

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

2nd CIRCLE HOOK WORKSHOP

(by videoconference)

28-30 April 2025

CHAIR'S REPORT

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Adoption of the agenda and workshop guidance
3. Workshop Objectives and review recommendations and 1st Circle Hook Workshop
4. Presentations and Discussions by the IATTC staff, invited experts, and CPCs
5. Discussions and Recommendations for the EBWG3
6. Other Matters
7. Adjournment

1. Welcome

The meeting was opened by Dr. Alex de Silva, Coordinator of Scientific Research at the IATTC, who introduced the Workshop and mentioned that it is co-hosted by the co-chairs of the Permanent Working Group for Ecosystem and Bycatch, Dr. Yonat Swimmer (USA) and Mr. Manuel Correia (Venezuela). The workshop was held virtually over Zoom on April 28, 29 and 30th from 1500-1800 PDT.

2. Adoption of the agenda and workshop guidance

3. Workshop Objectives and review recommendations and 1st Circle Hook Workshop

The Chairs introduced the Workshop and the aim to make progress towards satisfying the obligations in Resolution C-19-04. A summary of the 1st Circle Hook Workshop was discussed, included a list of outcomes. As for the current, 2nd, Circle Hook Workshop, the following objectives were stated:

- a. Define “large” circle hook size in effort to satisfy requirements of Resolution C-19-04;
- b. Review data on longevity and integrity of hooks from different configurations and manufacturers;
- c. Discussions on 3rd mitigation options;
- d. Develop best handling and release practice (BHRP) for sea turtles in small-scale / shallow-set longline fleet;
- e. Resolve language for Resolution C-19-04.

4. Presentations and Discussions by the IATTC staff, invited experts, and CPCs

a. Review of the workshop background document (Christina Langford, Scripps Institution of Oceanography)

b. Review 1st workshop (Kei Okamoto, Japan Fisheries Res. & Education Inst.)

A. Characteristics of circle hooks and fleet uses

1. Hook Characteristics (Dan Foster, retired NOAA Fisheries)
2. Gear characterization in small scale fleets across EPO (Salvador Siu– IATTC)

B. Impacts of circle hooks on target and non-target species

1. Rui Coelho (Portuguese Institute for the Ocean and Atmosphere)
2. Estibaliz Martinez (Datafish, Spain)
3. Kei Okamoto (Japan Fisheries Research and Education Institute)
4. Ochi Daisuke (Japan Fisheries Research and Education Institute)

C. Hook longevity and integrity

1. Melanie Hutchinson (IATTC)

D. Third mitigation options

1. Eric Gilman (Safina Center)

E. Best handling and release practice (BHRP) guidelines for sea turtles

1. Brian Stacy (NOAA Fisheries)
2. Mariluz Parga & Sandra Andraka (Submon, EcoPacífico+)
3. Melanie Hutchinson (IATTC)

5. Discussions and Recommendations for the EBWG3

Participants had many comments and questions to the presenters, including questions on impacts of circle hooks on catch rates, condition at haul-back, and impacts on varying taxa; questions on the durability of various hooks, including comments regarding the manufacturing differences. The group also expressed a particular interest in best handling and release practices and high value regarding species' survival. Some participants emphasized the importance of taking into account the socio-economic impacts of bycatch mitigation measures, and the needs of different fleets, as not all regions and fleet types are the same.

At the end of Day 2, Co-chairs circulated draft recommendations based upon workshop discussions and participants were prompted to provide suggested edits prior to Day 3 (April 30). Ultimately, there was no consensus on standardized specifications for circle hooks; the workshop did not develop a third mitigation measure, nor did it agree to a final set of BHRP. However, the workshop succeeded in drafting the following recommendations that stem from discussions nearing consensus and which will be presented at EBWG3 in May 2025.

Draft recommendations	Borrador de recomendaciones
<p>1.Circle Hook Minimum Size:</p> <p>The Workshop 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.</p> <p>The workshop encouraged each CPC should continue to collect information on the size of circle hooks, catch and other relevant information for each fleet, and report updates on this information to the EBWG, with a view to considering a comprehensive bycatch management strategy in the future.</p>	<p>2.Tamaño mínimo de los anzuelos circulares:</p> <p>El taller 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.</p> <p>El taller instó a cada CPC a seguir recopilando información sobre el tamaño de los anzuelos circulares e información pertinente para cada flota, y reportar actualizaciones de esta información al EBWG, con miras a considerar una estrategia integral de ordenación de la captura incidental en el futuro.</p>
<p>2.Third mitigation option (e.g., fish bait, potential closures/exemptions):</p> <p>Recommend that the Scientific Staff coordinate with the EBWG and the SAC on developing a third mitigation option for para 3.d taking into consideration the needs of different fleets and impacts on different taxa [small-scale coastal fisheries that target mahi mahi/dorado] taking into consideration measures shown to be effective to reduce sea turtle catch.</p>	<p>2.Tercera opción de mitigación (p. ej., cebo de pescado, posibles vedas/exenciones):</p> <p>Recomendar que el personal científico coordine con el EBWG y el SAC el desarrollo de una tercera opción de mitigación para 3.d, teniendo en cuenta las necesidades de las distintas flotas y los impactos en los distintos taxones[las pesquerías costeras de pequeña escala dirigidas al dorado], y teniendo en cuenta medidas que han demostrado ser eficaces para reducir las capturas de tortugas marinas.</p>
<p>3.Best Handling and Release Practices</p> <p>A future amendment to Resolution C-19-04 include a more recent guideline to required use of best handling and release methods as presented at this workshop for all IATTC fisheries (to replace FAO 2009 document).</p>	<p>3.Mejores prácticas de manipulación y liberación</p> <p>Una enmienda futura de la Resolución C-19-04 incluirá una directriz más reciente para requerir el uso de los mejores métodos de manipulación y liberación presentados en este taller para todas las pesquerías de la CIAT (para reemplazar el documento de FAO de 2009).</p>

6. Other Matters

No other matters were discussed.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1830 on April 30, 2025.