

**AGREEMENT ON THE INTERNATIONAL DOLPHIN CONSERVATION
PROGRAM**

52ND MEETING OF THE PARTIES

**La Jolla, California (USA)
23 October 2025**

RESOLUTION A-25-03

**FUNDING FOR THE CLOSE-KIN MARK-RECAPTURE RESEARCH PROJECT TO
ASSESS POPULATION ABUNDANCE OF DOLPHINS IN THE EASTERN TROPICAL
PACIFIC OCEAN**

The Parties to the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP):

Recognizing that during 2024 and 2025, funds were obtained from the Pacific Alliance for Sustainable Tuna to develop a protocol for obtaining tissue samples from mortalities of spotted (*Stenella attenuata*) and spinner (*Stenella longirostris*) dolphins in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean, consisting of the collection of a skin sample and a biopsy;

Considering that Phase 1 of the dolphin population assessment project, as presented to the Scientific Advisory Committee during its 16th meeting (held on 2–6 June) in document SAC-16 INF-K, will last 8–9 months, depending on the time required for the field sampling phase carried out by observers and crew members (1–2 months);

Highlighting the progress made between January and March 2025, including:

- (i) development of a detailed manual for the sampling protocol,
- (ii) production of a step-by-step training video,
- (iii) preparation and shipment of sampling kits to the IATTC offices in Mexico,
- (iv) coordination meetings with industry representatives, and
- (v) observer training;

Recalling that, in April 2025, sampling kits were distributed to Mexican-flagged purse-seine vessels in order to begin the sample collection phase;

Recognizing that assessing the status of dolphin populations is essential for strengthening the AIDCP's objectives and commitments;

Resolve the following:

1. That the AIDCP allocate US\$ 810,800 to Phase 2 of the Close-Kin Mark-Recapture (CKMR) research project to assess population abundance of eastern tropical Pacific dolphins. These funds will be used to execute the project tasks involved in assessing dolphin populations, as presented to the Scientific Advisory Committee during its 16th meeting (held on 2–6 June) in document SAC-16 INF-K.
2. If the feasibility of using skin swab samples for CKMR is confirmed by IATTC scientific staff during Phase 1, the use of AIDCP funds is authorized to finance Phase 2 of the study, which will have the following objectives:

- (i) Conduct field test skin swabbing of live dolphins,
- (ii) Collect 50-100 biopsy samples from mortalities across the population's range,
- (iii) Develop a high-throughput genetic panel, and
- (iv) Test the genetic panels on skin swabs.

3. If skin swabbing is not feasible, the IATTC staff, in coordination with the IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee and researchers from Parties interested in the study, shall explore the possibility of using alternative sampling methods, applying the resources mentioned in paragraph 1, in order to continue the assessment of dolphin populations.

4. Throughout the implementation of the project, the IATTC staff, the project coordinator and the scientists, industry, and other parties involved in the project shall hold periodic meetings, as appropriate, to review the project's progress and sampling protocol, incorporate suggestions to facilitate compatibility with fishing operations and address questions and comments. The meetings will also help to implement a training plan for observers/crew on how to implement the sampling protocol. The Director will also provide periodic, written updates on the project to AIDCP Parties