

## INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

### 85<sup>TH</sup> MEETING

Veracruz Veracruz, (Mexico)  
10-14 June 2013

## PROPOSAL IATTC-85 D-1

### SUBMITTED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

## RESOLUTION ON FISH-AGGREGATING DEVICES DATA COLLECTION AND MONITORING IN THE PURSE-SEINE FISHERY OF THE EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF IMPROVED FAD DESIGNS TO REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF ENTANGLEMENT OF NON-TARGET SPECIES

### EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

**Goal:** in order to ensure sustainability of fishing operations for stocks under the IATTC competence, all gears deployed to target these resources should be managed. This Resolution is intended to contribute to the long-term conservation and sustainable use of living marine resources, and in particular of highly migratory stocks, in the IATTC Convention Area by establishing a Fishing Aggregating Devices (FADs) Management Plan, a system for collecting data.

More specifically the Resolution foresees the development and implementation of a pilot research project and data collection on FADs (already foreseen in Resolution C-12-01) and, more importantly, the submission of Management Plans by CPCs that fish with FADs in the IATTC Convention Area. The Management Plans shall cover, amongst other, objectives, scope, institutional arrangements, FADs requirements and strategies to limit the capture of small bigeye and yellowfin tuna usually associated with fishing on FADs. In addition, the Resolution provides for the collection of a minimum set of FADs data to be transmitted to the IATTC Secretariat and made available to the Scientific Advisory Committee. In line with developments in other RFMOs, the proposal also includes principles for the design and deployment of FADs to reduce the entanglement of sharks, marine turtles or any other species

**New elements:** this draft Resolution was already submitted to IATTC in 2012 jointly with Colombia. For 2013 it adds an additional requirement for the collection of FADs data and for the development of non entangling FADs.

**Rationale:** FADs are increasingly used by purse seiner fleets to increase the efficiency of their catches. While FAD fishing can be an efficient method for catching large schools of tuna, industrial-scale FAD fisheries can have significant adverse impacts on tunas (notably on small tunas) and other species (notably by-catches of seabirds and turtles). Overall, information on FAD use is not widely available. This is the reason why, with the view of starting a serious management approach to FADs, the first essential element is to have a complete picture of the FADs and FADs utilization made by IATTC CPCs using them.

The FADs Management Plans and data collection obligations, should be seen as a first step of an IATTC regulatory approach which, on the basis of the gathered information should be developed by the IATTC scientific staff in strict coordination with the IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee.

**Background:** IATTC has adopted some conservation and management measures aimed at FADs. In 1999 IATTC recommended to limit the transshipment of catches from vessels associated with FAD fishing as well as commissioning a research on FADs and catches. Additionally IATTC Resolution C-12-01 on *Tuna conservation* required IATTC to start a voluntary pilot research programme with interested parties on FAD information gathering. The current proposal builds and develops the existing regime in order to make it more comprehensive and ambitious in line with similar decisions adopted in other RFMOs.

## **RESOLUTION ON FISH-AGGREGATING DEVICES DATA COLLECTION AND MONITORING IN THE PURSE-SEINE FISHERY OF THE EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN**

*The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)*

*Reaffirming* its commitment to the application of the precautionary approach, which establishes that a lack of scientific information must not be used as a pretext for not taking management measures for the fisheries resources of the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO);

*Aware* that tunas aggregate naturally under floating objects adrift in the ocean;

*Recalling* that the regulation of fishing effort is one of the most efficient conservation measures for maintaining tuna stocks at sustainable levels;

*Attentive to* the provisions of IATTC Resolution C-99-07 on measures related to the regulation of fish- aggregating devices (FADs);

*Taking into account* Resolution C-04-05 on bycatch, especially with regard to catches of juvenile tunas and bycatches of non-target species;

*Reiterating* the need to reduce bycatches of juvenile yellowfin and bigeye tunas in the purse-seine fishery of the EPO;

*Concerned* about the difficulties there have been in quantifying purse-seine fishing effort on FADs;

*Taking into account* IATTC Resolution C-12-01 on a multiannual program for the conservation of tuna in the Eastern Pacific Ocean in 2012-2014;

*Concerned* about the effect on the average length of the catches of the three main tuna species, mainly bigeye tuna, caught with purse seines on FADs (Document SAC 02-13) and the significant effect that FADs may have on bigeye tuna spawning biomass, according to IATTC estimates (Document SAC-03-06). That skipjack tuna is captured by FADs and in unassociated schools in the EPO (Document SAC-03-03), and according to IATTC estimates, its exploitation rate has been increasing in recent years (Document SAC-03-07);

*Noting* the substantial increase in the number of purse-seine sets made on FADs since 1993, increasing the catches of juvenile tuna and fishing mortality in general for the EPO, the impact of this fishing method being currently much greater than that of the longline fishery for bigeye tuna (Document SAC-02-07);

*Mindful* of the call upon States, either individually, collectively or through regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements in the United Nations General Assembly Resolution

67/79 on Sustainable fisheries to collect the necessary data in order to evaluate and closely monitor the use of large-scale fish aggregating devices and others, as appropriate, and their effects on tuna resources and tuna behaviour and associated and dependent species, to improve management procedures to monitor the number, type and use of such devices and to mitigate possible negative effects on the ecosystem, including on juveniles and the incidental by-catch of non-target species, particularly sharks and turtles;

Noting that based on recent scientific analysis of the development of improved FAD designs, in particular non-entangling FADs, both drifting and anchored, helps reducing the incidence of entanglement of sharks, marine turtles and other species

*Conscious* of the need to address, as a matter of priority, the elimination and reduction to the lowest possible level illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities;

**AGREES TO:**

1. Ask the Director to carry out the pilot research project and data collection on FADs that are used to aggregate tunas in the EPO, in accordance with paragraph 15 of Resolution C-12-01. For the purposes of this Resolution, the term Fish Aggregation Device (FAD) means anchored, drifting, floating or submerged objects deployed and/or tracked by vessels, including using radio and/or satellite buoys, for the purpose of aggregating target tuna species for purse seine or ring-net fishing operations.
2. Members and Cooperating Non-Members (hereinafter CPCs) that fish with FADs in the area of the EPO shall submit a FAD Management Plan to the IATTC Secretariat by 1 January 2014 that shall include the information included in Annex I of this Resolution. The Management Plan shall include strategies to limit the capture of small bigeye and yellowfin tuna associated with fishing on FADs.
3. CPCs shall ensure that all purse-seine and ring net vessels flying their flag, when fishing on FADs, collect and report the information contained in Annex II. This may be introduced through a dedicated logbook or modifications to regional logsheets.
4. To reduce the entanglement of sharks, marine turtles or any other species, the design and deployment of FADs should be based on the principles set out in Annex III.
5. The information collected in the framework of the pilot research project of Paragraph 15 of Resolution C-12-01, management plans submitted by the CPCs and data included in Annex II of this Resolution shall be made available to the Scientific Advisory Committee for analysis.
6. In 2015, compliance with FAD reporting requirement will be comprehensively reviewed by the *Committee for the Review of the Implementation of Measures adopted by the Commission* and presented to the Commission.
7. In 2015 the scientific staff of the IATTC, in coordination with the Scientific Advisory Committee, shall present the results of its analyses of the information collected, and on the basis of these results shall formulate opportune recommendations for regulating the management of the affected stocks, including recommendations on the exclusive use of biodegradable materials in new and improved FADs and the gradual phasing out of FAD designs that do not prevent the entanglement of sharks, marine turtles and other species.
8. FAD data collected shall be treated under the existing IATTC rules on confidentiality.
9. No later than 1 July 2015, CPCs shall require the owners and operators of their applicable flagged purse seine and ring net fishing vessels to mark all FADs deployed or modified by such vessels in accordance with a Commission marking scheme.

## Annex I

### GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION OF FAD MANAGEMENT PLANS

To support obligations in respect of FADs in Resolution IATTC-12-XX, the FAD Management Plan (FAD-MP) for a CPC to be submitted to the Commission shall include:

- An objective
- Scope:  
Description of its application with respect to:
  - Vessel-types and support vessels,
  - FAD types (anchored, drifting natural FAD, drifting artificial FAD),
  - FAD numbers to be deployed (per purse seine or ring net vessel per FAD type), reporting procedures for FAD deployment,
  - catch reporting from FAD sets (consistent with the IATTC's Standards for the provision of Operational Catch and Effort Data),
  - incidental by-catch reduction and utilization policy,
  - consideration of interaction with other gear types,
  - Plans for monitoring and retrieval of lost FADs
  - statement or policy on "FAD ownership".
- Institutional arrangements for management of the FAD Management Plans:
  - Institutional responsibilities,
  - application processes for FAD deployment approval,
  - Obligations of vessel owners and masters in respect of FAD deployment and use,
  - FAD and/or beacons replacement policy,
  - reporting obligations,
  - observer acceptance obligations,
  - relationship to Catch Retention Plans,
  - conflict resolution policy in respect of FADs.
- FAD construction specifications and requirements
  - FAD design characteristics (a description),
  - FAD markings and identifiers,
  - Lighting requirements,
  - radar reflectors,
  - visible distance,
  - radio buoys (requirement for serial numbers),
  - satellite transceivers (requirement for serial numbers).
- Strategies to limit the capture of small bigeye and yellowfin tuna associated with fishing on FADs.
- Applicable areas
  - Details of any closed areas or periods e.g. territorial waters, shipping lanes, proximity to artisanal fisheries, etc.
- Applicable period for the FAD-MP
- Means for monitoring and reviewing implementation of the FAD-MP.

## Annex II

CPCs are required to ensure their vessels report:

- a) An inventory of the FADs present on the vessel specifying in particular for each FAD:
  - i. FAD identifier (*i.e.*, FAD Marking or beacon ID or any information allowing to identify the owner)
  - ii. FAD type (anchored, drifting natural FAD, drifting artificial FAD),
  - iii. FAD design characteristics (dimension and material of the floating part and of the underwater hanging structure),
- b) Any visit on FADs. For each visit on a FAD, whether followed or not by a set, the,
  - iv. position,
  - v. date,
  - vi. hour,
  - vii. FAD identifier (*i.e.*, FAD Marking or beacon ID or any information allowing to identify the owner)
  - viii. FAD type (anchored, drifting natural FAD, drifting artificial FAD),
  - ix. FAD design characteristics (dimension and material of the floating part and of the underwater hanging structure),
  - x. type of the activity (deployment, hauling, retrieving, loss, intervention on electronic equipment).
- c) If the visit is followed by a set, the results of the set in terms of catch and by-catch.

## Annex III

### PRINCIPLES FOR DESIGN AND DEPLOYMENT OF FADS

1. The surface structure of the FAD should not be covered, or only covered with non-meshed material.
2. If a sub-surface component is used, it should not be made from netting but from non-meshed materials such as ropes or canvas sheets.
3. To reduce the amount of synthetic marine debris, the use of natural or biodegradable materials (such as hessian canvas, hemp ropes, *etc.*) for drifting FADs should be promoted.

**RESOLUTION ON FISH-AGGREGATING DEVICES DATA COLLECTION AND MONITORING IN THE PURSE-SEINE FISHERY OF THE EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF IMPROVED FAD DESIGNS TO REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF ENTANGLEMENT OF NON-TARGET SPECIES**

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*The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)*

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*Concerned* about the effect on the average length of the catches of the three main tuna species, mainly bigeye tuna, caught with purse seines on FADs (Document SAC 02-13) and the significant effect that FADs may have on bigeye tuna spawning biomass, according to IATTC estimates (Document SAC-03-06), that skipjack tuna is captured by FADs and in unassociated schools in the EPO (Document SAC-03-03), and according to IATTC estimates, its exploitation rate has been increasing in recent years (Document SAC-03-07);

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<#>Implementation period of the FADMP¶  
Implementing fleet: identification

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<#>Means for monitoring and review of the implementation of the FADMP¶

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Inventory of FADs

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<#>dimensions¶  
<#>individual identification¶  
<#>associated buoy (type and identifier)¶  
<#>updated every time a modification is made¶  
<#>Record of FAD activity: ¶  
Information on catch

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<#>deployment, ¶  
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Additionally and voluntarily, the following information may be included:¶

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