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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to inform the Administration and Finance Committee (CAF) about the technical assistance and capacity-building activities for developing countries that have been carried out or are planned to be carried out using resources from the Special Fund initially established by Resolution C-11-11. It should be recalled that, at its 82nd Meeting in July 2011, the Commission approved, through Resolution C-11-11, the creation of a "*Special fund for strengthening the institutional capacity of developing countries and territories for the sustainable development of fisheries for highly migratory species*".

At its 87th Meeting, held in July 2014, the Commission introduced a major change to the Fund's financing mechanism. While maintaining the possibility of receiving voluntary contributions—on which the Fund had exclusively relied until that time— the Fund began to receive an annual allocation equivalent to 2% of the Commission's operating budget in accordance with the provisions of Resolution C-14-03.

Paragraph 2 of the aforementioned Resolution establishes that:

*"The resources of the Fund shall proceed from the **fixed annual contribution of 2%** of the Commission's budget intended for building and strengthening the capacity of coastal developing countries and territories."*

Subsequently, at its 89th Meeting, held in June 2015, the Commission established the specific manner in which this contribution would be distributed among the Members:

"*This 2% is not to be extracted from the operational budget. Rather, once the amount of the operational budget is settled, an additional amount equal to 2% of the operational subtotal shall be added to the regular budget as a separate line item, and the final budget amount will be the sum of these two components, and each Member's contribution to the 2% shall follow therefore the same distribution key as the regular budget*."

Although paragraph 6 of the Resolution also encourages Members and national and international bodies and entities to make voluntary contributions to the Fund, in practice this source of funding has provided very limited support. Since 2014, no additional voluntary contributions have been received, with the exception of the contribution made by one Member in that same year.

2. CURRENT SITUATION OF THE FUND'S FINANCIAL RESOURCES

As described above, the Fund is an integral part of the Commission's regular budget, and contributions to the Fund are included in the annual contribution payable by each Member, in the amount established in the financing resolution currently in force, namely Resolution C-25-10 (Financing for fiscal year 2026).

Consequently, without taking into account possible voluntary contributions, only two factors may affect the availability of the Fund's financial resources: the total amount of the operational budget adopted for a given year and the timeliness with which members comply with their obligation to pay their annual contributions.

In this context, **Table 1** presents the Fund's balance for previous years, as well as the payments received through June 30, 2026. It also shows, for illustrative purposes only, the portion of each Member's annual contribution that is automatically allocated to the Fund, in accordance with the provisions of Resolution C-14-03 (Capacity Building). It should be noted that, as an exception and only for fiscal year **2026**, the Commission decided not to allocate budgetary resources to the Special Fund for strengthening the institutional capacities of developing Members, considering that the available resources were sufficient to cover the activities planned for that year.

TABLE 1. Members' contributions to the Fund in previous years, 2025, and through June 30, 2026, in US$

	Previous Years		2025		Total	
	Paid	**Pending**	**Paid**	**Pending**	**Paid**	**Pending**
Belize	7,778		958		8,736	0
Canada	23,598		2,769		26,367	0
China	39,294		5,935		45,229	0
Colombia	53,119		6,055		59,174	0
Costa Rica	21,144		3,161		24,305	0
Ecuador	278,179		36,026		314,205	0
El Salvador	15,664		2,136		17,800	0
European Union	70,357		7,452		77,809	0
France O.T	23,544		3,232		26,776	0
Guatemala	9,608		1,462		11,069	0
Japan	58,305		5,572		63,877	0
Kiribati	6,486	941		953	6,486	1,894
Korea	41,325		5,087		46,412	0
Mexico	185,053		23,978		209,031	0
Nicaragua	13,853		1,817		15,670	0
Panama	117,184		16,004		133,189	0
Peru	21,826		3,614		25,440	0
Chinese Taipei	39,130		4,901		44,031	0
United States of America	307,398		36,407		343,805	0
Vanuatu	9,190		1,091		10,281	
Venezuela	7,793	37,791		4,082	7,793	41,873
Total contributions	**1,349,828**		**167,657**		**1,517,485**	
Approved budget[1]	**1,388,560**		**172,692**		**1,561,252**	
Pending contributions		**38,732**		**5,035**		**43,767**

[1] Amounts approved by budget year: 2016 US$ 131,086, 2017 US$ 132,109, 2018 US$ 156,412, 2019 - 2023 US$159,487, 2024 US$ 171,130

Table 2 summarizes the Fund's balance for 2024 and 2025, as well as the projected balance for 2026. As of June 30, 2026, the Fund's balance is US$ 376,799.

TABLE 2. Fund activity, in US$			
	2024	**2025**	**2026**
1 January carryover from previous year	411,661	549,460	592,623
Income received	213,041	158,495	
Total income	624,702	707,955	592,623
Expenditures			
Santa Marta Workshop	15,143		
Participation in annual meeting	17,046	40,673	67,000*
Participation in SAC meeting	23,010	59,584	53,955
Participation in training seminar at Achotines	20,042		
International Workshop on Mitigation of FAD Loss and Abandonment in the Pacific Ocean		15,075	3,869
FAO International Course on Fisheries Port Inspections in Support of the Agreement on Port State Measures			91,000*
Expenditures Subtotal	75,242	115,332	215,824
Balance of Fund carried forward	549,460	592,623	**376,799**
*Projected amounts for the year 2026.			

To date, and over the years, several developing Members of the Commission have benefited from the Fund's resources. It should be noted that those resources cannot be used for technical assistance and capacity-building for Cooperating Non-Members, as they do not currently contribute to the Fund's financing.

Although the Fund has been functioning satisfactorily in practice, its optimal use requires—as is the case with other funds of this nature—the development and adoption of appropriate rules, particularly with regard to the criteria and procedures for the efficient planning and implementation of technical assistance and capacity-building activities. For example, with regard to the allocation of support intended to ensure the participation of representatives of eligible Members in the meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, it would be advisable to clarify aspects such as the procedures and deadlines for submitting requests for support.

The development of those specific rules remains pending, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 4 of Resolution C-14-03, which states: *"The administration of the Fund shall be the responsibility of the Director and shall be subject to the auditing rules of the Commission and the **financial regulations for the administration of the Fund to be developed by the Commission**."*

3. ACTIVITIES PLANNED OR IMPLEMENTED USING FUND RESOURCES DURING 2025 AND 2026

In accordance with the activities approved by the Commission at its previous meeting, the activities described in Table 3 were planned to be carried out during 2025 and 2026. The table presents the implementation status of each activity, as well as the corresponding updated information.

TABLE 3. Activities planned for 2025 and 2026 using resources from the Fund.	
Activity	**Objective and Status of the Activity**
1. Segundo Taller de Capacitación: Introducción a los métodos usados en las evaluaciones de poblaciones de atunes tropicales dirigido a autoridades involucradas en la gestión pesquera.	**Objective:** To strengthen the technical and scientific capacities of representatives from developing CPCs through training on methods used for tropical tuna stock assessments, contributing to the fulfillment of obligations established under the Antigua Convention. **Activity status:** In progress. The workshop is scheduled for **September 2027**, and approximately 13 officials from 13 CPCs are expected to participate.
2. Seminars for port inspections	**Objective:** To strengthen the technical and operational capacities of developing CPCs through training and capacity building activities to support the implementation of the PSMA, contribute to the elimination of IUU fishing, and support the implementation of relevant IATTC measures. **Activity status:** In progress. The workshop is scheduled for October 2026, and approximately 20 officials from 10 CPCs are expected to participate.
3. Annual IATTC scholarship	**Objective:** To strengthen the technical and scientific capacities of staff and scientists from developing CPCs through a training assignment at the IATTC Secretariat. **Status of the activity:** In planning. The scholarship plan, currently in draft form, remains under internal preparation.
4. Participation of representatives of developing Members in meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, including working groups and workshops.	**Objective:** To facilitate the participation of representatives from developing Members in meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, including working groups and workshops, with the aim of strengthening their contribution to the Commission's work. **Status of the activity:** Completed. Support was provided for the participation of representatives from developing Members in the meetings of the Scientific Advisory Committee, the International Workshop on FADs, and the IATTC Annual Meeting. During the relevant period, requests received from 11 CPCs were addressed. This activity will continue to be carried out in accordance with the Commission's needs.

4. ACTIVITIES SCHEDULED FOR 2027

Resolution C-14-03 states in paragraph 3 that "*The Director shall present to the Commission for its approval every year the strategic investment plan chargeable to the Fund, which shall be constructed on the basis of the requirements of the developing countries and territories and the analyses carried out by the Commission staff.*"

In accordance with this provision, the activities proposed to be financed from the Fund during 2027 are presented below. **Table 4** includes the estimated cost, as well as the planned date and location for each activity.

TABLE 4. Activities to be carried out in 2027 with resources from the Fund		
	Estimated Cost	**Date and Location**
Second training workshop: Introduction to methods used in tropical tuna stock assessments for authorities involved in fisheries management.*	US$25,000	September 2027- Achotines Laboratory, Panama
Annual IATTC scholarship for scientific capacity in developing CPCs **	US$30,000	2027- La Jolla, CA
R Programming Course	US$6,000	July 2027-Virtual
International Course on Fisheries Law	US$50,000	May 2027- To be determined
Scenario planning: preparing for plausible futures of EPO tuna fisheries	US$50,000	February 2027- To be determined
Participation of representatives of developing Members in meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, including working groups and workshops ***	US$220,000	At the venue of each meeting
FAO International Course on Fisheries Port Inspections in Support of the Agreement on Port State Measures (English)	US$20,000	2027- To be determined

* The proposed activities include the second stock assessment training workshop, previously approved by the Commission to be held in 2026 and rescheduled for 2027.

** As explained in previous reports, a call for applications will be issued to select the recipients of the Jimmy Martínez Fellowship. The Fellowship is named in honor of Jimmy Martínez in recognition of the contributions of this Ecuadorian scientist and biologist to the work of the Commission and to the sustainability of the species covered by the Antigua Convention. The fellowship would consist of an approximately three-month stay at IATTC headquarters.

*** As established in Resolution C-14-03 regarding the purposes for which the resources of the Special Fund are to be used, support will continue to be provided for the participation of representatives of developing Members in meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies.

It should be noted that the activities planned and proposed for 2027 will be financed with resources from the Fund, comprising the fixed annual contribution equivalent to 2% of the Commission's operating budget for that year, as well as the remaining resources from previous years. All proposed activities are consistent with the provisions of Resolution C-14-03.