INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

100TH MEETING

Phoenix, Arizona, USA
1 – 5 August 2022

SAC DOCUMENT IATTC-100-03 ADD.1

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC) TO THE COMMISSION

RECOMMENDATIONS AS ENDORSED BY THE SAC

1. WORKING GROUP ON BYCATCH:

The Working Group on Bycatch recommends:

1.1. Terms of reference of the Working Group:

(a) that the concept of development and elaboration of New Terms of Reference for the Bycatch Working Group be endorsed, with the goal of formalizing, modernizing and expanding the scope of the mandate of the working group in order to reflect the relevant provisions of the Antigua Convention;

(b) that the Working Group be renamed the "Working Group on Ecosystem and Bycatch (EBWG);

(c) that the SAC be encouraged to consider the draft terms of reference for the EBWG that have been submitted by the co-chairs of the Working Group not for the purpose of achieving a final version but rather facilitate to participating CPCs the presentation of comments or drafting suggestions to be sent to the Director by the end of May 2022, in order to allow for a revised text to be submitted to the Commission for its consideration at its 100th meeting in August 2022.

1.2. Circle hooks:

(a) Based on the outcomes of the 1st Workshop on Circle Hooks, which identified variable results regarding circle hooks sizes as well as an interest in balancing sea turtle mitigation efforts with social economic needs, that IATTC hold a follow-up workshop with the goal to explore and expand on topics of interest as well as on the data gaps that have been identified by the Working Group, for the purpose of mitigating the bycatch of sea turtles in accordance with resolution C-19-04;

(b) that the members of the Working Group and other participants be invited to notify, before 25 June 2022, to the Co-Chairs and to the IATTC staff the topics that they consider of interest, in order to allow for the identification of relevant research to be carried out and presenters to be invited in preparation of the follow-up workshop to be held prior to the 12th meeting of the Working Group in 2023.

1.3. Gear:

(a) that additional research be encouraged as well as exploration of spatial-temporal or dynamic management options for FADs and other gear types in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO);

(b) to advance with the study and submission of alternatives to the use of netting materials for FAD construction in order to eliminate the potential entanglements and mortality of bycatch species such as sea turtles and sharks;

(c) that additional research should be encouraged and supported to better understand the magnitude and impacts of at sea interactions of active or abandoned FADs made of different materials on vulnerable populations in the EPO.

1.4. <u>Hook shielding</u>:

(a) that CPCs be encouraged to carry out further research on the performance and feasibility of hook shielding devices in the EPO and to present to the IATTC all information derived from that research:

(b) that, on this basis and take into account the measures adopted by the WCPFC regarding the adoption of hook shielding devices, the Commission consider adopting similar measures, as appropriate.

2. AD HOC PERMANENT WORKING GROUP ON FADS:

The Working Group on FADs recommends:

2.1. <u>Biodegradable FADs</u>:

(a) to encourage harmonization across t-RFMOs, as much as possible, of the definition of biodegradable FADs, of guidelines and timeline for their construction and implementation, as well as of data collection priorities**.**

(b) that the following definition of "biodegradable" be considered; "*Biodegradable: Non-synthetic materials*[1] *and/or bio-based alternatives that are consistent with international standards*[2] *for materials that are biodegradable in marine environments. The components resulting from the degradation of these materials should not be damaging to the marine and coastal ecosystems or include heavy metals or plastics in their composition*."

(c) To recognize:

i. the need of further large-scale sea trials on an ongoing basis, in order to refine important practical/technical aspects of full implementation of biodegradable FADs (e.g., durability, designs, material availability and acquisition);

ii. that, ideally, these trials should be monitored and conducted in collaboration with scientists.

(d) that fishers supported by shipowners continue trialing bioFAD designs in a continued effort, deploying systematically a percentage of their FADs made of biodegradable materials from 2023 on;

(e) that the results of biodegradable trials at sea should be made available to the FAD WG;

(f) to consider a gradual, stepwise process for the implementation of fully biodegradable FADs based on the current state of the art of materials available and on the result of field tests;

(g) to consider the following categories in this gradual implementation process, in the understanding that the respective definitions do not apply the electronic buoys that are attached to FADs in order to track them and that the categories are preliminary and will be examined by the IATTC scientific staff before their presentation to the Commission:

i. <u>Category I</u>. The FAD is made of 100% biodegradable materials.

ii. <u>Category II</u>. The FAD is made of 100% biodegradable materials except for plastic-based flotation components (e.g., plastic buoys, foam, purse-seine corks).

---

[1] For example, plant-based materials such as cotton, jute, manila hemp (abaca), bamboo, or animal-based such as leather, wool, lard.

[2] International standards such as ASTM D6691, D7881, TUV Austria, European or any such standards approved by the Members of the IATTC

iii. Category III. The subsurface part of the FAD is made of 100% biodegradable materials, whereas the surface part and any flotation components contain non-biodegradable materials (e.g., synthetic raffia, metallic frame, plastic floats, nylon ropes).

iv. Category IV. The subsurface part of the FAD contains non-biodegradable materials, whereas the surface part is made of 100% biodegradable materials, except for, possibly, flotation components.

v. Category V. The surface and subsurface parts of the FAD contain non-biodegradable materials.

(h) that, within the gradual process of biodegradable FAD implementation, designs try to reduce, as much as possible, the amount of material used, and the non-biodegradable fraction used in their construction;

(i) that IATTC data collection methods and tools, including fisheries observer data, be revised as needed, so that the gradual implementation of biodegradable FADs in the EPO can be effectively monitored;

(j) that motivating incentives be established, without affecting the fishing effort, in order to encourage the replacement of current FADs with biodegradable FADs.

2.2. Non-entangling FADs: that the following definition be considered for non-entangling FADs: "*A FAD that does not include any netting materials for any part of the FAD including both the surface structure (e.g., raft) and subsurface structure (e.g., tail)*".

2.3. FAD data reporting:

(a) when a CPC has difficulties in reporting the full details described in Annex II and III of Resolution C-21-04 (i.e., deactivations and remote reactivations),

i. that this CPC report these data on a temporary basis, using a simplified form to be prepared by the IATTC staff and to be posted on the commission website when available; and

ii. that this simplified form contain the following elements: date, buoy code and reason for the reactivation of deactivation

(b) that the CPCs be encouraged to provide to the IATTC. staff the historic, raw buoy data collected prior to January 1, 2022, and received by original users (i.e., vessels, fishing companies), including both trajectories and acoustic information.