



**The Pew Charitable Trusts' Statement to the 102<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna  
Commission August 2024**

**Panama City, Panama**

The Pew Charitable Trusts looks forward to engaging IATTC members and Staff in Panama for a successful 2024 Commission meeting. At a time when climate change threatens fish population dynamics and livelihoods, this meeting provides an opportune platform to advance sustainable fisheries practices for the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO). Recognizing the potential for extensive negotiations on tropical tuna management, the Commission should also take this opportunity to complete several other pieces of work it has been developing in recent years.

The IATTC staff developed a comprehensive climate change workplan that was endorsed by the Scientific Advisory Committee this year. We urge members to support this workplan and accelerate the advancement of tools highlighted in it – particularly the use of management strategy evaluation (MSE) to ensure IATTC management approaches are robust to a range of environmental conditions. Bigeye and bluefin tuna MSE development is scheduled for management procedure adoption in 2025. This effort should be supported by the formalization of a science-management dialogue (SMD) working group, as recommended by the IATTC Staff and supported by multiple members. As such, IATTC should adopt [proposal J-1](#) from Ecuador to facilitate dialogue among scientists, managers and other stakeholders to advance MSE.

In addition, if the Commission adopts [proposal D-2](#) to increase bluefin tuna catch in the EPO, IATTC should improve monitoring and traceability of these species, particularly through a catch documentation scheme (CDS). A CDS is one of the most effective mechanisms for monitoring catch, verifying its legality and preventing IUU fishing. Other regional fisheries bodies, such as CCAMLR, CCSBT and ICCAT, have successfully deployed similar schemes for years. A CDS has been under development for Pacific bluefin since 2018, and IATTC should set a 2026 deadline to have the system fully operational, as required in proposal D-1.

To improve monitoring for all IATTC species, members should also adopt interim electronic monitoring standards. This effort began at the 2019 Commission meeting, after which multiple EM workshops and standards drafting meetings have been convened. Members should see this work across the finish line by adopting preliminary standards for the non-binding EM program that ensure the correct types of data are properly collected, stored, transmitted, and analyzed.

Finally, Pew urges IATTC to utilize its first biennial compliance meeting to develop a workplan to further strengthen the Commission's compliance review process. The workplan should include agreeing on criteria for categorizing instances of serious noncompliance, developing a set of pre-agreed corrective actions to respond to identified cases of noncompliance and repeat offenses, and implementing improvements to the current data reporting process, including an automated online submissions system and reporting templates.

By adopting these measures at its September meeting, IATTC will advance long-term sustainability of its fisheries and establish a model for all tuna RFMOs to follow in a rapidly changing world.