

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

**AD HOC WORKING GROUP TO STRENGTHEN THE DIALOGUE AMONG
SCIENTISTS, MANAGERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS ON MANAGEMENT
STRATEGY EVALUATION**

3rd MEETING

(by videoconference)

April 20-21, 2026

DOCUMENT MSE-03-03

**PLAN TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION AND FACILITATE
MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AMONG MANAGERS, SCIENTISTS AND
STAKEHOLDERS ON MATTERS RELATED TO HARVEST
STRATEGIES AND MSE**

Context: The *Ad hoc* Working Group to Strengthen the Dialogue Among Scientists, Managers and other Stakeholders on Management Strategy Evaluation (MSEDWG) was established by the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) in Resolution C-24-08. The first objective for the group, as outlined in Paragraph 2(a) of the resolution, is to “*Improve communication and facilitate mutual understanding among managers and scientists regarding matters related to harvest strategies [also known as management procedures] and MSE within the IATTC.*” Additionally, Paragraph 4 of Resolution C-24-08 requires that “*Without prejudice to the functions and competencies of the Scientific Advisory Committee to which this Group will report, the duties of the Working Group shall be to make recommendations.*” The [1st informal meeting of the group](#) tasked the group’s co-facilitators (now co-chairs), as a priority, with drafting a strategy to ensure the WG fulfills these mandates for review at the first formal meeting of the group in December 2025. Feedback was collected from members, and this updated draft plan represents the input received as a living document, which can be revised at any time, to guide the MSEDWG. This communication strategy aims to provide a clear understanding of the structure of the dialogue. This plan is understood to be guidance to help facilitate the process going forward.

The MSEDWG is a continuation of the workshops outlined in Resolution C-19-07. Participants in this Working Group are encouraged to review past documents in advance of these meetings to familiarize themselves with the terms defined and progress made so as to not slow progress. See [links to documents from the 2019-2025 MSE workshop series here](#).

To facilitate the implementation of this plan, the overarching goal established in Resolution C-24-08 is outlined first, along with the purpose of this plan. The plan has five communications objectives, with specific strategies that will be employed to achieve them. Progress toward

achievement of each concrete strategy will be reviewed and evaluated by the MSEWG on an annual basis.

OVERARCHING GOAL FROM RES. C-24-08: Improve communication and facilitate mutual understanding among managers and scientists regarding matters related to harvest strategies and MSE. (Paragraph 2a)

PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN: Develop and implement mechanisms that enable scientists, managers, and other stakeholders to maintain a dynamic, informed, and goal-oriented dialogue throughout the development of Management Strategy Evaluation processes.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- I. Ensure an inclusive process that fosters multi-directional exchange among fisheries managers, scientists, fishermen, industry personnel, and other stakeholders.
 - Strategy: CPCs are strongly encouraged to ensure consistent participation in their respective delegations at MSEDWG meetings, with representatives from diverse groups of stakeholders, including managers, scientists, fishermen, industry personnel, and other relevant stakeholders. Upcoming MSEDWG announcements from the Director will reiterate this inclusive stakeholder process.
 - Strategy: Participation by new members in ongoing work implies their acceptance of the process in its current state; previously made recommendations will not be reviewed without a rationale.
 - Strategy - *Scope*: All MSEDWG meetings will be open to all CPCs and accredited observers. The group may invite independent experts to provide insights on specific topics when deemed necessary.
 - Strategy - *Use of the floor*: Because of the nature and purpose of these MSEDWG meetings, all participants can request the floor rather than going through their flag and the respective head of the delegation.
 - Strategy - *Languages*: Per the Antigua Convention and IATTC Rules of Procedure, all MSEDWG meetings will include simultaneous interpretation in English and Spanish. All documents submitted must be translated into both languages. Documents submitted by members other than CPCs must be submitted in both languages.

II. Establish a common base of understanding of the MSE process and its purpose to manage fisheries through science-based and pre-agreed management procedures (MPs), also known as harvest strategies.

- Strategy: All members of the Group should read background materials ahead of meetings in an effort to understand the concepts, components, and basic rules of the MPs and MSE process on equal terms. If the concepts, components, and basic rules of the MPs and the MSE process are not properly understood, members shall inform the Co-Chairs, who will ensure that they are adequately explained through instructional strategies.
- Strategy: The MSEDWG will develop and agree on a glossary of MSE-related terms. This information will be posted on the IATTC website on a new page dedicated to the MSEWG and its business or in any implemented communications platform.
- Strategy: The MSEDWG will hold as many virtual or in-person meetings as necessary—subject to available financial resources and tailored to the subject matter—to present and explain the scope of the various harvest strategies, using document WSMSE-05-01 as a guide to help members become proficient in its use.
- Strategy: The MSEWG will provide input to the IATTC staff and Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) on a standard format for presentation of MSE results, including plots, tables, and written summaries, thereby creating consistent and familiar reporting that facilitates understanding.

III. Optimize the provision of tools and technical documentation so that MSEDWG participants have the necessary resources to contribute meaningfully to the meetings.

- Strategy: The MSEDWG co-chairs should work with the IATTC Secretariat to distribute an annotated agenda and relevant documents, at least 2 weeks in advance of each meeting, detailing what CPCs should be prepared to discuss under each agenda item. During the agenda-setting process, any member of the Group may propose agenda items intended solely to facilitate dialogue and mutual understanding regarding issues relevant to the MSE.
- Strategy: The MSEDWG co-chairs should work with the IATTC Secretariat to share meeting reports with CPCs within one month after each meeting.
- Strategy: The MSEDWG co-chairs may consider, or the Group may request, the use of web platforms and tools to improve participation deploying web-based, user-friendly platforms and tools would be helpful to improve online engagement, as previously

approved by the MSEDWG, allowing CPCs to connect with diverse (domestic) stakeholders, exchange content, and participate in discussions.

- Strategy: Without prejudice to any proposals that members may make, and in addition to those proposals, the Co-Chairs of the MSEDWG should maintain an updated draft timeline and work plan to improve communication and facilitate mutual understanding on issues related to MSE.

IV. Ensure stakeholders' views are considered at each stage of the MSE process.

- Strategy: The MSEDWG will accept contributions on areas or aspects relevant to the group's objective, particularly—though not exclusively—information regarding the three species of tropical tuna, while also taking into account the multispecies, multi-fleet, multi-gear, and multi-stock nature of the fisheries under the administration of the IATTC, as well as the MSE and MP standards adopted or currently being developed by other RFMOs:
 - Uncertainties to be considered in the MSE operating models;
 - Data to be used in the MSE and required for the implementation of management procedures;
 - Management objectives, including reference points and performance indicators;
 - Candidate Harvest Control Rules (HCRs) as a key element of various MPs to be tested;
 - Feedback on MSE results, including requests for additional testing; and
 - Selection of a final management procedure.
- Strategy: The MSEDWG will meet in person or virtually, depending on the schedule approved by the Group. While in-person meetings are more effective and therefore preferable for decision-making, they are also more costly; therefore, virtual meetings may be held as needed for pedagogical or informational purposes, or to gather relevant perspectives that facilitate an understanding of the MSE as both a method and a process.
- Strategy: Maintain active intersessional consultations among group members to ensure ongoing communication and adherence to the agreed response times. User-friendly web tools are ideal for this, as they allow tracking of feedback exchanges and materials.

- V. Facilitate an understanding of how MSE has worked in other RFMOs to serve as a guide and lessons learned for MSE processes at IATTC.
- Strategy: Consider information on the development of MSE and the implementation processes of MPs in other RFMOs, including the draft and final elements of MPs.