

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

85TH MEETING

**Veracruz Veracruz, (Mexico)
10-14 June 2013**

PROPOSAL IATTC-85 D-2

SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED STATES

**RESOLUTION FOR THE COLLECTION AND ANALYSES OF DATA
ON FISH AGGREGATING DEVICES**

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

The United States understands that fish aggregating devices (FADs) have an impact on the stocks and the pelagic ecosystem in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO), and recognizes the need for improved data collection and analyses on FADs by IATTC members.

The United States appreciates the work done by other CPCs to develop proposals for FAD management in the EPO, but believes it is premature to discuss specific FAD management measures at this time. Before any effective FAD management plan can be developed, we must have a better understanding of how they are being used and how they impact the fishery.

Furthermore, effective FAD management requires consistent and uniform application, thorough implementation and robust enforcement throughout the Convention Area. CPC-specific FAD management plans would not allow for such uniform application and robust enforcement of measures. To date, the national plans that have been adopted by CPCs have not resulted in the collection of the data elements included in previously-proposed FAD management plan guidelines. An RFMO-wide data collection and monitoring effort should be undertaken to objectively analyze FAD management options.

Document SAC-02-13, prepared for the SAC meeting in 2011, provides a summary of current research activities and data collection on FADs. Observer data on FAD deployment, sets, and retrievals have been collected since 2006. Resolutions C-09-01, C-10-01, C-11-01, and C-12-01 include provisions for the development of a pilot program for research and information gathering on FADs, including provisions for the marking of FADs. SAC-02-13 suggests potential methods for marking and identifying individual FADs, but indicates that these methods could be cost prohibitive and that the Commission may wish to consider other possibilities.

We propose specific measures for strengthening the collection and analyses of FAD information in the EPO, including a simple scheme for marking and identifying all FADs in the Convention Area.

We note our expectation that the information gathered and analysis undertaken will be used, if appropriate, to develop advice on the management of FADs that will be translated by the Commission into conservation and management measures.

RESOLUTION FOR THE COLLECTION AND ANALYSES OF DATA ON FISH AGGREGATING DEVICES

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC):

Taking into account the best available scientific information on the status of the bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack stocks;

Committed to the long term conservation and sustainable exploitation of fisheries in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO);

Understanding that all fishing gears, including fish aggregating devices (FADs), have an impact on the stocks and the pelagic ecosystem in the EPO and that such impacts should be fully understood by members of the Commission;

Agreeing that to accurately provide the scientific advice necessary to effectively manage tuna fisheries in the EPO it is necessary for the scientific staff of the IATTC to have access to and analyze the relevant data regarding such fisheries and gears and for Commission members to put in place measures as needed to collect such information in their fisheries;

Acknowledging that observers currently collect data on FADs in the EPO that has been examined by the IATTC staff (Document SAC 02-13) and that the Commission has adopted measures for further research on FADs;

Recognizing that these measures need to be expanded and improved upon to ensure that the effects of the use of FADs on highly migratory fish stocks along with non-target, associated and dependent species, are fully understood and that the Commission can receive the best available scientific advice concerning mitigation of any negative impacts; and

Committed to ensuring that such scientific advice is taken into account in the development of the Commission's conservation and management measures concerning fishing for tunas;

AGREES:

1. For the purposes of this Resolution, the term Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) means drifting, floating or submerged objects deployed and/or tracked by vessels, including through the use of radio and/or satellite buoys, for the purpose of aggregating target tuna species for purse seine fishing operations.

Section 1. FAD Data Collection

2. Beginning 1 January 2015, CPCs shall require the owners and operators of all purse seine vessels flying their flag, when fishing on FADs, to collect and report the information contained in Annex I. The data may be collected through a dedicated logbook, modifications to regional logsheets, or other domestic reporting procedures.
3. CPCs shall provide a summary of the data collected for the previous calendar year, pursuant to Paragraph 2, to the Director. CPCs shall submit the data to the Director no later than [30] days prior to each regular meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee.
4. No later than the IATTC annual meeting in 2016, the scientific staff of the IATTC, in coordination with the Scientific Advisory Committee, shall present to the Commission the results of its analyses of the information collected pursuant to Paragraph 2, and shall identify additional elements for data collection, as well as specific reporting formats, necessary to evaluate the impact of the use of FADs on the ecosystem of the EPO fishery. The analyses shall also incorporate information from data on FADs collected by observers through the *Flotsam Information Record*.
5. In addition, no later than the IATTC annual meeting in 2016, the scientific staff of the IATTC, in co-

ordination with the Scientific Advisory Committee, shall present to the Commission initial recommendations based on information collected, based on this resolution and through other mechanisms, for the management of FADs. The Commission shall consider adopting management measures based on those recommendations.

6. The scientific staff of the IATTC, in coordination with the Scientific Advisory Committee, shall also formulate recommendations for regulating the management of the affected stocks for presentation to the Commission, on the basis of the results of its analyses of the collected FAD information.
7. In 2016, compliance with the FAD reporting requirements of this Resolution will be comprehensively reviewed by the *Committee for the Review of the Implementation of Measures adopted by the Commission* and presented to the Commission.
8. Data collected pursuant to this resolution shall be treated under the rules established in the IATTC Resolution on Confidentiality.

Section 2. FAD Marking

9. No later than 1 July 2015, CPCs shall require the owners and operators of their applicable flagged purse seine fishing vessels to mark all FADs deployed or modified by such vessels in accordance with a Commission marking scheme.
10. The Director shall develop a marking scheme for consideration and adoption by the Commission in 2014, based on coordination with CPCs during the intersessional period.
11. 11. The Director should consider, at a minimum, including the following elements in the marking scheme:
 - All FADs shall be marked with a unique identification number, with a specific numbering system and format to be adopted by the Commission.
 - The marking should be easy to read by the observer before the vessel operator engages in any FAD-related activity (e.g., setting on the FAD, retrieving the FAD, servicing the FAD), but if not visible for any reason, (time of day, weather, etc.), the vessel operator shall assist the observer in obtaining the unique FAD identifier as soon as feasible.
 - The marking should be easy to apply to the FAD, but should be applied in such a manner that it will not become unreadable or disassociated from the FAD.

Annex I

CPCs are required to ensure their vessel owners and operators maintain and report to the appropriate national authorities:

- 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 (e.g., drifting natural FAD, drifting artificial FAD),
 - iii. FAD design characteristics (dimension and material of the floating part and of the underwater hanging structure),

- b) For every FAD activity, the:
 - i. position,
 - ii. date,
 - iii. hour,
 - iv. FAD identifier (i.e., FAD Marking or beacon ID or any information allowing to identify the owner)
 - v. FAD type (e.g., drifting natural FAD, drifting artificial FAD),
 - vi. FAD design characteristics (dimension and material of the floating part and of the underwater hanging structure),
 - vii. type of the activity (set, deployment, hauling, retrieving, loss, intervention on electronic equipment, other (specified)).
 - viii. If the activity is a set, the results of the set in terms of catch and by-catch.