



ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS
OF FISHING ENTERPRISES IN THE EU

EUROPECHE TUNA GROUP priorities for the 103rd session of the IATTC

(1st- 5th September 2025, Panama, Panama)

Brussels, 7 August 2025

This Position Statement contains a list of priorities identified by EUROPECHE TUNA GROUP for the next meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC). EUROPECHE TUNA GROUP invites IATTC Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, and other stakeholders to IATTC fisheries to consider these points on the adoption of decisions at the upcoming meetings of the IATTC.

1. Conservation of tropical tunas

EUROPECHE TUNA GROUP welcomes the fact that all stocks of tropical tunas in the Pacific Ocean are in good condition, with none of them overfished or subject to overfishing. It acknowledges the positive results of the last assessment of the stock of Eastern Pacific bigeye tuna, which would result in eight days of purse seine closure if the existing IATTC Control Rule were to be implemented.

EUROPECHE TUNA GROUP is concerned that the management strategy evaluation and consultation processes that should lead to the adoption of a Management Procedure for the stocks of tropical tunas in the IATTC Convention Area are not proceeding as scheduled, urging the IATTC to prioritize completion of this work.

EUROPECHE TUNA GROUP invites the IATTC to consider:

- Replacing IATTC Resolution C-24-01 with a new measure that **reduces the duration of the purse seine closure** taking into consideration both the number of days closure resulting from implementing the IATTC's control rule in place and implementation of the Precautionary Approach.

- Incorporating provisions in the new measure to **facilitate the recovery of FADs at risk of stranding in waters of French Polynesia**, in line with the recommendation made at the 2025 meeting of IATTC's Scientific Advisory Committee.
- **Prioritizing the strengthening of IATTC's traditional sampling programme** with the purpose of obtaining best scientific estimates of catch for the combined purse seine fleet and collecting additional biological data required for the assessments of the stocks of tropical tunas.
- That **the new measure adopted covers the years 2026-2028** and includes provisions to: **ensure the completion of multi-stock MSE work before the end of 2027**; enhance the process to communicate the results of MSE to the Commission, through the **science-management dialogue process**; facilitate IATTC's decision-making process towards the **adoption of a Management Procedure for tropical tunas** for the subsequent three-year management cycle (**2029-2031**).
- Strengthening communication between the **IATTC and the WCPFC** on matters **related to MSE** for the tropical tuna stocks, and approaches used for the implementation of multi-stock **Management Procedures**, in order to **harmonize as much as possible such processes**.

2. Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management

EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP congratulates the IATTC for the work undertaken to evaluate the impact of IATTC fisheries on non-target stocks, and the ecosystem, and the adoption of measures that take into consideration the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management.

EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP further welcomes the adoption, on 19 June 2023, of The Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ Treaty), which will enter into force upon deposit of the sixtieth instrument of ratification, approval, acceptance or accession (52 at present). While the BBNJ Treaty recognises the role of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, including provisions to “not undermine” their mandate, EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP agrees on the need for RFMO to clearly define that their competence extends to the bycatch and ecosystem impacts of the fisheries for stocks under their mandates, to avoid overlapping between RFMO and BBNJ measures.

EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP invites the IATTC to consider:

- Adopting a measure to **set a formal process for the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management by the IATTC**, which clearly defines the competences of the IATTC on the management of the fisheries for stocks under

its jurisdiction, plus the impacts of those fisheries on other species and the ecosystem.

- That the new measure includes a plan for the IATTC to continue implementing the EAFM, in a formal manner, **bearing in mind the socio-economic impacts that will issue from such implementation.**
- That the measure includes provisions to **encourage collaboration between the IATTC and the BBNJ**, once in force, to **ensure that any future measures implemented by the BBNJ do not undermine the activities of fisheries managed by the IATTC.**

3. Compliance

EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP is concerned about the impact of disagreements in the interpretation of IATTC measures, on issues related to compliance, which has been hampering the work of the Commission in recent years. EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP believes that this originates from provisions in IATTC Resolutions that are vague or not clearly specified, acknowledging the need for the IATTC to review all such cases.

EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP invites the IATTC to consider:

- Implementing a **process of legal screening of IATTC Resolutions**, intended to identify provisions that are controversial and propose amendments to such measures, for the consideration of the Commission at its 2026 meeting and, where required, adoption.
- The adoption of **templates to assist the IATTC Compliance Committee in assessing the levels of compliance of IATTC CPC with the measures in place**, along the lines of those used in other tuna-RFMO (e.g., IOTC).
- Contemplating the **gradual transfer of activities that the IATTC Secretariat carries to assist compliance monitoring to the CPCs responsible**, to be supported through the implementation of capacity building activities in the coastal-developing CPC that require it.
- The implementation of **comprehensive search tools at the IATTC Web Page to facilitate consultation from IATTC CPC or other stakeholders concerning any issues related to compliance** in the conservation and management measures adopted by the IATTC.

4. Funding of IATTC Regular budget

EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP is concerned about the poor financial status of the IATTC, and the risk that it undermines its work in the future. It acknowledges the need for the IATTC to prioritize cleaning up of the work plan and budget to ensure that the IATTC Secretariat can carry the Commission's mandate, and counts with the funds required for this purpose.

EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP notes the need for the Commission to reconsider the proportion of the APICD budget that is covered by the IATTC, in order to acknowledge the increased burden that APICD observers bear in response to IATTC needs. The EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP operators are not prepared to cover the drastic increase in US\$ per cubic meter of carrying capacity related to APICD observers, which, if adopted, would more than double the current US\$ per cubic meter contribution of each purse seiner.

EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP invites the IATTC to consider:

- Ensuring that **the IATTC Secretariat counts with enough resources to carry out its regular work**, as determined by the Commission, and any additional tasks identified and funded by the Commission.
- **Increasing IATTC's contribution to the APICD to cover from 30% to 50% of APICD's budget**, to compensate for increases in the work of APICD observers as a response to new IATTC requirements.

5. Other matters

EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP invites the IATTC to consider:

- ***Indices of abundance from longliners***: EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP encourages CPC having **longline fleets to share the operational longline data required to estimate indices of abundance with the IATTC scientific staff**, and that such data be stored at the IATTC Secretariat to facilitate future work on the estimation of indices of abundance, with its use subject to strict confidentiality rules and procedure, as agreed with the data providers. EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP notes that such an arrangement exists already at the WCPFC and invites the IATTC to adopt the same approach.
- ***Tagging programme***: EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP fully **supports the implementation of a tagging programme by the IATTC** and encourages IATTC CPC and other interested stakeholders to explore the way in which the programme proposed can be funded and implemented, as soon as possible.

- ***Transshipments:*** EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP reiterates its position that **transshipments should only occur in port**, to achieve both increased transparency and economic activity in the coastal countries of the area where the fishing activities take place.
- ***Regional observer programme longline:*** EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP is concerned about the paucity of the data available on interactions of longline fisheries with non-target species and the ecosystem and **encourages the IATTC to consider the implementation of a regional observer scheme for large-scale longliners and those longliners of any size that operate on the high seas**, along the lines of what is conducted for purse seiners under the APICD. EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP reiterates the importance of this data to obtain key information for stock assessments and the impacts of these fisheries.
- ***Catches of sharks by coastal fisheries:*** EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP stresses the value to **maintain the programmes** that have been implemented in recent years in coastal areas of countries of the Pacific rim of America, **devoted to the collection of data from coastal fisheries catching shark species**. EUROPÊCHE TUNA GROUP encourages the CPCs concerned to secure the funding available to maintain such activities or, where not possible, identify external sources of funding with the assistance of the IATTC Secretariat or other concerned stakeholders.