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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

During the 82nd Meeting of the IATTC in July 2011, Resolution [C-11-11](#) on the creation of a “*special sustainable development fund for fisheries for highly migratory species to strengthen the institutional capacity of developing countries*” was approved.

The resolution states that “the resources of the Fund shall proceed from contributions obtained from the Members or from national and international bodies or entities interested in strengthening the capacities of developing countries.

Accordingly, a separate account was opened (“*Building Capacity Fund*”), to which contributions to the Fund may be made, and in April 2012 all Members, as well as international organizations that may be interested in contributing resources were informed of this.

In 2012 The European Union approved a contribution of €100,000 (approximately US\$ 131,000) to the Special Fund. One of the conditions for this contribution to become effective is that other contributions be made to the Fund for at least 20% of this amount, *i.e.* €20,000.

Since these contributions could hardly come from the developing Members which would benefit from the Fund, contributions for covering those €20,000 were sought from Members classified in categories 5 and 6, developed countries in the formula used for calculating contributions to the IATTC budget. The Secretariat sent two communications of those Members, but to date no contributions have been received, so the contribution of the European Union is pending.

Resolution C-11-11 states in paragraph 4 that...” *Director shall present to the Commission for its approval every year the strategic investment plan chargeable to the Fund, which shall be constructed on the basis of the requirements of the developing countries and the analyses carried out by the Commission staff*. In April 2012, the Director reminded Members that the proposed plan for that year would incorporate the elements and almost all the activities described in Document IATTC-81-07, presented to the 81st meeting of the Commission in September 2010. The plan would be fully implemented if the necessary funds were available. The plan for 2013 contains the same elements since no funding was received for its full implementation in 2012 (Annex 1).

Finally, Resolution C-11-11 states in paragraph 8 that ...”*The Director be asked, within his program of work, to explore and identify other options to strengthen the capacity of Members. This shall include opportunities for partnership with other organizations that work in this field, and providing guidance to these organizations on the needs and priorities of the countries*”.

In this regard, the Secretariat has undertaken the following activities:

Date	Member or organization that receives, or participates in, the support	Activity	Support given
Sep 2009-Mar 2012	Mexican national observer program (PNAAPD)	Training in procedures for the alignment of the dolphin safety panel in purse-seine nets	Technicians of the Secretariat participate in the training of PNAAPD technicians
Permanente	Observer programs of Colombia, Ecuador, European Union (Spain), Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and Venezuela	Ongoing support and cooperation with the national observer programs	Keeping all databases and data entry/editing programs current, with fixes if problems occur and modifications when improvements are needed
2010-2012	OFCF (Japan), Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela	Studies of fishing gear	Work on formulating studies of fishing gears (artisanal fleets and other longline fleets)
2011-2012	OFCF (Japan), INCOPECSA (Costa Rica), CENDEPESCA (El Salvador)	Assessment of sampling options for landings of artisanal fleets	Participation in the assessments
2011-2012	OFCF (Japan)	Preparation of regional hook catalog	Work on the preparation of the catalog

Annex 1.

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PLAN CHARGEABLE TO THE FUND ON CAPACITY BUILDING

Areas in which the Commission could support capacity-building include:

1. **Improvements in data collection and quality assurance.** Resolution [C-05-03](#) on sharks states that the Commission “shall consider appropriate assistance to developing members for the collection of data on shark catches”.
2. **Training.** IATTC resolutions include a commitment to carry out training or seminars in some areas of the Commission’s work. Resolution [C-04-07](#) on mitigating bycatches of sea turtles states that members and the IATTC “should continue and expand organization of seminars for fishermen to enable them to treat incidentally-caught sea turtles properly to improve their survivability”. Also, Resolution [C-04-05](#) on bycatch requires governments to “educate fishermen through information dissemination activities, including distributing informational materials and organizing seminars on, *inter alia*, reducing bycatches of sea turtles and safe handling of incidentally caught sea turtles to improve their survivability.”
3. **Research on biological issues and technology to reduce bycatch of small tunas.** IATTC resolutions include the commitment to carry out research in some areas of the Commission’s work. Resolution [C-05-03](#) states that members “shall ... undertake research to make fishing gears more selective.” Resolution [C-04-05](#) calls on governments to support, and seek funds for, studies and research on developing technology for releasing juvenile tunas, particularly sorting grids, apply technology for the identification of species and size composition in schools prior to setting; and develop techniques and/or equipment to facilitate the release of billfish, sharks and rays from the deck or from the net. Resolution [C-04-07](#) states that the Commission should establish a voluntary fund to assist coastal developing members in improving conservation of sea turtles.

Specific activities for supporting capacity-building are described in Document [SAC-01-18](#), *Plan for future activities*, prepared for the first meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee in August-September 2010:

1. Tagging

Provided funds are available, a training course on tagging methodology for large pelagics, with emphasis on tropical tunas, will be held at the Achotines Laboratory (its implementation was postponed in 2011) for up to 10 participants from Latin American member countries. Participants will learn about the objectives of tagging studies, types of tags, tagging methodologies, data analyses, and potential applications of tagging data in stock assessments, and carry out tuna tagging in waters close to the laboratory.

2. Bycatches

- a. Training courses on bycatch estimation and mitigation;
- b. Design of research strategies to address bycatch issues;
- c. Management and economic incentives to address bycatch issues.

3. Shark fisheries

The Commission staff will provide appropriate assistance to developing CPCs in:

3.1. Sampling

- a. Develop standardized data collection forms (catch, effort, biological data) for sharks, rays, and

mahi-mahi in cooperation with other regional and subregional organizations, member nations, and if possible with Western Pacific organizations collecting data.

- b. Develop and disseminate sampling designs for landings of sharks and rays, and for observer programs where available, and support the creation and maintenance of databases.
- c. In-port collection of shark catch, size distribution, and effort data, as well as the development of standardized methods to identify shark species. This assistance should be extended to the proper identification of shark species based upon body parts (e.g. fins or trunks), or on incomplete specimens.

3.2. Data reporting

Improving their capabilities to report data on catches and effort by gear type, landings and shark trade, in accordance with IATTC reporting procedures, including available historical data. This assistance shall likely include the development of observer programs covering different fisheries. We plan to have one training course per year, dedicated to the development of standardized national observer programs.

3.3. Biological parameters

Conducting research on stock structure and biological parameters such as age, growth, natural mortality, diet, and reproduction. This assistance will likely include training in biological sample collection and analysis methods which will be part of the general training course on data collection.

3.4. Fisheries data studies

Conducting research on the spatial-temporal characteristics of the catch, including identification of shark nursery grounds and of specific areas and seasons that contribute to the majority of catches. This assistance shall likely include a general training course on quantitative methods in fisheries data analysis, which will also cover methods for estimating fisheries quantities, such as fishing mortality, and inputs for stock assessment (*e.g.*, total catch, standardized trends of CPUE).

3.5. Workshops on stock assessment of sharks

Participation in shark stock assessment workshops, which would include among its research topics stock assessment and management of sharks.

These activities for capacity building, which were identified in document SAC-01-18, , *Plan for future activities*, could be extended to other species, including mahi-mahi, if so requested by the Members of the Commission.