

**AGREEMENT ON THE INTERNATIONAL DOLPHIN CONSERVATION PROGRAM
(AIDCP)**

77TH MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL REVIEW PANEL

**Lisbon, Portugal
August 24, 2026**

MEETING REPORT

	Documents
1. Opening of the meeting	
2. Adoption of the agenda	
3. Review of Dolphin Mortality Limits for 2025 and 2026	IRP-77-01
4. Review of the AIDCP List of Qualified Captains	IRP-77-02
5. Review of cases with possible infractions (observer data)	IRP-77-03
6. Review of actions by the Parties regarding possible infractions reported by the IRP:	IRP-77-04
a) Actions taken since the report at the 76 th meeting	
b) Status review of special cases	
7. Report of the Permanent Working Group on Tuna Tracking	
8. Other business	
9. Recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties.	
10. Date and place of next meeting	
11. Adjournment	

ANNEXES

1. List of participants

1. Opening of the meeting

The 77th meeting of the International Review Panel (IRP) was held on August 26, 2024, in Panama City, Panama. It started at 09:58 local time.

M.Sc. Yarkelia Vergara, Chair of the AIDCP, gave the floor to Mr. Enrique Espinosa as Coordinator of the IRP to chair this meeting.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without modifications

3. Review of Dolphin Mortality Limits for 2025 and 2026

Biologist Enrique Ureña from the Secretariat presented document IRP-77-01. He reported on DML utilization and dolphin mortality from 2025 and 2026 until July 29, 2026. In 2025, 107 full-year limits were allocated: 89 used in the first quarter, 2 waived, 13 approved exemptions, 3 lost DMLs for not being

used before April 1, 4 limits allocated by the Director's reserve for the second half (15 dolphins each), where 1 was not used before October 1.

In 2025, the fleet made 11,175 sets on tuna associated with dolphins, with 942 dead dolphins, with a mortality rate per set of 0.08, and an average mortality rate of 9.5 per vessel. Regarding the distribution of cumulative mortality, 27 vessels did NOT register dolphin mortality, 17 vessels had a cumulative mortality between 1-5 dolphins, 14 vessels between 6-10 dolphins, 15 vessels between 11-15 dolphins, 16 vessels between 16-20 dolphins, and 10 vessels between 21-50 dolphins.

In relation to DML utilization, 103 full-year limits were allocated: 79 were used in the first quarter, 1 waived, 21 approved exemptions, 3 lost for not being used before April 1, 6 limits allocated by the Director's reserve for the second half (10 dolphins each). Up to the date mentioned, the fleet made 7,082 sets on tuna associated with dolphins, with 585 dead dolphins, a mortality rate of 0.08 per set, and an average mortality rate of 6.6 per vessel.

Regarding the distribution of accumulated mortality, 20 vessels did NOT register dolphin mortality, 23 vessels had an accumulated mortality for this year between 1-5 dolphins, 22 vessels between 6-10 dolphins, 13 vessels between 11-15 dolphins, 10 vessels between 16-20 dolphins, and 1 vessel between 21-25 dolphins.

4. Review of the AIDCP List of Qualified Captains

The secretariat presented document IRP 77-02, which indicates that during the period from October 16, 2025, to July 29, 2026, 10 applications were received to add captains to the list of qualified captains who complied with all the requirements, no captain was eliminated due to infractions nor were there reinstatements to the list.

5. Review of cases with possible infractions (observer data)

The secretariat presented document IRP 77-03 with the possible cases that require analysis by the Panel. It is reported that during the period since the 76.^a IRP meeting, the Secretariat has examined 762 fishing trips and identified four possible cases of non-compliance that require the Panel's consideration and guidance: two cases of fishing without Dolphin Safety Panel (DSP), one case of a set without the required backdown process, and one case of dolphin entrapment.

The cases 20260460 and 20260538 correspond to cases for fishing without DSP, after the removal of the panel or while it was under repair; in both cases, the vessels concentrated on schools of fish not associated with dolphins. The case 20260185 refers to a set involving dolphins without the required backdown process, although the captain indicated that he would release the bow head to facilitate the dolphins' exit. Finally, the case 20251039 involved a vessel without an assigned DML that, during a set over a floating object, accidentally caught two dolphins, which were later seen dead in the sack.

After reviewing these cases, the Panel decided to send them to each of the relevant Parties for investigation.

6. Review of actions by the Parties regarding possible violations reported by the IRP.

The Secretariat presented document IRP-77-04, which states that there were no cases to report regarding the previous meeting, but reported on some cases under investigation, as well as the latest responses from the corresponding CPCs.

7. Report of the Permanent Working Group on Tuna Tracking

The chair of the Permanent Working Group on Tuna Tracking, Jeiris Galicia, presented her report to the panel, indicating that the agenda was adopted without objection, and the information from document *T55-01* was presented with the update of the delivery of copies and originals of the TTF document showing a high level of compliance.

8. Other business

No other business was discussed at this meeting.

9. Recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties.

The IRP made the following recommendations to the AIDCP Meeting of the Parties:

- The 4 cases reviewed at this meeting and described in point 5 of this report were sent to the relevant Parties.
- Consider requesting the scientific staff of the IATTC to prepare an analysis of additional and alternative mechanisms to the backdown maneuver for the release of dolphins trapped in the net at the time of closing the purse seine, at levels of safety sufficient to consider them as operations that safeguard the integrity and prevent the mortality of dolphins, so that it can be considered in a possible update of the relevant management measures.
- Consider urging the Parties to submit to the Secretariat inputs for the development of an incentive system for captains and crews of vessels with a record of outstanding performance and no record of violations, with a view to improving compliance with the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program, in accordance with the purpose agreed in resolution A-99-01.
- That the managers and coordinators of onboard observer programs (both IATTC and national programs) be formally instructed to require that all reports issued by observer personnel be written under strict criteria of objectivity, impartiality, and factual rigor, categorically prohibiting the inclusion of personal opinions, value judgments, or assertions based on unverified assumptions or inferences; at the same time, the IATTC Secretariat is requested to continuously strengthen training programs for observers in technical writing and data reporting, reaffirming that the essential function of observers is to accurately and impartially record the facts directly witnessed, thus guaranteeing the technical soundness and credibility of the inputs used for fishery management and compliance assessment.

10. Date and place of next meeting.

The date and place of the next meeting will be announced by the Secretariat in the context of the upcoming meetings in October.

11. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:25 p.m. Lisbon, Portugal, time on August 24, 2026.

Annex 1

77th MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL REVIEW PANEL (IRP-77)

77ª REUNIÓN DEL PANEL INTERNACIONAL DE REVISIÓN

Lisbon, Portugal — 24 August 2026 / Lisboa, Portugal — 24 de agosto de 2026 (DRAFT)

ASISTENTES - ATTENDEES	
MIEMBROS - MEMBERS	
BELICE - BELIZE	
DELICE PINKARD* Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit	
LIMBERT CORTEZ* Ministerio de Defensa HUGO ALSINA Ministerio de Defensa	OSCAR MIRANDA Ministerio de Defensa WILLIAN OLIVES Ministerio de Defensa
COLOMBIA	
JOSÉ LUÍS COTES ANGEL* Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores JAVIER GARCIA Ministerio de Comercio, Industria y Turismo CARMEN LÓPEZ Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible	WILBERTO ANGULO VIVEROS Autoridad Nacional de Acuicultura y Pesca GERMÁN FONSECA Programa Nacional de Observadores CARLOS RODRIGUEZ
COSTA RICA	
JOSÉ MIGUEL CARVAJAL RODRÍGUEZ Instituto Costarricense de Pesca y Acuicultura MEDRANO GONZÁLEZ Instituto Costarricense de Pesca y Acuicultura	ANA VICTORIA PANIGUA PRADO Instituto Costarricense de Pesca y Acuicultura MAURICIO GONZÁLEZ Cámara Nacional de Pesquería
ECUADOR	
HENRY MERO* Subsecretaría de Recursos Pesqueros LUIGI BENINCASA AZUA Asociación de Atuneros del Ecuador	RAFAEL TRUJILLO Cámara Nacional de Pesquería
EL SALVADOR	
JASMIN CARDENAS Autoridad Salvadoreña de Economía Azul (ASEA)	RAUL EDGARDO CORTEZ COTA Autoridad Salvadoreña de Economía Azul (ASEA)
ESTADOS UNIDOS DE AMÉRICA - UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	
COLIN BRINKMAN* U.S. Department of State LUCY BULKELEY NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region DEREK CAMPBELL NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region PALLAVI JAVOR NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region TYLER LAWSON	AMY LUBRANO NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region AMANDA MUNRO NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region WILLIAM STAHNKE NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region KARIN KIZER U.S. Department of State

NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region	
GUATEMALA	
BERNAL CHAVARRÍA* Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería	
MÉXICO - MEXICO	
BERNARDINO JESÚS MUÑOZ RÉSENDEZ* Comisión Nacional de Acuacultura y Pesca (CONAPESCA) MICHEL DREYFUS Programa Nacional de Observadores	MARTHA ELENA BETANCOURT AGUIRRE FIDEMAR ALFONSO ROSIÑOL
NICARAGUA	
ROBERTO CHACON RIVAS* Instituto Nicaragüense de la Pesca y Acuicultura	JULIO GUEVARA Instituto Nicaragüense de la Pesca y Acuicultura
PANAMÁ - PANAMA	
YARKELIA VERGARA* Autoridad de los Recursos Acuáticos de Panamá MARÍA PATRICIA DIAZ DE SANTAMARIA Fundación Internacional de Pesca	ENRIQUE ESPINOSA Programa Nacional de Observadores
PERÚ - PERU	
RICARDO HERBOZO COLQUE* Ministerio de la Producción	ANA ALEGRE Ministerio de la Producción
UNIÓN EUROPEA - EUROPEAN UNION	
FIONA HARFORD* European Commission	IGNACIO GRANELL European Commission
VANUATU	
KATHERINE BERNAL* Vanuatu Fisheries Department	JOSÉ FERNANDO NAVIA Vanuatu Fisheries Department
VENEZUELA	
PEDRO GUERRA* Ministerio del Poder Popular de Pesca y Acuicultura ALVIN DELGADO Fundación para la Pesca Sostenida y Responsable de Túnidos JEIRIS GALICIA Ministerio del Poder Popular de Pesca y Acuicultura	ELENA QUINTERO Ministerio del Poder Popular de Pesca y Acuicultura MANUEL CORREIA Ministerio de Pesca y Acuicultura ABELARDO RIERA Fundación para la Pesca Sostenida y Responsable de Túnidos
SECRETARÍA - SECRETARIAT	
ARNULFO FRANCO, Director MARISOL AGUILAR ALEX AIRES DA SILVA RICARDO BELMONTES BARBARA CULLINGFORD ROLANDO DENIS MONICA GALVAN JON LOPEZ MARK MAUNDER TERESA MUSANO	JIMMY OLAYA REYES SANTIAGO OLIVARES BRIANNA PADILLA JORGE PARRAGA JEAN-FRANCOIS PULVENIS DE SÉLIGNY GABY RETANA MARLON ROMAN ENRIQUE UREÑA BRAD WILEY

*Head of Delegation-Jefe de Delegación

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NOTA: SI SU INFORMACIÓN ES INCORRECTA, POR FAVOR DEJENOS SABER. GRACIAS.