

MINUTES OF THE 52ND MEETING OF THE
INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

La Jolla, California, USA,
October 26-27, 1993

The 52nd meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) took place in La Jolla, California, USA, on October 26-27, 1993. Commissioners from Costa Rica, Panama, the United States, Vanuatu, and Venezuela, a representative from Japan, and observers from Colombia, Mexico, Spain, the European Economic Community, the Fishermen's Coalition, and the Fundación para la Defensa de la Naturaleza (FUDENA) attended the meeting.

Agenda Item 1 - Opening of the meeting

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Dr. Francisco Herrera Terán of Venezuela, at 9:55 a.m. Dr. Herrera introduced himself, and called upon representatives of the various nations and the European Economic Community to do the same. The names and affiliations of the attendees are listed in Appendix 1.

Agenda Item 2 - Adoption of agenda

Dr. Herrera called the attendees' attention to the provisional agenda prepared by the IATTC staff, and asked if anyone had suggestions or comments regarding the agenda. No one had any, so the agenda was adopted.

Agenda Item 3 - A review of the 1993 fishing year to date

Dr. Herrera called upon Dr. James Joseph, Director of the IATTC, for a review of the fishery for tunas in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) during 1993 to date.

Dr. Joseph said that the catches of yellowfin in the EPO were less during 1991 and 1992 than during 1986-1990, when they averaged more than 300,000 tons. The total catch for 1993 will probably be less than 250,000 tons. The lesser catches of 1991, 1992, and 1993 are due to decreased fishing effort, rather than to decreased abundance of yellowfin, as the catches per unit of effort have remained high. The average sizes of the fish in 1993 have been about the same as during the 1984-1992 period, which is good from the standpoint of harvesting the average maximum sustainable yield (AMSY) of yellowfin. Yellowfin are taken by purse-seine vessels in the EPO by three types of sets, those directed at fish associated with dolphins, those directed at fish associated with floating objects, and those directed at free-swimming schools of fish. Most of the yellowfin caught in association with dolphins are larger than those caught in the other two types of sets. Since 1984, more than half the yellowfin have been caught each year in schools associated with dolphins. The size of the fleet, which has decreased in recent years, is near the optimum size required for taking the AMSY. Mexico, which has the largest fleet, has taken the greatest amounts of yellowfin during 1993. The next-greatest catches have been taken by vessels of Venezuela, Vanuatu, and the United States, in that order. The total catch of skipjack in the EPO in 1993 will probably be about 95,000 tons. Only small amounts of skipjack are taken in schools associated with dolphins. The greatest catches of skipjack in the EPO during 1993 have been taken by vessels of Ecuador, the United States, Mexico, and Vanuatu, in that order. Large amounts of bigeye are taken in the

EPO by longline vessels of Japan and other nations. Much smaller amounts of bigeye, bluefin, and albacore are taken by surface gear in the EPO.

Dr. Herrera thanked Dr. Joseph, and asked if there were any questions. There were none, so he turned the floor over to Dr. Joseph for a review of the recent developments regarding the International Dolphin Conservation Program.

Agenda Item 4 - Review of International Dolphin Conservation Program

Dr. Joseph said that the Marine Mammal Protection Act was passed by the United States in 1972. At that time, the fleet consisted mostly of U.S. vessels, so the mortality of dolphins in the tuna fishery was mostly a U.S. problem. By the mid-1970s, however, many non-U.S. vessels had entered the fishery, so the problem became international. At the IATTC's 33rd meeting, held in Managua, Nicaragua, in October 1976, it was agreed that the IATTC would become involved in assessment of the condition of the stocks of dolphins which frequently associate with yellowfin tuna and attempts to reduce the mortalities due to fishing. Specifically, it was agreed that the IATTC "should strive to maintain a high level of tuna production and also to maintain [dolphin] stocks at or above levels that assure their survival in perpetuity, with every reasonable effort being made to avoid needless or careless killing of [dolphins]." The IATTC first received funding for its tuna-dolphin program in 1980, and almost immediately began to place observers on vessels of the international fleet. By 1986, vessels of all nations participating in the fishery were carrying IATTC observers. Originally, observers were placed on one third of the trips, as it had been determined that that coverage was adequate for estimation of the mortalities of dolphins due to fishing. Later the coverage was increased to 100 percent.

In 1986, the first year of complete coverage by the IATTC's observer program, the mortality of dolphins due to fishing was approximately 133,000 animals. By 1992, the mortality had decreased to about 15,500 animals, and in 1993 the mortality is expected to be between 3,000 and 4,000 animals.

At a workshop on tuna-dolphin interactions, sponsored by the IATTC and the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service, held in San Jose, Costa Rica, in March 1989, and at subsequent IATTC meetings, "dolphin mortality limits" (DMLs) were discussed. An overall dolphin mortality limit (DML) for a calendar year would be set before the beginning of that year, and the tuna fleet would be controlled by whatever means necessary to ensure that that limit was not exceeded. At a special meeting of the IATTC in April 1992, the members of the IATTC and the non-member nations participating in the fishery agreed to "adopt a multilateral program with the objectives of (1) progressively reducing dolphin mortality in the EPO fishery to levels approaching zero through the setting of annual limits and (2), with a goal of eliminating dolphin mortality in this fishery, seeking ecologically sound means of capturing large yellowfin tunas not in association with dolphins while maintaining the populations of yellowfin tuna in the EPO at a level which will permit maximum sustained catches year after year." The program is referred to as the International Dolphin Conservation Program (IDCP). The following schedule of overall DMLs was agreed upon: 1993, 19,500; 1994, 15,500; 1995, 12,000; 1996, 9,000; 1997, 7,500; 1998, 6,500; 1999, <5,000. At the 50th meeting of the IATTC in June 1992, agreement was reached on means to ensure that the limits were not exceeded. As the 1993 overall DML was 19,500 animals, and 106 vessels had applied to participate in the program, DMLs for individual vessels were set at 183 animals (19,500 animals divided by 106 boats). Only 60 of the 106 vessels which applied for individual DMLs for 1993

actually participated in the program; 17 were inactive, 17 fished only on schools of tunas not associated with dolphins, and 12 fished in areas other than the EPO. It is estimated that there will be only about 7,000 to 8,000 sets on tunas associated with dolphins in 1993, as compared to more than 10,000 such sets in most years of the 1986-1992 period. The decreased mortality of 1993 is due mostly to improved performance by the fishermen, however, rather than to decreased effort, as the number of dolphins killed per set decreased from 1.5 animals in 1992 to an estimated 0.5 animals in 1993.

Dr. Joseph then called upon Dr. Martín Hall of the IATTC staff, who gave further information on the mortalities of dolphins in the purse-seine fishery for tunas. Dr. Hall presented some slides which showed that (1) the total mortality of dolphins caused by the fishery decreased by nearly 90 percent from 1986 to 1992, (2) the numbers of sets on yellowfin tuna associated with dolphins stayed nearly constant during this period, and (3) the dolphin mortalities per set and per ton of yellowfin caught decreased by nearly 90 percent during the 1986-1992 period. He pointed out that the average mortality will be less than 70 animals per boat for the 60 boats which participated in the IDCP in 1993.

Dr. Herrera thanked Drs. Joseph and Hall, and asked if there were any questions. There were none, so Dr. Herrera said that he would move on to the next agenda item.

Agenda Item 5 - Other business

Dr. Herrera asked if there was any other business which should be discussed. Dr. Joseph said that he had received a letter from the Organización Latinoamericana de Desarrollo Pesquero (OLDEPESCA), stating that it wished to cooperate with the IATTC in matters of mutual concern, and a draft of an agreement to that effect. Dr. Joseph said that the agreement was written in very general terms, and would not compromise the authority of the IATTC or its member nations. He recommended that he be permitted to sign it. Dr. Herrera, who had seen the document, agreed with Dr. Joseph. It was agreed that copies of the document would be made available to the other Commissioners during the ensuing lunch period. The draft agreement is reproduced as Appendix 2 of these minutes.

The meeting was temporarily adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

The meeting was reconvened on October 27, 1993, at 9:35 p.m., and discussion of the draft agreement between the IATTC and OLDEPESCA was resumed. Everyone agreed with the contents of the document, but the representative from Japan said that his government would have to study the contents of the draft agreement, especially from a legal point of view, before permission to sign it could be granted. Also, it was pointed out that France and Nicaragua were not represented at the meeting, so unanimous consent could not be obtained during the current meeting anyway. It was agreed that consent to sign the document would be sought by mail from the governments of France, Japan, and Nicaragua.

Agenda Item 6 - Adjournment

Dr. Herrera, after asking if anyone had anything else to discuss and receiving no response, adjourned the meeting at 9:40 p.m.

APPENDIX 1

52nd (SPECIAL) MEETING OF THE IATTC--52ª REUNION (ESPECIAL) DE LA CIAT
October 26-27, 1993--26 y 27 de octubre de 1993
La Jolla, California

ATTENDEES--ASISTENTES

MEMBER COUNTRIES--PAISES MIEMBROS

COSTA RICA

Herbert Nanne Echandi
Comisionado
Armando Rodríguez Gutiérrez
Cámara de Comercio, Puntarenas

JAPAN--JAPON

Shingo Ota
Fisheries Agency of Japan
Sally Campen
Japan Tuna Association

PANAMA

Juan Antonio Varela
Comisionado

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA--
ESTADOS UNIDOS DE AMERICA**

Henry Beasley
Commissioner
Robert Macdonald
Commissioner
Mary Walker
Commissioner
Brian Hallman
Department of State
Robert C. Brownell, Jr.
Elizabeth Edwards
Martin Hochman
Paul Niemeier
Steve Thompson
Michael Tillman
National Marine Fisheries Service
David Burney
U.S. Tuna Foundation
Michael Dunn
Kate O'Connell
Tony Trutanich
Julius Zolezzi

VANUATU

Doresthy Kenneth
Ministry of Fisheries

VENEZUELA

Francisco Herrera Terán
Comisionado
Jean-François Pulvenis
Santos Valero
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores
Whitney Debevoise
Nancy Perkins
Arnold & Porter

OBSERVERS--OBSERVADORES

COLOMBIA

Alejandro Londoño
Guerly Avila de Tabarés
Instituto Nacional de Pesca y Acuicultura

MEXICO

Dámaso Luna
Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores
Carlos Camacho Gaos
Jerónimo Ramos
Secretaría de Pesca
Guillermo Compeán
Programa Atún-Delfín

SPAIN--ESPAÑA

Javier Ariz Tellería
Instituto Español de Oceanografía
Isabel Revenga Arangüena
Secretaría General de Pesca Marítima

**EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY--
COMUNIDAD ECONOMICA EUROPEA**

Peter A. Curran
Directorate-General of Fisheries

OTHER ATTENDEES--OTROS ASISTENTES

Felipe Charat

CANAINPES

Héctor López Rojas

FUDENA

Teresa Platt
The Fishermen's Coalition

**GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE LATIN AMERICAN
ORGANIZATION FOR FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT (OLDEPESCA)
AND THE INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA
COMMISSION (IATTC)**

The LATIN AMERICAN ORGANIZATION FOR FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT (OLDEPESCA) and the INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION (IATTC):

CONSIDERING:

That is highly desirable for the purposes of the development of the Latin American and Caribbean countries to harmonize efforts with Regional and Subregional Organizations, with a view to maximizing benefits from the utilization of the available resources and to avoid duplication;

That, given the existence of a set of common aims contributing to the sustainable development of the Latin American and Caribbean fisheries, action is needed that will make viable and formalize plans for inter-institutional cooperation;

That any formal links established should be in keeping with the precepts laid down by the Constitutional Convention of OLDEPESCA and the Convention of the IATTC.

RESOLVE THAT:

FIRST: *OLDEPESCA and the IATTC will, as far as they are able, cooperate mutually within the limits of their general objectives and their programs of work through the implementation of specific actions which will be agreed through working agreements.*

SECOND: *OLDEPESCA and the IATTC shall exchange information and documentation deemed necessary for mutual understanding of the activities which both organizations are developing or plan to develop, in order to facilitate the identification of opportunities for cooperation.*

THIRD: *When the forms of cooperation agreed within the framework of the present Agreement so require, OLDEPESCA shall be able to appoint missions to the IATTC, and vice versa, in order to facilitate the implementation of the specific cooperative programs or the coordination of their activities.*

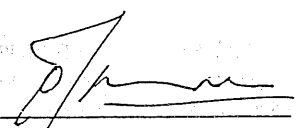
- FOURTH:** OLDEPESCA and the IATTC shall invite each other to meetings organized by each of them, on matters of common interest. To this end, both organizations shall exchange, in good time, the respective agendas and schedules for these meetings.
- FIFTH:** When one of the parties requires technical assistance from the other party, under the terms of the present Agreement they should hold consultations with the aim of determining the most practicable manner of supporting such assistance.
- SIXTH:** It is understood that no activity carried out within the framework of the present Agreement shall imply any change in the respective competence of each organization.
- SEVENTH:** Both organizations shall examine periodically the application of the present Agreement and shall adopt the measures necessary to facilitate or expand their cooperation.

In witness whereof this Agreement is signed in duplicate.

September 30, 1993

FOR OLDEPESCA

FOR THE IATTC



Dr. CARLOS MAZAL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dr. JAMES JOSEPH
DIRECTOR