

**26<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE PARTIES**

La Jolla, California (USA)  
22 October 2012

**DOCUMENT MOP-26-08a**

**REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEMORANDUM OF  
COOPERATION (MOC) ON THE CROSS-ENDORSEMENT OF  
OBSERVERS APPROVED BY THE WCPFC AND THE IATTC**

This report describes the actions by the Secretariat in the implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation signed between the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), and its relationship with the AIDCP.

**1. BACKGROUND**

During its 82nd meeting in June 2011, the IATTC approved the Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC, Appendix 1), which had been previously approved by the WCPFC. Before the approval and signature of the MOC, in order to fish in the areas of competence of the two Commissions, tuna purse-seine vessels, duly authorized to fish and included in the IATTC Regional Vessel Register and/or the WCPFC Register of Fishing Vessels, that intended to fish in both areas during a single fishing trip, had to carry on board to observers, each one approved by the respective Commission. The MOC allows only one observer to be used in such cases.

As regards the AIDCP, paragraph 9 of Appendix II stipulates that “if the Director determines that the placement of an observer from the On-Board Observer Program is not practical, a vessel subject to the jurisdiction of a Party that fishes in the Agreement Area without setting on dolphins may use a trained observer from another international program, provided such program is approved by the Parties, to collect pertinent information for the On-Board Observer Program, and to confirm to the Director that such vessel does not set on dolphins.”

Based on this provision and in the implementation of the provisions of IATTC Resolution [C-02-03](#) on the capacity of the tuna fleet operating in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, which authorizes a certain number of vessels with licenses to fish in other areas of the Pacific Ocean under an alternative international fisheries management regime, to fish in the Eastern Pacific Ocean for one single trip, since 2002 eight trips have been observed by the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) in coordination with the IATTC staff, as shown in the following table.

<b>Trips with data collected by the FFA</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>Trips</b>	<b>Sets made during trips</b>	<b>Total observed sets in EPO</b>	<b>% of sets</b>
2002	5	107	21,346	0.50
2004	2	20	22,563	0.09
2011	1	4	22,970	0.02
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>66,879</b>	<b>0.20</b>

Now that the WCPFC is established and, above all, the MOC has been signed by both Commissions, the Secretariat considers that the observers from the WCPFC program should participate in the operations of

those vessels in place of those who participate under the auspices of the arrangements made previously with the FFA.

Additionally, for some years now, the Secretariat has been evaluating the differences and similarities between the observer programs that operate in the Central and Western Pacific and those that operate within the framework of the AIDCP and the IATTC. The aim is to identify the possible needs of complementing the required information both for biological and fisheries statistics and for that related to compliance with the resolutions of the IATTC and the AIDCP and the requirements established in them.

## **2. IMPLEMENTATION**

Once the MOC was approved, the staff of both commissions worked on the preparation of a training course for WCPFC observers, as well as on identifying the additional information that those observers had to collect in order to comply with the requirements of the AIDCP in the IATTC, and that AIDCP observers on vessels operating in the WCPFC area of competence had to add to the data that they normally collected in that area.

In order to optimize the use of the time available during the training course, it was agreed that only experienced observers would participate, thus obviating the need to include training in fishing operations and methods and, in part, the identification of species. Also, the WCPFC staff suggested that the observers selected for this first training course should be, at least initially, from an observer program of a nation that was a member of both commissions and that was situated geographically in a place that would allow an efficient, rapid, and less costly assignment of observers to vessels. For this reason, the observer program of Kiribati was selected, and the training course was held in Tarawa, Republic of Kiribati.

From 17 to 22 August 2012, Mr. Ernesto Altamirano, of the IATTC staff, and Mr. Karl Staich, Coordinator of the WCPFC Regional Observer Programme (ROP), gave a training course for 16 members of the Kiribati observer program, of whom 12 fulfilled all the requirements satisfactorily and are now included in the list of mutually-recognized observers as defined in the MOC. Mr. Toani Takiura, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Fisheries and Development of Marine Resources of Kiribati, attended the opening and adjournment of the event, and Mr. Tekirua Riinga, head of the Kiribati observer program, was present throughout the course. The subjects covered during the course (Appendix 2) were selected after a series of meetings and discussions about the technical details of the data collected by observers in both areas of the Pacific Ocean. Involved in these discussions were the staff of the AIDCP observer program, the administrator of the IATTC database, and the staff of the WCPFC and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), who are responsible for managing and processing the data collected by the regional observer program operating in the central and Western Pacific.

The IATTC staff designed an operating manual for the observers, which includes a special section with instructions for the regional observer program, as well as guidelines on how to maintain communication with the IATTC staff.

## Appendix 1



### **MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION (MOC) ON THE CROSS-ENDORSEMENT OF WCPFC AND IATTC APPROVED OBSERVERS WHEN OBSERVING ON THE HIGH SEAS OF THE CONVENTION AREAS OF BOTH ORGANIZATIONS**

**between**

**THE COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF HIGHLY MIGRATORY FISH STOCKS IN THE WESTERN AND CENTRAL PACIFIC OCEAN**

**and**

**THE INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION**

The Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPFC) and the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC):

**UNDERSTANDING** the value of undertaking cooperative efforts to facilitate the operation of vessels that fish in both Convention Areas during the same fishing trip;

**CONSIDERING** the Memorandum of Understanding between WCPFC and IATTC signed in 2006 and the Memorandum of Cooperation signed in 2009;

**CONFIRM** the following conditions for the cross-endorsement of approved observers to operate on authorized vessels that undertake fishing operations in the convention areas of both organizations:

1. The IATTC and the WCPFC recognize the importance of facilitating mutual cooperative participation among the members of both Commissions.
2. The IATTC and the WCPFC recognize that their respective observer programs meet the standards of both Commissions by collecting accurate data on fishing activities essential to the conservation and management of the fish stocks covered by their respective Conventions.
3. Vessels with observers may fish in the IATTC Convention Area only if they are included on the IATTC Regional Vessel Register, or may fish in the WCPFC Convention Area only if they are included on the WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels.
4. Cross-endorsement for an observer will be given only when the IATTC and WCPFC Secretariats agree that the observer has met the necessary training requirements for operating on vessels that fish on the high seas in both Convention Areas and such requirements will be of the same standard.
5. It is understood that the relevant data and information requirements of each Commission will be met by the cross-endorsed observers when the vessel in question is in the high seas in the respective Convention Areas.
6. All data and information collected by observers operating on trips that extend into the high seas of the Convention Area of the other organization will be provided to both the IATTC and WCPFC Secretariats,

in accordance with procedures for the respective Commission and will be considered to be held by the respective Commission.

7. Each Secretariat will identify the data and information required for its Commission and will ensure that observers will be able to meet all such requirements with respect to vessels fishing within the high seas in that Commission's Convention Area.

8. Data and information collected by an observer cross-endorsed by the IATTC and WCPFC Secretariats may be used for compliance purposes and in legal proceedings.

9. The Secretariats may assist in facilitating the training of observers that meet cross-endorsement requirements, with a view towards developing a core group of observers who may be assigned to vessels operating on the high seas in both Convention Areas to meet the requirements of both IATTC and WCPFC with respect to observers.

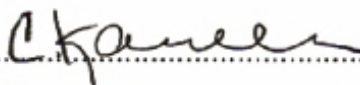
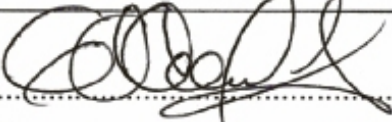
10. The provisions of this MOC may also apply to specified areas of either organisation which are not high seas, in accordance with relevant approval procedures of each Commission, and when so advised by the Secretariat of the relevant Commission to the other Secretariat that the coastal CCM/CPC in question has requested use of cross-endorsed observers.

11. Cross-endorsement for an observer by the IATTC and WCPFC Secretariats does not affect the application of domestic legislation and procedures of coastal CCM/CPC of either organisation.

12. An observer cross-endorsed by the IATTC and WCPFC remains under the control of the respective national or subregional observer programme and will be made available to fulfil duties in the IATTC Convention Area subject to approval of such programmes. Unless agreed otherwise by such programmes, this MOC does not create any obligation on cross-endorsed observers or programmes.

13. This MOC is subject to periodic review, and may be modified as agreed by both Commissions. Either Commission may terminate this MOC with three months' notice of such intention to the other Commission.

Signed on behalf of the WCPFC and the IATTC:

 ..... Chairman, WCPFC	 ..... Director, IATTC
Date: 09 Aug 2011	Date: 11-Aug-2011

Appendix 2. Agenda for the training course

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION  
WESTERN AND CENTRAL PACIFIC FISHERIES COMMISSION

*Memorandum of Cooperation for the Cross-Endorsement of Observers*

**FIRST OBSERVER TRAINING SESSION**

*August 2012 – Tarawa, Republic of Kiribati*

**Friday 17<sup>th</sup>**

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0900 - 1600	Introductions Cross-Endorsement Agreement for Mutual Cooperation IATTC functions and organization WCPFC functions and organization The AIDCP and the IATTC's management role
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**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup>**

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0900-1300	Relevant IATTC resolutions Observer responsibilities and duties
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**Monday 20<sup>th</sup>**

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0900 - 1600	Review of tuna identification Review of identification of marine mammals EPO-1 At-Sea Report
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**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup>**

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0900 - 1600	EPO-2 Summary Report on compliance with IATTC resolutions. EPO-3: International Review Panel (IRP) Report. EPO-4: Tuna Tracking.
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**Wednesday  
22<sup>nd</sup>**

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0900 - 1600	EPO-5: Marine Mammal Sighting and Set Record EPO-6: Sea Turtle Record. EPO-7: Shark Record Adjournment
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