

**INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION**

**SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**15<sup>TH</sup> MEETING**

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**SYNOPSIS OF LONGLINE OBSERVER DATA REPORTING PURSUANT TO  
RESOLUTION [C-19-08](#)**

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The purpose of this document and its accompanying tables is to provide a summary of the current reporting practices of IATTC CPCs in accordance with Resolution [C-19-08](#). This resolution replaced and updated the requirements and formats for CPCs to report observer data to the Commission previously established in Resolution C-11-08.

Under C-19-08, CPCs adopted a new standardized template for annual summary reporting of fishing effort and bycatch interactions (Annex A of the Resolution). Additionally, the Resolution formalizes two options for minimum data standards to be collected by longline observers and reported to the Commission (Annex B of the Resolution), both of which were previously approved and adopted by SAC-08 under C-11-08.

**1. LIST OF LONGLINE VESSELS THAT FISHED IN THE EPO IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR**

For the purposes of this report, IATTC staff assume that the provisions of C-19-08 applied to all CPCs with longline vessels >20 m LOA on the Regional Vessel Register (RVR) in 2023. In some cases, this assumption can be based on the listing of a CPC's longline vessels on the RVR without an indication of the vessels length overall (LOA). That is, unless the Secretariat is informed otherwise, we must assume that vessels without a listed LOA could be greater than 20 m and the requirements of C-19-08 apply.

In other cases, a CPC may have one or more qualifying longline vessels on the RVR, but those vessels did not fish in the relevant year, and so the longline observer requirements did not apply. In order to avoid mistaken application of these and other requirements, the Commission included in Resolution C-18-06, paragraph 5, which states that "*CPCs shall notify the Director by 30 June each year of their vessels on the Regional Vessel Register flying their flag that were actively fishing in the IATTC Convention Area for species covered by the Convention from 1 January to 31 December of the previous year.*" However, in many cases, these lists of active vessels are not submitted in time to inform the reporting assessments in this paper because the deadline for this submission is not until June 30. In some situations, there have been consecutive years where a CPC has communicated that their qualifying vessels did not fish for IATTC species (or have not fished at all), but as long these vessels remain on the RVR, we assume that the longline observer requirements may have applied, unless we receive a communication to the contrary relative to that fishing year.

## 2. ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORTS

Each CPC subject to the longline observer coverage requirement is required to submit an annual summary report to the SAC using the template provided in Annex A of Resolution C-19-08. To facilitate reporting, IATTC staff developed fillable electronic versions of Annex A—in English and Spanish—for ease of [download](#) and submission. The primary purpose of summary reporting is for each CPC to demonstrate compliance with two specific requirements under the Resolution, those being at least 5% observer coverage of their total longline fishing effort, and that this coverage is representative of the activities of their entire fleet, particularly with regards to ‘shallow’ and ‘deep’ sets. C-19-08 defines longline fishing effort as either “as the number of effective days of fishing<sup>1</sup> or hooks deployed.” The summary reports received for 2023, along with updated reporting submitted for previous years, are posted on the [SAC-15 meeting page](#) under “Annual summary reporting – scientific observers for longline vessels (Resolution C-19-08).”

**Table 1** summarizes compliance by each CPC with the requirement to submit a summary report using Annex A and to report the percent observer coverage. The majority of reporting CPCs indicated they met the 5% observer coverage requirement..

In evaluating whether the 5% minimum observer coverage requirement was met, IATTC staff considers that as long as 5% coverage was achieved according to at least one of the two approved effort metrics, the requirement was met. That is, Resolution C-19-08 effectively allows for the requirement to be fulfilled by meeting at least 5% by either metric and does not require that it be met in both instances. IATTC staff consider that number of hooks is the preferred and more accurate measure of longline fishing effort.

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<sup>1</sup> As defined by SAC-03 in 2012

**TABLE 1.** Summary of Annex A reporting by CPC showing whether Annex A was submitted for the 2023 fishing year, and the percent observer coverage achieved<sup>2</sup>, and the fishing effort metric(s) used to calculate observer coverage. Black cells indicate that although the CPC had qualifying vessels on the RVR, but the CPC has communicated that C-19-08 did not apply in 2023 because the relevant vessel(s) were not active or did not fish for IATTC species. Green fill indicates that the CPC submitted summary reporting in the required format, and in the % observer coverage column, that the 5% minimum coverage requirement was met according to at least one of the approved effort metrics.

CPC	Annex A Summary submitted?	% Observer coverage reported 2023
BLZ	NA	qualifying vessels did not operate in 2023
CHL	NA	qualifying vessels did not operate in 2023
CHN	Yes	13% (# hooks), 14% (effective days fished)
CRI	No	Did not have a LL observer program in 2023
ECU	Yes	8% (# hooks), 6% (effective days fished)
EU	Yes	6% (# hooks), 6% (effective days fished)
FRA	No	Not Reporting
JPN	Yes	4% (# hooks), 4% (effective days fished)*
KOR	Yes	4% (# hooks), 6% (effective days fished)
MEX	No	Not Reporting
NIC	NA	qualifying vessels did not operate in 2023
PAN	Yes	17% (# hooks), 33% (effective days fished)
PER	No	Not Reporting
TWN	Yes	2% (# hooks), 2% (effective days fished)*
USA	Yes	14% (# hooks)
VEN	NA	qualifying vessels did not operate in 2023
VUT	Pending	Pending

\* Preliminary or partial estimates that may updated.

### 3. SUBMISSION OF OPERATIONAL LONGLINE OBSERVER DATA

In 2017, SAC-08 established minimum data standards for the reporting of operational longline observer data to the Commission, allowing CPCs to choose between reporting (a) data recorded on the IATTC longline observer forms, or (b) data representing a subset of the WCPFC list of minimum standard data fields. These minimum standards were reaffirmed by the Commission with the adoption of C-19-08 and are found in Annex B of that Resolution. Under C-19-08, submissions of longline observer data for the previous year are due by June 30 of the following year.

The 5% observer requirement for longline vessels >20 m LOA has been in force since 2013, and the operational-level observer data collected pursuant to this requirement in each subsequent year should be provided to the Director. **Table 2** shows the status of each relevant CPCs submission of operational-level longline observer data by year. There have been substantial improvements in recent years in the reporting of data, including data due from past years. Additionally, in most instances where longline observer data

<sup>2</sup> Some of the percentages listed in the table above have been rounded up, and may slightly differ from the corresponding numbers, if expressed in decimals, which may be higher or lower, although in their close vicinity.

was not reported for a given year, the staff now has a more definitive picture in terms of whether the CPC did not collect longline observer data in a given year or the requirements of C-19-08 did not apply because the qualifying vessels were not active or did not fish for IATTC species. Note that although some CPCs have already reported operational level data for 2023, the deadline for making these submissions is not until June 31, 2024.

**TABLE 2.** Status of reporting of operational observer data by CPCs, by year. Cell color denotes whether a CPC reported operational observer data (green fill), has informed the Secretariat that their data submission is pending (P, orange fill), has indicated they do not have longline observer data to report (NR, black fill) or have not reported the status of their observer program for a given year (? , black fill), or has indicated that the longline observer were not applicable (NA).

Status of reporting of operational observer data by CPCs											
CPC	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
BLZ	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>				NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NR <sup>4</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>
CHL	?	?	?	?	?	?	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>
CHN											
CRI	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	P	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>
ECU							P	P			
EU (Portugal)	NR	NR	NR		NR	NR			NR <sup>4</sup>		
EU (Spain)	NR	NR	NR	NR							
FRA											
JPN	NR <sup>1</sup>	NR <sup>1</sup>							NR <sup>4</sup>	NR <sup>4</sup>	
KOR											
MEX											
NIC	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>
PAN	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>4</sup>			
PER	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>		NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	
TWN											
USA											
VEN	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>
VUT	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	NR <sup>2</sup>	P	P	NR <sup>4</sup>	NR <sup>4</sup>	NR <sup>4</sup>	

NR- Not reporting

NR<sup>1</sup> - CPC stated they will not be reporting data because they cannot report against the IATTC standards for these years

NR<sup>2</sup> - CPC reports that they had qualifying vessels, but did not have a longline observer program in this fishing year or the program was not active

NR<sup>3</sup> - CPC reports that relevant vessel was only active during the last quarter of the fishing year and an observer could not be assigned

NR<sup>4</sup> - CPC reports that their observer program was not active in this year because of the conditions of the pandemic

NA- CPC reports that the observer requirements were not applicable

NA<sup>1</sup> - CPC reports that the observer requirements were not applicable because relevant vessels listed on the RVR were not active or did not fish for IATTC species in this year

NA<sup>2</sup> - CPC reports that all of the EPO catches are in the IATTC/WCPFC overlap area, where they have elected to apply requirements of the WCPFC, so C-19-08 is not applicable

P- CPC has indicated that data will be submitted in the near future