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SIZE LIMIT FOR INCLUDING VESSELS IN THE IATTC IUU VESSEL LIST

For the past several years, the Commission has been discussing the limit of 24 meters overall length, established in paragraph 11 of [Resolution C-05-07](#), for vessels to be eligible for inclusion in the IATTC IUU Vessel List. During the 74th meeting of the Commission in June 2006, it became clear that most Parties believe that the 24-meter limit is too high.

Paragraph 11 of Resolution C-05-07 reads “*This resolution shall apply to any fishing vessel greater than 24 meters overall length*”.

In 2007, the Joint Working Group on Fishing by Non-Parties recommended to the 75th meeting of the Commission an amendment to Resolution C-05-07 which combined a length limit, to be decided by the Commission, with the criterion that all vessels with a history of fishing in waters outside the jurisdiction of their flag states be eligible for inclusion in the IUU List.

The Commission discussed this recommendation, and several delegations favored lowering the length limit (with 18 meters mentioned as a possibility), noting that many longline vessels have been built with measurements just below 24 meters in order to avoid regulation. However, one delegation was not in favor of this. The Commission did not agree to lower the length limit, but did decide to continue considering the issue and to address it again at a future meeting.

Figure 1, presented at the 75th meeting of the Commission, shows the distribution of length of vessels on the IATTC Regional Vessel Register, and indicates that 2,479 vessels are less than 24 meters.

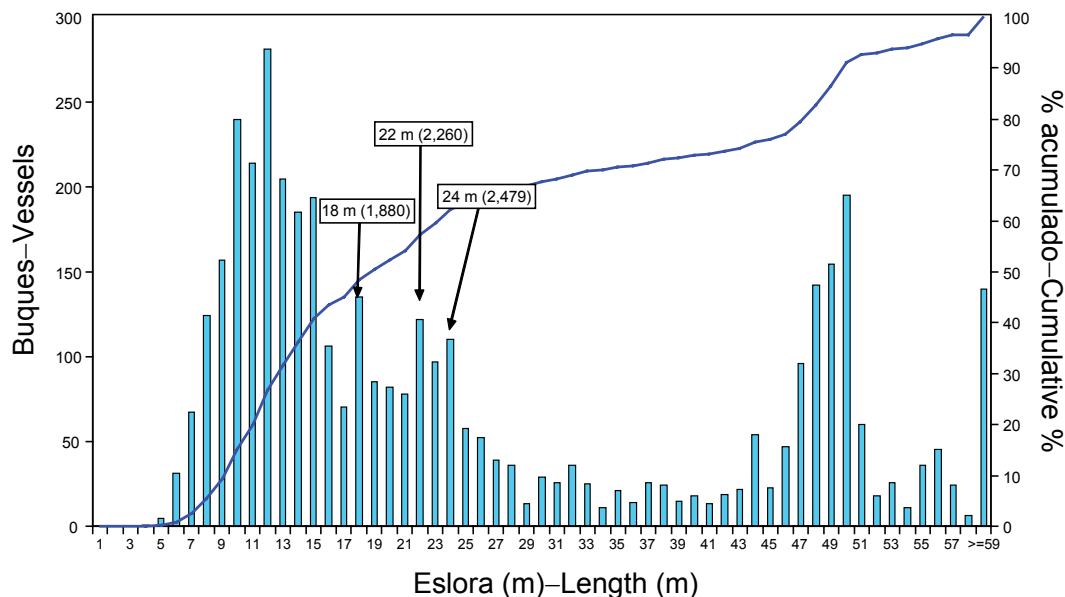


FIGURE 1. Vessels on the IATTC Regional Vessel Register for which length information is available (4,164 vessels). This information is not available for 355 vessels. The line indicates the cumulative percentage. Numbers in parenthesis are the number of vessels smaller than 18, 22 and 24 m.

The staff believes it would be appropriate to eliminate paragraph 11, as there is no valid reason for protecting a vessel from being considered IUU on the basis of size, and keeping in mind that no vessel of a Party can be added to the IUU List without the approval of that Party.

A related question is the definition of vessel length. Three IATTC Resolutions ([C-03-07](#), [C-04-06](#), and [C-05-07](#)) contain measures applying to vessels longer than 24 meters. In two of these, length is specified as “overall length”, and the third simply refers to “length.” It has been proposed that the IATTC and other regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) should harmonize their definitions of vessel length, using a common standard for defining length.

In 2007, Belize made a proposal, addressed to various RFMOs, that the standard should be ‘length between perpendiculars’, as in the FAO Compliance Agreement and other international instruments; it is also contained in official vessel documents, and thus can be easily verified. However, using this standard would have the effect of excluding many vessels covered by resolutions now in force, unless those resolutions were modified to reduce the vessel length stated in them.