

**INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION**

**100<sup>TH</sup> MEETING**

**Phoenix, Arizona, USA**

**1-5 August 2022**

**PROPOSAL IATTC-100 H-1**

**SUBMITTED BY COSTA RICA, EL SALVADOR, NICARAGUA,  
PANAMA**

**RESEARCH FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF DORADO**

***(Coryphaena hippurus)***

**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

Dorado (*Coryphaena hippurus*) is a highly valuable species for the fisheries in the eastern Pacific Ocean, exploited by both artisanal and medium-scale fisheries, as well as sport fisheries. In each of these activities, it provides substantive benefits to the fishing communities of coastal countries, so its sustainability must be ensured to contribute to the food security of these coastal communities. Also, this species is closely associated with tuna fishing activities, both in longline and purse-seine fisheries, and can sometimes be considered a target species, exploitable accompanying fauna, or as a bycatch species.

It is essential that the IATTC maintain a permanent, dynamic system of knowledge and management of dorado, as occurs with the relevant species of shark and others. This is in line with the provisions in the Antigua Convention, supported by the essential role played by the IATTC and the ecosystem approach, in the absence of government structures for specialized management of dorado as a highly migratory species, and given the interaction of tuna fisheries with this species and the risk of sustainability of this resource and as provided by international fisheries legislation.

This proposal intends to formally start the collection of relevant information that will allow activating the proper precautionary approach to knowledge for the management of dorado in the Convention Area. It promotes the development of tasks with minimal or no immediate economic impact, while identifying resources for more precise management. Its approval depends on the Commission ratifying its well-known responsibility in managing fishery resources and recognizing the challenge of continuously strengthening the IATTC's duties.

*The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), on the occasion of its 100<sup>th</sup> Meeting:*

*Recognizing that the fish stocks covered by the Convention are understood to be the stocks of tunas and tuna-like species and other species of fish taken by vessels fishing for tunas and tuna-like species in the Convention Area;*

*Bearing in mind that Article VII, paragraph 1 (f) of the Antigua Convention establishes that the Commission shall “adopt, as necessary, conservation and management measures and recommendations for species belonging to the same ecosystem and that are affected by fishing for, or dependent on or associated with, the fish stocks covered by this Convention, with a view to maintaining or restoring populations of such species above levels at which their reproduction may become seriously threatened”;*

*Reaffirming the obligations contained in the Antigua Convention, Article VII 1 (b) and (i), the Commission shall adopt, “standards for collection, verification, and timely exchange and reporting of data concerning*

*the fisheries for fish stocks covered by this Convention” and shall establish “a comprehensive program for data collection”;*

*Recognizing that dorado (Coryphaena hippurus) is a species targeted by artisanal and industrial longline fisheries and incidentally caught by purse-seine vessels operating in the Convention Area and is within the fish stocks of interest to the Commission;*

*Recalling that collaborative research with the IATTC in 2014-2016 showed that the data available for the south eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) were sufficient to conduct an exploratory assessment of the core dorado stock and management strategies, while information from the EPO north was found to be limited;*

*Recalling that the IATTC has provided the opportunity for collaborative research, including three technical meetings on the Coryphaena hippurus resource between 2014 and 2016; the development of an exploratory assessment of the C. hippurus stock in the "core" region; an exploratory management strategy evaluation (MSE) for the EPO south; and an evaluation of potential reference points and harvest control rules for C. hippurus in the EPO;*

*Taking into account that, in its 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Scientific Advisory Committee recommended that the IATTC staff continue working with CPCs on research in relation to the stock status of dorado (Coryphaena hippurus) in the Convention Area;*

*Recalling that, in its 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Scientific Advisory Committee presented a proposal for a regional scientific plan for dorado (Coryphaena hippurus), based on the acceptance of the recommendation made at the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee, regarding the need for future research to improve the analysis of the stock assessment of C. hippurus in the Convention Area;*

*Emphasizing that the objective of the Convention is to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the fish stocks in the Convention Area, and that both collaborative studies and exploratory research conducted by the Scientific Advisory Committee show a need for better data to assess the stock of Coryphaena hippurus in the Convention Area and research to improve the analysis and assessment of this fish stock.*

*Resolves as follows:*

To start a research program to manage dorado (*Coryphaena hippurus*), by implementing the following tasks:

**1. Members and Cooperating non-Members (CPCs)**

- a. CPCs participating directly or indirectly, either as flag States or coastal States in the dorado fishery, shall require collection and submission of biological and fishery data for dorado from their artisanal or industrial longline fleets greater than 14 meters overall. For fleets of 14 meters or less in length, CPCs shall make their best effort, to the best of their abilities, to provide sampling data of at least 10% of the landings in their ports with respect to the number of individuals and total weight for each dorado fishing trip by 30 June (beginning in 2023) in a standardized reporting format.
- b. CPCs participating directly or indirectly, either as flag States or coastal States in the dorado fishery, shall require collection and submission of biological and fishery data for dorado from their purse-seine or longline fleets that catch dorado incidentally by 30 June (beginning in 2023) in a standardized reporting format, unless they have already been submitted pursuant to other requirements, such as observer programs.

**2. IATTC**

- a. **Director:** The Director shall identify the necessary financial resources (funds), including through cooperation, and shall seek to obtain those resources so that the scientific staff of the Commission can implement the Regional Scientific Plan for *C. hippurus* for 2023-2026, presented in Document SAC-12 INF-D, and prioritize according to available resources.

**b. IATTC scientific staff:**

- i. The scientific staff of the IATTC shall develop a proposal for a standardized format for data reporting and shall present it at the 2023 meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee. This format shall be used by the CPCs to submit information.
- ii. The scientific staff of the IATTC shall cooperate with CPCs to:
  - a. design and implement tagging programs as resources allow;
  - b. implement a tag recovery campaign for tagging programs implemented by CPCs.

**3. Creation of an *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Dorado (*Coryphaena hippurus*)**

Create an *ad hoc* working group, either virtual or face-to-face, to identify the information available on the dorado (*Coryphaena hippurus*) resource in the various fisheries of interest to the IATTC. Also, to identify information gaps that must be solved to know the status of this resource either as target or bycatch and the potential recommendation of management measures. The group shall include at least one member of each CPC that expresses interest in participating and shall be led by a person to be determined by the Commission.