vessel shall ensure that the boarding and inspection is carried out by inspectors fully trained in fisheries enforcement procedures, or duly authorized for this purpose under national laws, and that such inspectors meet the requirements established in these procedures.

13. Authorized inspection vessels and inspectors notified by Members of the Commission pursuant to paragraph 11 shall be included on the Commission Register once the Executive Director confirms that they meet the requirements of that paragraph.

14. To enhance the effectiveness of the Commission's boarding and inspection procedures, and to maximize the use of trained inspectors, Members of the Commission may identify opportunities to place authorized inspectors on inspection vessels of another Member of the Commission. Where appropriate, Members of the Commission should seek to conclude bilateral arrangements to this end or otherwise facilitate communication and coordination between them for the purpose of implementing these procedures.

15. The ~~Executive~~ Director shall ensure that the register of authorized inspection vessels and authorities or inspectors is at all times available to all Members of the Commission and shall immediately circulate any changes therein in a timely manner and without delay (e.g., 1-2 business days). Updated lists shall be posted on the Commission website in a timely manner and without delay (e.g., 1-2 business days). Each Member of the Commission shall take necessary measures to ensure that these lists are circulated to each of its fishing vessels operating in the Convention Area in a timely manner and without delay (e.g., 1-2 business days).

PROCEDURES

16. Authorized inspection vessels shall fly, in clearly visible fashion, the IATTC inspection flag as designed by the Commission and adopted at the 2026 Commission meeting.

17. Authorized inspectors shall carry an identity card approved by appropriate authorities of the

inspection vessel identifying the inspector as authorized to carry out boarding and inspection procedures under the auspices of the Commission and in accordance with these procedures.

18. An authorized inspection vessel that intends to board and inspect a fishing vessel on the high seas that is engaged in or reported to have engaged in a fishery regulated pursuant to the Convention shall, prior to initiating the boarding and inspection:

    a. make best efforts to establish contact with the fishing vessel by radio, by the appropriate International Code of Signals or by other accepted means of alerting the vessel; provide the information to identify itself as an authorized inspection vessel - name, registration number, international radio call sign and contact frequency;

    b. communicate to the master of the vessel its intention to board and inspect the vessel under the authority of the Commission and pursuant to these procedures; and

    c. initiate notice through the authorities of the inspection vessel of the boarding and inspection to the authorities of the fishing vessel.

19. In carrying out boarding and inspection pursuant to these procedures, the authorized inspection vessel and authorized inspectors shall make their best efforts to communicate with the master of the fishing vessels in a language that the master can understand. If necessary to facilitate communications between the inspectors and the master of the vessel, the inspectors shall use the relevant part of the standardized multi-language questionnaire to be prepared by the Secretariat and circulated to all Members of the Commission with authorized inspection vessels.

20. Authorized inspectors shall have the authority to inspect the vessel, its license, gear, equipment, records, facilities, fish and fish products and any relevant documents necessary to verify compliance with the resolutions in force pursuant to the Convention.

21. Boarding and inspection pursuant to these procedures shall:

    a. be carried out in accordance with internationally accepted principles of good seamanship so as to avoid risks to the safety of fishing vessels and crews;

    b. be conducted as much as possible in a manner so as not to interfere unduly with the lawful operation of the fishing vessel;

    c. take reasonable care to avoid action that would adversely affect the quality of the catch; and

    d. not be conducted in such manner as to constitute harassment of a fishing vessel, its officers or crew.

22. In the conduct of a boarding and inspection, the authorized inspectors shall:

    a. present their identity card to the master of the vessel and a copy of the text of the relevant measures in force pursuant to the Convention in the relevant area of the high seas;

    b. not interfere with the master's ability to communicate with the authorities of the fishing vessel;

    c. complete the inspection of the vessel within 4 (four) hours unless evidence of a serious violation, as defined in paragraph 35 below, is found;

    d. collect and clearly document any evidence they believe indicates a violation of measures in force pursuant to the Convention;

    e. provide to the master prior to leaving the vessel a copy of an interim report on the boarding and

inspection including any objection or statement which the master wishes to include in the report;

f. promptly leave the vessel following completion of the inspection; and

g. provide a full report on the boarding and inspection to the authorities of the fishing vessel, pursuant to paragraph 28, which shall also include any master's statement.

23. During the conduct of a boarding and inspection, the master of the fishing vessel shall:

a. follow internationally accepted principles of good seamanship so as to avoid risks to the safety of authorized inspection vessels and inspectors;

b. accept and facilitate prompt and safe boarding by the authorized inspectors;

c. cooperate with and assist in the inspection of the vessel pursuant to these procedures;

d. not assault, resist, intimidate, interfere with, or unduly obstruct or delay the inspectors in the performance of their duties;

e. allow the inspectors to communicate with the crew of the inspection vessel, the authorities of the inspection vessel, as well as with the authorities of the fishing vessel being inspected;

f. provide them with reasonable facilities, including, where appropriate, food and accommodation; and

g. facilitate safe disembarkation by the inspectors.

24. If the master of a fishing vessel refuses to allow an authorized inspector to carry out a boarding and inspection in accordance with these procedures, such master shall offer an explanation of the reason for such refusal. The authorities of the inspection vessel shall immediately notify the authorities of the fishing vessel, as well as the Commission, of the master's refusal and any explanation.

25. The authorities of the fishing vessel, unless generally accepted international regulations, procedures and practices relating to safety at sea make it necessary to delay the boarding and inspection, shall direct the master to accept the boarding and inspection. If the master does not comply with such direction, the Member shall suspend the vessel's authorization to fish and order the vessel to return immediately to port. The Member shall immediately notify the authorities of the inspection vessel and the Commission of the action it has taken in these circumstances.

USE OF FORCE

26. The use of force shall be avoided except when and to the degree necessary to ensure the safety of the inspectors and where the inspectors are obstructed in the execution of their duties. The degree of force used shall not exceed that reasonably required in the circumstances.

27. Any incident involving the use of force shall be immediately reported to the authorities of the fishing vessel, as well as to the Commission.

INSPECTION REPORTS

28. Authorized inspectors shall prepare a full report on each boarding and inspection they carry out pursuant to these procedures in accordance with a format that may be specified by the Commission. The authorities of the inspection vessel from which the boarding and inspection was carried out shall transmit a copy of the boarding and inspection report to the authorities of the fishing vessel being inspected, as well as the Commission, within 3 (three) full working days of the completion of the boarding and inspection. Where it is not possible for the authorities of the inspection vessel to provide

such report to the authorities of the fishing vessel within this timeframe, the authorities of the inspection vessel shall inform the authorities of the fishing vessel and shall specify the time period within which the report will be provided.

29. Such report shall include the names and authority of the inspectors and clearly identify any observed activity or condition that the authorized inspectors believe to be a violation of the Convention or resolutions in force and indicate the nature of specific factual evidence of such violation.

SERIOUS VIOLATIONS

30. In the case of any boarding and inspection of a fishing vessel during which the authorized inspectors observe an activity or condition that would constitute a serious violation, as defined in paragraph 35, the authorities of the inspection vessels shall immediately notify the authorities of the fishing vessel, directly as well as through the Commission.

31. Upon receipt of a notification under paragraph 30, the authorities of the fishing vessels shall without delay:

    a. assume their obligation to investigate and, if the evidence warrants, take enforcement action against the fishing vessel in question and so notify the authorities of the inspection vessel, as well as the Commission; or

    b. authorize the authorities of the inspection vessel to complete investigation of the possible violation and so notify the Commission.

32. In the case of 31(a) above, the authorities of the inspection vessel shall provide, as soon as practicable, the specific evidence collected by the authorized inspectors to the authorities of the fishing vessel.

33. In the case of 31(b) above, the authorities of the inspection vessel shall provide the specific evidence collected by the authorized inspectors, along with the results of their investigation, to the authorities of the fishing vessel immediately upon completion of the investigation.

34. Upon receipt of a notification pursuant to paragraph 30, the authorities of the fishing vessel shall make a best effort to respond without delay and in any case no later than within 3 (three) full working days.

35. For the purposes of these procedures, a serious violation means the following violations of the provisions of the Convention or resolutions adopted by the Commission:

    a. fishing without a license, permit or authorization issued by the flag Member, in accordance with Resolution C-24-07, including any superseding resolutions or amendments thereto;

    b. failure to maintain sufficient records of catch and catch-related data in accordance with the Commission's reporting requirements or significant misreporting of such catch and/or catch-related data;

    c. fishing in a closed area;

    d. fishing during a closed season;

    e. intentional taking or retention of species in contravention of any applicable resolution adopted by the Commission;

    f. significant violation of catch limits or quotas in force pursuant to the Convention;

g. using prohibited fishing gear;

h. falsifying or intentionally concealing the markings, identity or registration of a fishing vessel;

i. concealing, tampering with or disposing of evidence relating to investigation of a violation;

j. multiple violations which taken together constitute a serious disregard of measures in force pursuant to the Commission;

k. refusal to accept a boarding and inspection, other than as provided in paragraphs 24 and 25;

l. assaulting, resisting, intimidating, sexually harassing, interfering with, or unduly obstructing or delaying an authorized inspector;

m. intentionally tampering with or disabling the vessel monitoring system; or

n. such other violations as may be determined by the Commission, once these are included and circulated in a revised version of these procedures.

o. Interacting with a data buoy or deploying fishing gear within one nautical mile of a data buoy.

ENFORCEMENT

36. Any evidence obtained as a result of a boarding and inspection pursuant to these procedures with respect to violation by a fishing vessel of the Convention or resolution adopted by the Commission and in force shall be referred to the authorities of the fishing vessel for action in accordance with Article XVIII and Article XIX of the Antigua Convention as well as Resolution C-22-02, including any superseding resolutions or amendments thereto.

37. For the purposes of these procedures, the authorities of the fishing vessels shall regard interference by their fishing vessels, captains or crew with an authorized inspector or an authorized inspection vessel in the same manner as any such interference occurring within its exclusive jurisdiction.

ANNUAL REPORTS

38. Members of the Commission that authorize inspection vessels to operate under these procedures shall report annually to the Commission on the boarding and inspections carried out by its authorized inspection vessels, as well as upon possible violations observed. The reports shall be provided to the Commission at least 30 days prior to the IATTC Annual Meeting.

39. Members of the Commission shall include in their annual statement of compliance within their Annual Report to the Commission under Resolution C-22-02 of the Convention action that they have taken in response to boarding and inspections of their fishing vessels that resulted in observation of alleged violations, including any proceedings instituted and sanctions applied.

OTHER PROVISIONS

40. Authorized inspection vessels, while carrying out activities to implement these procedures, shall engage in surveillance aimed at identifying fishing vessels of non-Members undertaking fishing activities on the high seas in the Convention area. Any such vessels identified shall be immediately reported to the Commission.

41. The authorized inspection vessel shall attempt to inform any fishing vessel identified pursuant to paragraph 40 that it has been sighted or identified as engaging in fishing activities that are

undermining the effectiveness of Convention and that this information will be distributed to the Members of the Commission and the flag state of the vessel in question.

42. If warranted, the authorized inspectors may request permission from the fishing vessel and/or the flag state of the vessel to board a vessel identified pursuant to paragraph 40. If the vessel master or the vessel's flag state consents to a boarding, the findings of any subsequent inspection shall be transmitted to the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall distribute this information to all Commission Members as well as to the flag State of the fishing vessel.

43. Any claim submitted for damage, injury, death or loss resulting from an operation carried out under these procedures shall be processed and considered by the Member whose official(s) are asserted by the claimant to be responsible for the acts or omissions out of which the claim arises, in accordance with the domestic laws of that Member.

COMMISSION COORDINATION AND OVERSIGHT

44. Authorized inspection vessels in the same operational area should seek to establish regular contact for the purpose of sharing information on areas in which they are patrolling, on sightings and on boarding and inspections they have carried out, as well as other operational information relevant to carrying out their responsibilities under these procedures.

45. The Commission shall keep under continuous review the implementation and operation of these procedures, including review of annual reports relating to these procedures provided by Members. In applying these procedures, Members of the Commission may seek to promote optimum use of the authorized inspection vessels and authorized inspectors by:

    a. identifying priorities by area and/or by fishery for boarding and inspections pursuant to these procedures;

    b. ensuring that boarding and inspection on the high seas is fully integrated with the other monitoring, compliance and surveillance tools available pursuant to the Convention;

    c. ensuring non-discriminatory distribution of boarding and inspections on the high seas among fishing vessels of Members of the Commission without compromising the opportunity of Members of the Commission to investigate possible serious violations; and

    d. taking into account high seas enforcement resources assigned by Members of the Commission to monitor and ensure compliance by their own fishing vessels, particularly for small boat fisheries whose operations extend onto the high seas in

    areas adjacent to waters under their jurisdiction.

SETTLEMENT OF DISAGREEMENTS

46. In the event of a disagreement concerning the interpretation, application or implementation of these procedures between two or more Members ("the parties"), the parties concerned shall consult in an attempt to resolve the disagreement.

47. If the disagreement remains unresolved following the consultations, the Executive Director of the Commission shall, at the request of the parties concerned, and with the consent of Commission, refer the disagreement to the Committee for the Review of Implementation of Measures Adopted by the Commission (Compliance Committee). The Compliance Committee shall establish a panel of five representatives, acceptable to the parties to the disagreement, to consider the matter.

48. A report on the disagreement shall be drawn up by the panel and forwarded through the Compliance Committee Chair to the Commission within two months of the Compliance Committee meeting at which the case is reviewed.

49. Upon receipt of such report, the Commission may provide appropriate advice with respect to any such disagreement for the consideration of the Members concerned.

50. Application of these provisions for the settlement of disagreements shall be non-binding. These provisions shall not prejudice the rights of any Member to use the dispute settlement procedures provided in the Convention.

51. This Resolution shall enter into force 1 January 2027.

3d. I-1 ECU. Reference points for swordfish.

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103RD MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025

PROPOSAL IATTC-103 I-1

SUBMITTED BY ECUADOR

INTERIM REFERENCE POINTS FOR SWORDFISH IN THE IATTC AREA

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

REFERENCE POINT REQUIREMENTS

- The most common reference points used for swordfish in other RFMOs are based on biomass and fishing mortality. There has been a recurring tendency to consider MSY as the target reference point and use a fraction of it as the limit reference point. Documents SAC-08-05e(iii) and SAC-14 INF-O provide relevant background information.
- The IATTC has encountered significant challenges in establishing MSY-based reference points for tropical tunas due to technical, analytical, and operational difficulties. As a result, the Commission has experienced delays in adopting reference points, which has generated significant debate regarding the identification and proposal of harvest control rules.
- In 2025, the IATTC scientific staff made the following recommendations regarding swordfish management and data collection (SAC-16-11): (i) adopt interim reference points for the stock and (ii) continue monitoring the stock together with benchmark stock assessments every three to five years.
- During its 15th meeting in 2024, the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) suggested that the scientific staff provide support in supplying data on the South Pacific swordfish fishery, and that these data be used in an update of the benchmark stock assessment to be presented to the SAC in 2026.

PROXY REFERENCE POINTS

- Although the swordfish benchmark assessment scheduled for 2026 could provide adequate information on the size and status of the stock relative to reference levels, the MSY estimates may not be robust enough for an updated model, which will require rigorous analytical and technical development.
- If RMS estimates are not robust or generate uncertainty that makes decision-making impossible, the identification and selection of reference points based on these quantities should follow a similar course to that in tropical tunas, delaying the adoption of management strategies.
- If RMS estimates are unreliable, making decision-making difficult, the identification and selection of reference points based on these quantities should follow a similar process to that applied to tropical tunas, delaying the implementation of management strategies.
- Given the delay in adopting RMS-based reference points, the adoption of proxy reference points should be considered as a precautionary measure. Early implementation of these reference points would allow short-term conservation measures to be applied, based on the results of the reference model for swordfish.

PROPOSAL C-25-XX

INTERIM REFERENCE POINTS FOR SWORDFISH IN THE IATTC AREA

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

Taking into account that the objective of the Antigua Convention is to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the stocks in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO);

Recalling Article 7 of the Antigua Convention, which assigns to the Commission the function of adopting conservation measures based on the best scientific evidence available;

Aware of its responsibility to make recommendations to its Members and Cooperating non-Members (CPCs) regarding the long-term sustainable use of stocks of tuna and tuna-like species;

Recognizing that swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*) is a priority species for management by the Commission, and that fishing activities have increased significantly over the last decade;

Noting that document SAC-16-11 of the Scientific Advisory Committee recommends the implementation of specific reference points, among others, based on the precautionary approach;

Concerned about the implementation of the swordfish research plan within the scheduled timeframe, including the benchmark assessment expected to be completed in 2026;

Agrees:

To adopt Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) proxy target and limit reference points to facilitate determining the conservation status of swordfish in the EPO.

INTERIM REFERENCE POINTS

1. To provisionally adopt the following proxy reference points:
    a. Target Reference Point: The equivalent to 35% of the spawning biomass that would occur in the absence of fishing.
    b. Limit Reference Point: The equivalent to 20% of the spawning biomass that that would occur in the absence of fishing.
2. These reference points are not the "optimal" options for swordfish, but they are feasible until more appropriate ones are identified and adopted.
3. The proxy reference points indicated in paragraph 1 may be interpreted as a deliberation by managers, based on conservation goals and aligned with the scientific staff's proposals. In fact, document SAC-14-INF-O provides a set of options for the target reference point that are consistent with those in this proposal.
4. Adopting the proxy reference points indicated in paragraph 1 would allow for the establishment of multi-year management cycles similar to those applied to tropical tunas, which should be maintained through benchmark assessments conducted every three to five years.
5. A multi-year cycle, such as 2027–2029, should provide a technical and analytical framework enabling CPCs to identify and adopt optimal reference points consistent with improvements in benchmark assessments.

3e. J-1 ECU. Management strategies.

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103RD MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025

PROPOSAL IATTC-103 J-1

SUBMITTED BY ECUADOR

RESOLUTION C-25-XX

CONSERVATION MEASURE TO ESTABLISH A MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR TROPICAL TUNA FISHERIES IN THE EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN

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

Aware of its responsibility to conduct scientific studies on tuna and tuna-like species in its Convention Area and to formulate recommendations to its Members and Cooperating non-Members (CPCs) regarding those resources;

Acknowledging that excessive fishing effort could reduce the potential production of the resource;

Concerned about the increasing capacity of purse-seine fleets fishing for tunas in the Convention Area;

Taking into account the best available scientific information, as reflected in the recommendations of the IATTC staff, as well as the precautionary approach;

Recalling the recommendations of the IATTC scientific staff and the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) on the precautionary approach and limit reference points, which the Commission considers to be of high priority; and

Aware of the ongoing work on the development of reference points and harvest control rules for tropical tunas in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO);

Agrees:

To implement management measures for tropical tunas in the EPO based on the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) process, which has been developed by the IATTC scientific staff and will be strengthened through the actions of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Management Strategy Evaluation (WGMSE).

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

1. The Commission shall commit to developing and implementing harvest strategies for each of the tropical tuna stocks or fisheries in the EPO during the new three-year cycle (2026-2028), in accordance with the process implemented by the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Management Strategy Evaluation (WGMSE) and the management measures proposed to the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC).
2. Without prejudice to the direction in which the WGMSE proceeds, the Commission shall require that harvest strategies contain the following elements:
    a) Define explicit management objectives, with specific deadlines, for the fishery or tropical tuna,

b) Identify target and limit reference points for each tropical tuna species,

c) Establish acceptable risk levels to avoid exceeding the limit reference points,

d) Implement a cost-effective monitoring strategy that uses the best available information to assess performance relative to the reference points,

e) Adopt harvest control rules that achieve target reference points and avoid limit reference points, and

f) Implement Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE), which periodically reviews the performance of the proposed harvest control rules relative to management objectives and includes risk assessment.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS OF A HARVEST STRATEGY

3. While developing harvest strategies, the Commission may adjust the elements outlined in paragraph 1 on a case-by-case basis, with the objective of meeting the specific requirements of the fishery or tropical tuna stock. This may include establishing interim or provisional elements of a harvest strategy. The absence of adequate scientific information shall not be used as a reason to postpone or not adopt harvest strategies.

4. Harvest strategies shall not result in the direct or indirect transfer of a disproportionate burden of management measures to CPCs.

5. The Commission shall agree on a work plan and indicative time frames for adopting harvest strategies for bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack tunas consistent with the recommendations made by the WGMSE to the SAC. The Commission and the SAC shall review this work plan annually, beginning this year, 2025, with actions for bigeye tuna.

3f. L-1 EUR. Amendment to C-19-08 on scientific observers for longliners.

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103RD MEETING

Panama City, Panama

1-5 September 2025

PROPOSAL IATTC-103 L-1

SUBMITTED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

RESOLUTION C-~~19~~25-~~08~~ XX

RESOLUTION ON SCIENTIFIC OBSERVERS FOR LONGLINE VESSELS

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in ~~Bilbao, Spain~~Panama City, Panama on the occasion of its 103rd ~~94th~~ Meeting;

Recognizing the need to collect scientific information on target species as well as comprehensive data on interactions with non-target species, in particular, sea turtles, sharks and seabirds;

Noting the need to ensure uniform and equitable treatment of all tuna-fishing vessels operating in the Convention Area;

Noting that all large purse-seine vessels operating in the Convention Area are required to carry scientific observers aboard, in accordance with the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program, and that the Commission has recommended the extension of observer coverage to smaller purse-seine vessels on a voluntary basis;

Acknowledging that some CPCs' shipowners of purse-seine vessels smaller than Class 6 make economic efforts to provide information on their activities, carrying observers aboard, in support of scientific research and thus *Mindful* of the need to ensure a level playing field among all tuna-fishing vessels operating in the Convention Area;

and

Taking into account all recommendations of the staff, the SAC, for 2023 in Document SAC-14-16, and the Working Group on Bycatch at their meetings in 2019 and the considerations of the CPCs; ~~*Taking* into account that IATTC scientific staff and the IATTC Working Group on Bycatch have reiteratedly recommended at least 20% observer coverage on longline vessels fishing for tunas in the Convention Area, and that the Working Group on Bycatch suggested that human observer coverage could be supplemented by electronic monitoring systems (EMS) in order to achieve that goal; and~~

~~*Noting* that the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), at its 10th meeting in May 2019, determined that the appropriate measure of longline fishing effort for calculating observer coverage is "number of hooks."~~

Agrees that:

1. Each Member and Cooperating non-Member (CPC) shall ensure that active longline vessels greater than 20 meters length overall carry human observers, in accordance with the following timeline of observation coverage:

1st January 2026	7%

1st January 2027	9%
1st January 2028	11%
1st January 2029	13%
1st January 2030	15%

~~1.~~2. For the purposes of this Resolution, the units to measure observation coverage are number of sets or number of hooks deployed ~~longline fishing effort is defined as the number of effective days of fishing[1] or hooks deployed~~.

3. Following the planned 2027 review of Resolution C 24-09, the Commission shall review this resolution at its 2028 annual meeting and consider - on the basis of CPC experiences with the use of EM in IATTC fisheries - the feasibility of allowing for EM to be used as a partial substitute or a complement for human observers to fulfil certain IATTC observer coverage requirements.

4. The main task of the scientific observers and/or EMS shall be to record~~, consistent with data standards established by the SAC, any available biological information,~~ the catches of targeted ~~fish~~ species, species composition, size distribution of the catches and any available biological information, as well as any interactions with nontarget species such as sea turtles, seabirds and sharks including their condition when captured and released and, when appropriate and relevant for scientific purposes, to monitor the application of mitigation measures agreed by the Commission in a timely and accurate manner.

~~2.~~5. At the latest by the 30th of May, each CPC shall update the list of its vessels by specifically indicating which vessels are active and the percentage of observers aboard, in addition to inactive and/or sunk and/or decommissioned vessels.~~.~~

~~3. Each Member and Cooperating Non-Member (CPC) shall ensure that at least 5% of the fishing effort made by its longline fishing vessels greater than 20 meters length overall carries a scientific observer.~~

6. Each CPC shall endeavour ~~endeavor~~ to ensure that observer coverage is representative of the activities of its fleet, including in terms of gear configuration, target species and fishing areas.

~~4.~~

~~5.~~7. CPCs shall:

a. Ensure that the minimum level of coverage is met;

b. Take all necessary measures to ensure that observers are able to carry out their duties in a competent and safe manner;

c. Endeavor to ensure that observers alternate vessels between their assignments;

d. Ensure that the vessel on which an observer is placed provide suitable food and lodging during the observer's deployment at the same level as the officers, where possible. Vessel masters shall ensure that all necessary cooperation is extended to observers in order for them to carry out their duties safely, including providing access, as required, to the retained catch, and catch which is intended to be discarded.

8. Scientific observers shall submit to their flag CPC authorities a report on these observations at the latest 30 days after the end of each fishing trip.

9. Every year, CPCs shall submit to the Scientific Advisory Committee, through the Director, by 31 March, the scientific observers' information on the previous year's fishery in a format established by the Committee.

10. The Director, in cooperation with the scientific staff and the Scientific Advisory Committee, shall review the existing reporting format detailing the required data to be collected directly by scientific observers and shall communicate it to the Commission at the latest by the 31st of December 2026.

~~6. The reporting requirements established by the SAC pursuant to resolution C-11-08 can be found in Annex A. The SAC may decide to modify these reporting requirements or establish new ones whenever deemed necessary and shall notify the Commission as appropriate for endorsement at the subsequent annual meeting of the IATTC.~~

~~7. CPCs shall submit operational data collected by observers from the previous year, consistent with the Minimum Data Reporting Standards (Annex B), to the Director no later than June 30 of each year.~~

~~Unless otherwise specified by the SAC, CPCs shall submit other reporting under this Resolution by 31 March of each year.~~

~~8.~~

~~9. The IATTC Scientific Staff, in consultation with CPCs, shall prepare a draft proposal for the development of minimum standards for the implementation of an EMS for the longline fleets, taking into account the experience of CPCs that are implementing EMS on longline vessels and progress made in other tuna RFMOs, to be submitted to the SAC meeting of 2020.~~

~~10. The SAC, in consultation with the IATTC Scientific Staff, shall present recommendations on this proposal to the Commission for its consideration at its annual meeting in 2020.~~

~~Annex A: Annual Summary Reporting (established by SAC-10)~~

~~Annex B: Minimum Data Reporting Standards (2 options, established by SAC-08)~~

~~Option 1 (harmonized with WCPFC)~~

~~Option 2 (IATTC-developed longline observer forms)~~

~~Annex A.~~

Template for annual summary reports on fleet information and observer data for longline vessels >20 m LOA operating in the EPO

(adopted by the 10th Meeting of the IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee, May 2019)

CPC	Name

FLEET INFORMATION (vessels >20 m LOA)									
	Both set types combined			Shallow sets (<15 HPB/HBF[1] or <100 m max hook depth)			Deep sets (≥15 HPB/HBF or ≥100 m max hook depth)		
Period covered	Date range DD-MMM-YY – DD-MMM-YY			Date range DD-MMM-YY – DD-MMM-YY			Date range DD-MMM-YY – DD-MMM-YY		
Area fished	from (XXX)°W to (XXX)°W and from (XX)°S/N to (XX)°S/N			from (XXX)°W to (XXX)°W and from (XX)°S/N to (XX)°S/N			from (XXX)°W to (XXX)°W and from (XX)°S/N to (XX)°S/N		
	Total Fleet	Observed	% observed	Total Fleet	Observed	% observed	Total Fleet	Observed	% observed
No. of vessels that fished									
No. of trips									
No. of effective days fishing									
No. of sets									
No. of hooks (in thousands) *(If unknown, approx. no. of hooks/set, using a *)*									
Predominant[2] hook type/size (IATTC code)									
Predominant bait type[3]									

[1] Hooks per basket / Hooks between floats
[2] 'Predominant' means most common, i.e., >50%
[3] Bait codes: SQ – squid; F – fishes (*e.g. Scomber* spp.); A – artificial lure (*e.g.* plastic jig)

NON-RETAINED SPECIES (vessels >20 m LOA)										
		No. of individuals observed								
		Both set types combined			Shallow sets (<15 HPB/HBF[1] or <100m max hook depth)			Deep sets (≥15 HPB/HBF or ≥100m max hook depth)		
		Released			Released			Released		
Species code	Species	Alive	Dead	Condition unknown	Alive	Dead	Condition unknown	Alive	Dead	Condition unknown
DKK	Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*)									
TTL	Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*)									
TUG	Green (*Chelonia mydas*)									
LKV	Olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*)									
	Add rows for additional species as required									
Sharks and rays										
FAL	Silky (*Carcharhinus falciformis*)									
OCS	Oceanic whitetip (*Carcharhinus longimanus*)									
BSH	Blue shark (*Prionace glauca*)									
SMA	Shortfin mako (*Isurus oxyrinchus*)									
SPL	Scalloped hammerhead (*Sphyrna lewini*)									
SPZ	Smooth hammerhead (*Sphyrna zygaena*)									
SPK	Great hammerhead (*Sphyrna mokarran*)									
RMB	Giant manta ray (*Manta birostris*)									
	Add rows for additional species as required									
Marine mammals										
FAW	False killer whale (*Pseudorca crassidens*)									
DRR	Risso's dolphin (*Grampus griseus*)									
SGF	Guadalupe fur seal (*Arctocephalus townsendi*)									
	Add rows for additional species as required									
Seabirds										
DQS	Antipodean albatross (*Diomedea antipodensis*)									
DPK	Waved albatross (*Phoebastria irrorata*)									
DIZ	Laysan albatross (*Phoebastria immutabilis*)									
DAQ	Short-tailed albatross (*Phoebastria albatrus*)									
	Add rows for additional species as required									
Billfishes										
MLS	Striped marlin (*Kajikia audax*)									
SSP	Shortbill spearfish (*Tetrapturus angustirostris*)									
BUM	Blue marlin (*Makaira nigricans*)									
	Add rows for additional species as required									

Annex B, Option 1.

Data field	Description/Instructions/Comments
GENERAL VESSEL AND TRIP INFORMATION	
VESSEL IDENTIFICATION	
Name of vessel	Name, including all numbers or other characters
Flag Registration Number	The number issued to the vessel by the authorities of its flag State.
International Radio Call Sign	If issued.
Vessel Owner/Company	Name (individual or company) and contact information, if available, of the vessel owner.
International Maritime Organization 'IMO' or Lloyd's Register number 'LR"	If issued.
VESSEL TRIP INFORMATION	
Date and time of departure from port	The date and time the vessel leaves port to start its fishing trip.
Port of departure	Include both the port name and country.
Date and time of return to port	The day and time the vessel returns to a port at the completion of its trip.
Port of return	Include both the port name and country.
OBSERVER INFORMATION	
Observer name	Full name.
Observer provider	Name of the organization or agency that employs the observer and has placed him on the vessel.
Date, time and location of embarkation	The date, time, and location where the observer boards the vessel to start his trip.
Date, time and location of disembarkation	The date, time, and location where the observer leaves the vessel and concludes his observer duties.
CREW INFORMATION	
Name of captain	Full name.
Name of fishing master	Full name.
Total number of crew	Total number of people aboard the vessel, excluding the observer
VESSEL CHARACTERISTICS	

Note: These characteristics only need to be noted if what is observed differs from specifications reflected on the IATTC vessel register.	
Vessel fish hold capacity	The total combined capacity, in metric tons (MT), of the vessel freezers, wells, and any other areas that can be used to store catch.
Freezer type	Some vessels may have more than one type of freezer. List all types present.
Length Over All (specify unit)	The "LOA" can typically be found in the vessel plans or other documents.
Tonnage (specify unit)	The vessel tonnage, as recorded in the vessel's registration documents; may be expressed as Gross Tonnage (GT) or Gross Register Tonnage (GRT).
Engine power (specify unit)	The engine power is typically listed in the vessel plans.
VESSEL ELECTRONICS Indicate "Yes" if present, "No" if absent. If more than one of type is present, indicate the total number present	
Radars	"Yes" if present, "No" if absent.
Depth Sounder	"Yes" if present, "No" if absent.
Global Positioning System (GPS)	"Yes" if present, "No" if absent.
Track Plotter	"Yes" if present, "No" if absent.

Data field	Description/Instructions/Comments
Weather Facsimile	"Yes" if present, "No" if absent.
Sea Surface Temperature (SST) gauge	"Yes" if present, "No" if absent.
Sonar	"Yes" if present, "No" if absent.
Radio/ Satellite Buoys	"Yes" if present, "No" if absent.
Doppler Current Meter	"Yes" if present, "No" if absent.
Expendable Bathythermograph (XBT)	"Yes" if present, "No" if absent.
Satellite Communications Services (Phone/Fax/Email)	Indicate all the vessel Satellite numbers if the vessel has Satellite communications on board
Fishery information services	"Yes" if present, "No" if absent. Please also list the information service used.
Vessel Monitoring System	Indicate the type(s) of VMS used on the vessel (*e.g.* INMARSAT, ARGOS, etc.)
Refrigeration Method	List all refrigerator types used on the vessel.

GENERAL GEAR CHARACTERISTICS	
Mainline material	List the of the mainline used by the vessel (*e.g.* Kuralon, Braided nylon, Monofilament Nylon, etc.).
Mainline length (specify unit)	The total length of the mainline when it is fully set
Mainline diameter (specify unit)	
Branch line material(s)	A branch line can consist of one type of material like monofilament or it can be made up of many different materials like braided nylon wire trace and mono filament, etc. If different types are used in different branch line positions, please describe.
SPECIAL GEAR CHARACTERISTICS	
Wire trace	**At the trip level** indicate "Yes" or "No" -if the vessel uses wire traces on some or all of its lines. If wire traces used on all lines during the trip then record "ALL LINES." If the vessel used wire traces on certain branch line positions during the trip, describe the configuration. For example, "wire traces were used on first and tenth branch lines of each basket". If the proportion of leaders that are wire varies within a trip, record the average based on a sample of ten total baskets from a range of sets.
Mainline hauler	Does the vessel use an instrument to haul in the main line after it is set or is the line hauled by hand?
Branch line hauler	Does the vessel use a special hauler to coil branch lines?
Line shooter	Does the vessel use a line shooter?
Automatic bait thrower	Does the vessel use a bait thrower or are bait and branch lines thrown overboard manually?
Automatic branch line attached	Does the vessel have an automatic branch line mechanism that attaches the branch at regular intervals or is this done manually?
Hook type	**For each set,** record the type of hook or hooks used, using the codes in the hook catalogue (*e.g.* J hooks, circle hooks, offset circle hooks, etc.)
Hook size	**For each set,** record the size of the hooks used. If not sure, ask the bosun or refer to a hook catalogue.
Tori Lines	**For each set,** record whether the vessel uses Tori lines when setting; if yes, how many and their length.
side setting with bird curtain and weighted branch lines	**For each set,** record whether the vessel used side-setting with a bird curtain in combination with weighted branch lines.
Data field	**Description/Instructions/Comments**

Weighted branch lines	**For each trip** where weighted branch lines are used, record the mass of the weight attached to the branch line. If more than one type of weighting is used during a trip, describe each type and indicate the proportion based on a sample of ten baskets from a range of different sets.
Shark lines	**For each set,** record the number of shark lines (branch lines running directly off the longline floats or drop lines) observed. Where possible, record the length of this line for each set.
Blue dyed bait	**For each set,** record whether the vessel used blue-dyed bait.
Distance between weight and hook (in meters)	**For each set,** record the distance in meters from where the bottom of the weight is attached on the branch line to the eye of the hook.
Deep setting line shooter	**For each set,** record whether the vessel used a deep setting line shooter.
Management of offal discharge	**For each set,** record whether the vessel used the management of offal discharge.
Date and time of start of set	**For each set,** record the date and time the first buoy is thrown into the water to start the setting of the line.
Latitude and Longitude of start of set	**For each set,** record the GPS reading at the time the first buoy is thrown into the water
Date and Time of end of set	**For each set,** record the date and time the last buoy (usually has radio beacon attached) at the end of the mainline is thrown into the water
Latitude and Longitude of end of set	**For each set,** record the GPS reading at the time the last buoy is thrown into the water
Total number of baskets or floats	**For each set,** record the number of baskets utilized. A basket is the sum of all the hooks set between two buoys on a longline; usually it is the same as the number of floats set minus one.
Number of hooks per basket (number of hooks between buoys)	**For each set,** record how many hooks set from one buoy to another, the number is usually constant along the line, but can vary in some cases, also if the vessel also sets a branch line on the buoy, count this as a hook between floats as well.
Total number of hooks used	**For each set,** record how many hooks were used. This is typically calculated by multiplying number of baskets by the number of hooks per basket.
Line shooter speed	**For each set** where the vessel uses a line shooter, record the shooter speed. The shooter will normally have an indicator to show its running speed, as well as a sound indicator or light,

	that beeps at a regular interval, when it is time to attach a branch line.
Length of float-line	**For each trip,** record length of the line that is attached to the floats, get a coil and measure the length. It usually remains the same throughout the trip.
Distance between branch-lines	**For each set,** record the distance between branch line attachments to the mainline. This can be determined easily if vessel has a line shooter with electronic attachment indicator.
Length of branch-lines	**For each set, m**easure the length of a sample of the majority of branch lines used, some may vary slightly due to repairs.
Time-depth recorders (TDRs)	Does the vessel use TDRs on its line? If yes record the number of TDRs used it may use and their location along the mainline.?
Number of light sticks	**For each set,** indicate whether the vessel uses light sticks on its line, record the number used, and where possible, information on
	the location (*e.g.* "used on first and tenth branch lines from the float").
Target species	What species does the vessel target? Tuna (BET YFT), Swordfish, Sharks, etc.
Bait Species	**For each set,** record the bait species used Pilchard, Sardine, Squid, artificial bait, etc.
Date and time of start of haul	**For each set,** record the date and time the first buoy of the mainline is hauled from the water to start the haul.
Date and time of end of haul	**For each set,** record the date and time the last buoy of the mainline is hauled from the water to end the haul.
Total number of baskets, floats monitored by observer in a single set	**For each set,** record how many floats or baskets were monitored by the observer?
INFORMATION ON CATCH FOR EACH SET	
Hook number (location between floats)	For each individual capture, record the hook number that the animal is caught on, counting from the last float hauled on board.
Species	Use FAO species code.
Length of fish	Measure length of specimen, using the recommended measurement approach for the species.

~~Length measurement code~~	~~Reflect the type of length measurement taken using the appropriate measurement code. For example, all tunas are measured from the end of the upper Jaw to fork of the tail, measurement code UF.~~
~~Sex~~	~~Sex the species if possible. If an unsuccessful attempt is made to sex the individual, record "I" for indeterminate. If no attempt to sex the individual is made, record "U" for unknown.~~
~~Condition when caught~~	~~For bycatch species (*e.g.* sharks, sea turtles, seabird, marine mammals, etc.) also reflect hooking location [*i.e.* hooked in mouth, hooked deeply (throat/ stomach), and hooked externally].~~
~~Fate~~	~~Record the ultimate disposition of the capture using the appropriate code (*e.g.* retained, discarded, etc.)~~
~~Condition when released~~	~~If released, record the animal's status when returned to the sea.~~
~~Tag recovery information~~	~~Record as much as information as possible on any tags recovered~~
~~**SPECIES OF SPECIAL INTEREST**~~ ~~**Sea turtles, marine mammals, sea birds, and sharks**~~	
~~**GENERAL INFORMATION**~~	
~~Type of interaction~~	~~Indicate the type of interaction (*e.g.* entangled, hooked internally, hooked externally, interaction with vessel only, etc.).~~
~~Date and time of interaction~~	~~Record ships date and time of interaction~~
~~Latitude and longitude of interaction~~	~~Record position of the interaction.~~
~~Species code of sea turtle, marine mammal, or seabird.~~	~~Use FAO codes for Species.~~
~~**LANDED ON DECK**~~	
~~Length~~	~~Measure length, in centimeters.~~
~~Length measurement code~~	~~Measure using the measure method determined for that species.~~
~~Sex~~	~~Sex the animal if possible.~~
~~Estimated fin weight (for sharks)~~	~~Weigh the fins separately if shark has been finned by crew. If no scales, estimate the weight.~~
~~Estimated carcass weight (for sharks)~~	~~Weigh the carcass of a finned shark. If no scales available, carcass is discarded, or if it is too large to handle, estimate the weight.~~
~~Condition when landed on Deck~~	~~Record the animal's condition when landed on deck, using~~

~~Data field~~	~~Description/Instructions/Comments~~
	~~appropriate code.~~
~~Condition when released~~	~~If released, record the animal's condition at the time of release, using appropriate code.~~
~~Tag recovery information~~	~~Record as much as information as possible on any tags recovered~~
~~Tag release information~~	~~Record as much as information as possible on any tags placed on the species before release.~~

~~Annex B, Option 2.~~

LONGLINE GEAR FORM

F2

VESSEL: _____ SAMPLE No: _____ OBSERVER: _____

Registration		Length	m	Fuel capacity	gal	Number of crew	
Company name		Width	m	Fuel used	gal	Water capacity	gal
Captain Name		Draft	m	Type of fuel		Catch conserve method	
Departure date/time		Distance deck to water	m	Type (fibra-mother ship)		If the vessel is a 'fibra', ↓ name of mother ship ↓	
Arrival date/time		Well capacity	MT	Number of fibras			
Departure port		Main motor		Navigation and fishing equipment:			
Arrival port		Aux. motor					

Characteristics	Quantity	Material *	Diameter	Length	Color *
Mainline			mm	Nm	
Upper gangion			mm	fath	
Middle gangion			mm	fath	
Lower gangion			mm	fath	
Floatline / dropline				cm	
Buoy			cm		
Flag					
Float			cm		

Distance btwn. hooks↓	Max. hooks on mainline↓	Number of lights↓	Number of radio buoys↓
hz			

Mainline weights:
Yes ( ) No ( )

Dropline connection to mainline:
Knots ( ) Snaps ( )

Mainline retrieval
By hand ( )
Manual crank ( )
Hydraulic crank ( )
Other _____ ( )

Fishing gear diagram

Hooks	Type (J / C)	Size	J-straight/ J-curved	Material*	Manufac-turer	Offset	Ring (Yes / No)	Other details	Observations
Hook A									
Hook B									
Hook C									

* Use numbers from code tables

F2s v2: 02/2012

LONGLINE SET FORM

F3

VESSEL: _____ SAMPLE No: _____ OBSERVER: _____

Set number		SET Start	SET End	RETRIEVAL Start	RETRIEVAL End	Number of hooks in the set by type:	Hook A	Hook B	Hook C		Type of bait	% of total
	LAT									Bait 1		
↓ Date ↓	LON					Total no. of hooks in set:				Bait 2		
	TIME					No. of hooks lost:				Bait 3		

Target Fishery	Set	Yes	Retrieval direction		Sea surf. temp.	No. hooks btwn. floats	Avg. hook depth	Bottom longline?	
	Special?	☐	Start to end	☐				Yes	No
	Patrolled?	☐	End to start	☐			fath	☐	☐

Observations:

Set number		SET Start	SET End	RETRIEVAL Start	RETRIEVAL End	Number of hooks in the set by type:	Hook A	Hook B	Hook C		Type of bait	% of total
	LAT									Bait 1		
↓ Date ↓	LON					Total no. of hooks in set:				Bait 2		
	TIME					No. of hooks lost:				Bait 3		

Target Fishery	Set	Yes	Retrieval direction		Sea surf. temp.	No. hooks btwn. floats	Avg. hook depth	Bottom longline?	
	Special?	☐	Start to end	☐				Yes	No
	Patrolled?	☐	End to start	☐			fath	☐	☐

Observations:

Set number		SET Start	SET End	RETRIEVAL Start	RETRIEVAL End	Number of hooks in the set by type:	Hook A	Hook B	Hook C		Type of bait	% of total
	LAT									Bait 1		
↓ Date ↓	LON					Total no. of hooks in set:				Bait 2		
	TIME					No. of hooks lost:				Bait 3		

Target Fishery	Set	Yes	Retrieval direction		Sea surf. temp.	No. hooks btwn. floats	Avg. hook depth	Bottom longline?	
	Special?	☐	Start to end	☐				Yes	No
	Patrolled?	☐	End to start	☐			fath	☐	☐

Observations:

F3s v1: 02/2012

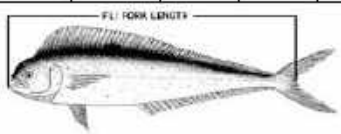
CATCH FORM

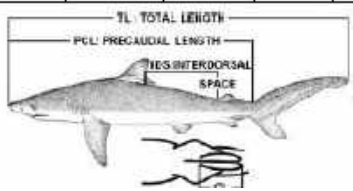
F4

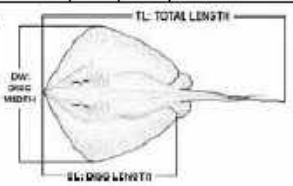
VESSEL: _____ SAMPLE No: _____ OBSERVER: _____

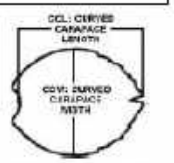
Set No.	Time	Species name	Number caught	Hook A B ©	Hook location *	Dispo-sition *	Sex M=1 F=2	Weight (kg)	LENGTHS (cm)			Male sharks			Observations
									POL-FL-TL-CCL	PCL-*DL*	IDS-*DW*-CCW	CL (cm)	CAL	SEMEN	











* Use numbers from code tables

F4s v1: 02/2012

TURTLE FORM

F5

(Record turtle sightings only for hawksbill, loggerhead and leatherback turtles)

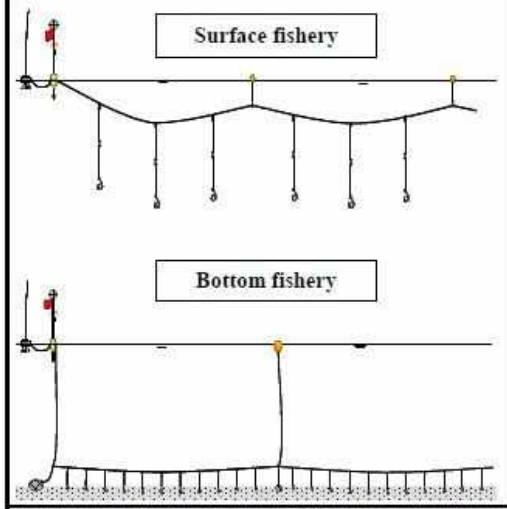
VESSEL: _____ SAMPLE No: _____ OBSERVER: _____

Date	Time	Set number	Species	Sex	CCL[1] (cm)	CCW[2] (cm)	Tail LTC (cm)	Hook A B C	Color of the nearest float or buoy*

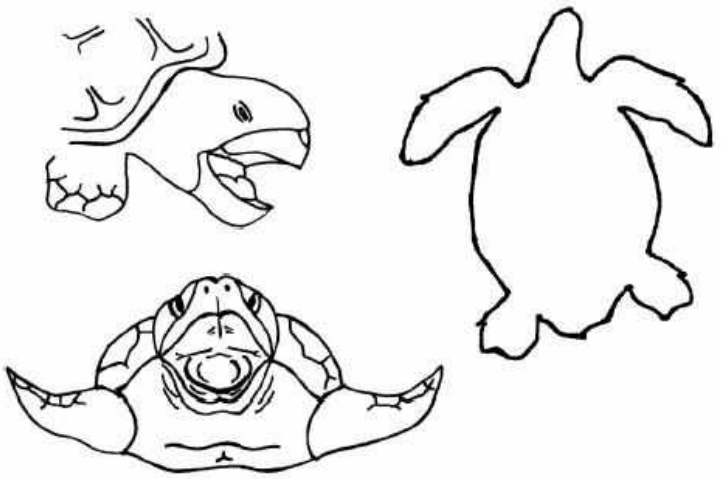
Position:	Latitude		Longitude		

Condition *( )	Entanglement *( )	Hooking *( )	Disposition*( )	Observations:

Turtle location in relation to the fishing gear



Hook location and turtle entanglement

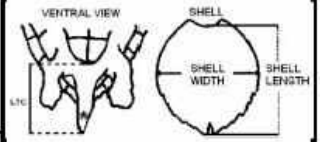


Existing tag 1:

Existing tag 2:

New tag 1:

New tag 2:



[1]CCL: Curved carapace length [2]CCW: Curved carapace width

* Use numbers from code tables

F5s v1: 02/2012

BIRD FORM

F6

VESSEL:_____ SAMPLE No: _____ OBSERVER:_____

Set No.	Date	Time	Species name	Position		Age Immature=1 Adult=2	Sex M=1 F=2	Caught in set Yes/No	Hook A B C	Cond-ition *	Mitig. 1 *	Mitig. 2 *	Dispo-sition *	Photo Yes/No	Observations
				Latitude	Longitude										

* Use numbers from code tables

F6s v1: 07/2014

3g. M-1 Various. Ecosystem approach.

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103RD MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025

PROPOSAL IATTC-103 M-1

SUBMITTED BY COSTA RICA, BELIZE, EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA, HONDURAS, NICARAGUA AND PANAMA

RESOLUTION ON THE PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO FISHERIES MANAGEMENT (EAFM)

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

The ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM) is one of the main guiding principles of fisheries management. The EAFM considers all the ways a fishery can impact its environment, from biological, ecological, social, and economic perspectives. This approach aims to maintain sustainable production systems in line with Sustainable Development Goal 14 and the principle that healthy oceans produce healthy fisheries.

The EAFM is present in many of the Commission's adopted resolutions and the work of its scientific staff. This approach is frequently referenced during discussions on fisheries management. However, there is no specific framework to guide the definition of EAFM elements and their operationalization under an appropriate standard.

The goal of this proposal is to establish the conditions necessary to fill operational gaps and ensure the proper and timely implementation of the EAFM in IATTC fisheries.

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in Panama City, Panama, on December 1-5, 2025, on the occasion of its 103rd Meeting,

Committed to the objective of the Antigua Convention to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the fish stocks covered by the Convention and to give particular consideration to the adoption, as necessary, of conservation and management measures and recommendations for species belonging to the same ecosystem and that are affected by fishing for, or dependent on or associated with, the fish stocks covered by this Convention, with a view to maintaining or restoring populations of such species above levels at which their reproduction may become seriously threatened;

Recognizing the provisions of international law that oblige States to ensure the conservation of living resources and to maintain or restore stocks of harvested species at sustainable levels, and require consideration of an ecosystem approach to the management of straddling and highly migratory fish stocks;

Considering the need for cooperation between Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) and other instruments, frameworks, and treaties related to fisheries and biodiversity*;*

Bearing in mind the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the FAO Guidelines on Fisheries Management, Volume Two: The Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries, which urge States and RFMOs to adopt a precautionary approach and ecosystem considerations in fisheries management;

Noting the increasing impacts of climate change, pollution, and habitat degradation on marine biodiversity and fisheries productivity;

Recognizing the progress made by the IATTC, including the establishment of the Working Group on Ecosystem and Bycatch, aimed at data collection, stock assessment, and bycatch mitigation, and the need to build on these efforts to incorporate broader ecosystem considerations;

Recalling IATTC Resolutions C-23-10 and C-24-10 on climate change, which recognize the need to address the impacts of climate change on fisheries and to incorporate climate considerations into the work of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies;

Taking note of the Ecocard work plan, including its objectives to facilitate the operationalization of the EAFM by improving ecosystem-based scientific advice for management through the development and application of meaningful and effective communication tools and products;

Acknowledging that climate change, ocean acidification, and other anthropogenic pressures not related to fishing are altering the distribution and abundance of stocks of tunas and associated species in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO), which should be considered in IATTC resolutions on climate change in conjunction with ecosystem considerations, so that productive fisheries based on resilient resources can be maintained;

Recognizing that implementing an ecosystem approach is essential to ensuring the socioeconomic resilience of fisheries-dependent communities by ensuring that fisheries management not only maintains the health of fish stocks, but also preserves the long-term livelihoods, food security, and well-being of fishers and their communities; and

Desiring to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of tuna stocks and associated ecosystems in the EPO by adopting an ecosystem approach to fisheries management;

Resolves the following:

1. The Commission shall progressively implement an ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM) in the EPO and support the conceptual framework necessary for implementing the EAFM, including social and economic impact elements and indicators to be defined as soon as possible. In 2026, the Ecosystem and Bycatch Working Group shall review its Terms of Reference and propose any adjustments to the SAC for its assessment and recommendation of possible adjustments to the Commission.

2. When making recommendations pursuant to Article VII.1 of the Antigua Convention, particularly when developing conservation and management measures, the Commission shall consider the minimum elements for the implementation of an ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM).

3. Within the limits of its budgetary resources, the Commission shall continue to support research and analysis on ecosystem considerations, including studies on the relationships between IATTC fisheries and species, associated species, and ecosystems. This shall include socioeconomic research on fisheries of interest to ensure a comprehensive ecosystem approach.

4. With the support of the staff and relevant subsidiary bodies, the Commission shall develop an operational definition of the EAFM in the context of the IATTC and its components to formalize

and standardize the implementation of the EAFM. The staff shall provide a review of the degree to which these elements have been implemented, including those that have already been part of the Commission's previous work (e.g., bycatch mitigation, ecosystem studies, etc.) and shall develop an EAFM implementation plan for consideration by the Commission.

5. Based on the results and recommendations of this assessment, the IATTC scientific staff is tasked, in collaboration with the relevant subsidiary bodies, with developing an EAFM Implementation Plan.

6. Additionally, the staff shall present the results and recommendations of this assessment to the Commission in 2026.

7. Promote regional cooperation with other Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), particularly the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, as well as other relevant instruments, bodies, legal frameworks, and scientific bodies to harmonize EAFM practices and share best practices.

FUNCTION OF THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC)

8. Following analysis by the Ecosystem and Bycatch Working Group, the SAC shall include, as a permanent item on the agenda, the assessment of the impacts of fishing and other anthropogenic and environmental factors, including climate change, on target and non-target species, and ecosystems.

a) The SAC shall take into account ecosystem considerations that advance ecosystem-based management advice when providing its management advice, including recommendations on minimizing adverse impacts on marine ecosystems and providing information that may assist CPCs in improving their resilience to climate change.

b) To the extent possible, the IATTC scientific staff shall endeavor to incorporate ecosystem considerations into scientific advice for fisheries management. Based on this, the staff shall develop and present recommendations to the Commission on how to integrate these considerations more effectively into existing and new resolutions in the context of the Convention Area.

c) The SAC shall identify knowledge gaps and prioritize research to improve the understanding of ecosystem dynamics, the impacts of climate change, and the socioeconomic implications for fisheries-dependent communities.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMISSION

9. In 2026 and every year thereafter, the Commission shall include ecosystem considerations as an agenda item in its regular meetings, including through recommendations related to ecosystems from its subsidiary bodies, as well as any other considerations related to ecosystem impacts under the Antigua Convention.

10. The Commission shall incorporate ecosystem considerations into the development and adoption of conservation and management measures, whenever possible, ensuring their contribution to the long-term sustainability of fisheries and ecosystems in the OPO.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND COOPERATION

11. The Commission shall promote cooperation and coordination with other RFMOs and relevant international organizations to contribute to an integrated ecosystem approach to fisheries management in all ocean basins.

12. With the Secretariat's support, the Commission shall implement capacity-building programs to help CPCs implement the ecosystem approach and address the impacts of climate change.

13. With the Secretariat's support, the Commission shall collaborate with other tuna RFMOs, the FAO, and other relevant organizations to secure technical and financial support for these initiatives.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

14. The Commission shall review the progress in the implementation of the EAFM annually, including how climate change impacts are being addressed.

15. The Commission shall review this Resolution and its implementation no later than three years after its adoption, and periodically thereafter, to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.

APPLICATION

16. This Resolution shall enter into force on [DATE] and shall remain in force unless it is amended or replaced by the Commission.

3h. O-1 VARIOUS. Amendment to Resolution C-14-03 regarding the capacity building fund.

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103RD MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025

PROPOSAL IATTC-103 O-1

SUBMITTED BY COSTA RICA, BELIZE, EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA, HONDURAS, NICARAGUA AND PANAMA

AMENDMENT TO PARAGRAPH 5 c OF RESOLUTION C-14-03

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Exercising the functions of Chair, facilitator, or coordinator of the Commission or its subsidiary bodies is essential to developing and adopting resolutions and recommendations, as well as to the Commission's decision-making process. In accordance with the Antigua Convention's implicit principles of effective participation and inclusiveness, any difficulties that developing country Members encounter in exercising their rights and responsibilities to the minimum extent required shall be addressed in a manner that mitigates inequalities, particularly economic ones. The Capacity Fund, governed by Resolution C-14-03, was created for this purpose.

Given that the majority of Members are developing countries and territories, and that the Commission has recently benefited from greater participation by Chairs from these states, a particular difficulty has been identified: ensuring such participation, given the financial difficulties of these Members. This could discourage this trend and have negative effects. In view of this, a practical approach to effectiveness is required. This approach would allow Chairs to attend meetings in person, if permitted, and exercise their functions with the necessary objectivity. This would eliminate the dual status of representative of a Member and Chair at the same time. The presented proposal intends to enable the Director, using the Capacity Development Fund, to authorize expenses for these individuals to attend meetings while carrying out their chair and coordination duties, on the same basis as representatives of Members who receive this financial support.

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

Taking into account the provisions of Article XXIII of the Antigua Convention that the Commission shall seek to adopt measures relating to technical assistance, technology transfer, training and other forms of cooperation, to assist developing countries that are members of the Commission to fulfill their obligations under the Convention, as well as to enhance their ability to develop fisheries under their respective national jurisdictions and to participate in high seas fisheries on a sustainable basis;

Recalling that the Antigua Convention, in its Article XXIII, likewise establishes that the members of the Commission shall facilitate and promote such cooperation, especially financial and technical, and the transfer of technology, as may be necessary for the effective implementation of the previous paragraph;

Considering that it is essential to ensure broad, dynamic, and substantive participation by the delegates of the Members of the Commission, including, among others, the opportunity to be elected as Chairs of the bodies that are part of the Commission's structure;

Recognizing that the Fund established by Resolution C-11-11 and amended by Resolution C-14-03 was created to ensure the broad participation of developing countries and territories in the work of the Commission, given the importance of greater involvement of these countries and territories in all areas of regulatory decision-making;

Agrees:

To amend subparagraph c of paragraph 5 of Resolution C-14-03, so that it now reads as follows:

"c. The participation in person of representatives of developing countries in the meetings of the Commission or its subsidiary bodies, as well as of scientific experts in the meetings of the Scientific Advisory Committee, and of the Chairs of the Commission or its subsidiary bodies, who are nationals of those countries, for the exercise of that capacity during the corresponding non-virtual meetings."

The Director shall submit an annual report to the Committee on Administration and Finance detailing the use of funds under this subparagraph, specifying the amounts used, the meetings covered, and the criteria applied.

3i. P-1 VARIOUS. Financial contributions from NGOs.

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103RD MEETING

Panama City, Panama
1-5 September 2025

PROPOSAL IATTC-103 P-1

SUBMITTED BY COSTA RICA, BELIZE, EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA, HONDURAS, NICARAGUA AND PANAMA

RULES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOs) WITH OBSERVER STATUS AT MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

In accordance with paragraph 2 of Article XVI of the Antigua Convention, regarding the principle of transparency, the Commission is entitled to adopt rules for the participation of non-governmental organizations, within the framework of Annex 2 of the Convention. Paragraph 10 of the Annex establishes that the Director may require observers to pay reasonable fees and to cover costs attributable to their attendance at meetings.

The Commission has long maintained a policy of requiring NGOs to contribute US$500 per meeting of the Commission, and this has been understood to include entire cycles of meetings that may take place on one or more consecutive days and even up to two weeks, which is neither reasonable nor proportionate, given that the space provided at the meetings for representatives of these organizations has a relative cost, since logistics are generally arranged according to the number of participants.

This proposal does not seek to discourage NGO participation, but rather to regulate their contributions so that, for financial reasons, they can be guaranteed the space they require. Therefore, it establishes an interim payment mechanism and allows for the development of an appropriate adjustment method when necessary.

Additionally, this proposal aims to align the IATTC's internal practices with the principles of good governance and responsible financial management. By implementing a flexible contribution structure based on actual costs, the Commission fulfills its transparency and effective participation mandates while fostering stronger, more sustainable collaboration with civil society. This will enable the IATTC to optimize its resource allocation and strengthen its work under the Antigua Convention.

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

Taking into account the provisions of paragraph 2 of Article XVI of the Antigua Convention, which states that the Commission shall promote transparency in its decision-making, including, among others, ensuring opportunities for interacting with non-governmental organizations of civil society;

Recognizing that meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, where documents are reviewed and interests relevant to decision-making are discussed, are based on the best scientific information available;

Bearing in mind that paragraph 10 of Annex 2 of the Antigua Convention empowers the Director to require non-Party and NGO observers to pay reasonable fees, and to cover costs attributable to their attendance;

Aware of the various formats in which the meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies have been held, whose costs and logistics differ depending on the requirements of the place, time, and space where they take place;

Seeking to facilitate mechanisms that provide a dynamic criterion for calculating reasonable fees to be charged to observers;

Bearing in mind that the current fee has not been changed for more than ten years, while the costs of organizing and holding meetings have increased significantly;

Seeking to align practices with the principles of good governance and responsible financial management by establishing a more flexible contribution structure based on cost dynamics.

Agrees,

1. To define the base amount to be charged to non-governmental organizations for participation as observers in each meeting of the Commission, group, or subsidiary body, in the amount of one thousand five hundred US dollars when up to three representatives attend. For each additional two representatives, the fee shall be increased by seven hundred and fifty US dollars.

2. The fee shall be one thousand US dollars for the first three representatives and two hundred and fifty US dollars for each additional representative in the case of fishermen's organizations from developing coastal countries that are Members of the IATTC, which shall be accredited by providing a statement in the application and a copy of their statutes.

3. The Director may exempt the organizations referred to in the preceding paragraph from payment if they represent coastal or small-scale fishermen who can prove their status and demonstrate that they have a plan in place for responsible fisheries management among their members, in line with IATTC management measures and knowledge.

4. Non-governmental organizations that make voluntary cash contributions to the Commission's general budget of at least forty thousand dollars shall be exempt from paying for up to three seats for their representatives as observers during the fiscal year in which the contribution was made.

5. In 2026 and every two years thereafter, the Committee on Administration and Finance shall evaluate this provision and may recommend modifications based on a dynamic model using cost variables and incentives for non-governmental organizations to contribute to scientific work, including through projects related to the analysis of indicators of the socioeconomic impact of fisheries management measures.

4. REPORTS

4a. Summary Report of the 16th Meeting of the SAC and text of recommendations

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

16TH MEETING

La Jolla, California (USA)
02-06 June 2025

SUMMARY REPORT

1. Opening of the Meeting

The 16th Meeting of the SAC was opened by the Chair, Dr. Arnulfo Franco with a welcome to all attendees. Participants were reminded to submit via email comments, presentations, or declarations for formal inclusion in the minutes. A list of attendees of SAC-16 can be found in Appendix A.

2. Adoption of Agenda

The provisional agenda was presented, outlining the week's work plan, with morning sessions dedicated to presentations and afternoon sessions to discussions. The agenda included discussions on tropical tunas (stock assessments, data collection, development of harvest strategies), FADs, temperate tunas and other species, ecosystem and bycatch, and management strategies, culminating in SAC recommendations. A proposal to circulate a compilation of all staff recommendations and in this and future meetings of the SAC was made. That was approved without revision.

3. The fishery in the EPO

a. The tuna fishery in 2024 (SAC-16-01)

The IATTC Coordinator of Scientific Research, Dr. Alexandre Aires-da-Silva, provided an overview of the tuna fishery in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) in 2024, serving as background for discussing staff recommendations for management. Over the last 10 years, average total retained catches of tuna were approximately 745,000 tons, composed primarily of skipjack tuna (SKJ, 43%), yellowfin tuna (YFT, 35%), and bigeye tuna (BET, 12%). Preliminary estimates for 2024 indicated a historic record high of over 1 million tons of tuna caught, 40% higher than the 10-year average. This is largely due to SKJ catches being 100% above the 10-yr average.

The purse seine fishery dominated among all fishing gear types, accounting for about 86% of total tuna catches over the last decade, with the longline fishery contributing about 9%. Longline effort has been relatively stable or slightly declining over the last 15 years. Historically, BET comprised about 90% of longline catches before the expansion of the floating-object fishery in the mid 1990s, but this has shifted to 30-40% over the last 20 years. Purse seine fleet capacity, after a post-COVID reduction, was at about 260,000 cubic meters in 2024, nearing its pre-COVID peak. Total fishing effort (number of sets) increased by 5% in 2024, reaching around 32,000 sets. While floating object sets have shown an increasing trend, there was a 12% drop in 2024 due to a strong increased number of unassociated sets (+77%).

In 2024, Ecuador accounted for 43% of total tuna catches, Mexico 19%, and Panama 15%. Species-specific catches in 2024 showed YFT at 294,000 tons (20% higher than the 10-year average), mainly from dolphin-associated fisheries (61%), with 2025 expected to be an "extraordinary year" due to strong 2021 recruitment. SKJ reached a historic record of about 645,000 tons (doubling the average), mostly from floating object sets (72%). BET catches were 52,000 tons (43% lower than average), greatly attributed to the effectiveness of the Individual Vessel Threshold (IVT) measure implemented in 2022 to reduce BET catches on floating-object sets.

Discussion:

- Mexico suggested including South Pacific Albacore in future presentations to the SAC under this heading, and other participants agreed that the submission of longline from the SPA fishery was important.
- The SAC participants also discussed efforts to improve longline CPUE and indices of abundance, as well as the impacts of El Niño on aspects recruitment- particularly yellowfin tuna.

4. Tropical tunas: stock assessments and data collection

a. Stock Status Indicators (SAC-16-02)

Dr. Mark Maunder presented stock status indicators for BET, YFT, and SKJ, using data from purse seine and longline fisheries from 2000 onwards. Indicators included number of sets, catch by species and set type, catch per set, and average length. YFT in the dolphin associated fishery showed an increasing CPUE trend since 2018. BET catch from longline fisheries was reduced to 60% of its 2000 average. A new joint longline index (Japan and Korea) showed an increasing trend for YFT since 2018 and improved precision for both YFT and BET.

Discussion:

- Japan inquired about the online availability of the joint longline indices document and differing trends between joint and nominal YFT indices. Dr. Carolina Minte-Vera explained that combining Japanese and Korean data improved the precision of the YFT relative abundance trend, decreasing both the variance and the mean of the trend in the latest period.
- The United States asked if BET longline CPUE had increased due to reduced juvenile mortality. Dr. da Silva confirmed that there has been a recent decline in BET fishing mortality (*F*) coinciding with the implementation of the Individual Vessel Threshold (IVT) measure. A pulse would be expected to start to show in the longline fishery in late 2024 and 2025.
- Participants also discussed YFT/SKJ CPUE increases and whether these were more likely due to increases in biomass or targeting shifts. Dr. da Silva indicated that the staff is carefully looking into these trends. At this stage, it appears that the most likely source of increase in YFT CPUE was favorable environmental conditions and strong recruitment.

b. Yellowfin (YFT) benchmark assessment (SAC-16-03)

Dr. Carolina Minte-Vera presented the 2025 YFT benchmark assessment, an integrated statistical age-structured assessment using Stock Synthesis. Spatial structure is the main uncertainty. The assessment included two hypotheses of spatial structure, one that considered the whole EPO, fit to a purse-seine based index of abundance, and another that split the EPO into a northeast (NE) and a southwest (SW) region, with separate models for each region, fit to purse-seine and longline indices of abundance respectively. The regions were delimited using length composition data and catch per set of small fish. Models for each hypothesis further incorporates spatial information through an "areas-as-fleet" approach. Other key developments included new growth and natural mortality models fitted to otolith and tagging data, and updated reproductive biology. Emphasis was placed on weighting abundance indices and length frequency data. New indices included a suite of dolphin associated purse seine indices and, for the first time, a multi-fleet (Japan and Korea) longline index, a combination that reduced uncertainty in the longline index and allowed it to be used to fit the SW model. Risk analysis results indicated a 0% probability of breaching the limit reference point for fishing mortality or spawning biomass, with biomass well above the limit for all scenarios considered. A comprehensive tagging program was suggested for future improvements, given the strong spatial structure of yellowfin tuna in the EPO.

Discussion:

- Japan questioned how it was concluded that the spatial structure assumption improved model performance given that was no direct metric to compare the EPO-wide models versus the region specific models for NE and SW and in the EPO-wide models. there Dr. Minte-Vera noted there was conflict between size composition data (preferring higher biomass) and CPUE (supporting lower biomass). In addition, she clarified that if the biomass estimated from region-specific models were combined, it was lower than that estimated biomass for the models for whole EPO, indicating that a much larger abundance was needed to accommodate conflicting data sets in the EPO-wide models. The region-specific models estimated different recruitment trends from the regional length frequencies. For precautionary management, it is important to consider the regional models and recognize that the high biomass estimated in the EPO-wide models maybe results from model misspecification.
- The European Union expressed concern that length composition data might be increasing the scale of the EPO-wide models and questioned the realism of high natural mortality scenarios and the arbitrary nature of the 1% effort creep level.
- Mexico agreed with spatial differences in YFT parameters but stressed that "stock" is an administrative, not biological, definition, making separate management for mixed regions challenging.

c. Skipjack (SKJ) risk assessment (SAC-16-04)

Dr. Rujia Bi presented the risk assessment for skipjack in the EPO. The risk analysis is based on the 2024 SKJ benchmark assessment results. The risk analysis indicated a 4% probability that the spawning biomass at the start of 2024 was below 30% of the unexploited level, according to the dynamic SBR ($dSBR_{MSY\text{-}proxy}$). Also, it indicated zero probability that average fishing mortality during 2021-2023 exceeded the level associated with the target biomass ($F_{MSY\text{-}proxy}$). With respect to the limit reference points, the risk assessment indicated less than 1% probability that the spawning biomass at the start of 2024 was below the limit reference point (S_{limit}). There was no discussion.

d. Improving the IATTC traditional purse-seine port sampling program (SAC-16-05)

Dr. da Silva presented the staff's proposal for an Integrated Port Sampling Program (IPSP), aiming to merge existing programs and improve data collection based on Resolution C-24-01 and external review recommendations. The IPSP proposes a probability sampling protocol, increased flexibility in trip/well selection, and enhanced within-well sampling coverage. Goals include providing fleet-level data with variance estimates, developing new catch estimation methods, maintaining services to support the Individual Vessel Threshold (IVT) measure to reduce BET catches, and refining morphometric relationships. The proposed budget for IPSP is similar to the 2025 EMP budget ($460,000 USD).

Dr. Cleridy Lennert-Cody provided further details on the proposed IPSP, clarifying its purpose to improve species and size composition data for fleet-level catch estimation and provide trip-level BET catch estimates to support the IVT measure. Improvements include probabilistic sampling, removing area/month constraints, and increased within-well coverage. The IPSP aims for ~70% trip coverage and ~20% well coverage. Data from IPSP can be post-stratified for comparability with data collected under traditional port sampling activities.

Discussion:

- Guatemala expressed serious reservations, citing a lack of clarity in financial objectives and the relationship between the Individual Vessel Threshold (IVT) measure and the proposed integrated sampling program. They also questioned the low sampling time allocated to current field office staff and suggested transferring sampling protocols to CPCs. Panama and Nicaragua indicated sharing many of these concerns. Guatemala provided the following statements for inclusion in the SAC-16 report:

  Guatemala strongly believes that this program would be acceptable if its sole purpose is scientific, provided that other lower-cost alternatives (such as CPCs managing the program) are

also considered. Guatemala is convinced that the enhanced sampling has no essential value in terms of control, given that under current management provisions, the responsibility for catch estimates lies with the CPCs. Port Sampling estimates are only one of several valuable inputs and have proven to be statistically close to the data in the Note of Sale. Therefore, due to financial constraints, Guatemala does not prioritize this project and would only consider it if external (non-budgetary) support is available.

Guatemala cannot join the consensus for the approval of this project due to its financial impact. It was noted that the Enhanced Sampling program had a lower cost (despite our concerns regarding the reasonableness of certain expenses and labor-related issues). Instead of reducing costs, the Integrated Program implies an increase of $60K in field office-related expenditures, raising the total from $400K to $520K.

- The United States supported the IPSP as a necessary update for data modernization and its potential to support the EM program, tagging program, and understanding the effects of the IVT measure.

5. Tropical tunas: development of harvest strategies

a. BET Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) (SAC-16-06)

Dr. Mark Maunder presented the IATTC staff's proposed candidate harvest strategy for BET, clarifying reference points and guiding the consideration of alternative strategies. The approach is based on best available science and MSE from other tuna stocks. Reference points include Target (S_{msy}, F_{msy}, with 30% of unexploited spawning biomass (S_0) as a proxy target) and Limit (7.7% of equilibrium virgin spawning biomass). The 30% S_0 target is proposed as more globally consistent level and offering a larger buffer from the limit.

The Antigua Convention mandates maintaining or restoring populations to produce MSY. For BET, reducing catches is a likely objective. A model-based approach is recommended for the Harvest Control Rule (HCR) due to objectives tied to target reference points. A 3-year management period is suggested for stability. The staff-recommended HCR is simple, designed to achieve objectives, and ensures biomass fluctuates around the target, with action taken well before the limit. Fishing mortality would reduce linearly to zero as spawning biomass declines from 20% S_0 to 0% S0. Maximum change in closure days is 10 days. Exceptional Circumstances (ECs) are proposed as safeguards for unforeseen factors, including breaching the limit reference point, fishing mortality exceeding historical levels, or if the harvest strategy is no longer appropriate. Reduced BET closures would increase SKJ fishing mortality, making a new tagging program essential for maintaining a reliable SKJ assessment.

Discussion:

- Several delegations expressed concern regarding the IATTC staff recommendation that a harvest strategy be adopted in 2025, indicating that, in their view, adequate testing and consideration of the proposed strategy had not yet occurred. Multiple delegations also expressed concern with the proposed approach that breaching of limits would be treated as “exceptional circumstances.”

b. Staff recommendations for conservation and management: tropical tunas (SAC-16-11)

Dr. da Silva presented the staff's recommendations. The SAC’s view on these topics are reflected in Section 1 of the SAC’s recommendations to the Commission (SAC-16-11).

c. Strategic Science Plan (2026-2030): workplan for stock assessments and development of harvest strategies for the tropical tunas (SAC-16-07)

Dr. da Silva presented the proposed investigations for the staff under the next Strategic Science Plan (SSP) cycle (2026-2030).

Discussion:

- Some participants questioned whether the scope of the SACs consideration of the SSP (and other topics) should include matters of budget, or whether the proper role of the SAC should be to help prioritize the work of staff with the understanding that endorsement of various programs and components are necessarily conditional upon the approval of funding through the budget process or otherwise.

6. FADS

Dr. da Silva presented the proposed staff's workplan on FAD research, focusing on improving data collection, understanding FAD effects on tuna populations and ecosystems, and developing management options. Dr. Jon Lopez detailed the plan, including optimizing FAD recovery programs and incentive systems.

a. Report of the FADs WG

The report and recommendations of the FAD WG were presented by the Chair, Dr. Josu Santiago and can be found in Appendix B

Discussion:

The methodology for approving recommendations from the ad hoc FADs working group was discussed. Dr. Santiago explained the SAC could endorse recommendations as is, or with modifications if consensus was reached. Documentation of minority positions was considered. Recommendation 5.6 on FADs was provisionally bracketed. The remainder of the Working Group's recommendations were endorsed by the SAC.

7. Temperate tunas and other species

a. Pacific bluefin tuna (PBF): MSE and harvest strategies (ISC and IATTC-WCPFC-NC JWG)

Dr. Josh Madeira, IATTC co-chair of the IATTC-WCPFC NC Joint Working Group on Pacific Bluefin Tuna (PBF), provided an update, noting the success of the previous year's meeting and significant progress in the PBF MSE. Dr. Shuya Nakatsuka, Chair of the ISC Bluefin working group, confirmed the MSE work was virtually concluded, pending final ratification by ISC. Dr. Hiromu Fukuda presented the PBF population projections which indicated an increase in spawning biomass with a high probability of exceeding the rebuilding objective. Participants took note that a recorded presentation by Dr. Desiree Tomasi is available online.

Discussion:

- China requested more detailed information on changes in catch and fishing effort and inquired about the notable decrease in average PBF tuna weight in 2022. Dr. da Silva explained that PBF availability in the EPO is subject to fluctuations influenced by environmental conditions and migratory patterns. Dr. Michelle Dreyfus (Mexico) added that the Mexican fleet's pursuit of larger tuna for fattening operations has contributed to increased average size in recent years.

b. North Pacific albacore (NP-ALB): harvest strategies (ISC)

Dr. da Silva presented an overview of North Pacific Albacore catches, mostly from the western and central Pacific, with recent EPO catches averaging approximately 8,000 tons, a notable decrease. Trolling is the predominant gear. The latest ISC stock assessment confirmed the population's healthy status. Staff recommendations focused on maintaining fishing intensity at or below fishing mortality reference points and considering criteria for exceptional circumstances.

Discussion:

- Canada and the United States expressed general support, emphasizing updating the harvest strategy to include exceptional circumstances.

c. South Pacific albacore: harvest strategies (SP-ALB): Harvest Strategies (WCPFC)

Dr. da Silva reported a considerable increase in recent SP-ALB catches within the EPO, primarily by longline. The latest SPC stock assessment concluded a healthy population status. IATTC staff recommended continued population monitoring in collaboration with the SPC and favorably considering efforts to establish a joint working group with the WCPFC to coordinate management strategies and development of harvest strategies.

Discussion:

- Mr. Brad Wiley updated on the possible formation of an IATTC-WCPFC joint working group (JWG) for SP-ALB, with proponents of its creation highlighting the success of IATTC-WCPFC NC JWG for PBF as a precedent. Terms of reference and a detailed work plan are being developed jointly through an informal process that includes CPCs of both commissions.

Discussion:

- China, Canada, and the United States expressed strong support for establishing the joint working group. Canada also expressed interest in developing a specific data form for South Pacific Albacore.

d. Staff recommendations for conservation and management: temperate tunas (SAC-16-11)

Dr. da Silva presented the IATTC staff's recommendations for temperate tunas found in document SAC-16-11.

e. Strategic Science Plan (2026-2030): workplans for the temperate species (SAC-16-07)

Dr. da Silva outlined proposed strategic objectives for temperate species, including continuing stock assessments and monitoring shark species, dorado, and swordfish.

8. Ecosystem and bycatch

a. Sharks and rays

i. List of Ray species under the purview of the IATTC (SAC-16-08)

Dr. Shane Griffiths presented a preliminary list of 17 ray species interacting with IATTC fisheries prepared by IATTC staff, proposing 7 oceanic and epipelagic species as a provisional list due to higher interaction with tuna fleets.

Discussion:

- China questioned if high interaction implied vulnerability and inquired about next steps for monitoring. Dr. Griffiths clarified that vulnerability assessment is the next stage.
- Guatemala expressed concern about including gillnet fisheries and reaffirmed their stance to exclude them from related proposals. Mexico emphasized that the listed species interact with fisheries under Commission authority, but are not "under the authority" of the Commission per se, stressing that the Commission can take conservation but not management measures.
- No consensus was reached during the initial discussions, but the SAC revisited this topic in the context of the development of recommendations to the Commission and in Recommendation 6.1 endorsed, pursuant to Article VII of the Antigua Convention, the list of seven species recommended by IATTC staff.

ii. Characterization of longline fleets in the Convention Area (SAC-16-09)

Leanne Fuller presented a characterization of longline fleets in the Convention area, proposing three broad categories: large-scale, medium-scale, and small-scale coastal fisheries, detailing their general characteristics.

Discussion:

- Guatemala praised the work and committed to providing additional information, suggesting the work continue.

- China inquired about including hook numbers and somehow distinguishing for tuna species in the classification.
- Japan questioned considering mother ship operations separately.
- The United States showed interest in small-scale coastal fisheries, asking about gear-switching proportions and impact on sharks/bycatch. Staff explained they lack information on time proportion between gears and expect impact data from the ongoing ABNJ project.
- Peru asked about vessels fitting between categories. Ecuador suggested extending trip duration for medium-scale longliners and clarifying that shark is not a target species in Ecuador.
- Corimahi supported Ecuador's stance, emphasizing the negative socioeconomic impact of circular hooks in artisanal dorado fisheries.

iii. Guidelines for best handling and release practices for sharks (update) (SAC-16-10)

Dr. Melanie Hutchinson presented best practices for shark handling and release, noting their effectiveness in reducing mortality rates. Key recommendations for purse seine fisheries included prioritizing visible shark release using stretchers/cradles, and keeping whale sharks in the water. For all longline fisheries, recommendations focused on reducing vessel speed, keeping sharks in the water for gear removal, using dehookers, or cutting lines close to the hook. Prohibited practices included using towing lines or hooks on live sharks. An update to Resolution C-24-05 was recommended, as well as funding for training and education.

Discussion:

- Guatemala stressed reviewing language for stakeholder understanding, prioritizing crew safety, and reiterated their proposal for the use of "velcro" devices for release of large sharks. The European Union and Nicaragua supported the idea of a pilot program to investigate the effectiveness of "velcro" or harness gear, with an emphasis on crew safety. The United States deemed continued work on tail-lifting and safe handling protocols important. Dr. Hutchinson noted that studying post-release survival of sharks following use of "velcro" devices implies long-term tagging studies with the use of satellite tags, which will be expensive. Staff was asked to develop a research plan and budget for such a study in order to inform further discussion.

b. Climate change

i. Report on 1st Workshop on climate change

Dr. Dan Crear summarized the first virtual climate change workshop, which had 80 participants from 17 countries and 8 NGOs. The workshop addressed the main objective, scope, and framework of the climate change work plan. Key recommendations included ensuring climate resilience for fisheries, developing science-based conservation measures, and promoting implementation led by IATTC staff and relevant working groups. Priorities cover tuna, associated species, and vulnerable bycatch. The geographical scope is the entire IATTC Convention area, with multiple temporal scales. Implementation should be participatory, and IATTC should secure necessary resources, including extrabudgetary funding. The proposed framework has 7 steps, from defining objectives to monitoring effectiveness.

Discussion:

- Mexico suggested changing "ensure" in the main objective to "contribute".
- Japan asked about the relationship between the workshop and the Ecosystem and Bycatch Working Group, and the approval process. The Chair clarified that SAC prepares a response to the Commission after its analysis, and the Commission makes final decisions. The SAC later recommended that the Commission continue supporting and implementing the proposed climate change work plan.

c. Staff recommendations for conservation and management: ecosystem and bycatch (SAC-16-11)

Dr. da Silva presented the staff recommendations under the ecosystem and bycatch heading from Document SAC-16-11)

Discussion:

Japan provided the following statements for inclusion in the SAC-16 meeting report under this heading:

Seabirds:

Japan does not support the staff recommendation regarding the amendment of seabird measures. This is because this amendment is based on a proposal from a certain member at last year's WCPFC, which was opposed and not supported by many members at last year's WCPFC Commission meeting due to practical and safety concerns. While recognizing the need for revision of the seabird measures, Japan proposes to continue discussions between IATTC staff and relevant CPC scientists through means such as intersessional workshops, in order to consider appropriate measures that take into account practicality, safety, and the status of seabird populations.

Sea turtles:

Japan does not support the staff recommendation regarding the amendment of sea turtle bycatch mitigation measures. This is because, in the bycatch risk assessment of leatherback turtles using EASI-FISH, the analysis has made unrealistic assumptions about the effectiveness of bycatch mitigation measures, as Japan has frequently pointed out at the past Bycatch Working Group. Despite IATTC staff also acknowledging this issue, it is neither reasonable nor acceptable to propose revisions to the measures based on these results. Furthermore, at the 2nd circle hook workshop in this year, it was presented that changes to bait and hook types may not result in a reduction of leatherback turtle bycatch—as is the case with hardshell sea turtles—and that these combinations could have negative effects on other species, such as shortfin makos. In assessing the effectiveness of bycatch mitigation measures, it is essential to conduct a comprehensive evaluation that takes all of this information into account.

d. Strategic Science Plan (2026-2030): workplans on ecosystem and bycatch

Dr. da Silva continued his presentation of the proposed SSP for 2026-2030 without further discussion by participants.

e. Report of the Ecosystem and Bycatch WG

Dr. Manuel Correia, co-chair of the Permanent Working Group on Ecosystems and Bycatch (EBWG), presented EBWGs preliminary report and recommendations (Appendix C).

Discussion:

- SAC participants discussed at length the role of the EBWG and process for consideration of its recommendations and were not able to reach a clear, common understanding. The key point of discussion was whether all EBWG recommendations go directly to the SAC for possible endorsement for consideration by the Commission, whether EBWG recommendations not endorsed by the SAC were still sent to the Commission as EBWG recommendations, and whether and under what circumstances the EBWG could make recommendations directly to the Commission without consideration or endorsement by the SAC. Japan indicated that their interpretation of the EBWG TORs was that the EBWG could only make recommendations directly to the Commission in exceptional circumstances. The United States expressed doubt about that interpretation but said that they would need to check with their legal counsel before SAC-17 in order to have a more formal and definitive opinion. Guatemala expressed during the EBWG that their delegation could consider joining consensus on SAC endorsement of some of the EBWG recommendations, provided that the discussion could continue in the SAC, and with the understanding that the EBWG recommendations are intended for the consideration of the SAC;

and that if this condition was not met, they would not be able to join consensus on the endorsement of any EBWG recommendations by the SAC.

- The SAC endorsed EBWG recommendations 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 10 and 12 as presented. The SAC was unable to reach consensus to endorse EBWG recommendation 6 on best handling and release practices for sharks. Discussion of EBWG recommendation 4 on the list of 7 ray species recommended by IATTC staff (SAC-16-08) was deferred to Friday during the development of SAC recommendations, where it was ultimately endorsed by the SAC. The SAC also endorsed EBWG recommendations 7, 9 and 11 as well, after introducing some editorial changes to be reflected in the document containing the SAC recommendations to the Commission.

9. Staff recommendations (SAC-16-11)

Dr. da Silva presented the remaining staff recommendations contained in document SAC-16-11.

10. Other business

Canada requested that IATTC staff draft a brief paper for SAC-17, based on any additional input coming from the 103rd Meeting of the Commission, outlining the process for the SAC to review, edit and potentially endorse recommendations coming to the SAC from working groups. They also requested that the staff give a brief presentation on this topic at the start of SAC-17.

Guatemala stated that for future meetings, any scientific action or project presented to the SAC must include an assessment of its budgetary implications so that it can be properly considered by the CAF.

11. SAC recommendations

The SAC-16 recommendations to the Commission are attached in Appendix D.

12. Adjournment

The 16th Meeting of the SAC was adjourned at approximately 6:00 pm on 6 June 2025.

Appendix A

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Appendix B

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

AD HOC PERMANENT WORKING GROUP ON FADS

9TH MEETING

La Jolla, California (USA)
28-29 May 2025

CHAIR'S SUMMARY REPORT

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting 2. Adoption of the agenda 3. Review of recommendations from the 8th meeting of the FAD Working Group 4. FAD data reporting established in Resolutions C-19-01 and C-21-04 5. FAD fishery indicators 6. Advances on biodegradable FADs in the EPO 7. FAD Register: potential benefits and modalities 8. Initiatives to reduce impacts of FADs fishing 9. Conclusions and recommendations 10. Other business 11. Adjournment the	FAD-09-01 FAD-09-02

The 9th meeting of the IATTC*'s ad hoc* Permanent Working on FADs was held in La Jolla, California (USA) on May 28 and 29, 2025. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Josu Santiago, in his capacity as Chair of the Working Group.

The list of participants is included in **Annex 1**.

The list of documents presented and discussed during the meeting is included below and can be found on the website of the 9th meeting of the Working Group, along with the corresponding presentations.

Meeting documents:

- FAD-09-01 - Floating object fishery indicators a 2024 report
- FAD-09-02 - Dynamics of Biodegradable and Conventional FADs in the EPO
- FAD-09-03 - Options for a FAD register

Informational documents:

- INF-A. Analyses of the regional database of stranded Drifting Fish Aggregating Device (dFADs) in the Pacific Ocean – 2024 update

Presentations:

- 9th Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on FADs
- A novel deposit-refund system to reduce lost fishing gear impacts in the world's BioFAD impacts
- Characterizing drifting fish aggregating device design in the Hawaiian Archipelago from 2009-2025
- CIAT- ECOFADS TUNACONS Avances 2024 y 2025 ES
- FAD-09-01 Floating object fishery indicators - 2024 report
- FAD-09-02 Dynamics of Biodegradable and Conventional FADs in the EPO
- FAD-09-03 Options for a FAD register
- IATTC Naming System
- INF-A Stranded FADs
- Options to mitigate dFAD loss and abandonments
- RD-C Initiatives for the recovery of plantations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean-TUNACONS
- RD-E Programa Recogida Plantados ES
- RD-F Data Collection for Assessing Impacts of FAD Stranding Events
- Regional data collection program on FAD strandings an update

Under **item 8 of the agenda** on **initiatives to reduce the impact of fishing on FADs**, Mr. Gibbons Fly, Executive Director of the American Tuna Vessel Association (ATA), made a statement (see **Annex 3**) in which he proposed that FADs should not be deactivated when drifting south of 10 degrees south, considered the southern limit of the fishing zones, since deactivation prevents them from being tracked and monitored to see if they are heading for ecologically sensitive areas; and that these FADs should not be counted as active for the purposes of implementing the limits established, provided that no sets are made on them.

This statement was welcomed by the Group and the proposal was supported by several participants who took the floor.

On the issue of FAD recovery, the option of considering financial incentives (e.g., payment of a fee per FAD deployed) was also mentioned, but with the need to avoid a race to recover FADs even when they are not at risk of stranding.

Under **item 9 of its agenda**, the Working Group adopted several **conclusions and recommendations** for consideration by the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), the text of which is reproduced in the table in **Annex 2** of this summary report.

With no other matters to consider, the Working Group noted that its next meeting would be held in the days immediately preceding the 17th meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee in May-June 2026.

Annex 1
List of participants

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Annex 2

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 9TH MEETING OF THE AD HOCPERMANENT WORKING ON FADS

Consistent with its terms of reference established in Resolution C-19-01, Annex III, **the Ad Hoc Permanent Working Group on FADs**, in reporting to the Scientific Advisory Committee on the results of its 9th meeting, and in the framework of the process of coordination with that Committee and with the scientific staff in the identification and review of feasible FAD management measures, as a preliminary step prior to the presentation of recommendations to the Commission, **wishes to recommend that:**

1. On FAD data reporting

1.1. The IATTC scientific staff develop and propose improvements to the characterization of the causes for remote deactivation and reactivation established in Resolution C-24-01.

1.2. The IATTC scientific staff analyze in greater detail the data from observers and satellite buoys to propose methods to help adequately evaluate the uses/record of the causes for remote deactivation and reactivation to identify possible opportunities for improvement or updates.

2. On FAD fishery indicators

2.1. The IATTC scientific staff continue to refine the indicators, including additional indicators of interest (e.g., last buoy positions, quantification of strandings and collections) and prepare a guide with a description of each indicator that facilitate the interpretation and assessment of the implications of each indicator.

2.2. The Commission consider urging flag CPCs to ensure that fishing companies and buoy suppliers provide the IATTC with available historical information on vessel acoustic buoys received from the original users, including trajectory and biomass information, to prevent losing this data of enormous value to science, and particularly to stock assessments. The processing of this data will be subject to the Commission's rules on confidentiality

3. On biodegradable FADs

3.1. The SAC recommend that the Commission consider adopting measures to obtain the necessary data and resources, including by exploring strategic partnerships and alternative sources of funding, to enable analysis to be carried out to determine more accurately the final destination of unrecovered FADs.

3.2. Progress be made in analyzing the useful life of biodegradable FADs ("BioFAD"), or that, in addition to the information provided by observers in the EPO, the IATTC scientific staff provide the Group with a more in-depth analysis, taking into account the information on the positions of buoys associated with FADs as well as relevant information from WCPFC observers.

3.3. The IATTC scientific staff continue to deepen their analysis of the useful life of BioFADs in collaboration with the industry.

3.4. (a) Interested parties be encouraged to continue pursuing technical studies on biodegradable, natural, or bio-based materials, useful for the construction of FADs,
(b) The exchange of experiences be promoted through participatory workshops.

3.5. The IATTC scientific staff present to the Working Group an analysis derived from the compilation and evaluation of the certification options for bio-based materials which are used in FADs, and which will ensure that the new material and the final product do not contribute to the pollution of the marine environment.

3.6. CPCs and other entities be encouraged to engage in BioFADs trials provide more BioFAD data from broader regions of the EPO in a random fashion more adequate to making scientific comparisons.

3. On the FAD register
(a) Considering the review of the suitability of a FAD Registry in the IATTC area, no need has been identified by the Working Group to implement such a registry in the region (b) The pros and cons of the implementation of different methods for marking FADs be explored.
3. On FAD retrieval
5.1. (a) The SAC consider the relevance of recommending to the Commission that it assess the value of adopting the form and database for collecting data on stranded FADs to be developed by the scientific staff, as harmonized as appropriate with the form developed by the SPC-WCPF, including the identification of possible adjustments. (b) if a form is adopted for this purpose, its use be preceded by some type of workshop or practical training 5.2. The SAC consider the relevance of recommending to the Commission to evaluate or assess the adoption of the creation of stranding data collection programs as well as the analysis of the convenience and operability of a network of these programs in the EPO. 5.3. The IATTC scientific staff, with the support of the FAD Working Group, work on the development of indicators to enable monitoring of the performance of FAD retrieval programs over time, to recommend improvements. 5.4. For the purpose of assisting in the retrieval of FADs and without prejudice to the active buoy limits established by the Commission, the scientific staff analyze ways to manage deactivations, such as consider expanding the areas for requiring buoy activations (i.e., par. 23 of C-24-01) to assist with FAD recoveries, with the understanding that FADs south of 10° S and west of 100°W would not count towards active FAD limits. 5.5. The Commission consider assessing the value of establishing an incentive system for CPCs to establish funds to support projects and entities dedicated to the tracking, recovery, and retrieval of drifting FADs, in particular those with the highest risk of drifting into ecologically sensitive areas such as coral reefs and related shoreline habitats. 5.6. The Commission consider amending Resolution C-24-01, as appropriate, so that, to assist FAD recovery efforts, FAD satellite buoys that are deactivated pursuant to paragraph 23 of Resolution C-24-01 and drifting south of 10°S Latitude and west of 100°W maintain their signal active exclusively to transmit their position to FAD recovery programs, and remain excluded from buoy limits.

Annex 3

Statement by Mr. Gibbons-Fly
Executive Director of the American Tunaboat Association (ATA)

PURSE SEINE SECTOR FAD RECOVERY INITIATIVE

Representatives of the purse seine sector have been working to establish a fund to support projects dedicated to the tracking, recovery, and retrieval of drifting FADs, in particular those with the highest risk of drifting into ecologically sensitive areas such as coral reefs and related shoreline habitats.

This initiative has included purse seine industry associations from the United States, Ecuador, the EU, particularly Spain, and others. I can assure you that the purse seine industry is committed to addressing the issue of drifting FADs in a serious way. But to do so, we need the Commission's help. And in that regard, we have a specific request for a recommendation from this Working Group to the broader Commission.

The current tropical tuna measure allows deactivation of FADs when they drift south of 10 degrees, which is considered the southern limit of viable fishing grounds. However, deactivation would not allow those FADs to be tracked for the purpose of knowing if and when they head into ecologically sensitive areas, for example in French Polynesia, Cook Islands, and elsewhere. The ability to monitor FADs south of 10 degrees south is a necessary component of any effort to track and recover these FADs.

At last year's annual meeting, the United States submitted a proposal that would have allowed, or perhaps even required, FADs to remain active south of 10 degrees, with the added provision that such FADs would not count against an individual vessel's active FAD limit. At the time, we heard the U.S. proposal described as an "exception" or a "loophole". But this is not the case given that, under the current rules, those FADs can simply be deactivated. If these FAD will continue to count against the active FAD limit once they drift south of 10 degrees for tracking purpose, this Commission is creating a disincentive for vessels to participate in any FAD recovery efforts.

The purse seine sector should not suffer adverse consequences for trying to do the right thing. Therefore, we are requesting that this working group include a recommendation that the Commission support allowing FADs to remain active for tracking purposes only south of 10 degrees, provided that such FADs would not count against the limit. We are prepared to consider safeguards to ensure no fishing set takes place on any such FAD.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I am happy to answer any questions.

Appendix C

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

WORKING GROUP ON ECOSYSTEMS AND BYCATCH

3RD MEETING

La Jolla, California (USA)
(hybrid)
26-27 May 2025

CO-CHAIR'S SUMMARY REPORT

The 3rd meeting of the IATTC Permanent Working Group on Ecosystem and Bycatch was held in a hybrid format in La Jolla, California (USA) on May 26, 27, and part of May 29, 2025. It was chaired by Dr. Yonat Swimmer and Mr. Manuel Correia, in their capacity as co-chairs of the Working Group. The list of participants is included in **Annex 1**.

The meeting agenda is as follows:

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of agenda
3. Review of recommendations from the 2nd meeting of the EBWG
3a. Brief discussion on recommendations from 2nd Circle Hook Workshop and aim to complete Res C-19-04 (Co-chairs)
4. Updates on Ecosystem and Bycatch Activities
- *i. SAC-16-09 Characterization of longline fleets in IATTC Convention area (IATTC Staff)*
- **ii.** *EB-03 RD-B Information about "Ring-shaped branchline (Meka-Ring) in pelagic longline fisheries and research plan (Japan Fisheries Research and Education Agency, D. Ochi)*

5a. Ecosystems
- *i. EB-03-01 Ecosystem considerations report (IATTC Staff)*
- *ii. EB-03-04 EB-03-04 Progress of the Ecocard workplan: Purpose and Development of Framework (IATTC Staff)*
- *iii. Updates on deep sea mining impacts (University of Hawaii)*

5b. Climate Change
- *i. SAC-16 INF-P Climate change staff recommendations: updated (IATTC Staff*)

5c. Elasmobranchs
- *i. SAC-16-08 List of ray species of purview to IATTC (IATTC Staff)*
- *ii. Mobulid Sorting Grids update (C. Heberer, Nature Conservancy)*
- *iii. EB-03 RD-A Trialing shark bycatch release devices on board purse seiners in the Pacific Ocean to enhance shark survival (AZTI, ISSF)*
- *iv. Considerations for a shark data collection program in the IATTC (IATTC staff)*
- *v. A shark research plan for the IATTC strategic Science Plan (IATTC staff)*

5d. Seabirds
- *i. EB-03-02 IATTC seabird action plan: Seabird distribution and associated fishery impacts (IATTC Staff)*

ii. *EB-03-03 IATTC seabird action plan: A review of bycatch mitigation options, measures and use (IATTC Staff)*
iii. *Predicting albatross bycatch hotspots across the North Pacific Ocean (EDF/ Tommy Clay)*
iv. *Metapopulation distribution shapes overlap with fisheries for a circumpolar seabird (EDF/ T. Clay)*
v. *EB-03-RD-E Black petrel distribution and range-wide overlap with pelagic longline fisheries (J Quiñones Davila Peru, NZ)*
vi. Testing low-coast mitigation measures to reduce albatrosses and petrels' bycatch in the Peruvian artisanal longline fisheries in southern Peru (J. Quiñones, Peru & NZ) *(J. Quiñones, Peru & NZ)*
vii. *EB-03-RD-C* ACAP Best Practice Advice for Reducing the Impact of IATTC Pelagic Longline Fisheries on Seabirds (ACAP, D. Gianuca)

5e. Best Handling and Release Practices (BHRP)

i. *SAC-16-10 Updated best handling and release practices for sharks in IATTC Fisheries (IATTC)*
ii. *EB-03-06 Seabird best handling and release practice guidelines (IATTC)*
iii. *EB-03-05 rev Best handling and release practices for sea turtles captured in IATTC fisheries (IATTC)*
iv. *Updates on a manual for handling sea turtles incidentally captured in fisheries (IAC, V. Cáceres)*
v. *EB-03-RD-D Can releasing sharks by the tail be a best release practice? (J. Murua, AZTI)*

6. Recommendations to the Scientific Advisory Committee
7. Other business
8. Adjournment

The documents of the meeting and their corresponding links, as well as the presentations made, are listed below and are available on the IATTC website.

Presentations

Twenty-four topics were presented and discussed, encompassed within seven main themes.

PRESENTATIONS	**PRESENTACIONES**	
Review of recommendations from the 2nd meeting of the EBWG	Revisión de las recomendaciones de la 2ª reunión del GTECI	**1**
Updates on activities on ecosystems and bycatch	Actualizaciones de las actividades sobre ecosistemas y capturas incidentales	**2**
Ecosystem	Ecosistema	**3**
Climate change	Cambio climático	**1**
Elasmobranchs	Elasmobranquios	**5**
Seabirds	Aves marinas	**7**
Best Handling and Release Practices (BHRP)	Mejores prácticas de manipulación y liberación (MPML)	**5**
TOTAL PRESENTATIONS	**PONENCIAS TOTALES**	**24**
NON-IATTC SPEAKERS	**PONENTES EXTERNOS A LA CIAT**	**9**

Meeting documents

2nd Circle Hook Workshop Report -- iattc.org/en-US/Event/DetailMeeting/Meeting-WSHKS-02

EB-03-01 - Ecosystem considerations

EB-03-02 - Seabird distribution and bycatch rates

EB-03-03 - Seabird action plan - A review of bycatch mitigation options measures and implementations

EB-03-04 - Progress of the EcoCard Workplan

EB-03-05 - Best handling and release practice guidelines (BHRP) for sea turtles

EB-03-06 - Seabird Best Handling and Release Practice Guidelines

SAC-16 INF-P - Climate Change Recommendations

SAC-16-08 - Ray species under the purview of the IATTC

SAC-16-09 - Characterizing and classifying longline fleets in the IATTC

SAC-16-10 - Shark Best Handling and Release Practice guidelines for sharks in IATTC fisheries - updated

Related documents:

RD-A. Trialing shark bycatch release devices on board purse seiners in the Pacific Ocean to enhance shark survival

RD-B. Ring shaped branch lines (meka-ring) in pelagic longline fisheries

RD-C. ACAP Best Practice Advice Pelagic Longline

RD-D. Lifting sharks tail BRDs be a best practice for improved crew safety and shark survival

RD-E. Black petrel distribution and range-wide overlap with pelagic longline fisheries

RD-F. Predicting albatross bycatch-risk hotspots across the North Pacific Ocean

Background documents:

Murua et al. 2025 – Bycatch Release Devices for elasmobranch mitigation
Metapopulation distribution shapes year-round overlap with fisheries for a circumpolar seabird

Presentations:

4.ii Information about Ring-shaped branchline (Meka-Ring) in pelagic longline fisheries and research plan

4i - Characterization of longline fleets

5a.i - Ecosystem Considerations

5a.ii - Progress of the Ecocard workplan

5c.ii Mobulid Sorting Grid

5c.iv Considerations for a shark data collection program in the IATTC

5c.v IATTC shark research plan

5d.iii Predicting albatross bycatch hotspots across the North Pacific Ocean

5d.iv Metapopulation distribution shapes overlap with fisheries for a circumpolar seabird

5d.vi Low coast mitigation measures

5dvi - Testing low coast mitigation measures to reduce albatrosses and petrels bycatch in the Peruvian artisanal longline fisheries targeting sharks in southern Peru

5dvii ACAP Best Practice Advice for Reducing the Impact of IATTC Pelagic Longline Fisheries on Seabirds

5e.i Best Handling and Release Practices for Sharks, Seabirds and Sea Turtles in IATTC Fisheries

5e.ii Updates on IAC Manual Best Practices for Safe handling and release for Sea Turtles Incidentally Caught in fishing Operations

5ev - Can lifting large sharks by the tail be a best handling and release practice?

EB-03-02 Seabird distribution and associated fishery impacts

EB-03-03 SAP mitigation options

RD-A - Trialing shark bycatch release devices on board purse seiners in the Pacific Ocean to enhance shark survival

RD-E - Black petrel distribution and range-wide overlap with pelagic longline fisheries

SAC-16 INF-P Climate change staff recommendations updated

SAC-16-08 - Ray species under the purview of the IATTC

As a result of the group's work, several recommendations were agreed upon for consideration by the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). These are as follows:

1. Gear Innovation	**1. Innovación de artes de pesca**
The EBWG recommends CPCs to make available to the SAC, through the IATTC Scientific Staff, any information they may have on the annular branches, including information on catch rates of target and non-target species, as well as other factors that can be used to assess this modification to longline fishing gear.	El GTECI recomienda que los CPC pongan a disposición del CCA, a través del personal científico de la CIAT, toda la información que puedan tener sobre las ramales anulares, incluyendo información sobre las tasas de captura de especies objetivo y no objetivo, así como otros factores que puedan utilizarse para evaluar esta modificación de las artes de pesca de palangre.
2. Organize workshops regarding Shark Conservation	**2. Organización de talleres relacionados a Conservación de los Tiburones.**
Recommends that the IATTC Scientific Staff evaluate the need to organize workshops to facilitate information sharing, as aligned with the objectives of the research plan for sharks referred to in Paragraph 15 of Resolution C-24-05, for discussion at the next EBWG.	Recomienda que el personal científico de la CIAT evalúe la necesidad de organizar talleres para facilitar el intercambio de información, en línea con los objetivos del plan de investigación de tiburones referido en el párrafo 15 de la Resolución C-24-05, para su discusión en el próximo GTECI
3. Seabird Action Plan	**3. Plan de Acción para las Aves Marinas**

Recommends that the IATTC staff develop a seabird mitigation reporting template relative to compliance with Resolutions in force regarding mitigation measures for seabirds for consideration by the SAC, with due consideration to the operational feasibility of data collection.	Se Recomienda que el personal de la CIAT elabore una plantilla para la presentación de informes relativos al cumplimiento de las Resoluciones vigentes sobre mitigación de aves marinas para su consideración por el CCA, considerando debidamente la viabilidad operativa de la recopilación de datos.
4. Rays	**4. Rayas**
In response to recommendation 6.1(b) by the IATTC SAC at its 15th meeting in 2024, the EBWG considers that the 7 ray species in Appendix A to these recommendations correspond to the species that have the greatest interactions with the fisheries under the competence of the IATTC in order to be considered for possible adoption by the Commission (Appendix X).	En respuesta a la recomendación 6.1(b) del CCA de la CIAT en su 15.ª reunión en 2024, el GTECI considera que las 7 especies de rayas de la Lista B de la Tabla 4 del documento SAC-16-08 corresponde a las especies que tienen las mayores interacciones con las pesquerías bajo la competencia de la CIAT a efecto de que pueda ser considerada su posible adopción por la Comisión. (Apéndice X)
5. Climate Change	**5. Cambio climático**
The SAC recommend to the Commission to continue to support and implement the proposed Climate Change workplan, in collaboration with the IATTC staff, the EBWG and the SAC	Que el CCA recomiende a la Comisión que continúe apoyando e implementando el plan de trabajo propuesto sobre cambio climático, en colaboración con el personal de la CIAT, el GTECI y el CCA.
6. Shark Best Handling and Release (NOT AGREED UPON BY CONSENSUS)	**6. Mejores practicas de manejo y libración de tiburones (NO ACORDADO POR CONSENSO)**
1. Recommends that, in response to the need to implement efficient and safe mechanisms for handling and releasing sharks and management of sharks, the Scientific Staff, in collaboration with CPC researchers, can continue undertaking research on the use of tools for lifting sharks from their caudal peduncles. for consideration as a possible good practice for handling and releasing sharks, improving non-traumatic release practices. For these studies and tests, and given the restrictions established in current measures, consider protocols to guarantee their appropriate use, marking of specimens and	Se recomienda que, en respuesta a la necesidad de implementar mecanismos eficientes y seguros para el manejo y la liberación de tiburones, el personal científico, en colaboración con los investigadores del CPC, continúe investigando el uso de herramientas para levantar tiburones de sus pedúnculos caudales. Se recomienda considerarlo como una posible buena práctica para el manejo y la liberación de tiburones, mejorando las prácticas de liberación no traumática. Para estos estudios y pruebas, y dadas las restricciones establecidas en las medidas vigentes, se consideren protocolos que garanticen su uso adecuado, el marcaje de especímenes y el acompañamiento de

accompaniment of observers, among others. [The scientific staff can review research form CPCs to consider updating best handling and release practices]. **(NOT AGREED UPON BY CONSENSUS)**	observadores, entre otros. [El personal científico puede revisar los formularios de investigación del CPC para considerar la actualización de las mejores prácticas de manejo y liberación.] **(NO ACORDADO POR CONSENSO)**
7. Fleet characterization	**7. Caracterización y Clasificación de la Flota Palangrera en la CIAT**
Recommends that the work initiated and described in document SAC-16-09 be continued, so that in coordination with the CPCs, field work and more precise evaluations on individual aspects of each fleet, the different segments exclusively of the longline fleets targeting the species under the Commission's mandate can be distinguished.	Se recomienda que se continúe el trabajo iniciado y descrito en el documento SAC-16-09, para que en coordinación con las CPC, trabajos de campo y evaluaciones más precisas sobre aspectos individuales de cada flota, se distingan los diferentes segmentos exclusivamente de las flotas palangreras dirigidas a las especies bajo el mandato de la Comisión.
8. Ecocards	**8. Ecocards**
The Working Group recommends continuing collaboration with other tRFMOs to establish criteria for delineating ecoregions and to develop indicators, including socioeconomics.	El Grupo de Trabajo recomienda continuar la colaboración con otros OROP para establecer criterios para delinear ecorregiones y desarrollar indicadores, incluyendo socioeconómicos
9. Collection of information	**9. Colecta de Información**
Continue the process of collecting information, in particular on mortality and utilization of sharks and other non-tuna species, relative to coastal fisheries in the EPO, related to the Presentation “Considerations for an IATTC Shark Data Collection Program” (Presentation 5c.iv).	Continuar el proceso de colecta de información, en particular de mortalidad y aprovechamiento de tiburones y otras especies distintas de los túnidos, relativos a las pesquerías costeras en el OPO, relacionado en la Presentación “Consideraciones para un programa de recolección de datos de tiburones en la CIAT” (Presentación 5c.iv).

Appendix X. Ray species recommended by IATTC scientific staff to be considered as an interim list of ray species to be considered under the purview of the IATTC

Apéndice X. Especies de rayas recomendadas por el personal científico de la CIAT para ser consideradas como una lista provisional de especies de raya que deben considerarse bajo su competencia.

Family	Species	Common name	Nombre común
Dasyatidae	*Pteroplatytrygon violacea*	Pelagic stingray	Raya látigo violeta
Mobulidae	*Mobula alfredi*	Alfred manta	Manta de Alfred
Mobulidae	*Mobula birostris*	Giant manta	Manta voladora
Mobulidae	*Mobula mobular*	Spinetail manta	Manta de aguijón
Mobulidae	*Mobula munkiana*	Munk's devil ray	Raya diablo de Munk
Mobulidae	*Mobula tarapacana*	Chilean devil ray	Manta cornuda o Raya diablo chilena
Mobulidae	*Mobula thurstoni*	Smoothtail manta	Manta diablo

EBWG3 Recommendations regarding the 2nd Circle hook Workshop /

Recomendaciones del GTECI3 respecto al 2do Taller sobre de Anzuelos circulares

1. Circle Hook Minimum Size:	**1. Tamaño mínimo de los anzuelos circulares:**
The Working Group acknowledged, in response to the Commission's request regarding Resolution C-19-04, to determine a minimum size for large circle hooks, that it is currently difficult to agree upon a single, appropriate minimum size. That the SAC consider urging each CPC to continue to collect information, in the format of their choice, on the size (including manufacturer standards) of circle hooks, impacts of circle hooks on target and non- target species (including catch rates and post-release mortality), and other relevant information, and report updates on this information to the IATTC scientific staff, through the Director, with a view to considering a comprehensive bycatch management strategy in the future, if possible.	El grupo de trabajo reconoció, en respuesta a la solicitud de la Comisión sobre la Resolución C- 19-04 de determinar un tamaño mínimo para los anzuelos circulares grandes, que actualmente es difícil acordar un tamaño mínimo único y apropiado. Que el CCA considere instar a cada CPC a que continúe recopilando información, en el formato que elija, sobre el tamaño de los anzuelos circulares (incluyendo las normas del fabricante), el impacto de estos en las especies objetivo y no objetivo (incluyendo las tasas de captura y la mortalidad posterior a la liberación), y otra información pertinente, y a que informe sobre las actualizaciones al personal científico de la CIAT, a través del Director, con miras a considerar una estrategia integral de gestión de la captura incidental en el futuro, si fuese posible.
2. Third mitigation option:	**2. Sobre una Tercera opción de mitigación:**

The EBWG recommends the IATTC Scientific Staff will collaborate with the EBWG, SAC and CPCs to provide options for the development of a third mitigation measure to reduce sea turtle bycatch, that takes into consideration the needs of different fleets and impacts on different taxa, for consideration by the SAC at its future meetings.	Con base en la información proporcionada por los CPC y el personal de la CIAT, el GTECI recomienda que el personal científico colabore con el GTECI, el CCA y los CPC para desarrollar opciones para una tercera medida de mitigación para reducir la captura incidental de tortugas marinas, que tome en consideración las necesidades de las diferentes flotas y los impactos en diferentes taxones, para su consideración por el SAC en sus futuras reuniones.
3. Best Handling and Release Practices for sea turtles	**3. Mejores prácticas de manipulación y liberación para las tortugas marinas**
That as soon as possible, the working group consider, if necessary, making recommendations regarding the updating of best practice guidelines for sea turtle handling and release practices for all IATTC fisheries.	A la mayor brevedad posible, que el grupo de trabajo considere, de ser necesario, hacer recomendaciones en relación a la actualización de las directrices de las mejores prácticas de manipulación y liberación de las tortugas marinas para todas las pesquerías de la CIAT.

3rd EBWG RECS/REC 3er GTECI

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Appendix D

THE INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

103rd MEETING

Panama City, Panama
01-05 September 2025

DOCUMENT IATTC-103-02

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 16th MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. TROPICAL TUNAS
That the Commission consider taking actions bearing in mind, among other elements, the measures proposed by the scientific staff described in document SAC-16-11.
1.1. Bigeye tuna
(a) That the Commission consider instructing that the candidate harvest strategy for bigeye tuna, described in document SAC-16-11 – Staff Recommendations 2025 (prepared in compliance with paragraph 8 of Resolution C-24-01; see also document SAC-16-06), be tested as a candidate rule in the management strategy evaluation process in 2025-2026 alongside other proposed candidates (see the report of the 1st meeting (Informal) of the Ad Hoc Working Group on MSE) and that the performance results be reviewed and analyzed by the Ad hoc Working Group on Management Strategy Evaluation (WGMSE).. (b) That the Commission consider requesting the WGMSE to submit its recommendations to the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) in 2026 for adoption of an MSE-tested management procedure/harvest strategy so that the SAC may formulate the corresponding proposals to the Commission, without excluding that their implementation may take place in any of the years of the current management cycle adopted by Commission. (c) That the IATTC scientific staff provide the CPCs, by correspondence, at least 30 days prior to the next annual meeting of the Commission, with a technical analysis of the impact of catches by class 4 vessels on the bigeye tuna stock and juvenile yellowfin tuna. (d) That, taking into account the multispecies nature of the IATTC tropical tuna fisheries, the scientific staff also evaluate the potential impacts of the implementation of catch strategies for bigeye tuna on the other tropical tuna stocks caught by the IATTC tropical tuna fisheries,

1.2. Yellowfin tuna

That the IATTC staff continue with, and the Commission support, the yellowfin tuna (YFT) research plan, especially with regards to YFT stock structure in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO).

2. TEMPERATE TUNAS

2.1. Pacific Bluefin tuna

Considering that the SAC endorsed the Staff recommendations on Pacific bluefin tuna in document SAC16-11, that the Commission consider taking actions such as resolutions or recommendations based on these recommendations.

2.2. South Pacific albacore tuna

(a) That the Commission encourage CPCs to participate in the IATTC-WCPFC Joint Working Group on the Management of South Pacific Albacore Tuna, once it is established.

(b) That the IATTC Staff continue to collaborate with the Pacific Community (SPC) to monitor the stock status of South Pacific albacore tuna.

2.3. North Pacific albacore tuna

(a) That the Commission, when updating the harvest strategy, note that the change in fishing intensity can potentially be translated into catch and effort measures according to the relationships described in document SAC-15 INF-T.

(b) That the Commission consider the criteria developed by the ISC ALBWG for identifying exceptional circumstances for North Pacific albacore tuna (see document SAC-15 INF-S).

3. MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVALUATION (MSE)

That the IATTC scientific staff expand the MSE work to test candidate harvest strategies for both purse-seine and longline fisheries, to assist the Commission with the implementation of a procedure for the management of tropical tunas and ensure balance among different fisheries.

4. DATA COLLECTION AND PROVISION

4.1. Tuna Tagging

(a) That the Commission support and prioritize the development of the tropical tuna tagging project in the EPO and recommend its implementation (see document SAC-16 INF-E.b).

(b) That the scientific staff submit to the Commission, at its next annual meeting, alternative proposals to the current design of the tropical tuna tagging programme, giving priority to cost-efficient schemes that allow scientific objectives to be achieved and reduce the risk of failure in future baseline assessments, especially for skipjack and yellowfin tuna.

4.2. Longline data reporting

That the Commission consider amending Resolution C-03-05 to enable the IATTC scientific staff to access operational set by set level logbook data from the longline fleet, or at a minimum, data aggregated at a 1 by 1 degree spatial resolution by vessel, month, and hooks per basket (or hooks between floats) for the construction of abundance indices and other useful information for stock assessments of tropical and temperate tunas. This may be currently achieved through a memorandum of understanding between the CPCs and the IATTC to make the data available during the development of the stock assessment.

6. ECOSYSTEM CONSIDERATIONS

6.1. Elasmobranchs (sharks and rays)

As a follow-up to its recommendation as adopted by the Commission, the SAC endorses the list of 7 ray species as recommended by the IATTC staff in the context of Paragraph f) Article VII of the Antigua Convention (see document SAC-16-08 Ray species under the purview of the IATTC).

6.2. Pilot Study for shark release devices

(a) With the aim of strengthening efficient and safe mechanisms for the handling and release of sharks, it is recommended that the scientific staff, in collaboration with researchers associated with CPCs, continue to evaluate through a controlled pilot study the use of specific tools such as Velcro and harnesses and associated protocols for lifting large sharks from the caudal peduncle (except for whale sharks).

(b) It is suggested that this pilot study be designed with a rigorous experimental approach, in line with the objective of determining the effectiveness and safety of these tools, the survival of individuals, and the safety of the crew and it is considered essential to include the fishing industry and specialists with experience in the handling and tagging of large sharks

(c) It is recommended that the scientific staff submit the results of the pilot study to the Working Group on Ecosystem and Bycatch (WGECB) and the SAC for consideration as a possible good practice for the management and release of incidentally caught sharks, in order to contribute to their survival.

(d) Given that the conduct of this study could be subject to restrictions arising from existing measures, the SAC requests the Commission to clarify whether this pilot study could be carried out and under what circumstances, and consequently consider, if necessary, an update of Resolution C-24-05 on sharks to that effect.

6.3. Sorting grids

That the Director, in coordination with interested CPCs, organize a second regional workshop on the use of tuna sorting grids to consider all relevant information presented in document SAC-16 INF-M and existing literature, and ensure the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including global experts, fishermen, fleet owners, and net engineers and manufacturers.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE

(a) That the Commission consider for adoption the list of revised IATTC staff recommendations of the main goal, scope, and framework (see document SAC-16 INF-P) of the IATTC's proposed climate change workplan (document SAC-15-12).

(b) That the Commission consider adopting the Terms of References proposed by the IATTC staff (see document IATTC-102 INF-B) to guide the series of climate change workshops aimed to facilitate staff and stakeholder engagement during the development of the proposed climate change workplan (document SAC-15-12).

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 9th MEETING OF THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON FADS AS ENDORSED BY THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Consistent with its terms of reference established in Resolution C-19-01, Annex III, **the Ad Hoc Permanent Working Group on FADs**, in reporting to the Scientific Advisory Committee on the results of its 9th meeting, and in the framework of the process of coordination with that Committee and with the scientific staff in the identification and review of feasible FAD management measures, as a preliminary step prior to the presentation of recommendations to the Commission, **wishes to recommend that:**

1. On FAD data reporting

1.1. The IATTC scientific staff develop and propose improvements to the characterization of the causes for remote deactivation and reactivation established in Resolution C-24-01.

1.2. The IATTC scientific staff analyze in greater detail the data from observers and satellite buoys to propose methods to help adequately evaluate the uses/record of the causes for remote deactivation and reactivation to identify possible opportunities for improvement or updates.

2. On FAD fishery indicators

2.1. The IATTC scientific staff continue to refine the indicators, including additional indicators of interest (e.g., last buoy positions, quantification of strandings and collection of stranded buoys) and prepare a guide with a description of each indicator that facilitate the interpretation and assessment of the implications of each indicator.

2.2. The Commission consider urging flag CPCs to ensure that fishing companies and buoy suppliers provide the IATTC with available historical information on vessel acoustic buoys received from the original users, including trajectory and biomass information, to prevent losing this data of enormous value to science, and particularly to stock assessments. The processing of this data will be subject to the Commission's rules on confidentiality

3. On biodegradable FADs

3.1. The SAC recommend that the Commission consider adopting measures to obtain the necessary data and resources, including by exploring strategic partnerships and alternative sources of funding, to enable analysis to be carried out to determine more accurately the final destination of unrecovered FADs. 3.2. Progress be made in analyzing the useful life of biodegradable FADs ("BioFAD"), or that, in addition to the information provided by observers in the EPO, the IATTC scientific staff provide the Group with a more in-depth analysis, taking into account the information on the positions of buoys associated with FADs as well as relevant information from WCPFC observers. 3.3. The IATTC scientific staff continue to deepen their analysis of the useful life of BioFADs in collaboration with the industry. 3.4. (a) Interested parties be encouraged to continue pursuing technical studies on biodegradable, natural, or bio-based materials, useful for the construction of FADs, (b) The exchange of experiences be promoted through participatory workshops. 3.5. The IATTC scientific staff present to the Working Group an analysis derived from the compilation and evaluation of the certification options for bio-based materials which are used in FADs, and which will ensure that the new material and the final product do not contribute to the pollution of the marine environment. 3.6. CPCs and other entities be encouraged to engage in BioFADs trials provide more BioFAD data from broader regions of the EPO in a random fashion more adequate to making scientific comparisons.
4. On the FAD register
(a) Considering the review of the suitability of a FAD Registry in the IATTC area, no need has been identified by the Working Group to implement such a registry in the region (b) The pros and cons of the implementation of different methods for marking FADs be explored.
5. On FAD retrieval
5.1. (a) The SAC consider the relevance of recommending to the Commission that it assess the value of adopting the form and database for collecting data on stranded FADs to be developed by the scientific staff, as harmonized as appropriate with the form developed by the SPC-WCPF, including the identification of possible adjustments. (b) if a form is adopted for this purpose, its use be preceded by some type of workshop or practical training 5.2. The SAC consider the relevance of recommending to the Commission to evaluate or assess the adoption of the creation of stranding data collection programs as well as the analysis of the convenience and operability of a network of these programs in the EPO.

5.3. The IATTC scientific staff, with the support of the FAD Working Group, work on the development of indicators to enable monitoring of the performance of FAD retrieval programs over time, to recommend improvements.

5.4. For the purpose of assisting in the retrieval of FADs and without prejudice to the active buoy limits established by the Commission, the scientific staff analyze ways to manage deactivations, such as consider expanding the areas for requiring buoy activations (i.e., par. 23 of C-24-01) to assist with FAD recoveries, with the understanding that FADs south of 10° S and west of 100°W would not count towards active FAD limits.

5.5. The Commission consider assessing the value of establishing an incentive system for CPCs to establish funds to support projects and entities dedicated to the tracking, recovery, and retrieval of drifting FADs, in particular those with the highest risk of drifting into ecologically sensitive areas such as coral reefs and related shoreline habitats.

5.6. The Commission consider amending Resolution C-24-01, as appropriate, so that, to assist FAD recovery efforts, FAD satellite buoys that are deactivated pursuant to paragraph 23 of Resolution C-24-01 and drifting south of 10°S Latitude and west of 100°W maintain their signal active exclusively to transmit their position to FAD recovery programs, and remain excluded from buoy limits,, provided that sets on these FADs are prohibited for vessels registered with the IATTC, and they are only maintained active for scientific recovery and analysis purposes.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 3rd MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON ECOSYSTEM AND BYCATCH AS ENDORSED BY THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PRELIMINARY NOTE

(a) The Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) reviewed the report of the 3rd meeting of the Working Group on Ecosystem and Bycatch (EBWG), including its recommendations. Although SAC generally supported the recommendations, several suggestions and clarifications were raised and as a result SAC did not endorse the recommendations of EBWG3 as its entirety. Instead, SAC took all the recommendations from EBWG3, made necessary modifications, and adopted them as part of SAC recommendations.

(b) The SAC noted that the Terms of Reference of EBWG (Resolution C-22-06) states that EBWG recommendations may be submitted to the Commission directly, whenever they could not be considered and/or endorsed by the SAC or upon the request of the Commission itself (para. 3ii).

(c) Given that all the EBWG3 recommendations were reproduced as part of SAC recommendations with necessary modifications, the SAC agreed that it is not necessary for the original EBWG3 recommendations to be submitted to the Commission directly. The original EBWG3 report

including its recommendations can be found in its meeting website.

(d) The SAC also noted that there is ambiguity in paragraph 3 of C-22-06 and, in fact, there were differences of opinion in its interpretation and implementation. The Commission may wish to clarify the intention of the said paragraph if deemed necessary.

(e) One member did not agree with the interpretation that the EBWG could not send forward recommendations to the Commission in the present circumstance and considers provision to allow direct forwarding to Commission in event that SAC does not reach consensus on endorsement because one or members do not join consensus.

The EBWG recommends that:

1. Gear Innovation

The Commission consider requesting CPCs to make available to the SAC, through the IATTC Scientific Staff, any information they may have on the annular branches, including information on catch rates of target and non-target species, as well as other factors that can be used to assess this modification to longline fishing gear

2. Organization of workshops regarding Shark Conservation

The Commission consider instructing the Director to ensure that the scientific staff consider developing regional workshops for the exchange of data and information, with the aim of strengthening available scientific knowledge and promoting fisheries management practices based on results derived from population models, which contribute to the conservation of silky, blue, hammerhead and thresher sharks in the EPO.

3. Seabird Mitigation

The Commission consider requesting that the IATTC staff develop a seabird mitigation reporting template relative to compliance with Resolutions in force regarding mitigation measures for seabirds for consideration by the SAC, with due consideration to the operational feasibility of data collection.

4. Characterization and classification of longline fleets in the Antigua Convention area

The Commission consider recommending that the work initiated and described in document SAC-16-09 be continued, so that in coordination with the CPCs, field work and more precise evaluations on individual aspects of each fleet are carried out, distinguishing the different segments exclusively of the longline fleets targeting the species covered under the Antigua Convention.

5. Ecocards

The Commission consider the IATTC staff to continue collaborating with other tRFMOs to establish criteria for delineating ecoregions and to develop indicators, including socioeconomics.

6. Collection of shark information

The Commission consider continuing the process of collecting information in coordination with CPCs, in particular on mortality and utilization of sharks and other non-tuna species, relative to coastal fisheries in the EPO targeting species covered by the Antigua Convention, related to the Presentation "Considerations for an IATTC Shark Data Collection Program" (see Presentation 5c.iv).

7. Sea Turtles

7.1. **Circle Hook Minimum Size**:
Considering that both the GTECI and the SAC, in response to the Commission's request regarding Resolution C-19-04, to determine a minimum size for large circle hooks, acknowledged that it is currently difficult to agree upon a single, appropriate minimum size, that the Commission consider urging each CPC to continue to collect information, in the format of their choice, on the size (including manufacturer standards) of circle hooks, impacts of circle hooks on target and non-target species (including catch rates and post-release mortality), and other relevant information, and report updates on this information to the IATTC scientific staff, through the Director, with a view to considering a comprehensive bycatch management strategy in the future, if possible.

7.2. **About a third mitigation option**:
The Commission consider recommending that the scientific staff of IATTC and the SAC develop, as necessary, alternatives for the development of a third mitigation option, taking into account the needs of the different fleets and the impacts on the different taxa, as well as measures that have proven to be effective in reducing sea turtle catches, and that do not affect the catch of the target species

7.3. Best Handling and Release Practices for sea turtles:

The Commission consider urging the EBWG, as soon as possible, if necessary, to make recommendations regarding the updating of best practice guidelines for sea turtle handling and release practices for all fisheries under the competence of the Commission.

Annex

Evaluation of the financial resources needed to implement specific recommendations as listed below

SAC-Recommendation 4.1.	**Tuna tagging**	1st year US$ 1,497,683 2nd year US$ 181,243 3rd year US$ 116,823
SAC-Recommendation 6.2.	**Pilot Study for shark release devices**	US$ 175,000
SAC-Recommendation 6.3.	**Sorting grids**	US$ 50,000
EBWG Recommendation 2	**Organization of workshops regarding Shark Conservation**	US$ 30,000

4b. Report of the 3rd Meeting of the Working Group on Electronic Monitoring.

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON ELECTRONIC MONITORING (EM)

3RD MEETING

Panama City, Panama
25 August 2025

CO-CHAIR'S MEETING REPORT

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Presentation by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and collaborators
   3a. EM Pilot Program on Small-Scale Purse-Seine Vessels in Ecuador
   3b. EM Research with Edge AI in Costa Rica
   3c. INCOPESCA/CNIP/IATTC/TNC Costa Rica: EM Pilot Project on Longline Vessels
4. FIP of Ecuador (Mahi-mahi and Swordfish Conservation, etc.) – Industry-driven EM Pilot Project on Industrial Longliners with Zunibal and WWF Ecuador
5. Questions and Discussion on Presentations
6. Discussion on the Objectives and Scope of EM within the IATTC
7. Frequency and Format of Future Meetings
8. Other Business
9. Recommendations to the Commission
10. Next Meeting
11. Adjournment

The 3rd Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Electronic Monitoring (EM) was held on 25 August 2025 in Panama City, Panama. The list of participants is included as Annex 1.

1. Opening of the Meeting

The Co-chairs provided a summary of the meeting intent and welcomed the participants.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes. The Co-Chairs noted that the intent of the structure of the agenda was to provide an update on efforts at implementation of EM in IATTC fisheries since the IATTC adopted interim minimum standards for electronic monitoring (C-24-09) last year, and for those updates to inform a discussion of next steps

3. Presentation by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and collaborators

The Nature Conservancy provided a brief presentation on three EM projects relevant to the IATTC.

3a. EM Pilot Program on Small-Scale Purse-Seine Vessels in Ecuador

The Nature Conservancy provided an overview of a pilot project on small (<class 6) purse seine vessels done in collaboration with Ecuadorian industry, assessing the viability of EM data collection on small vessels. Mr. Álvaro Terán explained that the work involves three purse seiners of 32, 44, and 46 meters in length, with the main goal of developing standards for an EM system for this vessel category. Data is already available for a year and a half of operations, and the project has expanded to include verification of shark catches through electronic monitoring, in collaboration with the company Satlink.

3b. EM Research with Edge AI in Costa Rica

Costa Rica presented on efforts to implement EM on small longline vessels, with and without human observers, including a pilot project to use Edge AI to analyze EM records. Mr. José Miguel Carvajal presented the results of the EM work conducted in Costa Rica. He reported that the project involves a 22-meter longline vessel, aiming to develop EM standards for this type of fishing operation. The pilot has been collecting data for four months, using both human observers and EM systems with three onboard cameras.

3c. INCOPESCA/CNIP/IATTC/TNC Costa Rica: EM Pilot Project on Longline Vessels

Combined with the above agenda item.

4. FIP of Ecuadorian Industrial Longline Fishery (targeting Mahi-mahi and Swordfish Conservation, etc.) – Industry-driven EM Pilot Project on Industrial Longliners with Zunibal and WWF Ecuador

Co-chair Guillermo Morán presented on an industry-led Electronic Monitoring (EM) pilot for Ecuador's industrial longline fleet, developed jointly with Zunibal and WWF Ecuador. The pilot is generating results that could inform future inclusion and improvements to the IATTC's provisional minimum EM standards under Resolution C-24-09.

5. Questions and Discussion on Presentations

The group discussed the promise and limitations of the various pilot projects. The discussion covered, among other topics, power and data transmission requirements for small vessels implementing EM, how long it takes to get from record collection to processed data, projected costs for broader implementation, and whether these projects have generated any data submitted to the IATTC Secretariat.

- The Secretariat was asked if they had received any EM data in 2025 in accordance with the standards adopted under Resolution C-24-09 on Provisional Minimum Standards for an

EMS. IATTC staff replied that to date, no data have been received, but noted that Ecuador and Costa Rica are still reviewing their pilot data and intend to share it with IATTC soon.

- A participant asked whether current EM technology allows for determination of species and size (length/weight) of catch, including discards? IATTC staff indicated that further training of the relevant algorithms is underway and that this technology is not yet mature, but some size data is being generated for some species such as silky sharks.
- Participants asked about the cost of the EM pilots and for implementing EM. Exact numbers were not shared, but it was noted that current EM costs are higher than use of human observers and this dynamic may persist in the near-term. At present, it is common for pilots to be funded by some combination of industry associations and 3rd party support such as from NGOs.
- Another question asked about the lag time between EM data collection, review and the availability of the resulting data. Mr. Moran shared that for Ecuador's pilot, analysis currently takes about 30 days and takes place Spain; but plans are in place to transition to cloud-based analysis to accelerate reviews.

6. Discussion on the Objectives and Scope of EM within the IATTC

The Co-Chairs noted that no voluntary data submissions have been made to the Secretariat pursuant to C-24-09, and that such submissions would be useful to inform review of the Resolution as scheduled in 2027. Several CPCs expressed an intention to submit such data in the near future.

The Co-Chairs reviewed the draft goals and scope for EM in IATTC summarized in "WGEM-01-01: Outcomes-of-the-EMS-workshops" and asked if the CPCs consider them to be appropriate to guide the work of the WGEM.

Goals

The EPO EMS should generate data for use in both scientific and compliance related activities, as defined by the Members.

Scope

The EPO EMS should include the following types of vessels operating in the IATTC Convention Area: tuna purse-seine vessels of all size classes; all longline vessels of 12 meters in length overall or more and motherships of longline vessels less than 12 meters in length, and transshipment authorized carriers.

CPCs had no objections to the proposed goals and scope. There were some suggestions to prioritize work on longline coverage in the short term, and to add to the goals an aspiration to replace human observers with EM, but no consensus on these points. The group also discussed the need for a work plan.

7. Frequency and Format of Future Meetings

The group discussed the possibility of holding two intersessional meetings in 2026 to further discuss goals and scope, to develop a work plan, to work with the Secretariat on preferred formats for data submissions, to review data and other information submitted to the Secretariat and working group regarding the implementation of EM in the EPO. The Co-Chairs suggested that the two intersessional meetings would be in virtual format, and the group requested that each meeting consist of two short 2-3 hour sessions. One delegation asked the co-chairs to explore the possibility of holding a meeting on the margins of the SAC meeting in 2026.

8. Other Business

No other matters were discussed.

9. Recommendations to the Commission

The group concluded that progress is needed beyond the current voluntary data submission model. It recommended holding two intersessional meetings in 2026 to advance its work subject to the availability of funding for interpretation services. The anticipated focus of these meetings would include review of EM data from the U.S. program relative to the standards established under Resolution C-24-09 (2024) and addressing fisheries with observer coverage gaps where EM could improve data collection.

The EMWG recommended that the Commission consider allocating the necessary funds to support holding two virtual intersessional meetings of the working group between now and the next annual meeting, or one virtual meeting and one on the margins of the SAC meeting.

10. Next Meeting

To be determined.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 hours on 25 August 2025 in Panama.

Annex 1

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4c. Report of the 3rd Meeting of the Permanent Working Group on Ecosystem and Bycatch

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

WORKING GROUP ON ECOSYSTEMS AND BYCATCH

3RD MEETING

La Jolla, California (USA)
(hybrid)
26-27 May 2025

SUMMARY REPORT OF CO-CHAIRS

The 3rd meeting of the IATTC Permanent Working Group on Ecosystem and Bycatch was held in a hybrid format in La Jolla, California (USA) on May 26, 27, and part of May 29, 2025. It was chaired by Dr. Yonat Swimmer and Mr. Manuel Correia, in their capacity as co-chairs of the Working Group. The list of participants is included in **Annex 1**.

The meeting agenda is as follows:

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of agenda
3. Review of recommendations from the 2nd meeting of the EBWG
3a. Brief discussion on recommendations from 2nd Circle Hook Workshop and aim to complete Res C-19-04 (Co-chairs)
4. Updates on Ecosystem and Bycatch Activities
- *i. SAC-16-09 Characterization of longline fleets in IATTC Convention area (IATTC Staff)*
- **ii.** *EB-03 RD-B Information about "Ring-shaped branchline (Meka-Ring) in pelagic longline fisheries and research plan (Japan Fisheries Research and Education Agency, D. Ochi)*

5a. Ecosystems
- *i. EB-03-01 Ecosystem considerations report (IATTC Staff)*
- *ii. EB-03-04 EB-03-04 Progress of the Ecocard workplan: Purpose and Development of Framework (IATTC Staff)*
- *iii. Updates on deep sea mining impacts (University of Hawaii)*

5b. Climate Change
- *i. SAC-16 INF-P Climate change staff recommendations: updated (IATTC Staff*)

5c. Elasmobranchs
- *i. SAC-16-08 List of ray species of purview to IATTC (IATTC Staff)*
- *ii. Mobulid Sorting Grids update (C. Heberer, Nature Conservancy)*
- *iii. EB-03 RD-A Trialing shark bycatch release devices on board purse seiners in the Pacific Ocean to enhance shark survival (AZTI, ISSF)*
- *iv. Considerations for a shark data collection program in the IATTC (IATTC staff)*
- *v. A shark research plan for the IATTC strategic Science Plan (IATTC staff)*

5d. Seabirds
- *i. EB-03-02 IATTC seabird action plan: Seabird distribution and associated fishery impacts (IATTC Staff)*

ii. *EB-03-03 IATTC seabird action plan: A review of bycatch mitigation options, measures and use (IATTC Staff)*
iii. *Predicting albatross bycatch hotspots across the North Pacific Ocean (EDF/ Tommy Clay)*
iv. *Metapopulation distribution shapes overlap with fisheries for a circumpolar seabird (EDF/ T. Clay)*
v. *EB-03-RD-E Black petrel distribution and range-wide overlap with pelagic longline fisheries (J Quiñones Davila Peru, NZ)*
vi. Testing low-coast mitigation measures to reduce albatrosses and petrels' bycatch in the Peruvian artisanal longline fisheries in southern Peru (J. Quiñones, Peru & NZ) *(J. Quiñones, Peru & NZ)*
vii. *EB-03-RD-C* ACAP Best Practice Advice for Reducing the Impact of IATTC Pelagic Longline Fisheries on Seabirds (ACAP, D. Gianuca)

5e. Best Handling and Release Practices (BHRP)

i. *SAC-16-10 Updated best handling and release practices for sharks in IATTC Fisheries (IATTC)*
ii. *EB-03-06 Seabird best handling and release practice guidelines (IATTC)*
iii. *EB-03-05 rev Best handling and release practices for sea turtles captured in IATTC fisheries (IATTC)*
iv. *Updates on a manual for handling sea turtles incidentally captured in fisheries (IAC, V. Cáceres)*
v. *EB-03-RD-D Can releasing sharks by the tail be a best release practice? (J. Murua, AZTI)*

6. Recommendations to the Scientific Advisory Committee
7. Other business
8. Adjournment

The documents of the meeting and their corresponding links, as well as the presentations made, are listed below and are available on the IATTC website.

Presentations

Twenty-four topics were presented and discussed, encompassed within seven main themes.

PRESENTATIONS	**PRESENTACIONES**	
Review of recommendations from the 2nd meeting of the EBWG	Revisión de las recomendaciones de la 2ª reunión del GTECI	**1**
Updates on activities on ecosystems and bycatch	Actualizaciones de las actividades sobre ecosistemas y capturas incidentales	**2**
Ecosystem	Ecosistema	**3**
Climate change	Cambio climático	**1**
Elasmobranchs	Elasmobranquios	**5**
Seabirds	Aves marinas	**7**
Best Handling and Release Practices (BHRP)	Mejores prácticas de manipulación y liberación (MPML)	**5**
TOTAL PRESENTATIONS	**PONENCIAS TOTALES**	**24**
NON-IATTC SPEAKERS	**PONENTES EXTERNOS A LA CIAT**	**9**

Meeting documents

2nd Circle Hook Workshop Report -- iattc.org/en-US/Event/DetailMeeting/Meeting-WSHKS-02

EB-03-01 - Ecosystem considerations

EB-03-02 - Seabird distribution and bycatch rates

EB-03-03 - Seabird action plan - A review of bycatch mitigation options measures and implementations

EB-03-04 - Progress of the EcoCard Workplan

EB-03-05 - Best handling and release practice guidelines (BHRP) for sea turtles

EB-03-06 - Seabird Best Handling and Release Practice Guidelines

SAC-16 INF-P - Climate Change Recommendations

SAC-16-08 - Ray species under the purview of the IATTC

SAC-16-09 - Characterizing and classifying longline fleets in the IATTC

SAC-16-10 - Shark Best Handling and Release Practice guidelines for sharks in IATTC fisheries - updated

Related documents:

RD-A. Trialing shark bycatch release devices on board purse seiners in the Pacific Ocean to enhance shark survival

RD-B. Ring shaped branch lines (meka-ring) in pelagic longline fisheries

RD-C. ACAP Best Practice Advice Pelagic Longline

RD-D. Lifting sharks tail BRDs be a best practice for improved crew safety and shark survival

RD-E. Black petrel distribution and range-wide overlap with pelagic longline fisheries

RD-F. Predicting albatross bycatch-risk hotspots across the North Pacific Ocean

Background documents:

Murua et al. 2025 – Bycatch Release Devices for elasmobranch mitigation
Metapopulation distribution shapes year-round overlap with fisheries for a circumpolar seabird

Presentations:

4.ii Information about Ring-shaped branchline (Meka-Ring) in pelagic longline fisheries and research plan

4i - Characterization of longline fleets

5a.i - Ecosystem Considerations

5a.ii - Progress of the Ecocard workplan

5c.ii Mobulid Sorting Grid

5c.iv Considerations for a shark data collection program in the IATTC

5c.v IATTC shark research plan

5d.iii Predicting albatross bycatch hotspots across the North Pacific Ocean

5d.iv Metapopulation distribution shapes overlap with fisheries for a circumpolar seabird

5d.vi Low coast mitigation measures

5dvi - Testing low coast mitigation measures to reduce albatrosses and petrels bycatch in the Peruvian artisanal longline fisheries targeting sharks in southern Peru

5dvii ACAP Best Practice Advice for Reducing the Impact of IATTC Pelagic Longline Fisheries on Seabirds

5e.i Best Handling and Release Practices for Sharks, Seabirds and Sea Turtles in IATTC Fisheries

5e.ii Updates on IAC Manual Best Practices for Safe handling and release for Sea Turtles Incidentally Caught in fishing Operations

5ev - Can lifting large sharks by the tail be a best handling and release practice?

EB-03-02 Seabird distribution and associated fishery impacts

EB-03-03 SAP mitigation options

RD-A - Trialing shark bycatch release devices on board purse seiners in the Pacific Ocean to enhance shark survival

RD-E - Black petrel distribution and range-wide overlap with pelagic longline fisheries

SAC-16 INF-P Climate change staff recommendations updated

SAC-16-08 - Ray species under the purview of the IATTC

As a result of the group's work, several recommendations were agreed upon for consideration by the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). These are as follows:

1. Gear Innovation	**1. Innovación de artes de pesca**
The EBWG recommends CPCs to make available to the SAC, through the IATTC Scientific Staff, any information they may have on the annular branches, including information on catch rates of target and non-target species, as well as other factors that can be used to assess this modification to longline fishing gear.	El GTECI recomienda que los CPC pongan a disposición del CCA, a través del personal científico de la CIAT, toda la información que puedan tener sobre las ramales anulares, incluyendo información sobre las tasas de captura de especies objetivo y no objetivo, así como otros factores que puedan utilizarse para evaluar esta modificación de las artes de pesca de palangre.
2. Organize workshops regarding Shark Conservation	**2. Organización de talleres relacionados a Conservación de los Tiburones.**
Recommends that the IATTC Scientific Staff evaluate the need to organize workshops to facilitate information sharing, as aligned with the objectives of the research plan for sharks referred to in Paragraph 15 of Resolution C-24-05, for discussion at the next EBWG.	Recomienda que el personal científico de la CIAT evalúe la necesidad de organizar talleres para facilitar el intercambio de información, en línea con los objetivos del plan de investigación de tiburones referido en el párrafo 15 de la Resolución C-24-05, para su discusión en el próximo GTECI
3. Seabird Action Plan	**3. Plan de Acción para las Aves Marinas**

Recommends that the IATTC staff develop a seabird mitigation reporting template relative to compliance with Resolutions in force regarding mitigation measures for seabirds for consideration by the SAC, with due consideration to the operational feasibility of data collection.	Se Recomienda que el personal de la CIAT elabore una plantilla para la presentación de informes relativos al cumplimiento de las Resoluciones vigentes sobre mitigación de aves marinas para su consideración por el CCA, considerando debidamente la viabilidad operativa de la recopilación de datos.
4. Rays	**4. Rayas**
In response to recommendation 6.1(b) by the IATTC SAC at its 15th meeting in 2024, the EBWG considers that the 7 ray species in Appendix A to these recommendations correspond to the species that have the greatest interactions with the fisheries under the competence of the IATTC in order to be considered for possible adoption by the Commission (Appendix X).	En respuesta a la recomendación 6.1(b) del CCA de la CIAT en su 15.ª reunión en 2024, el GTECI considera que las 7 especies de rayas de la Lista B de la Tabla 4 del documento SAC-16-08 corresponde a las especies que tienen las mayores interacciones con las pesquerías bajo la competencia de la CIAT a efecto de que pueda ser considerada su posible adopción por la Comisión. (Apéndice X)
5. Climate Change	**5. Cambio climático**
The SAC recommend to the Commission to continue to support and implement the proposed Climate Change workplan, in collaboration with the IATTC staff, the EBWG and the SAC	Que el CCA recomiende a la Comisión que continúe apoyando e implementando el plan de trabajo propuesto sobre cambio climático, en colaboración con el personal de la CIAT, el GTECI y el CCA.
6. Shark Best Handling and Release (NOT AGREED UPON BY CONSENSUS)	**6. Mejores practicas de manejo y libración de tiburones (NO ACORDADO POR CONSENSO)**
1. Recommends that, in response to the need to implement efficient and safe mechanisms for handling and releasing sharks and management of sharks, the Scientific Staff, in collaboration with CPC researchers, can continue undertaking research on the use of tools for lifting sharks from their caudal peduncles. for consideration as a possible good practice for handling and releasing sharks, improving non-traumatic release practices. For these studies and tests, and given the restrictions established in current measures, consider protocols to guarantee their appropriate use, marking of specimens and	Se recomienda que, en respuesta a la necesidad de implementar mecanismos eficientes y seguros para el manejo y la liberación de tiburones, el personal científico, en colaboración con los investigadores del CPC, continúe investigando el uso de herramientas para levantar tiburones de sus pedúnculos caudales. Se recomienda considerarlo como una posible buena práctica para el manejo y la liberación de tiburones, mejorando las prácticas de liberación no traumática. Para estos estudios y pruebas, y dadas las restricciones establecidas en las medidas vigentes, se consideren protocolos que garanticen su uso adecuado, el marcaje de especímenes y el acompañamiento de

accompaniment of observers, among others. [The scientific staff can review research form CPCs to consider updating best handling and release practices]. **(NOT AGREED UPON BY CONSENSUS)**	observadores, entre otros. [El personal científico puede revisar los formularios de investigación del CPC para considerar la actualización de las mejores prácticas de manejo y liberación.] **(NO ACORDADO POR CONSENSO)**
7. Fleet characterization	**7. Caracterización y Clasificación de la Flota Palangrera en la CIAT**
Recommends that the work initiated and described in document SAC-16-09 be continued, so that in coordination with the CPCs, field work and more precise evaluations on individual aspects of each fleet, the different segments exclusively of the longline fleets targeting the species under the Commission's mandate can be distinguished.	Se recomienda que se continúe el trabajo iniciado y descrito en el documento SAC-16-09, para que en coordinación con las CPC, trabajos de campo y evaluaciones más precisas sobre aspectos individuales de cada flota, se distingan los diferentes segmentos exclusivamente de las flotas palangreras dirigidas a las especies bajo el mandato de la Comisión.
8. Ecocards	**8. Ecocards**
The Working Group recommends continuing collaboration with other tRFMOs to establish criteria for delineating ecoregions and to develop indicators, including socioeconomics.	El Grupo de Trabajo recomienda continuar la colaboración con otros OROP para establecer criterios para delinear ecorregiones y desarrollar indicadores, incluyendo socioeconómicos
9. Collection of information	**9. Colecta de Información**
Continue the process of collecting information, in particular on mortality and utilization of sharks and other non-tuna species, relative to coastal fisheries in the EPO, related to the Presentation “Considerations for an IATTC Shark Data Collection Program” (Presentation 5c.iv).	Continuar el proceso de colecta de información, en particular de mortalidad y aprovechamiento de tiburones y otras especies distintas de los túnidos, relativos a las pesquerías costeras en el OPO, relacionado en la Presentación “Consideraciones para un programa de recolección de datos de tiburones en la CIAT” (Presentación 5c.iv).

Appendix X. Ray species recommended by IATTC scientific staff to be considered as an interim list of ray species to be considered under the purview of the IATTC

Apéndice X. Especies de rayas recomendadas por el personal científico de la CIAT para ser consideradas como una lista provisional de especies de raya que deben considerarse bajo su competencia.

Family	Species	Common name	Nombre común
Dasyatidae	*Pteroplatytrygon violacea*	Pelagic stingray	Raya látigo violeta
Mobulidae	*Mobula alfredi*	Alfred manta	Manta de Alfred
Mobulidae	*Mobula birostris*	Giant manta	Manta voladora
Mobulidae	*Mobula mobular*	Spinetail manta	Manta de aguijón
Mobulidae	*Mobula munkiana*	Munk's devil ray	Raya diablo de Munk
Mobulidae	*Mobula tarapacana*	Chilean devil ray	Manta cornuda o Raya diablo chilena
Mobulidae	*Mobula thurstoni*	Smoothtail manta	Manta diablo

EBWG3 Recommendations regarding the 2nd Circle hook Workshop /

Recomendaciones del GTECI3 respecto al 2do Taller sobre de Anzuelos circulares

1. Circle Hook Minimum Size:	**1. Tamaño mínimo de los anzuelos circulares:**
The Working Group acknowledged, in response to the Commission's request regarding Resolution C-19-04, to determine a minimum size for large circle hooks, that it is currently difficult to agree upon a single, appropriate minimum size. That the SAC consider urging each CPC to continue to collect information, in the format of their choice, on the size (including manufacturer standards) of circle hooks, impacts of circle hooks on target and non- target species (including catch rates and post-release mortality), and other relevant information, and report updates on this information to the IATTC scientific staff, through the Director, with a view to considering a comprehensive bycatch management strategy in the future, if possible.	El grupo de trabajo reconoció, en respuesta a la solicitud de la Comisión sobre la Resolución C- 19-04 de determinar un tamaño mínimo para los anzuelos circulares grandes, que actualmente es difícil acordar un tamaño mínimo único y apropiado. Que el CCA considere instar a cada CPC a que continúe recopilando información, en el formato que elija, sobre el tamaño de los anzuelos circulares (incluyendo las normas del fabricante), el impacto de estos en las especies objetivo y no objetivo (incluyendo las tasas de captura y la mortalidad posterior a la liberación), y otra información pertinente, y a que informe sobre las actualizaciones al personal científico de la CIAT, a través del Director, con miras a considerar una estrategia integral de gestión de la captura incidental en el futuro, si fuese posible.
2. Third mitigation option:	**2. Sobre una Tercera opción de mitigación:**

The EBWG recommends the IATTC Scientific Staff will collaborate with the EBWG, SAC and CPCs to provide options for the development of a third mitigation measure to reduce sea turtle bycatch, that takes into consideration the needs of different fleets and impacts on different taxa, for consideration by the SAC at its future meetings.	Con base en la información proporcionada por los CPC y el personal de la CIAT, el GTECI recomienda que el personal científico colabore con el GTECI, el CCA y los CPC para desarrollar opciones para una tercera medida de mitigación para reducir la captura incidental de tortugas marinas, que tome en consideración las necesidades de las diferentes flotas y los impactos en diferentes taxones, para su consideración por el SAC en sus futuras reuniones.
3. Best Handling and Release Practices for sea turtles	**3. Mejores prácticas de manipulación y liberación para las tortugas marinas**
That as soon as possible, the working group consider, if necessary, making recommendations regarding the updating of best practice guidelines for sea turtle handling and release practices for all IATTC fisheries.	A la mayor brevedad posible, que el grupo de trabajo considere, de ser necesario, hacer recomendaciones en relación a la actualización de las directrices de las mejores prácticas de manipulación y liberación de las tortugas marinas para todas las pesquerías de la CIAT.

3rd EBWG RECS/REC 3er GTECI

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4d. Report of the 9th Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on FADs

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

***AD HOC* PERMANENT WORKING GROUP ON FADS**

9TH MEETING

La Jolla, California (USA)
28-29 May 2025

CHAIR'S SUMMARY REPORT

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting 2. Adoption of the agenda 3. Review of recommendations from the 8th meeting of the FAD Working Group 4. FAD data reporting established in Resolutions C-19-01 and C-21-04 5. FAD fishery indicators 6. Advances on biodegradable FADs in the EPO 7. FAD Register: potential benefits and modalities 8. Initiatives to reduce impacts of FADs fishing 9. Conclusions and recommendations 10. Other business 11. Adjournment the	FAD-09-01 FAD-09-02

The 9th meeting of the IATTC*'s ad hoc* Permanent Working on FADs was held in La Jolla, California (USA) on May 28 and 29, 2025. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Josu Santiago, in his capacity as Chair of the Working Group.

The list of participants is included in **Annex 1**.

The list of documents presented and discussed during the meeting is included below and can be found on the website of the 9th meeting of the Working Group, along with the corresponding presentations.

Meeting documents:

- FAD-09-01 - Floating object fishery indicators a 2024 report
- FAD-09-02 - Dynamics of Biodegradable and Conventional FADs in the EPO
- FAD-09-03 - Options for a FAD register

Informational documents:

- INF-A. Analyses of the regional database of stranded Drifting Fish Aggregating Device (dFADs) in the Pacific Ocean – 2024 update

Presentations:

- 9th Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on FADs
- A novel deposit-refund system to reduce lost fishing gear impacts in the world's BioFAD impacts
- Characterizing drifting fish aggregating device design in the Hawaiian Archipelago from 2009-2025
- CIAT- ECOFADS TUNACONS Avances 2024 y 2025 ES
- FAD-09-01 Floating object fishery indicators - 2024 report
- FAD-09-02 Dynamics of Biodegradable and Conventional FADs in the EPO
- FAD-09-03 Options for a FAD register
- IATTC Naming System
- INF-A Stranded FADs
- Options to mitigate dFAD loss and abandonments
- RD-C Initiatives for the recovery of plantations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean-TUNACONS
- RD-E Programa Recogida Plantados ES
- RD-F Data Collection for Assessing Impacts of FAD Stranding Events
- Regional data collection program on FAD strandings an update

Under **item 8 of the agenda** on **initiatives to reduce the impact of fishing on FADs**, Mr. Gibbons Fly, Executive Director of the American Tuna Vessel Association (ATA), made a statement (see **Annex 3**) in which he proposed that FADs should not be deactivated when drifting south of 10 degrees south, considered the southern limit of the fishing zones, since deactivation prevents them from being tracked and monitored to see if they are heading for ecologically sensitive areas; and that these FADs should not be counted as active for the purposes of implementing the limits established, provided that no sets are made on them.

This statement was welcomed by the Group and the proposal was supported by several participants who took the floor.

On the issue of FAD recovery, the option of considering financial incentives (e.g., payment of a fee per FAD deployed) was also mentioned, but with the need to avoid a race to recover FADs even when they are not at risk of stranding.

Under **item 9 of its agenda**, the Working Group adopted several **conclusions and recommendations** for consideration by the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), the text of which is reproduced in the table in **Annex 2** of this summary report.

With no other matters to consider, the Working Group noted that its next meeting would be held in the days immediately preceding the 17th meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee in May-June 2026.

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Annex 2

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 9TH MEETING OF THE AD HOCPERMANENT WORKING ON FADS

Consistent with its terms of reference established in Resolution C-19-01, Annex III, **the Ad Hoc Permanent Working Group on FADs**, in reporting to the Scientific Advisory Committee on the results of its 9th meeting, and in the framework of the process of coordination with that Committee and with the scientific staff in the identification and review of feasible FAD management measures, as a preliminary step prior to the presentation of recommendations to the Commission, **wishes to recommend that:**

1. On FAD data reporting

1.1. The IATTC scientific staff develop and propose improvements to the characterization of the causes for remote deactivation and reactivation established in Resolution C-24-01.

1.2. The IATTC scientific staff analyze in greater detail the data from observers and satellite buoys to propose methods to help adequately evaluate the uses/record of the causes for remote deactivation and reactivation to identify possible opportunities for improvement or updates.

2. On FAD fishery indicators

2.1. The IATTC scientific staff continue to refine the indicators, including additional indicators of interest (e.g., last buoy positions, quantification of strandings and collections) and prepare a guide with a description of each indicator that facilitate the interpretation and assessment of the implications of each indicator.

2.2. The Commission consider urging flag CPCs to ensure that fishing companies and buoy suppliers provide the IATTC with available historical information on vessel acoustic buoys received from the original users, including trajectory and biomass information, to prevent losing this data of enormous value to science, and particularly to stock assessments. The processing of this data will be subject to the Commission's rules on confidentiality

3. On biodegradable FADs

3.1. The SAC recommend that the Commission consider adopting measures to obtain the necessary data and resources, including by exploring strategic partnerships and alternative sources of funding, to enable analysis to be carried out to determine more accurately the final destination of unrecovered FADs.

3.2. Progress be made in analyzing the useful life of biodegradable FADs ("BioFAD"), or that, in addition to the information provided by observers in the EPO, the IATTC scientific staff provide the Group with a more in-depth analysis, taking into account the information on the positions of buoys associated with FADs as well as relevant information from WCPFC observers.

3.3. The IATTC scientific staff continue to deepen their analysis of the useful life of BioFADs in collaboration with the industry.

3.4. (a) Interested parties be encouraged to continue pursuing technical studies on biodegradable, natural, or bio-based materials, useful for the construction of FADs,
(b) The exchange of experiences be promoted through participatory workshops.

3.5. The IATTC scientific staff present to the Working Group an analysis derived from the compilation and evaluation of the certification options for bio-based materials which are used in FADs, and which will ensure that the new material and the final product do not contribute to the pollution of the marine environment.

3.6. CPCs and other entities be encouraged to engage in BioFADs trials provide more BioFAD data from broader regions of the EPO in a random fashion more adequate to making scientific comparisons.

3. On the FAD register
(a) Considering the review of the suitability of a FAD Registry in the IATTC area, no need has been identified by the Working Group to implement such a registry in the region (b) The pros and cons of the implementation of different methods for marking FADs be explored.
3. On FAD retrieval
5.1. (a) The SAC consider the relevance of recommending to the Commission that it assess the value of adopting the form and database for collecting data on stranded FADs to be developed by the scientific staff, as harmonized as appropriate with the form developed by the SPC-WCPF, including the identification of possible adjustments. (b) if a form is adopted for this purpose, its use be preceded by some type of workshop or practical training 5.2. The SAC consider the relevance of recommending to the Commission to evaluate or assess the adoption of the creation of stranding data collection programs as well as the analysis of the convenience and operability of a network of these programs in the EPO. 5.3. The IATTC scientific staff, with the support of the FAD Working Group, work on the development of indicators to enable monitoring of the performance of FAD retrieval programs over time, to recommend improvements. 5.4. For the purpose of assisting in the retrieval of FADs and without prejudice to the active buoy limits established by the Commission, the scientific staff analyze ways to manage deactivations, such as consider expanding the areas for requiring buoy activations (i.e., par. 23 of C-24-01) to assist with FAD recoveries, with the understanding that FADs south of 10° S and west of 100°W would not count towards active FAD limits. 5.5. The Commission consider assessing the value of establishing an incentive system for CPCs to establish funds to support projects and entities dedicated to the tracking, recovery, and retrieval of drifting FADs, in particular those with the highest risk of drifting into ecologically sensitive areas such as coral reefs and related shoreline habitats. 5.6. The Commission consider amending Resolution C-24-01, as appropriate, so that, to assist FAD recovery efforts, FAD satellite buoys that are deactivated pursuant to paragraph 23 of Resolution C-24-01 and drifting south of 10°S Latitude and west of 100°W maintain their signal active exclusively to transmit their position to FAD recovery programs, and remain excluded from buoy limits.

Anexo 3

Declaración del Sr. Gibbons-Fly

Director de la Asociación de Buques Atuneros Americanos (ATA)

INICIATIVA PARA LA RECUPERACIÓN DE LOS FAD DEL SECTOR DE LA PESCA DE CERCO

Representantes del sector de la pesca de cerco han estado trabajando para establecer un fondo que apoye proyectos dedicados al seguimiento, la recuperación y retiro de plantados a la deriva, en particular aquellos con mayor riesgo de deriva hacia zonas ecológicamente sensibles, como los arrecifes de coral y los hábitats costeros relacionados.

Esta iniciativa ha contado con la participación de asociaciones de la industria cerquera de Estados Unidos, Ecuador, la UE, en particular España, y otros países. Puedo asegurarles que la industria cerquera está comprometida en abordar seriamente el problema de los plantados a la deriva. Pero para ello, necesitamos la ayuda de la Comisión. En ese sentido, solicitamos específicamente una recomendación de este Grupo de Trabajo a la Comisión en su conjunto.

La medida actual para el atún tropical permite la desactivación de los plantados cuando derivan al sur de los 10 grados, considerado el límite sur de las zonas de pesca. Sin embargo, la desactivación no permitiría rastrear dichos plantados para saber si se dirigen a zonas ecológicamente sensibles, y cuándo, por ejemplo, en la Polinesia Francesa, las Islas Cook y otros lugares. La capacidad de monitorear los plantados al sur de los 10 grados sur es un componente necesario de cualquier esfuerzo para rastrearlos y recuperarlos.

En la reunión anual del año pasado, Estados Unidos presentó una propuesta que habría permitido, o incluso exigido, que los plantados permanecieran activos al sur de los 10 grados, con la disposición adicional de que dichos plantados no se computarían en el límite de plantados activos de un buque individual. En aquel momento, escuchamos que la propuesta estadounidense se describía como una "excepción" o una "laguna". Pero esto no es así, dado que, según las normas actuales, esos plantados pueden simplemente desactivarse. Si estos plantados continúan contando para el límite de plantados activos una vez que se desvíen hacia el sur de los 10 grados para fines de seguimiento, esta Comisión está creando un desincentivo para que los buques participen en cualquier esfuerzo de recuperación de plantados.

El sector de la pesca de cerco no debería sufrir consecuencias negativas por intentar actuar correctamente. Por lo tanto, solicitamos que este grupo de trabajo incluya una recomendación para que la Comisión apoye que los plantados permanezcan activos con fines de seguimiento únicamente al sur de los 10 grados, siempre que no se contabilicen para el límite. Estamos dispuestos a considerar salvaguardias para garantizar que no se realice ningún lance de pesca sobre dichos plantados.

Gracias por considerar esta solicitud. Con gusto responderé cualquier pregunta.

Statement by Mr. Gibbons-Fly

Executive Director of the American Tunaboat Association (ATA)

PURSE SEINE SECTOR FAD RECOVERY INITIATIVE

Representatives of the purse seine sector have been working to establish a fund to support projects dedicated to the tracking, recovery, and retrieval of drifting FADs, in particular those with the highest risk of drifting into ecologically sensitive areas such as coral reefs and related shoreline habitats.

This initiative has included purse seine industry associations from the United States, Ecuador, the EU, particularly Spain, and others. I can assure you that the purse seine industry is committed to addressing the issue of drifting FADs in a serious way. But to do so, we need the Commission's help. And in that regard, we have a specific request for a recommendation from this Working Group to the broader Commission.

The current tropical tuna measure allows deactivation of FADs when they drift south of 10 degrees, which is considered the southern limit of viable fishing grounds. However, deactivation would not allow those FADs to be tracked for the purpose of knowing if and when they head into ecologically sensitive areas, for example in French Polynesia, Cook Islands, and elsewhere. The ability to monitor FADs south of 10 degrees south is a necessary component of any effort to track and recover these FADs.

At last year's annual meeting, the United States submitted a proposal that would have allowed, or perhaps even required, FADs to remain active south of 10 degrees, with the added provision that such FADs would not count against an individual vessel's active FAD limit. At the time, we heard the U.S. proposal described as an "exception" or a "loophole". But this is not the case given that, under the current rules, those FADs can simply be deactivated. If these FAD will continue to count against the active FAD limit once they drift south of 10 degrees for tracking purpose, this Commission is creating a disincentive for vessels to participate in any FAD recovery efforts.

The purse seine sector should not suffer adverse consequences for trying to do the right thing. Therefore, we are requesting that this working group include a recommendation that the Commission support allowing FADs to remain active for tracking purposes only south of 10 degrees, provided that such FADs would not count against the limit. We are prepared to consider safeguards to ensure no fishing set takes place on any such FAD.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I am happy to answer any questions.

4e Report of the 12th Meeting of the Committee on Administration and Finance

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

12TH MEETING

Panama City, Panama

28-29 August 2025

MEETING REPORT

AGENDA

		Documents
1.	Opening of the meeting	
2.	Adoption of the agenda	
3.	Outcomes from the intersessional meetings of the Committee on Administration and Finance (CAF) (extraordinary) (23 June; 24 July 2025)	
4.	Review of the financial audit report	
5.	Review of proposed budgets for 2026 and 2027	CAF-12-01
6.	Financial contributions of Members:	
	6a. Regular budget (Resolution C-15-05)	
	6b. Special Fund for promoting institutional capacity-building (Resolution C-14-03)	CAF-12-02
	6c. Program to monitor transshipments at sea (Resolution C-22-03)	CAF-12-03
7.	Review and revision of the financial regulations of the Commission	
8.	Other business	
9.	Recommendations to the Commission	
10.	Adjournment	

APPENDICES

The 12th meeting of the Committee on Administration and Finance was held in Panama City, Panama, on 28-29 August 2025.

1. Opening of the meeting

The meeting was opened by the Chair of the Committee, Ms. Rachael Wadsworth of the United States. The following delegations were present at the meeting: Belize, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Korea, Ecuador, El Salvador, the United States, France OT, Guatemala, Japan, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Chinese Taipei, the European Union, Vanuatu, and Venezuela.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The provisional agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Outcomes from the intersessional meetings of the Committee on Administration and Finance (CAF) (extraordinary) (23 June; 24 July 2025; 7 August)

The Director of the IATTC reported that three intersessional CAF meetings were held by videoconference to promote discussion of the IATTC budget and to support the work of this CAF meeting. Topics such as the preliminary 2026 budget projection, proposed changes to the AIDCP budget and auditing firms for 2026 were discussed in an initial and informal manner at the **first meeting**, which took place on 23 June 2025. There was insufficient time to begin discussion on the proposed formulas and financial regulations. A report of this meeting is available on the website: Report of the intersessional meeting of the Committee on Administration and Finance (Extraordinary) June 2025.

The **second meeting,** held on 24 July 2025, provided a review of documents presented to past AIDCP meetings regarding the time spent by IATTC staff and observers in relation to AIDCP tasks, as well as the salary allocations corresponding to each organization. A report of the meeting is available on the website: Report of the intersessional meeting of the Committee on Administration and Finance, July 2025.

The **third intersessional meeting** of the CAF was held on 7 August 2025 on a confidential basis with the aim of providing sensitive budget information requested by members to be considered in advance of the in-person CAF meeting in Panama on 30 August 2025.

The Chair noted that no formal consensus recommendations were reached at the intersessional meetings, but the CAF requested additional information needed for future meetings and outlined next steps for meetings.

4. Review of the financial audit report

Under this item of the agenda, the Committee heard a presentation from Moss Adams, the auditor, who merged with Baker Tilly. The auditor provided a review of the financial audit report and the recommendations from this report.

Suggestions for improvement from the auditor firm. The auditors provided an overview of several recommendations that are long standing to the IATTC for improvements. These include establishing IT administrator rights, completing an accounting manual, and conflict of interest statements for the IATTC.

One delegation asked if there were any signed letters from the staff regarding conflicts of interest. The Director responded that the employees in the La Jolla office had been sent a form for signature, but that this form was being adjusted for the field offices considering that relevant national laws and regulations are applied to employees of these offices. An example of this form was shared with the participants. It was recalled that the Antigua Convention clearly establishes principles to avoid conflicts of interest in its Article XII, paragraph 3, which states that: *"In fulfilling their functions, the Director and the staff of the Commission shall not act in any manner that could be incompatible with their status or with the objective and provisions of this Convention, nor shall they have any financial interests in activities such as investigation and research, exploration, exploitation, processing and marketing of the fish stocks covered by this Convention. Likewise, they shall also maintain as confidential, while they are employed by the Commission and thereafter, any confidential information they obtained or to which they had access during their employment."*

The United States recalled that at its 2024 meeting, the CAF had recommended that the Director implement all auditor recommendations and report on progress made in doing so. While acknowledging that difficulties may arise, the United States expected that the Director will proactively report on the implementation of these recommendations in the future.

The Committee also reviewed a list of four potential auditors for 2026, along with their quotes. The Committee requested additional information on costs and confirmation of availability for the auditors, which were provided later in the meeting.

Following this presentation, the IATTC Members emphasized some key points regarding the selection of an auditing firm for next year. They requested a comparative table of the four potential firms to help the

Committee evaluate the pros and cons of each and make a recommendation to the Commission.

One member asserted that **separate accounting and auditing for the IATTC and the AIDCP** is important, while maintaining good coordination so that appropriate decisions can be made regarding IATTC contributions to the AIDCP. Meetings between the two organizations should be held periodically.

Time spent by the auditing firm performing the work. Several delegations emphasized the importance of periodically renewing or changing firms to ensure transparency and bring new ideas and approaches to improve the accounting system.

5. Review of proposed budgets for 2026 and 2027

Ms. Claudia Hernández, the IATTC Accounting Coordinator, presented document CAF-12-01 reporting on the Commission's financial activity for 2024. She explained how resources were used for different accounting items and the expenses incurred above the agreed-upon 20% for that year's budget. She also mentioned that no budget has been proposed for 2027 because the Secretariat lacks the necessary information and parameters for estimating it.

The Director of the IATTC presented the budget for 2026, as outlined in document CAF-12-01. He noted that the expenses of the observer program are currently covered 30% by the IATTC and 70% by the AIDCP. This issue was discussed at the 50th Meeting of the Parties to the AIDCP, where a proposal for 50/50 coverage between the IATTC and the AIDCP was put forward from the AIDCP He added that the 103rd IATTC meeting should make a decision on this matter and referenced the IATTC staff document recommending the contribution of 50/50 coverage between the IATTC to the AIDCP.

He emphasized that the Commission's activities continue to grow as a result of the broader mandate derived from the Antigua Convention and the evolution of the Commission's work established in various resolutions. This broader mandate includes retaining qualified staff and keeping pace with inflation. Thus, the requested budget for 2026 is US$ 9,727,096, reflecting a 2% increase over the 2025 budget.

The Director of the IATTC gave a presentation on the percentage of work assigned to the staff between the IATTC and the AIDCP, and to on-board observers. He presented a table showing the distribution of tasks and pointed out that on-board observers devote much more time to IATTC tasks as they complete multiple compliance forms in accordance with IATTC provisions. He also explained the history of the allocation of observer program costs, in which the IATTC's 30% portion of the AIDCP budget prevails. He commented that, following an evaluation of the observers' work (explained in detail in documents AIDCP-50-01 - On-board observers tasks analysis and AIDCP-50-02 - Percentage analysis of the time dedicated by the staff to AIDCP tasks), it was concluded that 70% of AIDCP tasks are related to the IATTC, as these tasks cover issues such as turtles, sharks and compliance. Consequently, the Meeting of the Parties to the AIDCP concluded that the IATTC should cover at least 50% of the observer program costs.

He mentioned that the additional amount requested from the IATTC this time is around US$ 500,000 in terms of allocating AIDCP-related costs between the two instruments. The lack of a uniform distribution formula is causing significant accounting problems.

Guatemala pointed out that the problem would not affect execution of the 2025 budget thanks to the temporary measures that have been taken. However, the decision to modify the cost allocation is crucial and cannot be postponed until 2026. Guatemala emphasized the importance of the IATTC approving the cost of services provided by the Secretariat for the observer program, as established in the Antigua Convention, as well as the AIDCP including these costs in its budget. Venezuela added that a restructuring in 2021 transferred management of observer expenses to the AIDCP, significantly affecting its budget in 2022 and 2023. El Salvador drew attention to the extraordinary meetings of the CAF, where the origin of the 50/50% proposal numbers had been explained.

The EU rejected that it was being asked to endorse a decision already made to change the allocation to 50/50 split between the IATTC and AIDCP. The EU pointed out that this needs discussion between the

AIDCP and IATTC to understand the methodology and cannot be a decision from AIDCP imposing on the IATTC.

China inquired about the possibility of the new costs causing Members to deem the program too expensive and asked if the "50/50" model was fixed. The Secretariat clarified that the percentages are a recommendation based on the current distribution of work and are not a fixed model. China requested a calculation of the change in contribution of each member if changing from a 30% to a 50% contribution from the IATTC.

5. Financial contributions of Members

a) Regular budget (Resolution C-15-05)

The Chair provided an update that there were no new proposals for formulas to consider at this meeting as in the previous year and noted that there was no consensus on the new proposals for formulas. The United States noted that absent a consensus to use a different method, Resolution C-15-05 formula is in force and continues to apply until a new formula is adopted. The EU supported this claim and noted that it cannot accept a legal void on the formula and that the only logical approach is to work on the formula that we have. Guatemala, Panama, and Colombia disagreed that the formula in C-15-05 was in effect. Guatemala concluded the discussion by saying there was no consensus on the formula and that the members should focus on the budget.

The Director of the IATTC recalled that, as of 30 June 2025, there was an amount of **US$ 6,918,853** in outstanding contributions from Members, making it imperative that all Members pay their budget contributions on time so that the Commission and its staff can fulfill their mandates and achieve their objectives.

He reported that Venezuela (US$ 2,129,402); Panama (US$ 1,470,250); Ecuador (US$ 1,813,102); Mexico (US$ 1,117,990); Korea (US$ 244,181); Vanuatu (US$ 53,086); and Kiribati (US$ 90,482) are in arrears.

b) Special Fund for promoting institutional capacity-building (Resolution C-14-03)

Mr. Ricardo Belmontes, of the Commission's staff, presented document CAF-12-02 - Special Fund for promoting institutional capacity-building. He reported that the balance of the fund was US$ 607,488 as of 31 July 2025.

Due to workloads and the number of meetings held in 2024 and 2025, the activities planned and approved to be carried out with resources from the Fund were partially completed. The following activities are planned for the remainder of 2025 and 2026 with resources from the Fund. The activities and amounts for their implementation are detailed in Table 4 of document CAF-12-02):

- Second training workshop: Introduction to methods used in tropical tuna stock assessments. (A first workshop was held after the 102nd annual meeting of the IATTC in Panama). A second workshop is planned for 2026.
- Training seminars for port inspections in accordance with Resolution C-21-07.
- Training seminar on various IATTC matters for administrative, legal, and enforcement authorities related to the application of IATTC regulatory measures.
- Annual IATTC scholarship for scientific capacity building in developing CPCs (three-month visit to the IATTC offices).
- Participation of representatives of developing Members in the annual meeting of the IATTC and its subsidiary bodies.

The Committee did not object to the above activities being carried out but requested that the corresponding

amounts involved be specified and included.

c) Program to monitor transshipments at sea (Resolution C-22-03)

Mr. Ricardo Belmontes, of the Commission's staff, presented document CAF-12-03 - Regional program of observers for transshipments at sea. He focused his presentation on the Program's financial component, as the operational aspects had already been presented at the Scientific Advisory Committee meeting, and the compliance component had been submitted to the Review Committee for consideration.

He reported that the requested budget for 2026 was US$ 1,110,000, and a decision must be made regarding whether to continue working with MRAG as their three-year contract expires at the end of 2025. He also reported on the new costs required by MRAG for 2026–2028, which include an increase in the cost per day at sea from US$ 415 to US$ 480. Alternatively, a call for tenders could be considered to hire another company that can provide the same quality of work at a lower cost.

The Committee expressed favorable views to continue working with MRAG for another three years, but requested a reduction in fees and instructed the Secretariat to carry out this task during the week of the IATTC meeting before making a decision.

7. Review and revision of the financial regulations of the Commission

This agenda item to review the financial regulations was postponed due to a lack of time to discuss the document. The CAF determined that subsequent meetings should allocate sufficient time to review the document.

8. Other business

No other business was discussed.

9. Recommendations to the Commission

As the Committee continued to meet after the two days set aside for its work, in addition to the recommendations below, some additional information was requested for continuing the work:

- That the Secretariat present budget and contribution scenarios to the CAF using the amount approved in 2023, as well as the requested budget.
- That a comparative table be presented of the various proposals for conducting the 2026 audit.
- That the Secretariat seek reductions in the costs of the transshipment program with the goal of continuing to work with MRAG for three more years.
- That the costs of the activities to be carried out in 2025-2026 for capacity building in developing countries be detailed.

In addition, the Director presented information requested by the EU on the number of staff that have worked for the IATTC over the past 20 years. This number has ranged from 43 staff to 51 staff over the years and is currently at 44 staff in 2025. The Director also clarified these numbers do not include the staff in the regional offices.

CAF-12 RECOMMENDATIONS
Auditor
Recommend that the auditor reports be circulated 30 days in advance of the meeting.
Request the IATTC Director circulate the template for the conflict-of-interest forms used for the field offices staff and circulate the template for the HQ staff if it is different and once it has been completed before the end of the year.

Recommend the Director finalize the accounting manual and chart of accounts before the 2026 CAF meeting and circulate it to the CAF for its information before the end of the year, if possible.
Recommend additional follow up with Baker Tilly and confirm via letter that they are interested in providing services for 2026.
Request that the Secretariat prepare and present to the CAF financial statements that clearly communicate the separate financial positions of the IATTC and the AIDCP.
Presenting budget information
With respect to the review of the proposed budget, recommend the Secretariat include the costs related to the cyber-attack as a separate line item in the budget.
Recommend the Director ensure that any budgetary information presented to the Commission or to the Finance Committee is verified by the Staff in advance to ensure that presented amounts are correct.
The financial statements that are part of the audit should be included in the financial year report.
Recommendation: Instruct the Secretariat to present, for the last three fiscal years and the current year, disaggregated financial statements that clearly separate operating or current revenues and expenses from extraordinary or non-operating revenues and expenses, including methodological notes with classification criteria, identification of non-monetary items, programmatic breakdown, and reconciliation with the audited financial statements. This information must be available at least 30 days prior to the next meeting and will be a necessary condition to model actual costs, assess sustainability, and consider formulas for the distribution of financial contributions. It will also allow the operating expenses budget to be limited to projected operating revenues —not total revenues—, which generally do not fully materialize within the same fiscal year.
With respect to the discussion about the AIDCP [Res. 25-01 para. 2 *"To accept the Secretariat's recommendation regarding the sharing of the cost of the On-Board Observer Program equally between the AIDCP and IATTC"*] .
As a matter of procedure - Recommend that the Secretariat and CAF Chair seek to ensure that in the case of AIDCP budget issues that have implications on the IATTC budget, there is an opportunity to discuss within the IATTC or jointly with the AIDCP before a decision is made, to ensure that IATTC interests and views are appropriately considered.
Capacity Building Fund
For projects completed under the Capacity Building Fund, establish objectives for activities and include an indicator column for the CAF to consider if the objective of each activity met its objective.
For scholarships from the Capacity Building Fund, the CAF consider setting objectives for which these are to be used.
Recommend the Commission evaluate the 2% Capacity Fund allocation, and consider pausing or, just one time in 2026 as an exceptional case, reducing it this year in light of the health of the fund to develop the activities programmed for that year and other acute competing needs for funding.

Noting that para 7 of C-14-03 provides that the Commission should review the Capacity Fund and this was not completed in 2024, recommend the Commission consider this in 2026 and prioritize in the short-term accommodations to ensure continued core functions of the commission continue this year.
Recommend that courses and activities that take place under the capacity fund should be in both languages so that all member states can participate.
Recommend considering using capacity funds to focus on compliance by Member and Cooperating Non-Members.
Transshipments
Recommend the Secretariat work with MRAG to reduce the increased margin of the cost for the next 3-year period and report back to the CAF so a decision can be made on the extension of the contract.
Budget reductions
Recommend a closed session for a presentation of proposed budget reduction information and to clarify where the staff reductions would be in the organization.
Financial Regulations
Recommend an intersessional work be done to progress on revisions to the financial regulations before the next CAF meeting in 2026.
Request the Director, while the Commission decides on the update of the Financial Regulations, to draft and submit for consideration by the CAF a risk management policy within the budget execution processes. This policy should encompass the identification, assessment, and mitigation of risks applied to the planning, execution, monitoring, and evaluation of budgetary and financial management, under the principles of transparency, efficiency, and accountability. Special attention should be given to potential vulnerabilities such as budget deviations, regulatory non-compliance, and inefficiencies in resource allocation, with the aim of anticipating contingencies and strengthening financial resilience.
On-board Observer Program
The CAF notes a total estimated cost of the on-board observer program of $2,717,228, without prejudice to a decision on the sharing of costs of the program between IATTC and AIDCP. Furthermore, the Committee notes that estimates for other costs to be born entirely by the AIDCP related to Secretariat services amount $1,066,713

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m., Panama City time, on 6 September 2025.

4f. Report of the 26th Meeting of the Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

PERMANENT WORKING GROUP ON FLEET CAPACITY

26TH MEETING

Panama City, Panama
25 August 2025

CHAIR'S REPORT

AGENDA

	Documents
1. Opening of the meeting	
2. Adoption of the agenda	
3. Review of changes in the utilization of fleet capacity in the EPO	CAP-26-01
4. Identification and consideration of pending issues related to the management and control of the capacity of the fleet	
5. 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)	
6. Recommendations to the Commission	
7. Other business	
8. Adjournment	

1. Opening of the meeting

The 26th meeting of the Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity began at 2 p.m., after the required quorum was confirmed. Fifteen Members were present: Venezuela, Vanuatu, the European Union, Chinese Taipei, Panama, Nicaragua, Mexico, Guatemala, Japan, the United States, El Salvador, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Colombia and China.

The Chair of the Working Group, Mr. Julio Guevara, of Nicaragua, announced that this would be his last meeting in this position, and that a new Chair would be elected during next week's IATTC meeting.

2. Adoption of the agenda

Venezuela proposed that the following two items be considered under item 7 of the agenda, "Other business":

- A request for transfer of fishing capacity from Venezuela sent to the Secretariat in July 2025 via a forged official letter. (This issue was addressed under "Other business").
- The issue of discrepancies between registered capacity and maximum fleet landings. (This issue was then addressed under item 4 of the agenda).

Guatemala expressed concern about the title of item 5 of the agenda, which included the words "claims" and "disputes". It was pointed out that the Commission does not have a mandate to resolve this type of conflict, which should be handled directly by the parties involved, as the function of the Working Group is to review relevant issues, namely aspirations, possibilities, requests, and capacity adjustments.

Vanuatu recalled that at last year's meeting it had already been recommended that the name of the cases be changed from "*pending disputes*" to "*cases arising from administrative problems*."

Given these proposals, it was agreed that the wording should be modified, even though it had remained unchanged for several years. Terms such as "aspirations," "possibilities," and "adjustments" would be used instead of "claims" and "disputes." To make it clear that the Working Group does not have the authority to resolve disputes, the Secretariat suggested proposing a formula that would satisfy everyone before the next meeting.

3. Review of changes in the utilization of fleet capacity in the EPO

The Director, Dr. Arnulfo Franco, presented a detailed report on fleet capacity in the eastern Pacific Ocean. This update included information from previous years and data on inactive capacity, capacity under construction, available capacity, operational capacity, active capacity, and potential capacity.

He recalled that *active capacity* includes the capacity assigned to vessels currently operating in the region and that there is capacity that can become operational at any time, such as inactive capacity (8,000 cubic meters); combined with the well volume of the two vessels included in the IATTC Regional Vessel Register as such, capacity would add up to at least 10,000 cubic meters. It should also be considered that there is available capacity of 10,222 cubic meters that can be used at any time. On the other hand, however, operational capacity as such has remained below the value recorded for active capacity in 2002 over the years.

The target capacity, established in 2005, is 158,000 cubic meters, well below the current operational and authorized capacity. Potential capacity, which includes all requests in addition to active, inactive, and available capacity, would reach 378,400 cubic meters. It was noted that Ecuador has the largest fleet of larger (Class 6) and smaller vessels, followed by Mexico, Panama, and, recently, the United States, which has experienced significant growth.

In response to a request for clarification from Guatemala and a comment from Mexico, the Director clarified that the reference to the capacity of "*unauthorized vessels*" was an error that had been carried over from previous presentations and would be corrected immediately. He also clarified that *operational capacity* refers to vessels that are registered in the Regional Register and that fished the previous year.

Referring to the table in document CAP-26-01 that shows new requests made after the adoption of the capacity management plan in 2016, Bolivia requested that the reference to *"developing coastal State"* be changed to "*developing landlocked State."*

Regarding the same issue, Mexico requested that the title "*new requests*" be changed to "*requests*," as some requests have been outstanding for a long time. Guatemala supported Mexico, suggesting that new requests be presented as changes, rather than creating a distinction between *"new"* and *"old,"* so as not to suggest priorities.

In response to a question from the European Union regarding the calculation of potential capacity, the Director clarified that pending requests totaling 73,400 cubic meters would increase potential capacity by 25%, to 378,400 cubic meters.

4. Identification and consideration of pending issues

Venezuela expressed concern about the discrepancy between the maximum historical landings and the confirmed and recorded vessel capacity in the Regional Vessel Register. Venezuela believes that this discrepancy could affect scientific analyses and therefore requested that the Secretariat prepare and submit a report on this matter.

In addition to supporting Venezuela's request, Guatemala and the European Union proposed that the Secretariat prepare information documents on issues such as freezing tunnels and sealing wells for fuel use. They argued that these practices could increase the fleet's capacity and that a management protocol is necessary. The United States inquired about the Secretariat's access to information indicating whether and how freezing tunnels are considered part of a vessel's capacity and whether they are included as internal or external annexes.

Guatemala emphasized the importance of having background documents ready before making any decisions. The review should aim to identify problems, not presuppose non-compliance.

Ambassador Jean-François Pulvenis explained that the Secretariat had identified several issues and situations that the Members of the Commission needed to consider and analyze due to their practical consequences, some of which were illustrated by previous interventions. In this regard, he referred to document CAP-26-01, which provides a historical overview of the issue within the Commission and highlights some of these issues and situations. For example, he mentioned that the capacity of one-third of the purse-seine fleet in cubic meters had been automatically "confirmed" on 1 January 2017 without being measured or reported through the previously established confirmation process established by the Commission. He also referred to situations in which wells were disqualified for use as fuel storage. He suggested preparing a document with the Members to take inventory of these problems and issues for *"comprehensive and definitive"* consideration and resolution. He asked whether Members would prefer to keep sensitive information, such as the identification of vessels and flag CPCs, anonymous before publishing it. He also asked if they would prefer the information to remain anonymous and, if made public, if the CPCs concerned would want to review it beforehand. The Group agreed to collaborate (Secretariat/CPC) to prepare the relevant documents while initially maintaining the anonymity of vessels and flag CPCs, with the option of disclosing the information if necessary.

5. Review of pending capacity requests

Capacity requests from several CPCs were reviewed, as follows:

- **Bolivia:** Requested the activation of 2,000 cubic meters and that its request for 5,000 cubic meters be included in the table prepared by the Secretariat with the note that it is a landlocked developing country.
- **Vanuatu:** Requested the restitution of 12,500 tons of historical capacity that had been transferred to another flag in contravention of its country's legal and administrative procedures and asked the Working Group to recommend to the Commission in plenary the approval of these requests. Vanuatu's statement is reproduced in full in Appendix 3 to this report.
- **Venezuela:** Reiterated its request for 3,800 cubic meters of capacity.
- **El Salvador:** Reiterated its request for 2,105 cubic meters of capacity.
- **Nicaragua:** Reiterated its request for 4,200 cubic meters of capacity.
- **Guatemala:** Reiterated its request for 9,000 cubic meters of capacity as a developing coastal country with an industry that requires raw materials.
- **Mexico:** Reiterated its request for 2,000 cubic meters, but noted that, given the current state of the resource (yellowfin tuna), it would not be the right time to incorporate it as active capacity. Mexico is seeking a situation in which the resource allows for sustainable growth before activating capacity.

- **Colombia:** Reiterated its request for 4,772 cubic meters, which it considers a "*historic right*" recognized in Resolution C-02-03. It argued that its request should take precedence over new requests.
- **Ecuador:** Requested that the pending case of the vessel Victoria A be considered in the plenary meeting of the Commission and reiterated its request that this vessel be included in the Register on the list of inactive capacity.
- **Panama:** Made a presentation supporting its request for 3,000 m^3, expressing its appreciation for the opportunity to present its capacity request, which is based on its operational history in the IATTC area since before 2002, strict compliance with Resolution C-02-03, the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the total ban on purse-seine fishing in its EEZ for almost two decades, and the current developments in ports, logistics, and tuna processing plants on the Panamanian Pacific coast. Panama's statement is reproduced in full in Appendix 4 of this report.

6. Other business

Venezuela reported that, in July 2025, someone attempted to transfer 2,000 cubic meters of capacity to another Member of the Commission for the benefit of a specific company. This was done by sending a forged letter with Minister Juan Carlos Loyo's forged signature through a fake email account. Venezuela thanked the Secretariat for alerting them and requested that measures be taken to prevent future fraud of this kind.

Ambassador Jean-François Pulvenis pointed out that it had been possible to immediately detect the forgery in this case due to several details. These included the absence of the reference code usually included in this type of letter and the fact that the amount of cubic meters (2,000 m^3) was rounded and did not match Venezuela's available capacity. He warned that, had the forgery been more sophisticated, the Secretariat could have fallen for it and proceeded with an unauthorized transfer.

Guatemala congratulated the Secretariat and proposed that the Group recommend establishing a double verification system for any transfer of capacity between States. This system would require the Secretariat to verify the request via a second secure communication with the relevant authority.

Venezuela stated that although double verification already exists, new processes need to be added to more rigorously verify information.

7. Recommendations to the Commission

The Working Group adopted the following recommendations:

- **Preparation of informational documents:** That the Commission request the Secretariat to prepare documents on freezer tunnels and the sealing of wells for fuel storage, inter alia, to be used as reference by the Working Group in its future consideration of these matters.
- **Updating of documents:** That the Commission request the Secretariat to update document CAP-12-04 and, taking into account the status of resources, explore opportunities for resolving the capacity requests listed in that document.
- **Capacity discrepancies:** That the Commission instruct the Director to work with CPCs to review differences between landings in metric tons and vessel capacity in cubic meters of well volume, taking into account existing rules on confidentiality and/or disclosure of information.
- **Double-checking procedure:** That the Commission request the Secretariat to develop a proposal for a double-checking procedure that would include possible advanced verification methods to prevent cases of fraudulent capacity transfer requests.

8. Adjournment

The Chair of the Working Group thanked all delegations for their participation and support during his term. Panama and Guatemala also thanked him for his leadership.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Appendix 1
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Appendix 2

Bolivia's capacity request

(Informal Translation)

Requests from the Plurinational State of Bolivia to the 26th Meeting of the Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, Panama City, Republic of Panama, August 25, 2025

The Plurinational State of Bolivia, consistent with its statement presented at the 102nd Meeting of the IATTC, held from September 2 to 6, 2024, at this same venue, as well as its official correspondence with the Commission, requests the following from the 26th Meeting of the WG:

1. The activation, at the earliest possible date, of 2,000 m³ of storage volume, based on the reduction of the temporary closure for tropical tuna fishing using purse seines established by RESOLUTION C-24-01 ON CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR TROPICAL TUNA IN THE EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN DURING 2025–2026, in accordance with the Report attached to this request, which was prepared on the basis of the documents submitted and the recommendations issued by the 16th Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee, held in La Jolla, United States of America, from June 2 to 6, 2025;
2. That, as shown in the presentation by the Director of the IATTC on agenda item 3 on the "Review of Changes in Capacity Utilization in the EPO," Bolivia's request be included in the table on page 13 of Document CAP-26-01 REV. - UTILIZATION OF VESSEL CAPACITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTIONS C-02-03, C-12-06, C-12-08, C-15-02, and C-24-07, subsection c., on new requests, with the detail of "special needs and requirements of landlocked developing countries," for 5,000 m³ of hold volume, initially submitted in 2019 and reiterated at each and every meeting of the WG and the Commission, in accordance with the extract from the Official Letter attached as an annex to this application, and that it be kept in mind for activation when the state of fish stocks so permits.

Members of this subsidiary body of the Commission are requested to consider these requests from Bolivia, include them in the minutes of the 26th Meeting of the WG, and submit them as a recommendation to the 103rd Meeting.

Annex to request 1:

BIOLOGICAL-SCIENTIFIC REPORT
Request from the Plurinational State of Bolivia: Reduction of the closed season to 8 days and reallocation of 2,000 m^3 of capacity.

Introduction

The purpose of this technical-scientific report is to support the request made by the Plurinational State of Bolivia to the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) in relation to:

1. The reduction of the closed season from 10 days to 8 days in the tropical tuna purse seine fishery.
2. The reallocation of 2,000 m^3 of tuna carrying capacity to Bolivia, as part of the equitable redistribution of capacities within the framework of the IATTC.

This request is based on the scientific evidence available in the SAC-16 reports, particularly in the baseline assessments, population status indicators, management strategies, and recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Committee. The analyses show that this adjustment would not compromise the sustainability of tropical tuna stocks in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO), provided that the recommended biological and ecosystem controls are maintained.

1) Objective and scientific framework

This report evaluates, from an exclusively biological and precautionary perspective, the feasibility of adjusting the reduction of the annual closure of the OPO tropical tuna purse seine fishery to 8 days and reallocating 2,000 m^3 of carrying capacity to Bolivia, in light of the recommendations of CCA-16 and the SAC-16 technical documents (assessments, indicators, management strategies, and staff recommendations). In 2025, the CCA/IATTC discussed management options that include a maximum reduction of 10 days or, alternatively, 7 days with elimination of the "corralito," within the 2026–2028 cycle, specifying that any relaxation must be small and maintain safeguards such as the individual vessel threshold (IVT) and reinforced port sampling/monitoring so as not to increase the risk of exceeding FMSY (Maximum Sustainable Yield).

Consequently, the candidate strategy for bigeye tuna (BET) formalizes an F30–S20[1] harvest control rule, with a maximum change of ±10 days between cycles and "exceptional circumstances" if there is a ≥10% probability of exceeding the S20% reference point.

The scientific evidence available in the SAC-16 reports, particularly in the baseline assessments, population status indicators, management strategies, and recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Committee, demonstrates that such an adjustment would not

[1] F30: the target fishing rate is set to maintain the spawning biomass (SBR) close to 30% of the no-fishing level (management target). S20%: threshold reference point (20% of the no-fishing level). If the SBR falls toward that threshold, the rule reduces fishing mortality to allow recovery.

compromise the sustainability of tropical tuna stocks in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO), provided that the recommended biological and ecosystem controls are maintained.

2) **Recent status of stocks and biological signals**

Yellowfin tuna (YFT). The 2025 baseline assessment explicitly incorporates spatial structure (NE vs. SW) and supports a status consistent with management toward MSY (maximum sustainable yield), with no evidence of overfishing in the EPO under current measures. The 2024 catches (≈ 294,000 t, EPO) exceeded the 2014–2023 average by 14%, with no anomalous increases in discards, suggesting robust biomass and productivity.

Skipjack tuna (SKJ). A highly productive species; in 2024, the EPO catch reached 645,000 t (an all-time high, +100% vs. the 2014–2023 average), with discards <1.2% in purse seine; there are no signs of overexploitation based on operational indicators.

Bigeye tuna (BET). Status indicators (SSI) show that fishing mortality of juveniles decreased after the implementation of Individual Thresholds per Vessel (ITP) (C-21-04), with a positive effect confirmed in 2022–2024. However, Catch per Unit Effort (CPUE) and average size in sets on floating objects have shown long-term declines, so the relaxation of the ban must be prudent and accompanied by safeguards. In 2024, purse seine catches of BET (≈ 34,000 t) and longline catches (≈ 18,000 t) were low in historical terms, reducing the risk that a moderate adjustment (8 days) would push F above FMSY, provided that the control framework (ISB, sampling, observers, etc.) is maintained.

The species is considered highly productive and resilient to intensive fishing, according to results confirmed by stock status indicators (SSI) and recent baseline assessments (SAC-16-02 and SAC-16-03).

3) **Biological support for the reduction of the closure to 8 days**

- **Flexibility in the design of management strategies (EEO):**
  SAC-16-06 establishes that the maximum permitted changes in closed season days are limited to ±10 days, provided that the precautionary rule F30–S20 is respected. In this context, an 8-day reduction falls within the biologically acceptable range.
- **Recent population indicators:**
  The SSI show stable trends for yellowfin and skipjack tuna, and in the case of bigeye tuna, they reflect improvements in the reduction of juvenile mortality following the application of individual vessel thresholds (IVT). This indicates that small adjustments to the closed season do not pose a risk of population collapse.
- **Minimizing the risk of exceeding Fmsy**[2]:
  The US recommendation to the SAC emphasizes that any reduction in the closed season must be "small" so as not to increase the risk of exceeding FMSY. The difference between 10 and 8 days constitutes an adjustment with low biological impact, within the precautionary threshold.

[2] In accordance with scientific advice from the CCA/CIAT, F_{MSY} (or F_{RMS}) is defined as the fishing mortality rate that produces the maximum sustainable yield of the stock; therefore, measures must maintain F ≤ F_{MSY} to avoid overfishing and ensure the long-term productivity of the resource.

- **Multispecies balance:**
  The SAC recommended that any measure should consider multispecies effects (bigeye, yellowfin, skipjack). Recent analyses show that the resilience of yellowfin and skipjack allows them to absorb the marginal fishing pressure resulting from a closure reduction of only 2 days compared to the baseline scenario.

- **Evidence by species:**

1. YFT: 2025 assessment plus 2024 catches above the decade average point to resilience under the current mix of sets; the 8-day cut would not impose pressures incompatible with MSY.
2. SKJ: High productivity and record 2024 catches suggest low biological risk from a moderate adjustment to the closed season, provided that FAD sets continue to be managed with thresholds and indicators.
3. BET: UIBs have reduced catches and mortality in juveniles; maintaining UIBs + monitoring mitigates the risk of 8 days raising F above reference levels. HCR F30–S20 provides an automatic brake (reduction of F if SBR falls toward S20%).
4. Multispecificity and EEO/MSE (Management Strategy Evaluation) testing: The CCA urged testing candidate strategies for purse seine and longline in 2025–2026 and evaluating cross-species impacts; the 8-day adjustment is more conservative than 10 and compatible with the recommended triennial adaptive management cycle.

4) Justification for the allocation of 2,000 m^3 to Bolivia: Biological neutrality under capacity control

Fleet capacity in the OPO is managed through the Regional Vessel Register (C-02-03). The requested reallocation (2,000 m^3) is marginal in relation to the regional total and, under the current capacity ceiling and compliance with observers, sampling, and more UIB, its expected biological impact is neutral (it does not significantly modify cumulative F). In strictly population terms, what is relevant is not the origin of the flag, but that the aggregate capacity remains within the limit and that its operation complies with the HCR (Harvest Control Rule)[3], the UIBs, and the monitoring programs.

The request to reallocate 2,000 m^3 to the Plurinational State of Bolivia represents a marginal increase in relation to the total capacity of the regional registry, without significantly altering overall effort levels.

5) Proposed monitoring plan

- Maintain UIB and reinforced port sampling/EMP as a condition for the reduction to 8 days.
- Apply HCR F30–S20 with monitoring of the probability of exceeding S20% (trigger for "exceptional circumstances"), i.e., if at any time monitoring shows too high a probability of exceeding S20%, the rule automatically corrects: it would not allow the ban to be relaxed and, on the contrary, would adjust the measures.

[3] A Harvest Control Rule (HCR) is a predefined procedure that adjusts effort or catch based on stock status indicators and reference points (target and limit). Within the CIAT framework, HCR F30–S20 for bigeye tuna keeps fishing mortality compatible with a target SBR level and automatically reduces exploitation if there is a risk of reaching the biological limit.

- Monitor SSI (Stock Status Indicators) (CPUE, average size, effort on floating objects) for YFT, BET, and SKJ with annual reports; include specific analysis of class 4 vessels and effects on recruitment (CCA mandate).
- Align with the Strategic Science Plan 2026–2030 (data, life cycle, sustainable fisheries, environment–ecosystem–fisheries interaction) to support robust assessments and continuous MSE (Management Strategy Evaluation).

6) Biological conclusion

According to the evidence from the SAC/IATTC 2025, an adjustment of the closed season to 8 days is biologically compatible with HCR F30–S20, maintains the precautionary principle ("small reduction" with active safeguards), and is consistent with the recent performance of stocks (robust YFT and SKJ; BET with juvenile mortality contained by UIB). The reallocation of 2,000 m^3 to Bolivia, within the registry and capacity ceilings, is biologically neutral under the current control and monitoring framework. Therefore, a request is submitted to the Commission to adopt an 8-day reduction in the closed season instead of 10 and to approve the reallocation, with annual monitoring of SSI and adaptive adjustments if the indicators so require. Finally, it is recommended that scientific personnel be instructed to monitor the impacts of this measure on populations, using SSI indicators and baseline assessments, ensuring transparency and rigor in adaptive implementation.

Technical bibliography (IATTC/CCA, 2025)

- SAC-16 – Conclusions and Recommendations/Proposals (management options; "small reductions," UIB, EMP/IPSP; class 4 analysis).
- SAC-16-06 – Candidate management strategy for bigeye tuna (BET): HCR F30–S20; ±10-day limit; exceptional circumstances.
- SAC-16-03 – 2025 baseline assessment of yellowfin tuna (YFT): spatial structure, performance toward MSY.
- SAC-16-02 – Stock status indicators (SSI): trends in FO-sets, mean size, UIB effects 2022–2024.
- SAC-16-01 – The tuna fishery in the EPO in 2024: catches by species, discards, reference to C-02-03 (capacity).
- SAC-16-11 & CCA-16 Recommendations – Staff recommendations and EEO mandate 2025–2026; multispecies assessment.

Annex to request 2:

Excerpt from Official Letter DGIMFLMM – UBPM No. 050/2024 of September 18, 2024, addressed to the President of the Commission, Mr. Arens:

Subsection c. on new requests:

1.1. Bolivia is disappointed that, once again, its request for 5,000 cubic meters of new capacity has not been included in the merit document, which it has submitted every year since 2019, as have other CPCs, some submitting theirs even after that year.

1.2. The request was substantiated at the 2022 and 2023 GTP meetings, with the relevant explanations being provided on both occasions via email, at the request of the Acting Director of the IATTC and the Chair of the GTP, respectively. For your records, I am attaching the messages of substantiation, marked as Annex Alpha and Annex Bravo, together with the acknowledgment of receipt from the GTP Chair, marked as Annex Charlie.

1.3. This request is particularly relevant because subsection c. of the categories identified in section 7 refers to "requests for new capacity increases by coastal and non-coastal States of the OPO" (emphasis added).

1.4. Bolivia had never heard, until Saturday, August 31, 2024, that its request was inadmissible on the grounds that it had been decided, at some point, not to admit new capacity requests to the list. On the contrary, we appreciate and agree with the statement made by the Chair of the GTP that the only thing that was closed was the admission of new capacity claims and disputes; this corresponds with what this delegation recalls about the status of this matter.

1.5. Based on the foregoing, Bolivia requests that its “new request” for 5,000 m^3 be included in subsection c. of the table with a detail that reads as follows: **“**Special needs and requirements of landlocked developing countries” (emphasis added

Appendix 3

Vanuatu´s intervention on the Esmeralda C case

Thank you chairman, I would like to introduce Vanuatu´s request, to confirm approval of the restitution and activation of 1,358 m3 of well volume to Vanuatu´s Active PS Capacity List, corresponding to the well capacity of the vessel Esmeralda C, registered in 2001 under the Vanuatu flag and re-flagged to another Member in 2005, due to the permanent transfer of well capacity without its consent and therefore, in contravention of the IATTC Convention and resolutions. Specifically, this transfer of well volume took place in the absence of direct notification from Vanuatu to the Director of IATTC.

This case was reviewed and resolved in 2014 at the 15th meeting of this Working Group and ratified and confirmed at its 16th meeting with a favorable recommendation to the Commission. Notwithstanding the positive recommendation from this Working Group, no consensus was achieved at the 88th meeting of the Commission.

Vanuatu would like to recall Annex 1 of the Convention and Resolutions C-02-03 and C-24-07 which requires a notification from the relevant Member to the IATTC Director to proceed with any changes on the information contained in the Record of vessels. In the transfer of Esmeralda C, Vanuatu did not issue any direct notification regarding the transfer of its well volume. The only notification issued by Vanuatu was regarding the cancellation of Vanuatu's flag to the Esmeralda C to be re-flagged to another member, without any mention of a change regarding its well volume. No transfer of well volume was approved by Vanuatu. An administrative error in 2005 allowed the transfer of its well volume and this action has produced serious damages for Vanuatu, resulting from the inability to utilize its well volume for twenty years.

At the 15th meeting of Working Group, in 2014, Vanuatu and three other Members presented "pending capacity requests" based on transfers of well volume without their consent and it was agreed and recommended to the Commission that all 4 Members be granted as a restitution the amounts corresponding to the well volume transferred without their consent".

At the 16th meeting of this working group, held also in 2014 the previous recommendation was confirmed and declared that this case was reviewed and resolved stating that: "The Working Group recognized that the recommendations that it had issued at its 15th meeting regarding the various cases reviewed and resolved continue in force and would not be subject to revision or modification. Consequently, those cases would not be addressed again at this meeting of the Working Group but by the 88th Extraordinary Meeting of the IATTC. These recommendations are described in the minutes of the 87th Meeting of the Commission, as follows: b. Consider favorably the requests by Ecuador Vanuatu and Venezuela that they be granted as restitution of the amounts corresponding to well volumes that were transferred without their consent..." A similar recommendation was agreed for Guatemala.

It must be noted that at the 88th meeting of the Commission, Vanuatu's case did not reach consensus. At that meeting, one of the four Members with an originally favorably recommendation obtained the restoration of its well volume and the other two also received the approval of the Commission but conditioned to its future activation, which occurred in 2017.

Additionally, Vanuatu recalls the 2016 agreement on the elements for the development of a capacity management plan for EPO which includes among others that pending capacity requests and claims

should be activated in a gradual manner, notably taking into account their antiquity, justification and urgency.

In this regard, the transfer without Vanuatu´s consent occurred twenty years ago, and its claim was assessed and recommended favorably in 2014 by this Working Group, and since then, another ten years has passed without resolution. Vanuatu, as a Member, considers that an administrative problem cannot be a permanent obstacle for a Member to exercise its rights. The cause of this case is not simply against Vanuatu´s rights but contrary to the Convention and the rules of procedure and resolutions of the Commission and with this arises the urgent need to reestablish Vanuatu´s right.

Vanuatu also considers that the need for the reduction of the capacity in the years long-process cannot be the argument to deny the restitution of Vanuatu´s rights that were deprived by an error of the Administration, in particular taking into account the healthy status of the resources base on the latest scientific report and the possibility to grow at it was just mentioned.

To finalize our intervention I would like to recall that Vanuatu is a small island developing State and is the most economically disadvantaged, least- developed Member of this Organization, as measured by per capita GDP, and, pursuant to paragraph 11 of Lanzarote Plan, should be given due recognition in accordance with paragraph 5 of the FAO Code of Conduct for responsible Fisheries, through enhancing the ability of such countries to develop their own fisheries as well as to participate in high seas fisheries, including access to such fisheries. The restitution of the well capacity of the Esmeralda C will provide a significant income stream to Vanuatu for the benefit of its people and it would represent a small foothold in the purse seine fishery from which Vanuatu will again seek to expand its presence.

Appendix 4
Panama's capacity request

(Informal Translation)

Office of the General Administration

Panama City, August 25, 2024

The delegation of the Republic of Panama appreciates the opportunity to present and substantiate its request for 3,000 m³ of carrying capacity, corresponding to three vessels that have conducted fishing operations within the IATTC Convention Area. These vessels hold IATTC registration numbers, have carried observers onboard, have operated on species regulated by the Commission, and possess duly registered cubic meter.

In April of this year, Panama submitted to the Secretariat a note containing information on 35 vessels that meet these criteria, amounting to a total of 30,920 m³ with operational periods prior to 2002. This demonstrates a solid and well-documented operational history. In addition to the supporting documentation evidencing the consistent operation of Panamanian-flag vessels before 2002, our request rests on three essential pillars that reflect our commitment to conservation, our legitimate right as a developing coastal State, and our vision of responsible fisheries management.

First, Panama has strictly — and even beyond — complied with the provisions established under Resolution C-02-03. As a coastal and developing State, Panama exercises its right to promote the sustainable development of tuna fisheries, consistent with Article 5 of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, which recognizes the need to strengthen the capacity of these States to exploit their resources sustainably.

Second, for nearly two decades, Panama has maintained a unique policy in the region: the total prohibition of purse-seine fishing within its Exclusive Economic Zone. This measure has directly and consistently contributed to the conservation of tropical tunas in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, supporting the recovery of tuna stocks and generating benefits for all stakeholders. This long-term commitment to conservation, in our view, should be duly recognized within the framework of the evaluation of our request.

Furthermore, Panama promotes a vision of responsible development aimed at strengthening the national tuna fleet, modernizing port and processing infrastructure, and fostering complementary economic activities such as tourism and recreational fishing — always in harmony with the principles of sustainability. In this regard, the Government has implemented a national policy focused on the productive development of the tuna fleet in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, with the objective of supplying the national industry, contributing to food security, and ensuring compliance with IATTC conservation measures.

This plan includes, among other components, the establishment of modern processing facilities in free zones for value-added products, the modernization of ports and logistical infrastructure, and the promotion of tourism and recreational fishing. These pillars aim to invigorate the local economy, create jobs, attract investment, and strengthen both national and international logistics services.

Finally, Panama calls for due recognition of its documented operational history, sustained conservation measures, and status as a developing coastal State. On this basis, we respectfully request that our application for 3,000 m³ of capacity be favorably considered by the Standing Working Group on Fleet Capacity, in support of regional management and the strengthening of responsible tropical tuna fisheries.

4g Report of the 16th Meeting of the Committee for the Review of Implementation of Measures Adopted by the Commission

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MEASURES ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION

16th MEETING

Panama City, Panama
26-27 August 2025

CHAIR'S REPORT

AGENDA

	Documents
1. Opening of the meeting	
2. Adoption of the agenda	
3. Recommendations of the 15th meeting of the Committee: progress report	
4. Priority elements of a draft Work Plan for the Committee: updates	
5. Compliance with IATTC measures in 2024:	
5a. Report by the staff on compliance	
5b. Review of the questionnaires and additional information submitted by CPCs in compliance with Resolution C-22-02	
6. Review of unresolved cases of possible non-compliance (2019-2023)	
7. Review of the provisional IUU vessels list	
8. Cooperating non-Members	
9. Recommendations to the Commission	
10. Adjournment	

The 16th meeting of the Committee for the Review of Implementation of Measures Adopted by the Commission (Review Committee, COR) was held on 26-27 August 2025 in Panama City, Panama. The meeting was suspended and then resumed on 30 August 2025, in order to resolve pending issues from the agenda. The list of attendees is included as **Appendix 1**.

1. Opening of the meeting

Mr. Antonio Vásquez, of El Salvador, the Chair of the Committee, opened the meeting and welcomed the delegations, observers, and stakeholders. He emphasized the importance of the COR's work and invited the delegations to collaborate to advance the committee's business, noting the need to maintain efficiency to cover all agenda items.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The Chair noted that, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, no requests had been received for the inclusion of additional agenda items. The Chair also noted that a request for a presentation had been received from an NGO, PEW Charitable Trust, and added that space would be allocated for this presentation on the "Capacity Self-Assessment Tool." The agenda, along with the tentative schedule, was submitted for

consideration. The Chair explained the logistics and, with the addition of the Pew Charitable Trust presentation, the agenda was adopted.

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, the Chair requested the nomination of a rapporteur, and Panama was appointed.

3. Recommendations of the 15th meeting of the Committee: progress report

The Chair invited the Secretariat to provide an update on the progress of the tasks agreed upon during the 15th meeting of the Committee. Mr. Ricardo Belmontes, of the Secretariat, presented document COR-16-01. He noted that completed tasks included an instruction sheet for filling out the Compliance Questionnaire, additions to the Provisional Compliance Overview, and progress on developing and finalizing the template for Resolution C-24-05. Some delegations questioned the ambiguity of paragraphs 23, 24, and 25 of this resolution. The Chair noted that the COR did not have a specific mandate to review the template, but rather, it was the COR's responsibility to acknowledge that the template had been developed in accordance with paragraph 23 as part of the Secretariat's broader task of developing the remaining templates. Therefore, the COR took note of the template's development and agreed that the Commission would discuss its formal adoption through the relevant mechanism.

The Secretariat provided updates on the vessel *Mar Aral* case, citing Memorandum 377-410, in which Colombia reported closing the case. Regarding the document "Possible Infractions Reported by Governments as Under Investigation or Not Answered (2019–2023)," the COR expressed doubts about some fields and references, such as the section on the number of cases. The COR also noted the lack of important information needed to review the pending cases. The COR requested that the Secretariat update the document with information from the Final Compliance Report for the corresponding year, as well as with the Secretariat's comments and updates received from the respective CPC regarding follow-up actions, to facilitate review by the COR.

Due to the lack of necessary information to review these cases, the Chair noted that a substantive review could not be conducted during the COR-16 meeting. Therefore, it was agreed that the cases would be reviewed next year. CPCs were urged to send updated information on cases that have been identified as under investigation.

4. Priority elements of a draft Work Plan for the Committee: updates

Under this new agenda item, the Secretariat presented the COR with the progress made on the work plan regarding automatization, follow-up of infractions, categorization, priority areas, capacity building, and human and financial resources. Mr. Ricardo Belmontes presented the document "Recommended Actions for Elements of an IATTC Compliance Plan and Progress Report."

Regarding the automatization of the compliance process, the Secretariat reported that it has held meetings with the secretariats of other Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) through its participation in the Tuna Compliance Network and mentioned that financial resources are needed to move forward with this task. The Secretariat has also held discussions with the FAO to explore the possibility of accessing their software for submitting Members' reports on the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. The Secretariat will continue to move forward in this direction, aiming to inform the COR about the possibility of implementing such a system. The COR requested that the Secretariat specify the progress made and the cost of implementing such a system in the future.

Regarding the follow-up of previous infractions, the Secretariat confirmed that the Chair and Director had sent letters to CPCs regarding possible non-compliance from previous years and confirmed that responses had been received on some pending cases. The Secretariat once again referred to the document "Possible Infractions Reported by Governments as Under Investigation or Not Answered (2019–2023)," and reiterated the need to include more information to review the cases next year, as well as the need for CPCs to explain why cases remain under investigation or why they can be closed.

Regarding the categorization of non-compliance status and the follow-up action, it was noted that document COR-16 INF-A had been developed and would be discussed under agenda item 4b.

The Secretariat presented the priority areas of possible non-compliance, noting that the information to be included in the trends document was included in the Provisional Compliance Overview. The COR noted the absence of the trends document. In response, the Guatemalan delegation expressed disagreement with the Secretariat's solution and emphasized the need for a specific document. Therefore, the Secretariat was tasked with preparing and presenting a document on the review of trends in infractions at COR-17. Finally, the preparation of the capacity-building template was noted, as was the need to raise the issue with the Committee on Administration and Finance (CAF) and the Commission.

Following the Secretariat's presentation, the Committee requested that tangible results on outstanding tasks be provided for the next meeting, as well as updates on priority areas through the trends document and the automatization process.

5. Categorization of non-compliance status and follow-up actions

The COR discussed document COR16-INF-A, "Draft IATTC Categorization of Non-Compliance Status and Follow-Up Actions," which was prepared by the CPCs as part of the “Priority Elements of a Draft Work Plan for the COR” during COR-15. The delegations recognized the usefulness of the document as a starting point for deliberations. They provided extensive feedback on the categorization criteria and the assignment of severity levels for each case. They also discussed the possible subjectivity that could arise from the mitigation and aggravation criteria and the need to address terminological inconsistencies with resolutions and terminology adopted by the IATTC.

Some delegations expressed doubts about how the new system should be adjusted within the framework of the resolutions adopted by the IATTC, pointing out that the system proposes actions to be taken in the event of possible non-compliance, which would require modifying the relevant resolution. They emphasized the need for more time to review the system, given its relevance and complexity.

The COR demonstrated a strong commitment to developing a compliance promotion scheme and agreed to undertake intersessional work. To this end, the COR requested that the Chair, with the assistance of the Secretariat, prepare a document to be considered by the COR and define the timing of the intersessional work beginning sixty days after the conclusion of the current IATTC meeting cycle. There will be two rounds of correspondence consultations; during each round, CPCs will submit proposals and comments based on document COR-16 INF-A. The Chair will compile the comments and reactions received from the CPCs in a new document to be discussed at the next Special Biennial Meeting of the COR in 2026.

6. Compliance with IATTC measures in 2024

Mr. Ricardo Belmontes, of the Secretariat, presented the Provisional Compliance Overview based on document COR-16-02, summarizing the improvements in specific areas of compliance. He noted a general downward trend in possible non-compliance, pointing out specifically the reduction in silky shark retention and interaction with sea turtles, as well as the decrease in cases related to the deployment and activation of FADs, and compliance with bigeye and bluefin tuna catch limits.

He also pointed out the ongoing challenges in shark handling, observer coverage on longline vessels, and payment of financial contributions. Some delegations expressed concern about inaccurate and/or outdated information in certain sections of the document and the presentation. They emphasized the need to improve the clarity of the color coding in the general table to prevent misinterpretation and to distribute the documentation well before the meetings. To this end, the Secretariat received a series of specific recommendations for improving the presentation, including publishing it prior to the COR meeting for review, and including a general table of possible non-compliance, as well as consistently organizing the presentation of the overview and provisional draft compliance report.

The Secretariat acknowledged the comments and explained the challenges of compiling information received late. The Chair emphasized the importance of the Secretariat and CPCs adhering to the deadlines established in the IATTC resolutions.

7. Provisional Draft Compliance Report, 2024

The COR reviewed document COR-16-03, "Provisional Draft Compliance Report," using the methodology implemented since Resolution C-22-02 was adopted. The COR reviewed those cases identified by the Secretariat as "pending" on a case-by-case, resolution-by-resolution basis. The CPCs had the opportunity to report on the actions they took to resolve the pending situations and to clarify the cases they considered resolved.

At the start of the review, the Japanese delegation pointed out that paragraph 3 of Resolution C-24-02 regarding bluefin tuna sport fishing was omitted from the 2024 review. The Secretariat acknowledged the omission, and it was recommended to include it in next year's review.

Notably, numerous cases relating to Resolution C-24-01 were reviewed. Regarding processing plants, several delegations expressed the difficulties a flag State faces in ensuring that a processing plant in another jurisdiction provides the required information. Several delegations agreed on the need for improvement on this issue and that it should be reviewed at the Commission meeting.

Pending cases concerning the handling of sharks under Resolutions C-16-05 and C-23-07 (paragraph 3b) were reviewed. All the involved delegations reported that the cases were pending and under investigation, emphasizing the complexity of these types of investigations.

Regarding Resolution C-19-08 on observer coverage on longline vessels over 20 m LOA, the COR discussed what status should be assigned to cases where the CPC is argued to have taken actions to improve compliance, and whether the obligation applies only to the coverage percentage. The COR concluded that the statuses adopted in Resolution 22-02 pose interpretation difficulties for particular cases and should be reviewed.

The Committee noted the absence of Chile and Honduras, both of which had cases of possible non-compliance. Therefore, the Committee decided to leave the cases referring to these CPCs pending, noting the importance of their presence at COR meetings as a criterion for renewing their Cooperating non-Member status.

During the review of the cases, the Committee emphasized the need to update the possible statuses that can be assigned to different cases based on the CPCs' actions to resolve cases appearing in the draft as pending. The Committee also highlighted the interpretation difficulties when applying possible compliance statuses, especially when the CPC determines a situation of compliance or non-compliance. Additionally, the Committee requested that, for future reviews, the assigned statuses be consistent with those referred to in the Annex to Resolution C-22-02 or subsequent amendments.

The Secretariat noted the difficulties it faces when conducting the pre-evaluation due to ambiguous information received from the CPCs, and mentioned that CPCs sometimes request a specific compliance status in the draft. The Committee provided specific recommendations to improve and facilitate the review of the Provisional Draft Compliance Report, including updating the statuses that can be assigned and the assignment criteria contained in Resolution 22-02. The Committee also requested that the Secretariat include comments in the "Secretariat Comments" section when the information provided by the CPC is insufficient to support the Secretariat's determination of "Resolved" status, which would allow the Committee to review the case.

8. Review of unresolved cases of possible non-compliance (2019-2023)

The Chair explained the difficulties in conducting a meaningful review of these cases and noted that this had been partially discussed under agenda items 3 and 4. The Chair also reiterated the recommendation to the Secretariat to update the document on the password-protected compliance website with relevant

information on each case. The Committee discussed the need for CPCs to send progress updates to the Secretariat to update the aforementioned document, and agreed to allocate sufficient time to review these pending cases at the next meeting of the COR in 2026.

9. Review of the IUU vessel list

Ambassador Jean-François Pulvenis, the Head of the IATTC's Policy and Compliance Division, presented document COR-16-06, "IUU Vessel List," and clarified the procedure for the prior nomination and inclusion of a Venezuelan vessel on the "Provisional IATTC IUU Vessel List," which had previously been nominated by Panama.

Panama informed the COR that, following a bilateral meeting with Venezuela on 26 August , the respective authorities had clarified the miscommunications, confirming that the vessel in question had received sanctions from Panama, as well as from its flag State, a fact of which Panama was unaware. Based on this new information, Panama formally withdrew its nomination of the Venezuelan vessel.

This case sparked a significant debate about the interpretation and implementation of Resolution C-19-02. There were differing views on the role of the Secretariat, including whether it should act as a "filter" to prevent the circulation of requests that do not comply with the deadlines set out in the resolution, such as the two-year reporting deadline, or if all nominations should be submitted to the COR for consideration.

As a result of this discussion, there was a general consensus on the need to review and amend Resolution C-19-02. The advisability of extending the deadline for submitting IUU fishing cases was discussed, as the current two-year deadline is deemed insufficient for the CPCs' internal identification procedures. Other CPCs pointed out that it is difficult to respond to possible identifications if the reporting deadline is too long. It was agreed that the relevant delegations should collaborate on a joint proposal clarifying the procedures, deadlines, communication mechanisms, and the Secretariat's role, with the intention of submitting a proposal amending the current resolution to the Commission for consideration. One delegation then requested that the Secretariat prepare a proposal to extend the deadline in Resolution C-19-02, to be presented at the Commission meeting.

10. Cooperating non-Members

The Secretariat reported that document COR-16-04, published on the meeting website, contained detailed information on the applicants, pursuant to Resolution C-07-02. The Chair requested that the COR consider the applications and recommend the renewal of the Cooperating non-Members to the Commission, noting the COR's decision on cases awaiting responses from Honduras and Chile.

The COR decided to refer the consideration and decision on the applications for renewal of status to the Commission, noting that the criteria for renewal include applicants' participation in the Committee and Commission meetings. The COR noted the absence of Chile and Honduras from the meeting, as well as the presence of Bolivia, Indonesia and Liberia. The COR also noted that there are pending cases from Honduras and Chile, which the Committee decided to keep pending in order to give the applicants an opportunity to clarify their situation at the Commission's annual meeting, with a view to renewing their status as Cooperating non-Members.

11. Other business

The United States delegation requested consideration of additional matters, beginning by expressing its concern about the lack of clarity in the Compliance Questionnaire regarding the communication of obligations that CPCs determine as “not applicable” to their activity. Particularly, emphasis was placed on the silky shark resolution, highlighting the need for improvement. To this end, the Committee reiterated in one of its recommendations that explanations should be provided when a CPC indicates that an obligation is not applicable, and that this should be included in future questionnaires.

Additionally, the United States expressed the opinion that a vessel exceeding its limit of active FADs in the previous year should be considered a very serious possible case of non-compliance, in line with previous discussions at the COR meeting.

Finally, with regard to financial matters, the powers of the COR to consider or not consider possible cases of non-compliance arising from CPC contribution responsibilities were discussed. This led to different interpretations of the COR's functions under the Antigua Convention and the Terms of Reference of the Committee on Administration and Finance (Res. C-12-02). Due to time constraints, the Committee agreed to continue discussing these issues in the future, recognizing the importance of clarifying them.

12. Recommendations

The COR concluded its regular session on Wednesday, 27 August, at 6:00 p.m. and agreed to review the recommendations in an additional session. For that purpose, an additional session was held on Saturday, 30 August, during which the recommendations were adopted (see Appendix 2).

13. Adjournment

After reviewing and adopting the recommendations on Saturday, 30 August, the Chair thanked the delegations for their work and acknowledged the progress made and agreements reached. The COR officially adjourned its meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Appendix 1

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Appendix 2

Recommendations of the 16th meeting of the Review Committee (COR)

Recommendations to the Secretariat:

1. To update the document *Possible infractions reported by governments as under investigation or unanswered (2019-2023)* with information from the *Final Compliance Report* from the corresponding year, the Secretariat comments and CPC updates on the follow up actions, to facilitate the COR review. The Final Compliance Reports should be listed in chronological order in one part of the password protected compliance webpage.
2. To ensure that the *Provisional Compliance Overview* and the *Draft Provisional Compliance Report* are updated and comprehensively address the implementation of all conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission (e.g. Resolution 24-02 paragraph 3).
3. To include in the "Secretariat's comments" section of the *Draft Provisional Compliance Report*, information on instances when a CPCs response is insufficient for the Secretariat to assign the status of "Resolved".
4. To add a dropdown list that includes the different compliance statuses from Annex 2 in Resolution C-22-02, to the *Draft Provisional Compliance Report* worksheet to facilitate the COR review.
5. To include, as the first table in the *Provisional Compliance Overview*, an updated color-coded overview table of possible non-compliance cases like the one included in the presentation of the *Provisional Compliance Overview* at the COR16.
6. To ensure that the presentation on the *Provisional Compliance Overview* is posted on the password protected COR webpage fifteen days prior to the meeting and follows the same order as the *Provisional Compliance Overview* document.
7. To ensure strict adherence to the procedures and deadlines established in Resolutions adopted by the Commission to provide CPCs sufficient time for review of COR-related information and documentation. All data or reports submitted after the deadline shall be automatically reflected in the *Provisional Compliance Overview* and the *Draft provisional Compliance Report* as a "Not Resolved" and reviewed at the COR meeting.
8. To develop and present at the COR17, a document on the review of infraction trends, identifying the thematic areas and Resolutions that require special attention as identified in the *Priority elements of a draft Work Plan for the COR.[CAD]*
9. When the Secretariat notifies the CPCs of a possible infraction, and it becomes necessary to clarify the observer's report, this shall be executed through an additional document attached to the report explaining the reason for the changes made as a result of the normal review process.
10. To ensure that purse seine observers from the observer program receive appropriate training to record accurate information on FAD material design, specifically for deployed FADs, noting that the COR has dealt with a large number of FAD material possible non-compliance cases in recent years.
11. To redact the vessel names in documents and reports that are displayed on screen and to virtual attendees during the COR meeting.
12. To ensure that the Draft Provisional Compliance Overview and the Draft Provisional Compliance Report provides information on the implementation by CPCs of obligations in relation to paragraph 3 of Resolution C-24-02 for sport catch of PBF by all CPCs.

Recommendations to the Committee:

13. Following the conclusion of the next COR meeting, to make public a summary of the *Final Compliance Report*, excluding confidential information, after ensuring sufficient time for review by the CPCs.
14. To conduct intersessional work to further develop the *Categorization of Non-Compliance Status and the Follow up Actions* document, using document COR16-INF-A as a basis. The Chair will lead this process, with the support of the Secretariat and seek input from all interested CPCs, to produce a document for discussion during the next special biennial meeting of the COR in 2026.
15. To ensure sufficient time is allocated for the specific point in the COR agenda in future years to review pending cases from previous years.
16. To review Resolutions and paragraphs provisionally marked "Resolved" in the Provisional Draft Compliance Report by the relevant CPC to ensure the status reflects COR consideration.

Recommendations to CPCs:

17. To ensure strict adherence to the procedures and deadlines established in Resolutions adopted by the Commission, in particular data submission, recalling that the delay submission of this information compromises the capacity of the Secretariat to prepare the relevant compliance reports and documents.

18. To provide the Secretariat with updates and information on the status or progress of outstanding possible non-compliance cases from the previous years where the CPC has stated that an investigation has started or for which the possible case of non-compliance is otherwise not marked as "resolved".

19. To include in the *Standard questionnaire on compliance with IATTC resolutions* an explanation when assigning a "Non-Applicable (N/A)" or "Compliant" status to a given obligation. The online/automated version of the questionnaire, when available, should not allow submission unless such explanation is provided.

Recommendations to the Commission:

20. To consider the Cooperating Non-Member status renewal request of Bolivia, Chile, Honduras, Indonesia, Liberia, properly considering the absence of Honduras and Chile from the COR16 meeting and outstanding possible non-compliance cases for Honduras and Chile for the 2024 period.
21. To review and amend as appropriate, among others, paragraph 4 of Resolution C-19-02 to extend the period of the application of this provision, as well as to improve and clarify the process of elaboration of the IUU vessel list.
22. To amend Annex 2 of Resolution C-22-02 to:
    a. Refine the definitions and criteria for all Possible Non-Compliance Issues Statuses to ensure objective and consistent application.
    b. Introduce a distinct status of "non-compliant" to be assigned in instances where a possible non-compliance issue has been substantiated and confirmed.
23. To consider it a possible very serious non-compliance case if a vessel has exceeded its Active FAD Limit by a significant number or if a vessel is over its Active FAD limit for more than 10 days.

4h. Report of the 10th Meeting of the IATTC – WCPFC/NC Joint Working Group on the management of Pacific bluefin tuna

JOINT IATTC AND WCPFC-NC WORKING GROUP MEETING ON THE MANAGEMENT OF PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA
TENTH SESSION (JWG-10)

Toyama, Japan (Hybrid)
9 – 12 July 2025

CHAIRS' SUMMARY OF THE 10TH JOINT IATTC AND WCPFC-NC WORKING GROUP MEETING ON THE MANAGEMENT OF PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA

IATTC-NC-JWG10-2025/00

AGENDA ITEM 1 OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The 10th Session of the Joint IATTC and WCPFC-NC Working Group Meeting on the Management of Pacific Bluefin Tuna (JWG-10) was held on 9 – 12 July 2025. The meeting was opened by co-chairs Mr. Josh Madeira (USA, IATTC) and Mr. Masanori Miyahara (Japan, Northern Committee Chair).

2. Japan welcomed JWG members, observers, and participants, expressing gratitude to attendees and special thanks to the co-chairs. Japan noted that this year features challenging measures including long-term management and universal Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) measures, emphasizing that while these items are difficult and complicated, they are confident the JWG can make good progress.

3. A list of participants to the JWG-10 is included in **Annex A**.

AGENDA ITEM 2 ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND MEETING PROCEDURES

4. Co-Chair Madeira outlined the meeting procedures and presented the provisional agenda for adoption.

5. The provisional agenda was adopted (**Annex B**).

6. Mr. Samuel Coyle of Japan was appointed as rapporteur for the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 3 REPORTS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA MEASURES

7. The JWG reviewed WCPFC and IATTC members' implementation reports regarding CMM 2024-01, CMM 2024-02, Resolution C-24-02, and Resolution C-24-03. Co-Chair Miyahara explained that the discussion would be conducted in two rounds: first, a discussion on the implementation of CMMs by each party, and second, a review of the reports on MCS measures.

8. Japan asked Korea about current year fishing activities, specifically about a reported large purse seine catch of 7,000 fish in July that could potentially cause overshooting of catch limits. Korea responded that there was a significant PBF catch in late June or early July, and they were still compiling the exact catch amount. Korea explained that their initial report showed purse seine catches did not exceed 600 metric tons and they have reserved catch limits of more than 300 metric tons for unexpected situations.

9. In response to questions from Japan, Korea subsequently provided additional information from their relevant division, noting that they do not have recreational fisheries specifically targeting PBF but that recreational fisheries catch small PBF from time to time due to high abundance in their waters. Korea reported that recreational fisheries caught 358 individual PBF (0.83 metric tons) in 2023 and 526 individual PBF (1.21 metric tons) in 2024, with catches consisting only of small fish due to gear configuration. Regarding set nets, Korea reported having 155 total set net licenses (82 in Gangwon Province and 73 in North Gyeongsang Province) that do not target PBF. Japan clarified that their 1,688 set net sites are authorized to catch PBF, with many targeting PBF while others do not, and noted that Korea's recreational catches should be counted against their catch limits as a mandatory requirement. Korea explained that they count recreational fishery catches against their 2024 catch limits; they will continue to count against future catch limits.

10. The USA asked Mexico about the number of pens holding PBF and whether Mexico also has pens for yellowfin tuna. While they do not have the exact number, Mexico responded that Mexican farming companies have limited capacity based on each company's concession, and there are no pens for yellowfin tuna. Japan asked Mexico about sports fishery data collection methods, noting that Mexico estimated sports fishery catch to be 4 metric tons in 2024, and whether fishermen are required to provide catch reports. Mexico responded that sports fishermen must fill out documents and there are port inspectors who check vessel arrivals and communicate with fishermen.

11. Japan asked Chinese Taipei about the management of recreational sports fishermen, noting that their catches should be counted under WCPFC measures. Chinese Taipei responded that they have laws requiring recreational fishermen to obtain tags before landing PBF, and without tags, they are not allowed to land.

12. In response to a question from Japan about how the USA manages the catch from their sport fisheries, the USA responded that its recreational fisheries are robustly managed in a manner consistent with its commercial fisheries through trip limits, bag limits, 100% logbook and near-real time reporting requirements. Although the management of this fishery did not change between 2023 and 2024, US recreational catches for PBF declined, and the number of fish caught to date in 2025 is also much lower than the same period in 2024. Japan noted concerns about the gap between commercial and recreational fishing trends, with commercial catches reducing by almost 40% while recreational catches increased sharply to a record high of almost 2,000 metric tons in 2023, and asked how the USA plans to manage sports fisheries under the new management procedure. Co-Chair Miyahara noted that this question was relevant to discussions to occur in Agenda Item 5.

13. Japan asked New Zealand about managing the sports fishery catch of PBF under WCPFC conservation measures. New Zealand responded that they manage PBF recreational harvest by a combined bag limit of 20 finfish per day, which differs from their southern bluefin tuna management approach. Chinese Taipei requested information about New Zealand's international trade partners, to which New Zealand replied that in 2024, they exported PBF primarily to Japan and smaller amounts to the USA, Australia, Canada, and Switzerland.

14. In response to a question from Japan about monitoring the number and average size of PBF caged in farming pens, particularly when originally caught by purse seiners, Korea responded that they check the amount of caging and harvest of PBF based on paper documents. Korea noted that government officials and scientists visit the farms to monitor activities, although coverage is not 100%. Korea explained that

farming activities for PBF are in their initial experimental stage, so going forward, they will consider making necessary enhancements to their existing MCS system.

15. Japan asked Mexico to provide MCS information in written form for both WCPFC and IATTC implementation reports. Regarding farming activities, Japan noted that Mexico's purse seiners have 100% observer coverage, but observers cannot identify the number of fish to be caged or the average size of PBF to be caged, which is why video cameras are necessary. Japan asked whether Mexico's operators use video cameras to confirm the actual size of fish. Mexico responded that they have stereoscopic cameras when transfer is done and that observers and inspectors have the possibility to get information about the amount of fish transferred.

16. In response to questions from Japan about violations by sports fishermen, the USA reported that they have never discovered any laundering of PBF and noted that while recreational fishermen are prohibited from selling PBF on the market, a minimal number of violations have been identified and are addressed. Japan noted that the USA sport fisheries caught almost 2,000 metric tons in 2023, which could have a big impact, and stated that monitoring and enforcement measures are important. Japan explained that in their case, they frequently identify violations during peak season that are subject to penalties, with around 10 cases identified in their recreational fisheries almost every year, and expressed surprise that USA sports fishermen caught 2,000 metric tons, but no violations were found.

17. Co-Chair Miyahara noted the need for a standardized MCS reporting format and tasked Japan with creating a unified format for MCS reporting based on current CMM and IATTC resolutions. Japan agreed to make efforts to create a format for reporting that would be used for next year's reporting. Co-Chair Miyahara asked Japan to create a draft skeleton of MCS measures for consideration at the JWG 11 meeting next year. Japan noted that creating a draft skeleton of MCS measures is a challenging task and requested assistance from other delegations during the intersessional period, stating that cooperation is necessary to complete this work. Japan created a draft reporting template and explained that it allows members to place their MCS activities according to existing obligations, and expressed hope that it would be helpful for unified reporting. The template in Annex C was considered but could not be agreed upon. This template will be sent to each commission for further consideration **(Annex C)**.

18. No further discussions were held on the reports submitted by other members.

AGENDA ITEM 4 SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION ON PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA

4.1 Catch limit scenario projections

19. Dr. Shuya Nakatsuka, the Chair of the ISC Pacific Bluefin Tuna Working Group (PBFWG), presented updated projection results using the 2024 benchmark stock assessment. The PBFWG reviewed the projection results, notably scenario 3 that reflects the current management measures (CMM 2024-01 and C-24-02) and scenario 4 that maximizes the use of the conversion factor of small-fish quota to large-fish quota. The PBFWG noted that the projection of new measures is only slightly more pessimistic compared to the scenario 15 presented in 2024, while the projection of maximum application of the conversion factor produced much more optimistic results.

20. The USA noted that in last year's negotiations, it was important that any quota increases would still allow for long-term increases to the biomass over time. They also noted the significant positive

conservation benefits of transferring small fish to large fish, even after applying the conversion factor. The USA asked about the confidence intervals related to scenario 3, noting that it is possible that the stock could fall below the second rebuilding target over time, and inquired whether recruitment or other factors may influence this possible outcome.

21. The PBFWG explained that the dotted lines represented the fifth and 95th percentiles, and the main reason for the variance in projections is the assumption of recruitment variance, which creates the width of the area. The PBFWG noted a small dip around 2030 reflecting slightly lower recruitment, but it will be higher in the long term, with the width in the trajectory reflecting recruitment value assumptions.

22. Pew Charitable Trusts noted that Table 2 shows future projection scenarios and the probability of overfishing according to various reference points. They expressed concern that under the new CMM, there is a risk of overfishing depending on the level of the target and looked forward to more discussions on the long-term harvest strategy to prevent an overfishing situation in the future.

4.2 Research on migratory patterns

23. The PBFWG explained that they had not received any additional requests from the Northern Committee as referred to in last year's report, and there had not been a formal request to ISC on this matter. The PBFWG noted that stock structure and distribution are key information for understanding stock and fundamental for stock assessment, and are of great interest for many scientists, much broader than ISC itself. The PBFWG stated that there are many studies regarding migratory patterns, but they were not quite sure what was being requested, and if the JWG or the NC wants specific information on migratory patterns, they would need specific instructions.

24. The USA appreciated the information presented by ISC and noted that there are many studies describing migration patterns and documenting historical harvests. They stated they did not want to divert PBFWG too far from their existing schedule, specifically the peer review next year, and suggested a path forward might be to identify references that document migration patterns and list those references to satisfy the request. They suggested the JWG could recommend to the NC that this could be a path forward. The JWG recommended that the NC task the ISC to compile existing references that document migration patterns and present them to WCPFC22.

4.3 Review of conversion factors

25. The PBFWG presented analysis regarding conversion factors for swapping catch quotas between Pacific bluefin tuna fishery sectors while maintaining overall fishing intensity. The analysis calculated conversion factors among WCPO small to WCPO large and WCPO large to EPO, and can be used to convert between all fishery sectors.

26. The PBFWG noted that the results could vary if conditions such as selectivity of fleets or natural mortality are different from those assumed, and that transfers of TAC between the EPO and WCPO based on a prescribed fishery impact ratio would be more consistent with how the impact between EPO and WCPO was calculated for the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE).

4.4 Reports from WCPFC-SC and IATTC-SAC

27. The JWG acknowledged that the 21st meeting of the WCPFC Scientific Committee (August 13–21, 2025, Tonga) would occur after JWG-10, hence no SC outcomes were available for this meeting.

28. The IATTC representative reported that the 16th SAC meeting took place in June. The SAC endorsed the recommendations from the IATTC scientific staff, who made four recommendations: (1) reference points should be adopted, taking into consideration those in SAC-14; (2) choose one of the harvest control rules and test using MSE, considering performance relative to possible reference points for PBF and other performance metrics; (3) recruitment should be monitored, and the harvest strategy should include provisions for exceptional circumstances; and (4) future work should focus on improving harvest control rules to ensure they are robust.

AGENDA ITEM 5 LONG-TERM HARVEST STRATEGY

5.1 Development of the long-term harvest strategy

29. Co-Chair Madeira acknowledged the significant progress made to date and thanked the ISC for their work to complete the MSE analysis and final report. He noted that the JWG had received the final MSE results just two weeks prior to the meeting and that all results had been posted for review.

30. Co-Chair Madeira emphasized that the current long-term harvest strategy for PBF was outdated and should be updated in both commissions as a matter of priority. He noted that the JWG was expected to recommend a comprehensive long-term harvest strategy in 2025 and that it was anticipated to be implemented in 2026. Further, he noted that the IATTC resolution C-24-03 was a two-year measure that would need to be negotiated in 2026.

31. Co-Chair Madeira outlined the key elements that must be included in the long-term harvest strategy agreement, as required by WCPFC CMM 2022-03 and relevant IATTC resolutions, including management objectives, acceptable levels of risk, reference points, monitoring strategy, harvest control rules, and the MSE framework itself for future testing of different harvest control rules.

5.2 Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE)

32. Dr. Desiree Tommasi, representing the PBFWG, provided a summary of the final results of the MSE. She explained that the MSE examined the performance of candidate management procedures for PBF relative to the set of objectives agreed upon by the JWG using a closed-loop computer simulation that accounted for uncertainty in observations, assessment models, and implementation.

33. Dr. Tommasi described the management procedures as model-based harvest strategies that estimate stock status from an estimation model, specify a harvest control rule (HCR) to be applied, and establish TAC by fleet segment: TAC Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO), TAC WCPO small fish, and TAC WCPO large fish.

34. Dr. Tommasi explained that performance was evaluated based on four categories: safety, status, stability, and yield. For safety performance, the objective was to maintain less than 20% probability of the stock falling below the limit reference point (LRP), with all HCRs showing less than 10% probability of breaching the IATTC's interim LRP. All HCRs except for HCRs 6 and 14 were also able to maintain a low

probability (<20%) of breaching the second interim rebuilding target of 20%SSBF=0. For status performance, the objective was to maintain fishing mortality at or below the target level with at least 50% probability, with all HCRs achieving at least 50% probability of maintaining fishing mortality at or below their target levels.

35. Dr. Tommasi noted that stability performance aimed to limit changes in overall catch limits between management periods to no more than 25% unless the stock was below the LRP, while yield performance focused on maintaining an equitable balance in proportional fishery impact between the WCPO and EPO, maximizing yield over medium and long terms. She emphasized that HCRs with the highest probability of spawning stock biomass (SSB) being at or above the second rebuilding target had the lowest yield metrics and vice versa, demonstrating clear tradeoffs between safety and yield objectives.

36. Following the presentation, China sought clarification on the MSE projection timeframe, noting that the projection period seemed short compared to the PBF lifespan of 15-20 years, suggesting a 30–40-year timeframe might be more appropriate. Dr. Nakatsuka responded that the projection was based on the generation time of 8-9 years rather than maximum age, covering more than two generations.

5.3 Recommendations on the long-term harvest strategy

37. Co-Chair Madeira requested members to share their priorities regarding the MSE results and management objectives, emphasizing the need for discussion on tradeoffs between safety, status, stability, and yield objectives that had been previously agreed upon by the JWG.

38. The JWG reaffirmed that the four management objective categories—safety, status, stability, and yield—were all equally important and had been agreed upon through extensive discussions 2-3 years earlier. Members emphasized that economic factors and equitable fishery impacts were important considerations, with priority given to ensuring the PBF stock never becomes heavily depleted again and biomass is maintained above the second rebuilding target. Several members noted that attention should focus on the performance of HCRs rather than revisiting management objectives.

39. Japan expressed preference for HCR 5, noting that according to the MSE simulation, relationships between yield and performance were demonstrated. Japan noted that all HCRs except 6 and 14 showed a < 20% probability of SSB falling below 20%SSBF=0, indicating that safety criteria were met for most HCRs. Japan emphasized that some HCRs, like 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, and 11, showed the possibility of significant TAC reduction when the stock falls, indicating low stability in terms of fishery management and harvest.

40. The USA expressed support for HCRs 9 to 16, as these scenarios support the 70:30 West-East allocation, which is an important aspect for the USA, given that EPO historically had a much larger impact. The USA emphasized the importance for their stakeholders to gain a more equitable portion of the harvest and favored scenarios with defined targets and limit reference points, which eliminated HCRs 5, 6, 7, 13, 14, and 15 from consideration.

41. New Zealand noted that modifications to the 2024 benchmark may have resulted in optimism and emphasized that the sustainability of stock was paramount, not wanting to lose the recovery, especially considering climate change. New Zealand stated their preference for two HCRs that most closely aligned with their domestic harvest strategy standards: HCRs 3 and 11. New Zealand noted that their harvest strategy standard specifies a default soft limit which is analogous to the WCPFC LRP of 20%SSBF=0.

42. Korea explained that they have not established a definitive position on the selection of HCRs, noting they did not want to rush to make important decisions without adequate time to digest the information that had been made available only two to three weeks prior. Korea noted that, regarding concerns about the absence of LRP in some HCR scenarios, the important point was to keep the stock safe regardless of terminology, emphasizing attention to the yield and safety relationship.

43. Chinese Taipei supported Japan's position, agreeing that all HCRs except 6 and 14 could ensure the stock would remain at a safe level. Chinese Taipei expressed support for HCR 5, because it is easier to communicate with the stakeholders since part of its concept has already been implemented and it has proven effective in achieving the rebuilding targets.

44. In relation to HCR 5, Korea reiterated its previous statement made during the intersessional JWG meeting that was held in Monterey that reverting back to the level of CMM 2021-02 in the event of the SSB falling below the LRP of 20%SSBF0 would not necessarily mean that the catch limit allocation to each country would be the same as what is in that CMM.

45. Japan further stated that HCR 5 was the most suitable option it could accept among the 16 options. Japan noted that its stakeholders have endured significant sacrifices in implementing strict CMMs, including a 50% decrease in small fish catch limits. Japan stressed that more ambitious HCRs would not be workable for their stakeholders, particularly given the extensive fisheries operations in their exclusive economic zone, territorial waters, and internal waters.

46. Japan also stated that it does not agree to drop HCRs 6 and 14, since they provide sufficient safety with the probability of stock falling below 20%SSBF=0 at around 23%, which maintains the stock above the IATTC LRP of 7.7%SSBF=0 with very high probability.

47. The USA expressed disagreement with Japan's position, emphasizing that the JWG should not jeopardize the hard-won rebuilding success by accepting any HCR that could allow the stock to fall below 20%SSBF=0. The USA argued that establishing a 20%SSBF=0 LRP would be the minimum acceptable threshold, noting that if the stock fell below this level, fishing effort should be reduced to minimal levels. The USA also clarified that it would prefer an F-target of 40% to prioritize safety.

48. Following bilateral discussions, Japan reported that while some progress had been made, significant gaps in opinions remained between the delegations. The USA reiterated its position that establishing a 20%SSBF=0 LRP would be essential for preventing backward movement.

49. The JWG noted general views to continue discussions on an appropriate range of F-targets, with a preliminary focus on consideration of a 25% to 30% range for future HCR selection, noting the need to consider together with other elements of HCR as a package.

50. Japan questioned the implication of changing the management cycle to two years from three years in the long-term harvest strategy. ISC replied that the shorter management cycle leads to responsive management, in general, including earlier response to recruitment drops. ISC further explained that the safety performance might be similar even when deploying a two-year management cycle.

51. The JWG requested that the ISC develop guidance and criteria for defining exceptional circumstances, particularly with respect to risks related to low recruitment, and provide them to the JWG.

52. The JWG noted that exceptional circumstances procedures would be important regardless of the selected HCR, particularly for addressing potential recruitment drops.

53. The JWG acknowledged that while agreement on specific HCRs had not been reached, there was unanimous appreciation to the ISC for the excellent work on the MSE, noting that the quality of the scientific work remained outstanding regardless of the difficulty in reaching consensus on HCR selection.

54. The JWG re-emphasized its commitment to agree to a long-term harvest strategy based on the MSE and the intention to keep the stock above the second rebuilding target. The members committed to holding intersessional discussions to advance the long-term harvest strategy, as outlined in the workplan.

55. The JWG recognized the success of the rebuilding efforts and the significant impacts these had on stakeholders, acknowledging the considerable efforts made by all parties. The JWG expressed a strong commitment that no one wanted to see the stock fall back below the 20% rebuilding target. The JWG also noted broad agreement on the importance of protecting Age-0 fish as a key element of future management measures.

AGENDA ITEM 6 REVIEW OF CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA

56. No discussions were held on this agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM 7 CATCH DOCUMENTATION SCHEME

57. Mr. Shingo Ota (Japan), Chair of the 6th Joint Working Group on Catch Documentation Scheme Technical Meeting (JWG-CDS-06), presented the key outcomes of the technical meeting held on 9 July 2025.

58. Mexico expressed appreciation for the Chair's Summary Report and noted that it contained fishing methods that are not used across regions. Mexico observed that while the resolutions would have essentially the same content in both commissions, there would be some differences based on what is permitted or does not exist in the respective commissions. Mexico requested that this distinction be reflected in the report.

59. In response, Mr. Ota acknowledged Mexico's comment and confirmed that he would consult with the rapporteur to include additional text in the summary to address this point before submitting the revised document to the Secretariat.

60. Co-Chair Miyahara asked if there were any other comments on the Chair's Summary Report. With the single amendment proposed by Mexico, the JWG adopted the report.

AGENDA ITEM 8 NEXT JWG MEETING

61. The JWG affirmed the commitment to complete work related to the long-term harvest strategy, catch documentation scheme, and amendments to MCS in 2026. To achieve these goals, the JWG propose

the following work plan:

2025:

- JWG Members work to support progress on the long-term harvest strategy through bilateral and multilateral meetings conducted on the margins of the IATTC and WCPFC meetings. JWG Members will communicate their preferences to the JWG Co-Chairs by December 2025 so that they can make arrangements for virtual or in-person intersessional meeting(s) as needed.
- ISC begins work to develop guidance and criteria for defining exceptional circumstances, particularly with respect to risks related to low recruitment, to be provided to JWG-11.

2026:

- The JWG will hold intersessional meetings as needed to finalize the long-term harvest strategy at JWG-11.
- JWG recommends a long-term harvest strategy, including additional management measures triggered by exceptional circumstances, which will be implemented in 2027.
- JWG recommends a CDS CMM/resolution.
- JWG recommends amendments to the existing MCS CMM/resolution after reviewing reports on the implementation of PBF measures.

62. The JWG considered the tentative date and location for the JWG-11 meeting in 2026. After the discussion, the JWG agreed that the next meeting would be scheduled for July 8 - 11 in Japan, subject to final confirmation of arrangements.

63. The JWG noted that the 7th Joint Working Group on Catch Documentation Scheme Technical Meeting (JWG-CDS07) would be held in conjunction with JWG11, with the duration to be determined based on progress made in intersessional work.

AGENDA ITEM 9 OTHER BUSINESS

64. Korea expressed appreciation for the collective efforts of all JWG members and noted that the 2024 scientific assessments demonstrate that PBF stock is in rapid recovery, meeting rebuilding targets ahead of schedule. Korea emphasized that this success has created new realities for coastal states, including unprecedented increases in PBF abundance in Korean waters, likely due to climate change altering migratory patterns and distribution. While coastal states of the WCPFC hold the rights to manage highly migratory species in their territorial and archipelagic waters, Korea noted that they have voluntarily participated in the international management framework with limited catch limits based on historical records, these rigid historical quotas are creating severe socio-economic strain on coastal fishing communities who face economic hardship while seeing abundant resources in their traditional fishing grounds. Korea stated that the remarkable recovery must translate into adaptive and equitable management, emphasizing that the long-term management framework should fully consider the current state of the resource and the legitimate rights and needs of coastal states experiencing dramatic changes in stock distribution, and reaffirmed their commitment to sustainable PBF management while identifying ensuring the livelihoods of fishing communities as a top priority **(Annex E)**.

AGENDA ITEM 10 ADOPTION OF REPORT

65. The IATTC-NC JWG10 adopted the report.

AGENDA ITEM 11 CLOSE OF MEETING

66. The meeting was brought to a close at 11:12 AM on 12 July 2025.

ANNEXES

Annex A – List of participants

Annex B – Agenda

Annex C – Draft Reporting Template of CMM 2024-02 / Resolution C-24-03

Annex D – Chair's Summary of 6th CDS Technical Meeting

Annex E – Korea's statement

Annex A

JOINT IATTC AND WCPFC-NC WORKING GROUP MEETING ON THE MANAGEMENT OF PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA
TENTH SESSION (JWG-10)

Toyama, Japan (Hybrid)
9 – 12 July 2025

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Annex B

JOINT IATTC AND WCPFC-NC WORKING GROUP MEETING ON THE MANAGEMENT OF PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA
TENTH SESSION (JWG-10)

Toyama, Japan (Hybrid)
9 – 12 July 2025

AGENDA

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND MEETING PROCEDURES

Any additional issues raised here will be covered under the agenda OTHER BUSINESS.

3. REPORTS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA MEASURES

Each CCM or CPC involved in Pacific bluefin tuna fisheries and/or farming shall submit a report to the Executive Director on implementing relevant measures by 15 June each year.

JWG10 will review implementation reports from WCPFC and IATTC Members regarding CMM 2024-01, CMM 2024-02, RESOLUTION C-24-02, and RESOLUTION C-24-03. CCMs and CPCs are reminded that new measures related to Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) are now in force per WCPFC CMM 2024-02 and IATTC Resolution C-24-03. These new reporting obligations will be reviewed by JWG-10 and subsequently reviewed by the appropriate committees at WCPFC and IATTC.

4. SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION ON PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA

4.1 Catch limit scenario projections

The ISC Pacific Bluefin Tuna Working Group (PBFWG) will provide JWG10 with updates on projection results based on CMM 2024-01 and Resolution C-24-02 using the 2024 benchmark stock assessment, as requested by JWG-09.

4.2 Research on migratory patterns

The PBFWG will provide an update on research on Pacific bluefin tuna migratory patterns, as requested by WCPFC21.

4.3 Review of conversion factors

The PBFWG will provide analysis regarding conversion factors to inform discussions on long-term harvest strategy and review of conservation and management measures.

4.4 Reports from WCPFC-SC and IATTC-SAC

The 21st meeting of the WCPFC Scientific Committee (August 13–21, 2025, Tonga) will occur after JWG10; hence, no SC outcome will be available.

IATTC will present key outcomes from the 16th Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee (May 26 – June 6, 2025, San Diego).

5. LONG-TERM HARVEST STRATEGY

5.1 Development of the long-term harvest strategy

The Co-Chairs will provide a summary of the development of the long-term harvest strategy to date and expectations for 2025.

5.2 Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE)

The PBFWG will provide the results of the MSE and any relevant guidance provided by ISC in June 2025.

5.3 Recommendations on the long-term harvest strategy

JWG-10 will discuss harvest strategy elements, including reference points and management procedures, and make recommendations for consideration by NC21 and IATTC.

5.4 Review the workplan

JWG-10 will review the workplan for the long-term harvest strategy and recommend next steps to consider and incorporate new information.

6. REVIEW OF CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA

JWG10 will review relevant CMMs and Resolutions and propose any revisions, including any amendments to align with the long-term harvest strategy, as needed and appropriate.

7. CATCH DOCUMENTATION SCHEME

The Chair of the CDS Technical Meeting will present key outcomes. JWG10 will review progress on:

- Development of the electronic Pacific Bluefin Catch Documentation System (ePBCD),
- Drafting a CMM/Resolution to establish a PBF Catch Documentation Scheme.

8. NEXT JWG MEETING

The JWG10 will consider the tentative date and location of the JWG11 meeting in 2026, including the duration of the CDS Technical Meeting.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Issues raised under Agenda Item 2 will be discussed here.

10. ADOPTION OF REPORT

11. CLOSE OF MEETING

Annex C

JOINT IATTC AND WCPFC-NC WORKING GROUP MEETING ON THE MANAGEMENT OF PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA
TENTH SESSION (JWG-10)

Toyama, Japan (Hybrid)
9 – 12 July 2025

Draft Reporting Template of Conservation and Management Measure 2024-02 for the Monitoring, Controlling, and Surveillance of Pacific Bluefin Tuna / Resolution C-24-03 on Monitoring and Control Measures for the Bluefin Tuna Fishery in the EPO

Related provisions of CMM 2024-02/Resolution C-24-03

2. *Each CCM/CPC that has Pacific bluefin tuna fisheries and/or farming shall report to the Executive Director/Director by 15 June each year on the implementation of its monitoring and control measures it has taken in the previous calendar year to ensure its compliance with CMM2024-01/Resolution C-24-02 that include the following components:*
3. *CCMs/CPCs that do not have Pacific bluefin tuna fisheries and/or farming, shall report to the WCPF/IATTC Secretariat annually any by-catches of Pacific bluefin tuna under paragraph 9 of CMM 2024-01/footnote 1 of Resolution C-24-02.*

2(1) Monitoring and control measures for fisheries

a. Registration of commercial fishing vessels that are authorized to fish for Pacific bluefin tuna (including the WCPFC RFV in accordance with CMM 2018-06 on WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels and Authorization to Fish) / a) Registration of commercial fishing vessels in the IATTC Regional Vessel Register in accordance with Resolution C-24-07 on the Regional Vessel Register	
b. Registration of set nets that are authorized to fish for Pacific bluefin tuna (including registration scheme, number of registered set nets) / b) Registration of set nets that are authorized to fish for Pacific bluefin tuna (including registration scheme, number of registered set nets)	

c. Allocation of catch limits by fishery within the CCMs, where such allocation exist / c) Allocation of catch limits by fishery within the CPCs, where such allocation exist	
d. Reporting requirements for catches for fisheries (targeted, incidental, and discards) / d) Reporting requirements for catches for fisheries (targeted, incidental, and discards), including Resolution C-03-05 on data provision	
e. Measures to monitor catch (e.g. landing receipts, landing inspection, observer program, etc.) / e) Measures to monitor catch (e.g. landing receipts, landing inspection, observer program, etc.)	
f. Measures to monitor landings (including CMM 2017-02 on Minimum Standards for Port State Measures) / f) Measures to monitor landings, including Resolution C-21-07 on port state measures	
g. Measures to monitor domestic transactions / g) Measures to monitor domestic transactions	

(2) Monitoring and control measures for farming

a. Registration of farms that are authorized to farm Pacific bluefin tuna (including registration scheme, number of registered farms, number of registered 'holding pens' or 'cages')	
b. Reporting requirements for caging of fish	
c. Reporting requirements for harvest of farmed fish	
d. Measures to monitor farming activities (including Rules, standards, and procedures to monitor transfer and caging activities)	

Annex D

JOINT IATTC AND WCPFC-NC WORKING GROUP MEETING ON THE MANAGEMENT OF PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA
TENTH SESSION (JWG-10)

Toyama, Japan (Hybrid)
9 – 12 July 2025

CHAIR'S SUMMARY OF THE 6TH CATCH DOCUMENTATION SCHEME (CDS06) TECHNICAL MEETING

IATTC-NC-CDS06-2025/00

1. OPENING OF MEETING

1.1 Welcome

1. Mr. Shingo Ota, Chair of the CDS Working Group, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants.

1.2 Appointment of rapporteur

2. Mr. Samuel Coyle of Japan was appointed the rapporteur for the meeting.

1.3 Adoption of the agenda

3. The provisional agenda was adopted without any change (**Appendix 1**).

1.4 Meeting arrangements

4. Japan explained the meeting arrangements.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF A CATCH DOCUMENTATION SCHEME FOR PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA

2.1 Recap of the 5th CDS Technical Meeting and intersessional activities

5. The Chair noted that the participants at the 5th CDS Technical Meeting had revisited and reaffirmed the conclusions drawn at the 4th CDS Technical Meeting, except for the demarcation of responsibility between the IATTC and WCPFC Secretariats in operational work for system development and maintenance.

6. The Chair recalled that the 5th CDS Technical Meeting had identified two differing views about system development: one system for both organizations versus a separate but harmonized system for each organization, with participants agreeing to continue discussing both approaches.

7. The Chair summarized the key agreements from the 5th CDS Technical Meeting on draft CMM elements, including: initially covering international transactions; excluding heads, eyes, roes, guts and tails

from scope; mandating registration of fishing vessels targeting PBF and farms; including information on vessel, catch, trade, caging, harvesting and transshipment; keeping tagging optional with exemption of tagged fish from validation; requiring validation by government authorities or delegated organizations; establishing a reconciliation process for automatic data validity checking; and agreeing to further discuss treatment of vessels not targeting PBF, data confidentiality arrangements, communication protocols, and exceptional arrangements.

8. The Chair noted that the Small Working Group had been tasked to produce an amended draft CMM based on the 5th CDS Technical Meeting discussions and present it at the current meeting.

9. The Chair noted that the draft letter of agreement between the IATTC/WCPFC and the SPC was successfully endorsed by the JWG and signed on May 9, 2025.

2.2 Framework and governance of ePBCD

10. The participants continued to discuss options for budgetary and administrative consideration, including system architecture and the roles and responsibilities of the IATTC and WCPFC Secretariats.

11. The participants revisited the two differing views about system development: one system for both organizations and a separate but harmonized system for each organization.

12. The participants generally agreed to support one system for both organizations, with general preference expressed for a single system as being more cost-effective than developing two separate systems.

13. The participants agreed to make a final decision on this point after evaluating the technical and financial implications of supporting one system, taking into account the ongoing informal discussions with Shore Informatics regarding the feasibility of developing an ePBCD based on the CCSBT's e-CDS system.

14. The participants agreed that given the difference in conservation and management measures for PBF between the IATTC and WCPFC, certain flexibility should be considered when formulating actual resolutions or CMMs for the CDS in each commission.

2.3 Review of the revised draft CMM

15. Japan presented the working draft CMM Resolution, emphasizing that it was prepared by the Small Working Group as a basis for discussion and had not received formal authorization from the Small Working Group.

16. The presentation covered the background, noting that the 5th CDS Technical Meeting in 2024 tasked the Small Working Group to produce an amended draft CMM, and that both the 102nd IATTC meeting and 21st WCPFC Regular Session agreed to consider the establishment of a CDS for Pacific bluefin tuna fisheries by December 31, 2026.

17. Japan outlined what has been agreed upon from previous meetings, including: (1) exclusion of seafood traceability and specific monitoring, controlling and surveillance measures (3rd

CDS Technical Meeting, 2022); (2) stepwise approach initially covering international transactions; (3) exclusion of heads, eyes, roes, guts and tails from scope; (4) mandatory registration of fishing vessels targeting PBF and farms;

(5) optional rather than mandatory tagging with exemption of tagged fish from validation; (6) validation by government authorities or delegated organizations; (7) verification system following other RFMOs practices; and (8) automatic reconciliation process for data validity checking.

18. The presentation detailed the draft CMM structure across eight parts: (I) General Provisions and Application, covering objective, scope, and definitions; (II) Documents and Information Required, specifying information for ePBCD and ePBRC; (III) Validation, establishing recording and validation procedures; (IV) Tag, providing optional tagging provisions; (V) Verification for PBF trade, covering examination and verification procedures; (VI) Communication, addressing notification requirements; (VII) Data Sharing and Confidentiality, establishing data handling protocols; and (VIII) Exceptional Arrangements, providing for paper documentation under specific circumstances.

19. Key provisions presented included: prohibition of export, import or re-export without completed and validated ePBCD or ePBRC; pilot testing phase for at least X years on voluntary basis before mandatory implementation; automatic reconciliation function to detect data inconsistencies; validation requirements by authorized government officials or delegated organizations; and exceptional arrangements allowing paper documentation under specific circumstances such as small catches less than 1 metric ton, system malfunctions, or technical difficulties.

20. Following the presentation, the participants provided suggestions to revise the draft resolution. The participants made revisions to multiple sections, including paragraphs 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, and 14, to improve readability and clarify terms and phrases. The participants also made changes to paragraphs 15, 17, 19, 22, 26, 27, and 28, and added a new paragraph 29 as a placeholder for a text to be proposed by Korea. The participants postponed their suggestions regarding specific time frames for paragraphs 8 and 26. The outcomes of the discussion are reflected in **Appendix 2**.

21. The participants discussed concerns about Annex F regarding artificial fry, particularly the potential for mixing artificial fry with wild fry and the need for proper identification systems to prevent loopholes and regulatory avoidance.

22. The participants discussed the question of whether the ePBCD system should use one form for export and re-export and another for the other activities, such as catch and caging, or combine landing and export information in one form and a separate form for re-export, as in the case of ICCAT, with the WCPFC Secretariat noting feedback from CCSBT suggesting they would have preferred the former one if designing from scratch due to software complications.

23. The participants agreed that Japan will contact the CCSBT Secretariat to better understand the difficulties they faced with having the ICCAT system and share this information with the Small Working Group.

3. NEXT MEETING

24. The participants agreed to convene the 7th CDS Technical Meeting in conjunction with the 11th JWG meeting.

25. The participants agreed to give the Small Working Group discretion to propose additional virtual technical working group meetings before the 7th Meeting, depending on the progress made by the Small

Working Group.

26. The participants agreed that the duration of the next technical meeting will be decided intersessionally, depending on the progress made by the Small Working Group and any additional working group meetings.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

27. WWF welcomed the good progress made on the CDS and emphasized the need to introduce the CDS as soon as possible given the expanding distribution of PBF, noting that the system does not need to be perfect from the start and can be improved stepwise. WWF recommended holding additional Small Working Group meetings if needed to ensure completion by 2026.

28. The Chair noted that the Small Working Group will work intersessionally, possibly through email exchange, and that the success of producing a completed draft CMM depends on the Small Working Group's efforts.

5. CHAIR'S SUMMARY AND REPORT TO THE JWG

29. The Chair will provide his summary of the CDS technical meeting to the JWG as usual.

Appendix 1

JOINT IATTC AND WCPFC-NC WORKING GROUP
SIXTH CATCH DOCUMENTATION SCHEME TECHNICAL MEETING
(CDS-06)

Toyama, Japan (Hybrid)
09:00 – 15:00, 9 July 2025

ANNOTATED AGENDA

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

1.1 Welcome
Mr. Shingo Ota, Chair of the CDS Technical Meeting, will open the meeting.

1.2 Appointment of rapporteur
A rapporteur will be appointed.

1.3 Adoption of the agenda
An agenda will be adopted. Any additional issues will be discussed under Other Matters.

1.4 Meeting arrangements
The Chair will explain the meeting arrangements, process, and reporting to the JWG.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF A CATCH DOCUMENTATION SCHEME FOR PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA

2.1 Recap of the 5th CDS Technical Meeting and intersessional activities
The Chair will briefly review the results of the 5th CDS Technical Meeting and intersessional work.

2.2 Framework and governance of ePBCD
The meeting participants will continue discussing options for budgetary and administrative consideration, including system architecture and the roles and responsibilities of the IATTC and WCPFC secretariats**.**

2.3 Review of the revised draft CMM
The meeting participants will continue to discuss elements to be included in the CMM submitted by the small working group.

3. NEXT MEETING
The participants will discuss the venue and timing of the next meeting.

4. OTHER BUSINESS
Any other matters raised under Agenda Item 1.3 will be discussed here.

5. CHAIR'S SUMMARY AND REPORT TO THE JWG

The Chair will summarize the results of the CDS Technical Meeting to be reported to the Joint IATTC-WCPFC NC Working Group.

6. CLOSE OF THE MEETING

Appendix 2

JOINT IATTC AND WCPFC-NC WORKING GROUP
SIXTH CATCH DOCUMENTATION SCHEME TECHNICAL MEETING
(CDS-06)

Toyama, Japan (Hybrid)
09:00 – 15:00, 9 July 2025

Working Draft CMM Resolution for Pacific Bluefin Tuna CDS

IATTC-NC-CDS06-2025/02

Small Working Group under the CDS Technical Meeting

Background

In 2019 and 2020, the virtual working group established under the CDS Technical Meeting discussed a draft CMM/Resolution for Pacific bluefin tuna Catch Documentation Scheme. The draft CMM/Resolution received many comments and suggestions from the members of the virtual working group. In June 2022, Japan, as the lead, circulated the 3rd draft of the CMM/Resolution among members of virtual working group, with all comments and suggestions tentatively incorporated. However, since the text became quite busy with those comments and suggestions, including provisions related to traceability and monitoring, controlling and surveillance measures, some of which were considered to be beyond the scope of the CDS, the 3rd draft was not directly discussed at the 3rd CDS Technical meeting.

The 3rd CDS Technical meeting in July, 2022 agreed that "the scope and functions of the draft CMM for the development of CDS would: i) not include seafood traceability and not go beyond the scope of the bluefin tuna CDSs utilized by the CCSBT and ICCAT, and ii) not include specific monitoring, controlling and surveillance measures."

The 4th CDS Technical meeting in July 2023 tentatively agreed to use resources from the CCSBT e-CDS as the platform for the system development of ePBCD. This choice has some implication to the Draft CMM/Resolution. On the other hand, there were several pending issues that need further discussion, such as demarcation between IATTC and WCPFC.

In July 2024, the small working group submitted a working draft CMM/Resolution to the 5th CDS Technical meeting. This draft was developed based on the 3rd draft and by simplifying some of the text to reflect the agreement in 2022 to narrow the scope and functions of the draft CMM/Resolution. The 5th CDS Technical meeting tentatively agreed to take a stepwise approach to determine the scope of application and to initially set the scope as covering international transactions. The 5th CDS Technical meeting also agreed to task the small working group to produce an amended draft CMM and to present it at the next CDS Technical meeting.

Furthermore, at the 102nd meeting of the IATTC in September 2024 and the 21st regular session of the WCPFC in December 2024, the CPCs/CCMs agreed to consider the establishment of a CDS for Pacific bluefin tuna fisheries in the EPO/WCPO by 31 December 2026.

In light of these progress, the small working group wishes to submit the amended working draft CMM/Resolution as attached. This working draft has not received any authorization from the virtual working group or small working group established under the CDS Technical meeting. Rather, this document was created for the purpose of having a basis for further discussion at the 6th CDS Technical meeting and thereafter.

Part I: General Provisions and Application

1. The objective of the Pacific bluefin tuna Catch Documentation (PBCD) program is to identify the origin and movement of Pacific bluefin tuna (PBF) in its processed or unprocessed form (wild capture or farmed) in order to support the implementation of Conservation and Management Measure (CMM)/Resolution for PBF, including by providing a tool to assist in combating IUU fishing.

2. This CMM/Resolution applies to PBF, except for those captured in sport and recreational fisheries when their sales are prohibited.

3. For the purpose of this CMM/Resolution:
   (1) "Catch" means:
   Commercial wild capture of PBF, except when the captured PBF is not retained on board.
   (2) "Caging" means:
   The relocation of live PBF from a fishing vessel, trap or transport cage to a farming cage, including a fattening cage.
   (3) "Export" means:
   Any movement of PBF from the territory of the Commission Member, Cooperating Non-member and participating Territory (hereinafter referred to as CCM)/Member and Cooperating Non-Member (hereinafter referred to as CPC) where the fishing vessel is flagged (hereinafter referred to as flag CCM/CPC) or where the trap or farm is established (hereinafter referred to as trap CCM/CPC or farm CCM/CPC, respectively) to the territory of another CCM/CPC or non-CCM/non-CPC of the Commission, or from the fishing grounds to the territory of a CCM/CPC which is not the flag CCM/CPC or to the territory of a non-CCM/non-CPC of the Commission.
   (4) "Harvest [(from cages)]" means:
   Removal of PBF from farming cages for consumption, processing, export or other purposes that result in the death of the animal.
   (5) "Import" means:
   Any introduction of PBF into the territory of a CCM/CPC [or non-CCM/CPC] from another CCM/CPC or non-CCM/CPC of the Commission, or from the fishing grounds to the territory of a CCM/CPC, which is not the flag CCM/CPC, trap CCM/CPC or farm CCM/CPC.
   (6) "Re-export" means:
   Any movement of PBF from the territory of a CCM/CPC where it was previously imported to the territory of another CCM/CPC or non-CCM/non-CPC.
   (7) "Transshipment" means:
   The unloading of all or any of PBF on board a fishing vessel to another fishing vessel either at sea or in port.

4. [Export, import or re-export of PBF without a completed and validated electronic Pacific bluefin tuna Catch Documentation (ePBCD) or electronic Pacific bluefin tuna Re-export Certificate (ePBRC) shall be prohibited.] Export, import or re-export of fish parts other than the meat or collars (i.e., heads, eyes, roes, guts and tails) shall be exempted from the requirement of this CMM/Resolution.

5. Development and implementation of ePBCD and [ePBRC]
   (1) For the implementation of this CMM/Resolution, an interoperable ePBCD system [between IATTC and WCPFC] will be developed. This system will also be made available for [ePBRC]. WCPFC and IATTC Secretariats should formulate the Terms of Reference for an open tender for the system development before the end of 20XX, or as soon as possible thereafter. Such Terms

of Reference shall be approved by both WCPFC and IATTC. The Secretariat shall report to the Commission the result of tenders and progress on the system development thereafter.

(2) A pilot testing phase will be undertaken at least for [X] years to implement ePBCD and [ePBRC]. The pilot testing will involve CCMs/CPCs on a voluntary basis and cover range of actions required in this CMM/Resolution.

(3) Use of the ePBCD system is mandatory of all CCMs/CPCs once the establishment of the ePBCD system is completed with necessary modifications as a result of the pilot testing phase.

(4) Notwithstanding paragraph 4 and subparagraph (3), paper PBCDs and [PBRCs], whose formats are attached as Annex A and B, respectively, or printed ePBCDs and [ePBRCs] may be used in cases falling under the exceptional circumstances specified in paragraph 26. The provisions of paragraph 4 and Parts II through VII shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to paper PBCDs and PBRCs or printed ePBCDs and [ePBRCs].

(5) The ePBCD system will include a function that automatically detects any inconsistencies in the input data and notifies the relevant CCMs/CPCs of these inconsistencies. Such inconsistencies shall include the following:

a. The accumulated catch attributed to a CCM/CPC recorded in the ePBCD system exceeds that CCM/CPC's catch quota or catch limit for the relevant management year (notification will be sent to the CCM/CPC).

b. The amount of exported Pacific bluefin tuna recorded in the ePBCD system originating from a single vessel or trap on a single day exceeds the recorded amount of PBF caught by that vessel or trap on that day (notification will be sent to the exporting CCM/CPC).

Part II: Documents and Information Required

6. The following information shall be recorded in the ePBCD. Each item shall be in accordance with the specifications in Annex C.
   (1) Information on catch
   (2) Information on transshipment
   (3) Information on harvest [(from cages)]
   (4) Information on first sale after catch
   (5) Information on [export] and import

7. The following information shall be recorded in the [ePBRC]. Each item shall be in accordance with the specifications in Annex D.
   (1) Information on imported PBF, including information on related ePBCD(s)
   (2) Information on re-export and import

Part III: Validation

8. Record in ePBCD and [ePBRC]
   (1) The master or operator of a vessel, the trap or farm operator, the exporter, their authorized representative, or the authorized representative of the flag CCM/CPC, trap CCM/CPC, farm CCM/CPC or the CCM/CPC where PBF is exported from (hereinafter referred to as export CCM/CPC) shall record the information specified in paragraph 6 in the appropriate section of the ePBCD on each occasion it catches, transships, harvests [(from cages)], first sells, or exports PBF.
   (2) For PBF that is not exported, catch and transshipment information must be recorded in the ePBCD, however, the additional information required in sub-paragraph (1) is not required.

(3) Information on catch shall be recorded within [7] days of the landing. However, if the landing of PBF by one vessel or one trap at a time is less than [1] metric ton, or the PBF is tagged in accordance with Part IV, the information may be recorded within [ ] days. When PBF is caged, information on catch shall be recorded within [ ]. Any transfer of the caged PBF shall be prohibited until the information on catch is recorded.

(4) The re-exporter, its authorized representative, or the authorized representative of the CCM/CPC where the PBF is re-exported from (hereinafter referred to as re-export CCM/CPC) shall record the information specified in paragraph 7 in the appropriate section of the [ePBRC] on each occasion they re-exports PBF.

9. Validation of ePBCD and [ePBRC]

(1) The ePBCD and [ePBRC] must be validated by an authorized government official, or other authorized individual or institution, of the flag CCM/CPC, trap CCM/CPC, farm CCM/CPC, export CCM/CPC or re-export CCM/CPC that caught, harvested [(from cages)], exported or re-exported PBF.

(2) The ePBCD shall be validated only when:

a. All the information provided in the ePBCD has been established to be accurate;

b. The accumulated catch attributed to a CCM/CPC is within that CCM/CPC's catch quota or catch limit for the relevant management year; and,

c. The PBF in the ePBCD was caught, transshipped, harvested [(from cages)] or sold in compliance with other applicable provisions of CMMs/Resolutions.

(3) The [ePBRC] shall be validated only when:

a. All the information provided in the [ePBRC] has been established to be accurate;

b. All the ePBCD numbers relating to the previously imported PBF products are included.

c. Each related ePBCD had been validated and accepted for the importation of the products declared on the [ePBRC]; and,

d. The products to be re-exported are wholly or partly the same product on the validated ePBCD(s).

Part IV: Tag

10. Notwithstanding paragraph 9, validation of ePBCD shall not be required when PBF is tagged by the flag CCM/CPC or trap CCM/CPC in accordance with the following criteria:

(1) All PBF in the ePBCD concerned are individually tagged;

(2) The minimum information associated with the tag includes:

a. Identifying information on the vessel or trap that caught PBF;

b. The date of catch or landing;

c. The area of catch of the PBF;

d. The type of product and weight of the PBF;

e. Information on the exporter and importer (where applicable);

f. The point of export (where applicable).

(3) Information on tagged fish is compiled by the responsible CCM/CPC and made available to the Secretariat upon its request.

11. CCMs/CPCs may require their vessels or traps to affix a tag to each PBF preferably at the timing of kill, but no later than the time of landing. The tags shall have unique country-specific numbers and be tamper proof. The tag numbers shall be linked to the ePBCD.

12. Such tags shall only be used when the accumulated catch attributed to a CCM/CPC is within that CCM/CPC's catch quota or catch limit for the relevant management year, including where appropriate individual quotas allocated to vessels or traps.

Part V: Verification for PBF trade

13. Each CCM/CPC shall ensure that its competent authorities, or other authorized individuals or institutions take steps to identify each consignment of PBF imported into or exported or re-exported from its territory and request and examine the validated ePBCD(s) and [ePBRC(s)] as well as other related documentation for each consignment of PBF when it is exported, imported or re-exported. These authorities, individuals or institutions may also examine the contents of the consignment to verify the information contained in the ePBCD and in related documents and, where necessary, shall carry out verifications with the importer or exporter concerned.

14. If as a result of examinations or verifications carried out pursuant to paragraph 13, questions arise regarding the information contained in an ePBCD or [ePBRC], the final importing CCM/CPC and the CCM/CPC whose competent authorities validated the ePBCD(s) or [ePBRC(s)] shall cooperate to address such questions.

15. If a CCM/CPC involved in export, import or re-export of PBF identifies a consignment in violation of paragraph 4, it shall notify the findings to the relevant CCM/CPC. The relevant CCM/CPC shall take necessary measures, including investigations, and share the results with the informing CCM/CPC.

16. Pending the examinations or verifications under paragraph 13 to confirm compliance of PBF consignment with the requirements in this CMM/Resolution and any other relevant CCMs/Resolutions, the CCMs/CPCs shall not grant its release for export, import and re-export.

17. Where a CCM/CPC, as a result of examinations or verifications under paragraph 13 and in cooperation with the validating authorities concerned, determines that an ePBCD or [ePBRC] is invalid, import, export and re-export of the PBF consignment shall be prohibited.

Part VI: Communication

18. Each CCM/CPC shall notify the Secretariat of the name, title, organization and address of the government officials or other authorized individuals specified in paragraph 9(1), and the name and address of the other authorized institutions specified in the same paragraph and, where appropriate, the name and title of the officials who are individually empowered within those institutions. This notification shall indicate the date at which the authorization comes into force. Any changes to the content of the notification under this paragraph shall be promptly notified to the Secretariat.

19. Each CCM/CPC shall notify the Secretariat of the name, address and contact details of the organization that will serve as the point of contact for questions related to ePBCDs or [ePBRCs] concerning the CCM/CPC. Any changes to the content of the notification under this paragraph shall be promptly notified to the Secretariat.

20. All CCMs/CPCs concerned shall, as soon as possible for the ePBCD system implementation, submit to the Secretariat the data necessary to ensure the registration of their users in the ePBCD system.

Access to and use of the system cannot be ensured for those who fail to provide and maintain the data required by the ePBCD system.

21. The Commission shall request the non-CCMs/non-CPCs that are involved in export, import or re-export of PBF to cooperate with the implementation of the program and to provide to the Commission data obtained from such implementation.

22. Access to the ePBCD system shall be granted to non-CCMs/non-CPCs to facilitate trade of PBF. Until such time as the functionality is developed that allows non-CCMs/non-CPCs access to the system, this shall be accomplished through completion by the non-CCMs/non-CPCs of paper PBCD and [PBRC] consistent with the terms of paragraph 5(4) and submission to the Secretariat for entry into the ePBCD system. The Secretariat shall communicate without delay to those non-CCMs/non-CPCs known to import, export or re-export PBF to make them aware of the ePBCD system and the applicable provisions of this CMM/Resolution.

Part VII: Data Sharing and Confidentiality

23. The information notified under paragraph 18 shall be handled as non-public domain data and the Secretariat shall facilitate access to this information by authorized CCM/CPC users through the secure pages of the Commission website.

24. The Secretariat shall facilitate access to the information notified under paragraph 19 through the public pages of the Commission website.

25. All the data in ePBCD shall be processed in accordance with the Rules of Procedures for the Protection, Access to, and Dissemination of Data Compiled by the Commission/Resolution on Confidentiality.

Part VIII: Exceptional Arrangements

26. Paper PBCDs and [PBRCs], whose formats are attached as Annex A and B, respectively, or printed ePBCDs and [ePBRCs] may be used in accordance with paragraph 5(4), if any of the following circumstances apply:
    (1) The landing or caging of PBF by one vessel or one trap at a time is less than [1] metric ton, or the PBF is tagged in accordance with Part IV. In this case, the logbook or the sales note may be used as a temporary PBCD. Such paper PBCDs, printed ePBCDs or temporary PBCDs shall be converted to ePBCDs within a period of [ ] days or prior to the export, whichever is first;
    (2) PBF is caught prior to the full implementation of the ePBCD system as specified in paragraph 5(3);
    (3) Technical difficulties arise with the ePBCD system that preclude a CCM/CPC from using the system. In this case, the CCM/CPC shall follow the procedures set forth in Annex E. Delays by CCMs/CPCs in taking necessary actions, such as providing the data necessary to ensure the registration of users in the ePBCD system or other avoidable situations, do not constitute technical difficulties in this subparagraph.
    (4) In the case of trade between CCMs/CPCs and non-CCMs/non-CPCs, where access to the ePBCD system by non-CCMs/non-CPCs through the Secretariat in accordance with paragraph 22 is not possible or is not timely enough to ensure that trade is not unduly delayed or disrupted.

27. When a paper PBCD or [PBRC], or a printed ePBCD or [ePBRC] is used in accordance with paragraphs 5(4) and 26, importing CCMs/CPCs, solely on the basis of the use of such paper or printed PBCD and [PBRC], shall not be cited as a reason to delay or deny import of PBF.

28. Where requested by a CCM/CPC, the Secretariat shall facilitate the conversion of paper PBCDs or [PBRCs], or printed ePBCDs or [ePBRCs] to ePBCDs or [ePBRCs].

29. New text to be proposed by Korea

Annex A: Format of Paper PBCD
Need to be considered based on the discussion in the main text.

Annex B: Format of Paper PBRC
Need to be considered based on the discussion in the main text.

Annex C: Information to be Recorded in ePBCD
Need to be considered based on the discussion in the main text.

Annex D: Information to be Recorded in ePBRC
Need to be considered based on the discussion in the main text.

Annex E: Procedures for Technical Difficulties with the ePBCD system
Need to be considered based on the discussion in the main text.

Annex F: Artificial Fry
Need to be considered based on the discussion in the main text.

Annex E

JOINT IATTC AND WCPFC-NC WORKING GROUP MEETING ON THE MANAGEMENT OF PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA TENTH SESSION (JWG-10)

Toyama, Japan (Hybrid)
9 – 12 July 2025

KOREA'S STATEMENT

Thank you, co-chairs.

The Republic of Korea would first like to express its sincere appreciation for the collective and

arduous efforts of all members of the Joint Working Group. The latest scientific assessments from 2024 have provided clear and encouraging evidence that the Pacific bluefin tuna stock is in a period of rapid recovery, meeting our ambitious rebuilding targets well ahead of schedule. This is a testament to the effectiveness of our collaborative conservation measures over the past two decades and a shared success we can all be proud of.

This very success has brought forth new and pressing realities for coastal states, including the Republic of Korea. In recent years, our waters have witnessed an unprecedented and dramatic increase in the abundance of Pacific bluefin tuna. While the precise causes are still under investigation, it is widely presumed that factors such as climate change are altering the migratory patterns and distribution of this valuable species. We note that Korea is not alone in observing these significant shifts.

While coastal states of the WCPFC hold the rights to manage highly migratory species in their territorial and archipelagic waters, the Republic of Korea has voluntarily and steadfastly participated in this international management framework with very limited catch limits based on historical catch records that no longer reflect the reality of the resource's distribution and abundance. We have done so as the stock was in a dire situation and to implement the principle that cooperative management is the most effective path to the long-term sustainability of this highly migratory species.

However, the stock is rapidly recovering now. Catch limits based solely on catch records from 20 years ago have created a severe socio-economic strain on our coastal fishing communities. These communities, which are facing economic hardship and the threat of decline, now see a resurgent and abundant resource in their traditional fishing grounds, yet they are constrained by rigid, historical quotas. It is an untenable situation for a responsible coastal state to simply watch as its fishing communities suffer while a healthy and plentiful resource is at their doorstep.

The remarkable recovery of the Pacific bluefin tuna is a collective achievement that must now translate into adaptive and equitable management. Looking forward, it is imperative that the long-term management framework for this species fully considers the current state of the resource and the legitimate rights and acute needs of coastal states that are experiencing these dramatic changes in stock distribution.

The Republic of Korea remains fully committed to the sustainable management of Pacific bluefin tuna. A long-term management regime that fully considers the new realities will motivate Korea to maintain its commitment. As a costal state, one of Korea's top priorities is to ensure the livelihoods of our fishing communities who depend on the resources in our territorial waters.

We believe that by working together and acknowledging the changed circumstances, we can ensure both the continued health of the Pacific bluefin tuna and the vitality of the coastal communities that depend on it.
Thank you.

5. OTHER
5a. Statement by the Chair of the IATTC, Mr. Andres Arens

Mr. Juan Carlos Navarro Q, Minister of Environment
Mr. Arnulfo Franco, Executive Director of the IATTC
Mr. Eduardo Carrasquilla Dutari, General Administrator of Panama's Aquatic Resources Authority
Authorities from the Ministry of Environment
Authorities from the Ministry of Agricultural Development

Distinguished delegates, representatives of governments, international organizations, the private sector, civil society, the scientific community, colleagues from the Commission staff, and dear translators:

It is an honor for me to chair the **103rd meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission** here in **Panama City**, a host country to which we are deeply grateful for its hospitality and ongoing commitment to regional governance of marine resources. Panama, with its maritime history and vocation, symbolizes the spirit of cooperation and dialogue that characterizes our Commission.

A fundamental task brings us together: **achieving a solid and lasting consensus** that strengthens the sustainability of fishery resources in the eastern Pacific Ocean. We acknowledge our differences, yet we recognize that the future of our fisheries and coastal communities depends on the IATTC's ability to reach agreements.

One of our greatest threats is **illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing**. No country, no matter how strong, can face this challenge alone. Only through cooperation, information sharing, strengthening monitoring and traceability systems, and effective enforcement of our conservation measures can we close the door on illegality and ensure sustainable and fair trade.

We have come a long way in **adopting conservation measures for tuna and tuna-like species**. However, challenges remain. We are here to overcome these challenges together.

Science guides us, and our duty is **to support decision-making based on the best available scientific evidence**, with a long-term view that ensures healthy ecosystems and profitable fisheries for future generations.

In order to continue agreeing on effective science-based conservation measures, the IATTC must also **strengthen its administrative and financial organization**, with transparency, rigor, and predictability. A solid budget and efficient management are the foundation that allows us to

sustain scientific excellence, ensure the inclusive participation of all parties, and respond to the growing demands of you, the Members, and the international community at large.

At this meeting, we have the opportunity to take decisive steps:

- As a result of scientific excellence, sound policy management, cooperation among countries, and the industry's strong commitment, today we have healthy stocks of our main target species, making this meeting an excellent opportunity to consider modernizing our tuna management.
- Further strengthen coordination with other fisheries management organizations to ensure consistency in the management of shared stocks.
- Demonstrate to the international community that when things are done well, with dedication, effort, investment of resources, and the combined talent of capable professionals, positive results are achieved.
- The IATTC is tangible proof that the work of RFMOs is effective, useful, and very necessary.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The future of our fisheries is not built with speeches or isolated documents, but with **concrete, consensual, and sustained actions over time**. I invite you during these days of work to prioritize cooperation over confrontation, common interest over particular interests, and science over uncertainty.

In a spirit of responsibility and unity, I greet you once again and thank you for allowing me to chair the **103rd meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission**.

Thank you very much.

5b. Statement by the Director of the IATTC, Dr. Arnulfo Franco

Ministers and Vice-Ministers,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Dear colleagues,

First, on behalf of this Commission and its staff, I would like to express our gratitude for the hospitality extended to us by Panama, its authorities, and its people for hosting this 103rd meeting of the IATTC at a very special moment in its history. This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Commission's inception in 1950, and it has now been 15 years since the Antigua Convention entered into force in August 2010, radically transforming the Commission by updating and strengthening it in light of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the instruments adopted under its framework, and in application of the principles and rules of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Today, the Commission is no longer limited to tropical tunas, but its mandate extends to all tunas and tuna-like species, as well as dependent or associated species and related ecosystems. In terms of the area it covers, although it is attached to the coasts of the American continent, it encompasses the entire eastern Pacific, up to the jurisdictional waters of French Polynesia and Kiribati, and even overlaps with a small portion of the area of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

In this regard, it is important to remember that the IATTC is the oldest of the five tuna RFMOs dedicated to promoting and ensuring the conservation and sustainable management of tuna and tuna-like species, as well as the conservation of associated or dependent species and related ecosystems. Now more than ever, the IATTC works in coordination and cooperation with its four sister organizations to ensure the most efficient execution of their common mandate and the preservation of their powers to defend the interests and rights of their Members, including in international forums where it is essential that they make their voices heard.

As stated in the Antigua Convention, " multilateral cooperation constitutes the most effective means for achieving the objectives of conservation and sustainable use of living marine resources." The positive balance of the joint efforts of IATTC Members and other actors and stakeholders within its framework demonstrates this. As we noted at the third United Nations Ocean Conference, during the last two decades, after the IATTC strengthened its role as a true regional fisheries management organization with the adoption of mandatory conservation and management measures, significant improvements in tuna stocks were noted at the regional and global levels, as reflected in the latest FAO report on the state of fisheries in 2024. This report highlights that 87% of global tuna stocks are fished sustainably and that 99% of total catches come from tuna stocks that are in good health.

An essential factor in the success of these policies and actions is the sound scientific advice on which management measures are based, including the development of a dialogue between scientists and managers that ensures that conservation and management decisions take into account practical requirements and changing environmental, technological, and socioeconomic conditions.

In this regard, it is important to recall the Commission's heritage as established by the 1949 convention between the United States of America and Costa Rica, a heritage that was expressly preserved in the 2003 Antigua Convention. The IATTC is the only tuna RFMO that has its own high-level scientific staff with the diverse qualifications required to ensure that the best science is made available to all Members, without exception and regardless of their relative level of development and available resources, both human and financial. It is noteworthy that the 2003 Antigua Convention devoted a long article, Article XIII, to this scientific staff and its various tasks in the service of the entire Commission and all its Members. In this same vein, the IATTC of 1949 also passed down field offices in several countries, which are essential hubs for conducting research and for managing the IATTC's onboard observer program, as well as a laboratory in Achotines, Panama, where highly important experiments are carried out to improve our understanding of tunas and, with a forward-looking approach, to enable their eventual farming and the achievement of reproduction and a full life cycle in captivity.

Finally, it is worth remembering once again that this institutional strengthening of the Commission has taken place during a period in which more and more contributions and inputs have been constantly requested from the IATTC and its staff, in response to the changing and increasingly important needs of its Members, who themselves are subject to new, multiple, and often urgent demands.

All of these elements will surely be taken into consideration during this week's discussions and when decisions are made that will drive the IATTC into its new cycle of activities in the coming months and years. We are fully confident that all participants in these meetings and in the decision-making process will be guided, as in the past, by the desire to achieve the greatest benefit for all Members of the Commission, both individually and collectively. I can assure you that the Commission's staff and I will remain at your disposal and service to support you as best we can in this joint effort. I wish you the greatest success in your deliberations.

5c Statement by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Panama (acting), Ambassador Carlos Guevara Mann

Distinguished guests at the head table. Distinguished delegates and people joining us at this magnificent meeting.

Of course, I bring special greetings from His Excellency the President and our Minister Javier Martínez Acha, who are currently in route to Japan for an official visit. Just a moment ago, I was telling the Minister of the Environment how pleased we are that this meeting, the 103rd meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, is being held here for the second consecutive year.

We believe that, in this way, Panama not only values its role as a bridge to the world and a meeting place for countries around the globe, but also adds significant value to important duties in our time, such as environmental protection, ensuring global food production and distribution, and seeking and finding solutions for agreements among countries.

This meeting brings together representatives from more than 20 countries and numerous non-governmental organizations. As I mentioned, this meeting provides a valuable opportunity to strengthen international cooperation regarding the management of fishery resources in the eastern Pacific Ocean.

Tropical tuna, in addition to being essential to our economies, is an integral part of the balance of marine ecosystems.

Panama remains firmly committed to protecting marine resources, not only tropical tuna, but also associated species that contribute to the biodiversity of our seas. The decisions made here will directly impact the health of our oceans and the coastal communities that depend on them for their livelihoods and economic development.

The objective of this meeting is clear: to promote sustainable tropical tuna fisheries through responsible, environmentally friendly practices. Only through a collaborative, science-based approach grounded in international law can we guarantee these resources continue to be a source of well-being for present and future generations.

We recognize the progress the Commission has made over the years. As I mentioned to the Director, we are pleased to note its successful operation for 75 years since its establishment in 1950. We particularly highlight the responsible and preventive management measures that have led to significant achievements in fisheries conservation.

These efforts exemplify how multilateral action can yield concrete results. We are confident that the discussions over the next five days will be productive and contribute to the sustainability of fisheries, the protection of the environment, and the improvement of the well-being of those who depend on it.

Panama reaffirms its commitment to multilateralism and to combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. This meeting demonstrates that commitment and shows that international cooperation is essential to addressing common challenges. We are confident that this meeting will be a decisive step toward conserving our marine resources. Thank you very much.

5d. Statement by Bolivia on Capacity

Ministerio de Defensa
Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia

Statement of the Plurinational State of Bolivia before the 103rnd meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)
Panama City, Panama, 01-06 September 2025

[Informal Translation]

The Plurinational State of Bolivia, participating in the 103rd Meeting of the Commission, hereby declares:

First, Bolivia reaffirms its claim of sustained capacity since 2004 without interruption;

Secondly, it reiterates its request for the immediate allocation and activation, or for activation at the earliest possible date, to replace 2,000 m^3 with new capacity resulting from the possible reduction in the closed season recommended at the 16th Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee and at the Commission itself, as a compromise solution while awaiting the replacement of the entirety of its claim, in accordance with the request submitted during the 26th Meeting of the Permanent Working Group (PWG) on Fleet Capacity.

Finally, it thanks the PWG for having recorded, at the same meeting mentioned above, under the heading “new requests,” Bolivia's aspiration, reiterated annually since 2019, for an additional 5,000 m^3, to be activated in the future when the state of fish stocks allows it, in response to the “special needs and requirements of landlocked developing countries.”

For years, Bolivia's first two requests have been inspired by the most genuine spirit of equity as a source of international law, seeking a solution that is essential and intrinsically fair, and contributing to the resolution of the oldest claim that is still pending. They also enjoy precedent within this organization in at least two cases.

Now, in 2025, these requests are also based on two new pillars that make them even more solid: The first is the best available scientific evidence, which allows for the recommendation of a reduction of the temporary ban on purse seine fishing for tropical tunas by up to ten days, of which two days could be used to accommodate Bolivia's immediate needs; the second is the renewed international interest shown this year by landlocked developing countries, following the proclamation of the International Day of Awareness of the Special

Needs and Development Challenges of Landlocked Developing Countries, together with the momentum generated by the work of the Third UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, held in Awaza, Turkmenistan, from August 5 to 8, 2025. Bolivia, which falls into this category of countries, is unique in that it once had a coastline, coupled with the fact that it had a fishing fleet in the eastern Pacific Ocean that, at its peak, amounted to 7,910 m^3. This Declaration is presented for the purpose of achieving certain effects recognized by international law and required by Bolivian constitutional law.

Issued in Panama City, Republic of Panama, on the fifth day of September of the year two thousand twenty-five.

Requests from the Plurinational State of Bolivia to the 26th Meeting of the Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, Panama City, Republic of Panama, August 25, 2025

The Plurinational State of Bolivia, consistent with its statement presented at the 102nd Meeting of the IATTC, held from September 2 to 6, 2024, at this same venue, as well as its official correspondence with the Commission, requests the following from the 26th Meeting of the GTP:

1. The activation, at the earliest possible date, of 2,000 m³ of storage volume, based on the reduction of the temporary closure for tropical tuna fishing using purse seines established by RESOLUTION C-24-01 ON CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR TROPICAL TUNA IN THE EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN DURING 2025–2026, in accordance with the Report attached to this request, which was prepared on the basis of the documents submitted and the recommendations issued by the 16th Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee, held in La Jolla, United States of America, from June 2 to 6, 2025;
2. That, as shown in the presentation by the Director of the IATTC on agenda item 3 on the "review of changes in capacity utilization in the OPO," Bolivia's request be included in the table on page 13 of DOCUMENT CAP-26-01 REV. - UTILIZATION OF VESSEL CAPACITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTIONS C-02-03, C-12-06, C-12-08, C-15-02, and C-24-07, subsection c., on new requests, with the detail of "[s]pecial needs and requirements of landlocked developing countries," for 5,000 m³ of hold volume, initially submitted in 2019 and reiterated at each and every meeting of the GTP and the Commission, in accordance with the extract from the Official Letter attached as an annex to this application, and that it be kept in mind for activation when the state of fish stocks so permits.

Members of this subsidiary body of the Commission are requested to consider these requests from Bolivia, include them in the minutes of the 26th Meeting of the GTP, and submit them as a recommendation to the 103rd Meeting.

Annex to request 1:

BIOLOGICAL-SCIENTIFIC REPORT
Request from the Plurinational State of Bolivia: Reduction of the closed season to 8 days and reallocation of 2,000 m^3 of capacity.

Introduction

The purpose of this technical-scientific report is to support the request made by the Plurinational State of Bolivia to the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) in relation to:

1. The reduction of the closed season from 10 days to 8 days in the tropical tuna purse seine fishery.
2. The reallocation of 2,000 m^3 of tuna carrying capacity to Bolivia, as part of the equitable redistribution of capacities within the framework of the IATTC.

This request is based on the scientific evidence available in the SAC-16 reports, particularly in the baseline assessments, population status indicators, management strategies, and recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Committee. The analyses show that this adjustment would not compromise the sustainability of tropical tuna stocks in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO), provided that the recommended biological and ecosystem controls are maintained.

1) Purpose and scientific framework

This report evaluates, from an exclusively biological and precautionary **perspective**, the feasibility of adjusting the reduction of the annual closure of the OPO tropical tuna purse seine fishery to 8 days and reallocating 2,000 m^3 of carrying capacity to Bolivia, in light of the recommendations of CCA-16 and the SAC-16 technical documents (assessments, indicators, management strategies, and staff recommendations). In 2025, the CCA/IATTC discussed management options that include a maximum reduction of 10 days or, alternatively, 7 days with elimination of the "corralito," within the 2026–2028 cycle, specifying that any relaxation must be small and maintain safeguards such as the individual vessel threshold (IVT) and reinforced port sampling/monitoring so as not to increase the risk of exceeding FMSY (Maximum Sustainable Yield).

Consequently, the candidate strategy for bigeye tuna (BET) formalizes an F30–S20[1] harvest control rule, with a maximum change of ±10 days between cycles and "exceptional circumstances" if there is a ≥10% probability of exceeding the S20% reference point.

The scientific evidence available in the SAC-16 reports, particularly in the baseline assessments, population status indicators, management strategies, and recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Committee, demonstrates that such an adjustment would not compromise

[1] F30: the target fishing rate is set to maintain the spawning biomass (SBR) close to 30% of the no-fishing level (management target). S20%: threshold reference point (20% of the no-fishing level). If the SBR falls toward that threshold, the rule reduces fishing mortality to allow recovery.

the sustainability of tropical tuna stocks in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO), provided that the recommended biological and ecosystem controls are maintained.

2) Recent status of stocks and biological signals

Yellowfin tuna (YFT). The 2025 baseline assessment explicitly incorporates spatial structure (NE vs. SW) and supports a status consistent with management toward MSY (maximum sustainable yield), with no evidence of overfishing in the EPO under current measures. The 2024 catches (≈ 294,000 t, EPO) exceeded the 2014–2023 average by 14%, with no anomalous increases in discards, suggesting robust biomass and productivity.

Skipjack tuna (SKJ). A highly productive species; in 2024, the EPO catch reached 645,000 t (an all-time high, +100% vs. the 2014–2023 average), with discards <1.2% in purse seine; there are no signs of overexploitation based on operational indicators.

Bigeye tuna (BET). Status indicators (SSI) show that fishing mortality of juveniles decreased after the implementation of Individual Thresholds per Vessel (ITP) (C-21-04), with a positive effect confirmed in 2022–2024. However, Catch per Unit Effort (CPUE) and average size in sets on floating objects have shown long-term declines, so the relaxation of the ban must be prudent and accompanied by safeguards. In 2024, purse seine catches of BET (≈ 34,000 t) and longline catches (≈ 18,000 t) were low in historical terms, reducing the risk that a moderate adjustment (8 days) would push F above FMSY, provided that the control framework (ISB, sampling, observers, etc.) is maintained.

The species is considered highly productive and resilient to intensive fishing, according to results confirmed by stock status indicators (SSI) and recent baseline assessments (SAC-16-02 and SAC-16-03).

3) Biological basis for reducing the closed season to 8 days

- **Flexibility in the design of management strategies (EEO):**
  SAC-16-06 establishes that the maximum permitted changes in closed season days are limited to ±10 days, provided that the precautionary rule F30–S20 is respected. In this context, an 8-day reduction falls within the biologically acceptable range.
- **Recent population indicators:**
  The SSI show stable trends for yellowfin and skipjack tuna, and in the case of bigeye tuna, they reflect improvements in the reduction of juvenile mortality following the application of individual vessel thresholds (IVT). This indicates that small adjustments to the closed season do not pose a risk of population collapse.

• **Minimizing the risk of exceeding Fmsy**[2]:

[2] In accordance with scientific advice from the CCA/CIAT, F_{MSY} (or F_{RMS}) is defined as the fishing mortality rate that produces the maximum sustainable yield of the stock; therefore, measures must maintain F ≤ F_{MSY} to avoid overfishing and ensure the long-term productivity of the resource.

The US recommendation to the SAC emphasizes that any reduction in the closed season must be "small" so as not to increase the risk of exceeding FMSY. The difference between 10 and 8 days constitutes an adjustment with low biological impact, within the precautionary threshold.

• **Multispecies balance:**

The SAC recommended that any measure should consider multispecies effects (bigeye, yellowfin, skipjack). Recent analyses show that the resilience of yellowfin and skipjack allows them to absorb the marginal fishing pressure resulting from a closure reduction of only 2 days compared to the baseline scenario.

• **Evidence by species:**

1. YFT: 2025 assessment plus 2024 catches above the decade average point to resilience under the current mix of sets; the 8-day cut would not impose pressures incompatible with MSY.
2. SKJ: High productivity and record 2024 catches suggest low biological risk from a moderate adjustment to the closed season, provided that FAD sets continue to be managed with thresholds and indicators.
3. BET: UIBs have reduced catches and mortality in juveniles; maintaining UIBs + monitoring mitigates the risk of 8 days raising F above reference levels. HCR F30–S20 provides an automatic brake (reduction of F if SBR falls toward S20%).
4. Multispecificity and EEO/MSE (Management Strategy Evaluation) testing: The CCA urged testing candidate strategies for purse seine and longline in 2025–2026 and evaluating cross-species impacts; the 8-day adjustment is more conservative than 10 and compatible with the recommended triennial adaptive management cycle.

4) Justification for the allocation of 2,000 m^3 to Bolivia: Biological neutrality under capacity control

Fleet capacity in the OPO is managed through the Regional Vessel Register (C-02-03). The requested reallocation (2,000 m^3) is marginal in relation to the regional total and, under the current capacity ceiling and compliance with observers, sampling, and more UIB, its expected biological impact is neutral (it does not significantly modify cumulative F). In strictly population terms, what is relevant is not the origin of the flag, but that the aggregate capacity remains within the limit and that its operation complies with the HCR (Harvest Control Rule)[3], the UIBs, and the monitoring programs.

The request to reallocate 2,000 m^3 to the Plurinational State of Bolivia represents a marginal increase in relation to the total capacity of the regional registry, without significantly altering overall effort levels.

5) Proposed monitoring plan

- Maintain UIB and reinforced port sampling/EMP as a condition for the reduction to 8 days.

[3] A Harvest Control Rule (HCR) is a predefined procedure that adjusts effort or catch based on stock status indicators and reference points (target and limit). Within the CIAT framework, HCR F30–S20 for bigeye tuna keeps fishing mortality compatible with a target SBR level and automatically reduces exploitation if there is a risk of reaching the biological limit.

- Apply HCR F30–S20 with monitoring of the probability of exceeding S20% (trigger for "exceptional circumstances"), i.e., if at any time monitoring shows too high a probability of exceeding S20%, the rule automatically corrects: it would not allow the ban to be relaxed and, on the contrary, would adjust the measures.
- Monitor SSI (Stock Status Indicators) (CPUE, average size, effort on floating objects) for YFT, BET, and SKJ with annual reports; include specific analysis of class 4 vessels and effects on recruitment (CCA mandate).
- Align with the Strategic Science Plan 2026–2030 (data, life cycle, sustainable fisheries, environment–ecosystem–fisheries interaction) to support robust assessments and continuous MSE (Management Strategy Evaluation).

6) Biological conclusion

According to the evidence from the CCA/IATTC 2025, an adjustment of the closed season to 8 days is biologically compatible with HCR F30–S20, maintains the precautionary principle ("small reduction" with active safeguards), and is consistent with the recent performance of stocks (robust YFT and SKJ; BET with juvenile mortality contained by UIB). The reallocation of 2,000 m^3 to Bolivia, within the registry and capacity ceilings, is biologically neutral under the current control and monitoring framework. Therefore, a request is submitted to the Commission to adopt an 8-day reduction in the closed season instead of 10 and to approve the reallocation, with annual monitoring of SSI and adaptive adjustments if the indicators so require.

Finally, it is recommended that scientific personnel be instructed to monitor the impacts of this measure on populations, using SSI indicators and baseline assessments, ensuring transparency and rigor in adaptive implementation.

Technical bibliography (IATTC/CCA, 2025)

- SAC-16 – Conclusions and Recommendations/Proposals (management options; "small reductions," UIB, EMP/IPSP; class 4 analysis).
- SAC-16-06 – Candidate management strategy for bigeye tuna (BET): HCR F30–S20; ±10-day limit; exceptional circumstances.
- SAC-16-03 – 2025 baseline assessment of yellowfin tuna (YFT): spatial structure, performance toward MSY.
- SAC-16-02 – Stock status indicators (SSI): trends in FO-sets, mean size, UIB effects 2022–2024.
- SAC-16-01 – The tuna fishery in the EPO in 2024: catches by species, discards, reference to C-02-03 (capacity).
- SAC-16-11 & CCA-16 Recommendations – Staff recommendations and EEO mandate 2025–2026; multispecies assessment.

Annex to request 2:

Excerpt from Official Letter DGIMFLMM – UBPM No. 050/2024 of September 18, 2024, addressed to the President of the Commission, Mr. Arens:

Subsection c. on new requests:

1.1. Bolivia is disappointed that, once again, its request for 5,000 cubic meters of new capacity has not been included in the merit document, which it has submitted every year since 2019, as have other CPCs, some submitting theirs even after that year.

1.2. The request was substantiated at the 2022 and 2023 GTP meetings, with the relevant explanations being provided on both occasions via email, at the request of the Acting Director of the IATTC and the Chair of the GTP, respectively. For your records, I am attaching the messages of substantiation, marked as Annex Alpha and Annex Bravo, together with the acknowledgment of receipt from the GTP Chair, marked as Annex Charlie.

1.3. This request is particularly relevant because subsection c. of the categories identified in section 7 refers to "requests for new capacity increases by coastal and non-coastal States of the OPO" (emphasis added).

1.4. Bolivia had never heard, until Saturday, August 31, 2024, that its request was inadmissible on the grounds that it had been decided, at some point, not to admit new capacity requests to the list. On the contrary, we appreciate and agree with the statement made by the Chair of the GTP that the only thing that was closed was the admission of new capacity claims and disputes; this corresponds with what this delegation recalls about the status of this matter.

1.5. Based on the foregoing, Bolivia requests that its “new request” for 5,000 m^3 be included in subsection c. of the table with a detail that reads as follows: **“**Special needs and requirements of landlocked developing countries” (emphasis added).

5e. Statement by Vanuatu on Capacity

Vanuatu statement to the Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity

Thank you chairman, I would like to introduce Vanuatu´s request, to confirm approval of the restitution and activation of 1,358 m3 of well volume to Vanuatu's Active PS Capacity List, corresponding to the well capacity of the vessel Esmeralda C, registered in 2001 under the Vanuatu flag and re-flagged to another Member in 2005, due to the permanent transfer of well capacity without its consent and therefore, in contravention of the IATTC Convention and resolutions. Specifically, this transfer of well volume took place in the absence of direct notification from Vanuatu to the Director of IATTC.

This case was reviewed and resolved in 2014 at the 15th meeting of this Working Group and ratified and confirmed at its 16th meeting with a favorable recommendation to the Commission. Notwithstanding the positive recommendation from this Working Group, no consensus was achieved at the 88th meeting of the Commission.

Vanuatu would like to recall Annex 1 of the Convention and Resolutions C-02-03 and C-24-07 which requires a notification from the relevant Member to the IATTC Director to proceed with any changes on the information contained in the Record of vessels. In the transfer of Esmeralda C, Vanuatu did not issue any direct notification regarding the transfer of its well volume. The only notification issued by Vanuatu was regarding the cancellation of Vanuatu's flag to the Esmeralda C to be re-flagged to another member, without any mention of a change regarding its well volume. No transfer of well volume was approved by Vanuatu. An administrative error in 2005 allowed the transfer of its well volume and this action has produced serious damages for Vanuatu, resulting from the inability to utilize its well volume for twenty years.

At the 15th meeting of Working Group, in 2014, Vanuatu and three other Members presented "pending capacity requests" based on transfers of well volume without their consent and it was agreed and recommended to the Commission that all 4 Members be granted as a restitution the amounts corresponding to the well volume transferred without their consent".

At the 16th meeting of this working group, held also in 2014 the previous recommendation was confirmed and declared that this case was reviewed and resolved stating that: "The Working Group recognized that the recommendations that it had issued at its 15th meeting regarding the various cases reviewed and resolved continue in force and would not be subject to revision or modification. Consequently, those cases would not be addressed again at this meeting of the Working Group but by the 88th Extraordinary Meeting of the IATTC. These recommendations are described in the minutes of the 87th Meeting of the Commission, as follows: b. Consider favorably the requests by Ecuador, Vanuatu and Venezuela that they be granted as restitution of the amounts corresponding to well volumes that were transferred without their consent..." A similar recommendation was agreed for Guatemala.

It must be noted that at the 88th meeting of the Commission, Vanuatu's case did not reach

consensus. At that meeting, one of the four Members with an originally favorably recommendation obtained the restoration of its well volume and the other two also received the approval of the Commission but conditioned to its future activation, which occurred in 2017.

Additionally, Vanuatu recalls the 2016 agreement on the elements for the development of a capacity management plan for EPO which includes among others that pending capacity requests and claims should be activated in a gradual manner, notably taking into account their antiquity, justification and urgency.

In this regard, the transfer without Vanuatú s consent occurred twenty years ago, and its claim was assessed and recommended favorably in 2014 by this Working Group, and since then, another ten years has passed without resolution. Vanuatu, as a Member, considers that an administrative problem cannot be a permanent obstacle for a Member to exercise its rights. The cause of this case is not simply against Vanuatú s rights but contrary to the Convention and the rules of procedure and resolutions of the Commission and with this arises the urgent need to reestablish Vanuatú s right.

Vanuatu also considers that the need for the reduction of the capacity in the years long-process cannot be the argument to deny the restitution of Vanuatú s rights that were deprived by an error of the Administration, in particular taking into account the healthy status of the resources base on the latest scientific report and the posibility to grow at it was just mentioned.

To finalize our intervention I would like to recall that Vanuatu is a small island developing State and is the most economically disadvantaged, least- developed Member of this Organization, as measured by per capita GDP, and, pursuant to paragraph 11 of Lanzarote Plan, should be given due recognition in accordance with paragraph 5 of the FAO Code of Conduct for responsible Fisheries, through enhancing the ability of such countries to develop their own fisheries as well as to participate in high seas fisheries, including access to such fisheries. The restitution of the well capacity of the Esmeralda C will provide a significant income stream to Vanuatu for the benefit of its people and it would represent a small foothold in the purse seine fishery from which Vanuatu will again seek to expand its presence.

