

**INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION
COMISION INTERAMERICANA DEL ATUN TROPICAL**

COSTA RICA - FRANCE - JAPAN - NICARAGUA - PANAMA - UNITED STATES OF AMERICA - VANUATU - VENEZUELA

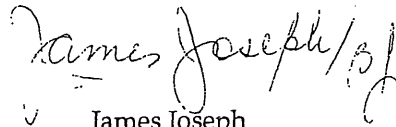
Scripps Institution of Oceanography, 8604 La Jolla Shores Drive, La Jolla, CA 92037-1508, U.S.A.
Tel: (619) 546 7100 - Fax: (619) 546 7133 - Director: James Joseph, Ph. D.
FTS Tel: (700) 893 6100 - FTS Fax: (700) 893 6133

December 8, 1994
Ref: 0820-400

TO: Commissioners and Participants
FROM: James Joseph, Director
SUBJECT: IATTC Minutes and IGM Minutes

Please find enclosed minutes of the IATTC and the Intergovernmental Meetings celebrated en La Jolla, California, on October 20-21, 1994.

Sincerely yours,


James Joseph
Director

Enclosures

JJ:bj

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION COMISION INTERAMERICANA DEL ATUN TROPICAL

COSTA RICA - FRANCE - JAPAN - NICARAGUA - PANAMA - UNITED STATES OF AMERICA - VANUATU - VENEZUELA

Scripps Institution of Oceanography, 8604 La Jolla Shores Drive, La Jolla, CA 92037-1508, U.S.A.

Tel: (619) 546 7100 - Fax: (619) 546 7133 - Director: James Joseph, Ph. D.

FTS Tel: (700) 893 6100 - FTS Fax: (700) 893 6133

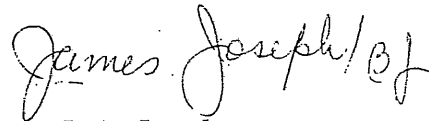
8 de diciembre de 1994

Ref: 0820-400

A: Delegados y Participantes
DE: James Joseph, Director
ASUNTO: Actas de la 54ª Reunión de la CIAT
y la 28ª Reunión Intergubernamental

Se les envían adjuntas las actas de la 54ª Reunión de la CIAT y de la 28ª Reunión Intergubernamental celebradas en La Jolla, California, los días 20 y 21 de octubre de 1994.

Atentamente,



James Joseph
Director

Anexos

JJ:bj

MINUTES OF THE 54TH MEETING OF THE
INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

La Jolla, California, USA
October 20, 1994

Agenda Item 1 - Opening of the meeting

The 54th meeting of the IATTC was held at the Radisson Hotel, La Jolla, California, on October 20, 1994. The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Dr. Jean-François Pulvenis of Venezuela, at 10:20 a.m. Representatives of all the member governments were in attendance, as were representatives of Colombia, Mexico, Spain, the Comisión Permanente del Pacífico Sur, the European Community, the International Whaling Commission, the American Cetacean Society, the Animal Welfare Institute, the Asociación Empresarial Pesquera de América Latina, the Center for Marine Conservation, the Defenders of Wildlife, the Earth Island Institute, the Fishermen's Coalition, the Fundación para la Defensa de la Naturaleza, Greenpeace International, and the Humane Society International. These are listed in Appendix 1.

Agenda Item 2 - Adoption of agenda

The Chairman asked if there were any comments on the provisional agenda (Appendix 2). There were none, so it was adopted.

Agenda Item 3 - Review of the 1994 fishing year to data

The Chairman called upon Dr. James Joseph, Director of the IATTC, to review the 1994 fishery for tunas in the eastern Pacific Ocean.

Dr. Joseph said that the catch of yellowfin to date in 1994 has been slightly greater than the corresponding catch for 1993, whereas the opposite has been the case for skipjack. He next showed data on the catch of yellowfin per capacity ton (YC/C) at sea for 1992, 1993, and 1994, explaining that these numbers reflect fishing success, and are assumed to be proportional to yellowfin abundance. The YC/C for the international fleet during 1994 was less than during 1992 and 1993. When this YC/C was segregated into estimates for the Mexican fleet (the largest fleet in the eastern Pacific Ocean) and the non-Mexican fleet, the former showed a drop of more than 30 percent, whereas the latter showed a slight increase.

In discussing the possible causes for this reduction in fishing success, Dr. Joseph noted several things which might be happening:

1. Increased fishing on schools of small yellowfin not associated with dolphins could reduce the catch of yellowfin. He noted, however, that so far there had not been a pronounced shift to "dolphin-safe" fishing. Fishing for dolphin-associated fish accounted for about 60 to 70 percent of the yellowfin catch during 1982-1992, but only about 50 to 55 percent of that catch during 1993-1994. The average size of the fish in the catch has not changed, however. He stated that so far the data do not support the idea that dolphin-safe fishing has contributed substantially to the decline in fishing success, and noted that a more definitive statement cannot be made until complete data for 1994 have been compiled and analyzed.

2. Fishing success in the area between 10°N and 20°N, where most of the catches of the Mexican fleet are made, has declined sharply. Fishing success

in the area south of 5°N and in the area between 145°W and 160°W has increased, however. It is impossible at this time to determine whether the reduced catches in the central area of the fishery are due to reduced abundance or to reduced vulnerability to capture of the fish in that area.

Dr. Joseph spoke about the recent El Niño episode and its possible effects on the fishery for yellowfin tuna, and noted that currently the sea-surface temperatures and depth of the thermocline in the eastern Pacific Ocean are near normal.

After Dr. Joseph's talk, there was considerable discussion of the effects of switching to dolphin-safe fishing on the catches of yellowfin, the health of the yellowfin resource, and the catches of other species associated with yellowfin in free-swimming schools and schools associated with floating objects. The concensus was that reduced catches of yellowfin resulting from such a switch would cause considerable hardship to the industry. In response to queries, Dr. Joseph said that a switch to dolphin-safe fishing would change the age composition of the population of yellowfin tuna, causing a substantial reduction in the yield per recruit, but that it is not known whether that change would affect the recruitment of yellowfin. He reiterated that not enough is known to evaluate the effects of increased catches of other species which would result from a switch to dolphin-safe fishing.

Agenda Item 4 - Review of the International Dolphin Conservation Program to date

The Chairman called upon Dr. Joseph to discuss this subject. Dr. Joseph stated that during the 1960s and early 1970s most of the vessels which fished for tunas associated with dolphins in the eastern Pacific Ocean were registered in the United States, but that during the mid 1970s more nations became involved in the fishery, and the problem of dolphin mortality thus became an international one. In 1976 the Commission decided to undertake a program to study the problem and reduce the mortalities due to fishing. This program involved placing observers aboard tuna vessels to gather data on mortalities and abundance of dolphins and on conditions associated with mortalities of dolphins. The data on abundance and mortalities are used for assessments of the various stocks of dolphins, and the information on conditions associated with mortalities are used for identifying, developing, and transferring information on equipment and techniques effective for reducing the mortality of dolphins to the international fleet. This program was not begun until 1980, and did not include the fleets of all nations involved in the fishery until 1986. The annual mortalities of dolphins decreased precipitously during the 1986-1992 period. The decrease was due almost entirely to reduction in the mortality per set, rather than to reduction in the numbers of sets made on dolphin-associated tunas.

The International Dolphin Conservation Program (IDCP) was established at the IATTC and intergovernmental meetings held in La Jolla, California, USA, in June 1992. The following overall Dolphin Mortality Limits (DMLs) were established by the agreement which established the IDCP: 1993, 19,500; 1994, 15,500; 1995, 12,000; 1996, 9,000; 1997, 7,000; 1998, 6,500; 1999, >5,000. (The DML for 1994 was later reduced to 9,300 animals.) The mortality was only 3,609 animals in 1993, and the biological effects of these mortalities on the various stocks of dolphins involved in the fishery are insignificant. The International Review Panel (IRP) and the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) are important components of the IDCP. The principal duties of the IRP are to

review the performances of vessels with individual DMLs, to identify infractions of agreements concerning mortality of dolphins, and to inform the governments in which vessels committing infractions are registered of those infractions. (The DML for individual vessels for a given year is calculated by dividing the overall DML for that year by the number of vessels which have announced their intention to fish for tunas associated with dolphins during that year.) In addition, it makes recommendations to the various governments for standardized sanctions for captains, vessel owners, and observers and for minimum standards for fishing gear. The principal duties of the SAB are to provide advice to the Director of the IATTC concerning research directed at reducing or eliminating the mortality of dolphins caused by the fishery for tunas in the eastern Pacific Ocean. The IRP has met several times each year since its establishment, the most recent meeting being held immediately prior to the present meeting. Due to lack of funds, the SAB has met only once since its establishment. In summary, efforts to reduce the mortality of dolphins have been more successful than expected, and the present level of mortality is insignificant from the standpoint of the health of these stocks.

Dr. Joseph then turned the floor over to Dr. Martín A. Hall, who is in charge of the IATTC's Tuna-Dolphin Program. Dr. Hall pointed out that the ecosystem to which tuna and dolphins belong is complex and poorly understood, so it is impossible to predict with confidence the effects of alterations in fishing methods. He said that bycatches are a fact of life in fisheries all over the world, and that the bycatches by the fisheries for tunas tend to be less than those by the fisheries for most other species. In the purse-seine fishery for tunas in the eastern Pacific Ocean, the bycatches are greatest in sets on fish associated with floating objects and least in sets on fish associated with dolphins (if the dolphins which are released unharmed are not counted as bycatch). Among the things to be considered with respect to the effects of the different modes of fishing on tunas are the yields per recruit, the amounts of unmarketable tunas caught and discarded at sea dead, and the possible effects on recruitment due to alteration of the age structure of the population. Among those to be considered with respect to the rest of the ecosystem are the bycatches of dolphins and other species, the impact of fishing operations on the animals which are not caught, the impact of lost gear, and the utilization of energy. He showed some slides of the geographical distributions of some of the animals caught incidentally during tuna-fishing operations. Marlins are nearly evenly distributed over much of the eastern Pacific Ocean, whereas the distributions of mahi-mahi and sea turtles are more patchy.

Dr. Hall said that research is needed to determine whether bycatch problems exist and, if they exist, the seriousness of the problems. If problems exist, they can be perhaps be alleviated by gear modification, modification of the behavior of the fishermen, or finding ways to utilize the bycatch. The first two approaches have reduced the mortality of dolphins in the purse-seine fishery for tunas in the eastern Pacific Ocean to insignificant levels. These mortalities can perhaps be reduced further by further modifying the nets and techniques of fishing.

The Chairman then called for comments and questions regarding Dr. Joseph's and Dr. Hall's presentations. In response to these, Dr. Joseph said that dolphins will increase in abundance due to the reduction in mortalities due to fishing, but that the increases will be slow due to their low reproductive rates. Some of the attendees criticized the U.S. Marine Mammal

Protection Act, which fails to take into account the tremendous strides made in reduction of dolphin mortalities during the last few years.

Agenda Item 5 - Other business

The Chairman announced that the IATTC had been selected as the recipient of the 1994 Carl L. Sullivan Fishery Conservation Award of the American Fisheries Society (AFS). The award is given to an individual or organization, professional or nonprofessional, for outstanding contributions to the conservation of fishery resources.

Agenda Item 6 - Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

APPENDIX 1

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION
COMISION INTERAMERICANA DEL ATUN TROPICAL

54th MEETING—54^a REUNION
La Jolla, California, USA
October 20, 1994—20 de octubre de 1994

ATTENDEES—ASISTENTES

MEMBER COUNTRIES—PAISES MIEMBROS

COSTA RICA

LUIS PARIS CHAVERRI Comisionado
ALVARO MORENO GOMEZ
Comisionado
Instituto Costarricense de Pesca y Acuicultura

FRANCE

ALAIN FONTENEAU
ORSTOM

JAPAN

KATSUMA HANAFUSA
International Affairs Division

SALLY J. CAMPEN
Federation of Japan Tuna Fisheries
Cooperative Associations

NICARAGUA

SERGIO MARTINEZ CASCO
Commissioner
CIRH

CARLOS ABAUNZA
Ministerio de Economía y Desarrollo

ENRIQUE OLIVARES TORRES
MEDEPESCA

PANAMA

RICARDO MARTANS G.
Ministerio de Comercio e Industrias

UNITED STATES

HENRY BEASLEY, Commissioner
PAUL NIEMEIER
MICHAEL TILLMAN
ELIZABETH EDWARDS
DANA WILKES
National Marine Fisheries Service

BRIAN HALLMAN
WILLIAM GIBBONS-FLY
Department of State

MARTIN HOCHMAN
NOAA

ROBERT MACDONALD
Commsioner

CARLOS ARBELAEZ
Seatrading International

GORDON BROADHEAD

DAVE BURNEY
U.S. Tuna Foundation

TOM CREHAN
Fishermen's Cooperative Association of San Pedro

PETE DILEVA
JOE HORNE
Caribbean Fishing, Inc.

MICHAEL DUNN
Mitsubishi Foods (MC) Inc.

AUGUST FELANDO

PETER H. FLUORNOY

WILLIAM GILLIS
American Tuna Sales Association

GUILLERMO GOMEZ
Gomez-Hall Associates

TERRY HOINSKY
Fishermen's Union of America, AFL-CIO

ROBERT INSINGER

PAUL KRAMPE
Van Camp Seafood Company

MICHAEL MCGOWAN
Cabason, Inc.

ANTHONY NIZETICH
Ocean Fish Co.

OTTO OBRIST
Ocean Ventures, Inc.

JOHN ROYAL
Fishermen and Allied Workers' Union

ED STOCKWELL
StarKist Foods Inc.

ANTHONY VUOSO
Tri-Marine International

ED WEISSMAN

ROBERT B. YOUNG
Fisheries Consultant

VANUATU

RICHARD CARPENTER
Commissioner for Maritime Affairs

ANTHONY TILLET

VENEZUELA

JEAN-FRANÇOIS PULVENIS Comisionado
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores

HUGO ALSINA LAGOS
SARPA, Ministerio de Agricultura y Cría

NON-MEMBER COUNTRIES--PAISES NO MIEMBROS

COLOMBIA

SILVIA FORERO DE GUERRERO
Ministerio de Agricultura

ALFONSO PAZ TENORIO
Frigomarina Ltda.

ALEJANDRO LONDOÑO GARCÍA
ADOLFO RINCON PRIETO
Instituto Nacional de Pesca y Acuicultura

ALVARO BUSTAMANTE STEER
AMERICO RODRIGUEZ
Atunes y Erelatados del Caribe, S.A.

DARIO JARAMILLO
Ministerio de Comercio Exterior

HUGO DOMINGO MARINO VILLA
GUILLERMO DAW ALVAREZ
JAIME SEDA
Frigogan

AUGUSTO MAINERO ROMAN
Frigopesca, S.A.

MEXICO

MA. TERESA BANDALA MEDINA
Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores

CARLOS CAMACHO GAOS
Subsecretario

RICARDO BELMONTES ACOSTA
GUILLERMO COMPEAN JIMENEZ
Secretaría de Pesca

FELIPE CHARAT
ALFONSO ROSIÑOL
CARLOS DE ALBA
CANAINPES

MARIO MONTANO BENSON
Atunera Maya

RAUL PAEZ DELGADO
CEPSECE S.C.

SPAIN

ANTONIO FERNANDEZ AGUIRRE
Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación

JOSE MANUEL SANCHEZ MORA
Asconser

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS--ORGANIZACIONES INTERNACIONALES

BERNARDO UCCELLETTI
Comisión Permanente del Pacífico Sur

MICHAEL TILLMAN
International Whaling Commission

MANUEL ARNAL MONREAL
European Commission

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS--ORGANIZACIONES NO GUBERNAMENTALS

BARBARA BRITTEN
American Cetacean Society

DAVID C. PHILLIPS
Earth Island Institute

CRISTOPHER K. CROFT
Defenders of Wildlife

GEORGE PLATT
THERESA PLATT
The Fishermen's Coalition

FRANCISCO HERRERA TERAN
Asociación Empresarial Pesquera de América
Latina

TRACI ROMINE
Greenpeace International

HECTOR LOPEZ ROJAS
Fundación para la Defensa de la Naturaleza

RICK SPILL
Animal Welfare Institute

KATHLEEN O'CONNELL-GUTIERREZ
Humane Society International

NINA YOUNG
Center for Marine Conservation

IATTC--CIAT

JAMES JOSEPH
MARTIN HALL
DAVID BRATTEN
BERTA JUAREZ
NICOLAS WEBB

Director
Tuna-Dolphin Program--Programa Atún-Delfín

APPENDIX 2

54th MEETING (SPECIAL) OF THE INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

October 20, 1994

La Jolla, California

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of agenda
3. Review of the 1994 fishing year to date
4. Review of the International Dolphin Conservation Program to date
5. Other business
6. Adjournment