

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

85TH MEETING

Veracruz, Veracruz (Mexico)

10-14 June 2013

PROPOSAL IATTC-85 A-1

PRESENTED BY COLOMBIA, COSTA RICA, ECUADOR, EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA, MEXICO, NICARAGUA, PANAMA, PERU, AND VENEZUELA

RESOLUTION ON CONTRIBUTIONS BY THE IATTC TO THE NATIONAL OBSERVER PROGRAMS OF THE AIDCP

This proposal is the same as the one presented at the 83rd meeting of the Commission in June 2012 (IATTC-83 K-2), with the exception of the last paragraph, in which the date of entry into force was changed from 2013 to 2014.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

We, the NATIONAL OBSERVER PROGRAMS, present this proposal, based on the following justifications:

Financial justification: For six years now, the annual vessel assessment established for the functioning of the AIDCP observer program has not varied. The costs directly associated with the functioning and operation of the observer program, such as air travel, technology, office costs (mailing documentation, office supplies, *etc.*), have increased substantially in the last 5 years, especially the air tickets necessary for transporting and placing observers aboard vessels.

Labor justification: The demand for professionals in biology/marine biology has been growing and thus also their wage opportunities. The work of recruiting biologists/marine biologists interested in exercising their profession aboard fishing vessels is difficult, above all if the wages offered are unattractive compared to other organizations or companies.

Environmental justification: The information gathered by the observers and in turn contributed to the national programs, the AIDCP and the IATTC, is VITAL for:

- (1) The existence, operation and success of the AIDCP program, as well as for the adoption of management and conservation measures by the IATTC, based on a sampling of 100% of the trips made by IATTC purse-seine vessels that must comply with having an observer aboard;
- (2) The determination of compliance with the AIDCP and with IATTC management measures depends on the reports of the observers.

Legal justification: The obligations of the observers are contained in the International Agreement for the Protection of Dolphins (AIDCP).

In order to comply with IATTC resolutions, obtaining the information that the observers are required to collect was increased, information which consumes 50% of the observer's activity when he is aboard the

vessel. The demand for this information, not only means more work for the observer and more to transport, but also greater need for staff and equipment to function at the level of the program offices, as well as for office supplies and increased mailing costs among others.

Moral justification: The IATTC contribution in no way benefits the activities carried out by the national observer programs and on the contrary, the benefit obtained from the work of the observers is not quantifiable being fundamental for conservation and management programs, scientific data and to demonstrate compliance both in the IATTC and in the AIDCP.

Given the above, we submit the following proposal.

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in La Jolla, California (USA), on the occasion of the 83rd Meeting:

Aware of the importance and excellent work of the IATTC and national observer programs, aboard tuna vessels contemplated in the framework of the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program;

Recognizing that through the international observer program established by the AIDCP, the IATTC acquires valuable data about the purse-seine fishery related to tunas and associated or dependent species, vital for the conservation of the stocks of tunas under the purview of the Commission.

Taking into account that with the contributions of the AIDCP national observer programs to the IATTC these allow the IATTC, to monitor the different IATTC resolutions;

Understanding that the national observer programs are fundamental for fulfilling the objectives contemplated in the IATTC Convention Article VI paragraph 3 and, in the AIDCP Convention the development-related part of Annex II of the same Convention;

Taking into account that the IATTC contributes annually 30% of the budget of the AIDCP which is utilised by the AIDCP Secretariat for administrative costs and of a scientific nature of the Scientific Observer Program administered by the Secretariat, and that that contribution, does not benefit the national observer programs, despite the important work of collecting information that these programs carry out for use by the IATTC;

Aware of the evidence of their reliability that the national observer programs have given by equipping themselves, by means of appropriate instruments, with the procedures and results of the observer programs moved forward by the IATTC, generating together, highly reliable information that has allowed the IATTC, to fulfil with sufficient coverage the Conventional objectives that are specific to it.

Remembering that the duties of the observers are subject to the AIDCP which establishes in its Annex II:

1. *The duties of the observers shall be, inter alia:*

- a. *to gather all pertinent information on the fishing operations of the vessel to which the observer is assigned as is necessary for implementation of this Agreement;*
- b. *to make available to the captain of the vessel to which the observer is assigned all measures established by the Parties pursuant to this Agreement;*
- c. *to make available to the captain of the vessel to which the observer is assigned the record of dolphin mortality of that vessel;*
- d. *to prepare reports on information gathered in accordance with this paragraph, and provide the vessel captain with the opportunity to include in such reports any information the captain might deem to be relevant;*
- e. *to provide such reports to the Director or the pertinent national program, to be used in accordance with Annex VII, paragraph 1, of this Agreement; and*

f. *to perform such other functions as agreed by the Parties.*

Taking into consideration that the costs for the implementation and performance of the national programs have increased significantly in recent years due to the increase in moving observers, inflation, salary increases for observers and contractual benefits, among others; as well as the fact that the contributions that the AIDCP has been making up to now to the different observer programs are insufficient.

Recognising that the participation of the observer programs represents among other advantages and benefits, economy in costs, effectiveness and quality for the IATTC, since it reduces the participation coverage in the programs and, as a consequence in the logistics of the same;

Assuming the importance that the different observer programs which the AIDCP currently has, they require maintaining the level of demand that has characterised them as regards efficiency and objectivity, additional resources are necessary;

Agrees:

First: That the IATTC contribute to the budgets of the national observer programs created under the rules of the AIDCP, with an amount equivalent to 30% of the percentage that the IATTC contributes annually to the AIDCP.

Second: - That the contribution to the AIDCP addressed by the first agreement above, be transferred to the different observer programs proportional to the monitored coverage.

Third: - That the contribution to the AIDCP addressed by the first agreement above, be established in a permanent manner and be provided to the AIDCP before 1 January of each year, as of 1 January 2014.