

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION
COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE APPLICATION OF MEASURES ADOPTED BY
THE COMMISSION
SECOND SPECIAL BIENNIAL COMPLIANCE MEETING
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**PLAN TO ADVANCE AUTOMATION OF THE
IATTC COMPLIANCE SYSTEM ON ITS FIRST STAGE**

1. Introduction.

Regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) with mandates on tuna and related species have made significant progress in automating their monitoring and enforcement systems. The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), and the Southern Bluefin Tuna Conservation Commission (CCSBT) have digital platforms that integrate infraction review, country reporting, and monitoring of compliance with conservation and management measures (CMMs).

The IATTC already has a relational database (SQL) that records the monitoring of possible infractions and the responses of Members to these, linked to the Regional Vessel Register. This infrastructure is a favorable asset for IATTC: it does not start from zero.

The fundamental purpose of this document is to describe what is intended to be done to transform the existing database into an integrated and automated compliance platform, to obtain the support, suggestions, or comments from the COR. This is a working document under review: the possibilities of automation, as well as the different ways of carrying it out with the Secretariat's own resources, are in the analysis phase, and the experience of other RFMOs is being consulted. Therefore, this document does not include cost estimates. It is worth emphasizing that this is not a simple or short-term exercise: the experience of other RFMOs shows that completing the automation of a compliance system has taken them several years.

Minimum investment in basic infrastructure. The equipment and software currently used by the IATTC Secretariat are outdated and require updating. It is important to make an initial investment in its renewal, to have a solid foundation that allows the teams to support and efficiently operate a compliance automation system.

➤ **System users**

The aim is to design the system for three types of internal users, plus a public access area on the IATTC website:

- **CPC** — Members and Cooperating Non-Members that send compliance information (answers to questionnaires, data, and resolution reports) and to consult their own history.
- **Secretariat** — The IATTC team that manages the system, reviews submissions, approves their publication, and monitors deadlines.
- **Committee for the Review of the Implementation of Measures Adopted by the Commission (COR)** — which receives the final compliance reports.

2. Diagnosis: current state of the IATTC infrastructure.

It is important to establish what is currently available, what needs to be expanded, and what needs to be developed. In this regard, there are already SQL databases, the Vessel Register, the website, the internal obligations

dashboard, and the CPC mail directories, with which the system must be integrated without duplicating or affecting its current operation.

Component	Current situation	Effort required	Status
Infractions database	Robust SQL database with record of possible infractions and responses from Members. Functional and with historical data.	Workflow automation, interface improvements, and reporting	✓ existing
Regional Vessel Registry	SQL database linked to the infractions database. Operational as a reference data source.	Expand integration with external portal for CPCs and with CRAVT	✓ existing
IATTC website	Existing and operational. It has a public area.	The CPC portal and publishing sections should be integrated into it, or at least accessible from it — it should not be perceived as a separate system.	✓ existing
Internal dashboard of obligations of the Secretariat	Existing internal record of what reports and data each CPC must submit, according to which resolution, and within what timeframe.	Module 2 should connect to this dashboard to read obligations and deadlines, instead of duplicating them.	✓ existing
Institutional email directories of the CPCs	Registered email accounts of the representatives of each CPC, used today for the manual exchange of information.	The acknowledgments and automatic notifications of the new system should be sent to these already registered accounts.	✓ existing
CPC Web Interface / Access Portal	It doesn't exist. CPCs do not have direct access to the systems; today the interaction is by email and PDF or paper documents.	New development on the existing database	★ new
Receipt of compliance reports	Completely manual: email, PDF documents. Without automated acknowledgment or status tracking.	Completely new development	★ new
Internal database storage	Data, reports, and responses to potential non-compliance must be sent to an IATTC website and transmitted to a database.	New development based on existing data	★ new
CPC access to data and reports	Data and reports must be accessible to CPCs on the IATTC internet portal	Existing access that needs improvement	improve it.

3. The goal is to carry out, in the first stage, the design of an automated system.

The strategy to be implemented is one of gradual evolution: expanding and modernizing the existing infrastructure through the development of new layers of automation, interface, and integration. It is planned to be carried out, mainly, on two levels: the automation of the delivery and receipt of compliance questionnaires and of possible reported non-compliance; and the delivery to the IATTC of the data and reports established in various resolutions.

a) Module 1: Automation of Compliance Questionnaires and potential non-compliances. (EXPAND EXISTING DATABASE)

This module will seek to ensure that the Compliance Questionnaire that the Secretariat and the Chair of the COR send to the CPCs, as well as possible non-compliance with IATTC resolutions—detected mainly through the program for observers on board purse seine vessels— and the responses of the CPCs to these are received through the IATTC internet portal and, once received, are stored in a Secretariat's database.

Currently, the CPC sends an email → the Secretariat saves it manually → a report is generated manually.

The intention now is for the CPC to access the portal → fill out the form and respond to the reported non-compliance → the system registers it and generates an acknowledgment of receipt.

The above would be carried out in stages.

	Who / What	What needs to happen
1	The Secretariat updates the questionnaire with review by the president and identifies potential non-compliances	The Secretariat uses the system to create a questionnaire or notification of a possible non-compliance; defines the questions, the required fields, and which CPC it is aimed at. It also reports any possible breaches detected by the observer program or other means.
2	The questionnaire appears on the portal and the possible breaches	The questionnaire is available on the IATTC web portal, visible only to the CPC to whom it was addressed (password access).
3	The CPC responds online.	The CPC representative enters the portal, reads the questionnaire and any potential non-compliances, and fills out the response directly in the system, without needing to send emails or loose files.
4	The system saves the answer.	Upon submission, the response is automatically stored in the Secretariat's database. No manual intervention is required.
5	Automatic acknowledgment	The system immediately sends an acknowledgment to the CPC confirming that their response was received, with folio number, date, and time.
6	The Secretariat reviews and approves the publication	The Secretariat may review the response. If the decision is to publish it for all CPCs to see, this can be approved with one click.
7	Post on a secure site.	The completed questionnaire or responses to potential non-compliances are visible to all CPCs in a protected section of the IATTC website. Each CPC must undergo authentication to view it.
8	Automatic completeness assessment	The system checks if the questionnaire was fully completed, and if any non-compliance issues were addressed: all required fields answered, with no missing data or incorrect formats.
9	Report for review by the Secretariat	The system automatically generates a draft compliance report, which is simply a list of potential non-compliances and other relevant data to be evaluated by the COR.
10	Report for COR consideration	After reviewing the report, the Secretariat issues an instruction to the system to publish it and give CPCs access to it.

In the future, the Commission could consider enabling the system to rate the level of compliance for each country and the entire fleet in the EPO by establishing specific parameters and formulas for evaluation. The specific formulas would, in any case, be defined by the Commission.

b) Module 2: Portal for submitting Data and Resolution Reports.

This module would function very similarly to the previous one, but instead of questionnaires or responses to possible non-compliances, it would manage the data and periodic reports that CPCs must submit in accordance with each current IATTC resolution (catch reports, vessel lists, observer reports, etc.).

The standardization of online reporting formats is perhaps the most arduous task within this module. The following would be attempted:

- A secure web portal for CPCs to submit their catch reports and data online, and in general, information on the operation of their fleet, as well as resolution templates, national reports, etc.
- Automatic validation of format and completeness at the time of submission, with instant acknowledgment of receipt.
- Automated tracking of submission status by country, by measure, and by year, with overdue deadline alerts.
- Each CPC has access to their own compliance history and can download updated official templates.

As a starting point, it is worth noting that the Secretariat already has an internal dashboard that lists the reports and data that each CPC must submit, according to the resolution number and the corresponding deadline. This CPC's obligations board should be absorbed by the system and integrated into it, without the need to build a parallel register.

The above would be carried out in stages:

	Who / What	What needs to happen
1	Obligations board	The system reads the Secretariat's existing dashboard to determine what each CPC must deliver, by what deadline, and in what format. Each CPC only sees their own outstanding obligations.
2	The CPC sends its information.	The CPC accesses the portal, selects the report to be delivered, and uploads the data or files directly to the system. No more emails.
3	The system stores the shipment.	The information is stored in the database with the corresponding metadata: submission date, user, version, resolution to which it responds.
4	Automatic acknowledgment	The CPC receives immediate confirmation that their shipment was registered, with a folio number and timestamp.
5	Automatic publishing	The data received is automatically published on the IATTC website, with the appropriate access controls and after review by the Secretariat.
6	Automatic evaluation of the shipment	The system checks three criteria and generates a result for each one (see table below).
7	Shipping Compliance Report	With the results of the evaluation, the system produces a compliance report by CPC and by resolution, available for review by the Secretariat and the COR.

What the system evaluates about each shipment

For each piece of data or report it receives, the system must automatically verify three criteria:

Criterion	Question that is answered	How does the system verify it?
Completeness	Does the shipment contain everything that was ordered?	Compare the fields and files received against the list of requirements for that resolution. If something is missing, it marks it as incomplete.

Criterion	Question that is answered	How does the system verify it?
Timeliness	Did it arrive on time?	Compare the submission date against the deadline recorded on the obligations board. Result: on time, late, or not sent.
Format	Is the data in the correct format?	Verify that the files and data meet the technical standard defined for that resolution (column structure, data types, valid ranges, etc.).

4. Acceptance criteria or practical aspects expected from this automation stage.

Upon completion of the development, the system should be able to do all the following without manual intervention. These criteria should be used as the basis for acceptance or functional testing:

- A CPC logs into the portal, answers a questionnaire, and receives acknowledgment of receipt.
- The CPC's response is stored in the database without anyone from the Secretariat having to copy it.
- The Secretariat approves the publication of a response with one click, and it becomes visible to all CPCs immediately.
- The system checks if the questionnaire or data submission was completed and marks any missing fields.
- The system generates the report for the COR without the need to assemble it manually, although subject, of course, to review.
- A CPC sends a resolution report, and the system automatically verifies if it arrived complete, on time, and in the correct format.
- The system sends an alert to the CPC when a report deadline is approaching.

As a subsequent step, and once the criteria have been established by the COR and the Commission, it would be expected that it would be possible to download an individual compliance report at any time.

5. Final considerations.

The IATTC is in a favorable institutional position: it already has a robust SQL database that records possible non-compliances by vessels and the responses of Members to these, a Regional Vessel Register, an institutional website, and an internal dashboard of obligations by CPC —core technological and operational assets of an automated compliance system.

The effort required is therefore primarily one of evolution, not of building from zero. The most urgent missing components are the CPC's digital reporting portal —currently completely manual— and the automated dashboards for the COR and the Commission. They could be developed on the existing infrastructure, although the cost and the method of execution —with our own resources— are still under review by the Secretariat.

Given the level of work currently faced by the Secretariat, it might be necessary for the Commission to consider appointing an additional person in the unit responsible for data and information processing, to specifically support this project and, in the future, its maintenance.

The experience of ICCAT, IOTC, WCPFC, and CCSBT, shared with the IATTC Secretariat, demonstrates that these systems generate tangible returns in terms of compliance by CPCs as well as institutional credibility. There is an opportunity to reach that standard in less time and at a lower cost, by taking advantage of the infrastructure already built.