

32ND MEETING OF THE PARTIES

La Jolla, California (USA)
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**MATTERS RELATED TO THE OBSERVER COVERAGE OF PURSE-
SEINE VESSELS OF LESS THAN 363 t CAPACITY**

The Secretariat seeks confirmation by the Parties of the previously-established method of calculating the assessment fees for purse-seine vessels of less than 363 t capacity that are required to carry an observer, as well as a determination regarding how coverage of trips made by such vessels should be apportioned among observer programs.

1. BACKGROUND

Article XIII of the AIDCP establishes the On-Board Observer Program, which currently comprises the IATTC international observer program and the national observer programs of Colombia, Ecuador, the European Union, Mexico, Panama (which also covers Nicaragua), and Venezuela. Annex II, paragraph 2, of the Agreement stipulates that “*each Party shall require its vessels with a carrying capacity greater than 363 metric tons ... to carry an observer during each fishing trip in the Agreement Area.*” It also specifies that “*at least 50 percent of the observers on the vessels of each Party shall be IATTC observers; the remainder may be from the Party’s national observer program.*”

Currently, the goal of the national programs is to cover about half (in the case of the Ecuadorian program, one-third) of the trips by their respective fleets. The IATTC program covers the remainder of the trips by these seven fleets, plus all trips by vessels of other fleets that operate under the AIDCP.

2. VESSELS OF LESS THAN 363 t CAPACITY COVERED BY THE ON-BOARD OBSERVER PROGRAM

Under certain circumstances, vessels of lesser capacities may be required to carry observers. For example, IATTC Resolution C-12-08 in its paragraph 5 indicates that “*any vessel [regardless of its size] with one or more of its wells sealed to reduce its well volume recorded on the Regional Vessel Register shall be required to carry an observer from the International Dolphin Conservation Program (IDCP) on board*”. Furthermore, IATTC Resolution C-12-01, paragraph 4, allows “*purse-seine vessels of IATTC class-4 (between 182 and 272 metric tons carrying capacity)[...] to make one single fishing trip of up to 30 days duration during the specified closure periods, provided that any such vessel carries an observer of the On-Board Observer Program of the [...] AIDCP*”. Finally, AIDCP Resolution A-02-01, paragraph 1, requires “*those purse-seine vessels of less than 363 metric tons carrying capacity [...] that have been identified by the IRP to have committed a possible infraction by intentionally setting on dolphins [...] to carry observers.*”

3. VESSEL FEES AND OBSERVER COVERAGE

The Secretariat considers that the observer coverage of all vessels, regardless of capacity, is to be carried out within the framework of the On-Board Observer Program. The costs to be covered by the Program include not only those related to the observers themselves, but also those related to the processing of the data collected with a view to its use for scientific and management purposes as well for verifying compliance issues through the IRP, and the IATTC Review Committee. Regarding the assessment fees to be paid by smaller vessels, in November 2008 the 20th Meeting of the Parties agreed that “*vessels of less*

than 364 t carrying capacity that are required to carry an observer would pay an assessment based upon an unconfirmed well volume of 510 m³ (364 t x 1.4 factor); however, if a vessel's well volume had been confirmed, its assessment would be based on a well volume of 426 m³(364 t x 1.17051 factor," even if they made only one trip during the year. Consistent with that decision, and in light of the economic and administrative considerations noted above, the Secretariat believes that this practice should continue.

Regarding observer coverage of vessels over 363 t and the apportionment of trips between the IATTC and national programs, the Secretariat considers that the relevant percentages established in accordance with the AIDCP should be maintained, and that in any case, the rate of coverage by the national programs should not exceed 50% of the trips. However, the Parties might wish to review and discuss the coverage of vessels of lesser capacity, as described in section 2 above. In particular, the Parties could consider the advisability of all such coverage being provided by the IATTC program only, even for vessels of Parties with national observer programs.

The following table reflects the observer coverage of vessels of less than 363 t during 2010-2015, for Parties with an observer program.

Year	Flag	Class	Program	Trips	Total	% IATTC
2010	ECU	3	National	1	10	30
		4	IATTC	3		
		4	National	6		
2011	ECU	4	IATTC	4	8	50
		4	National	4		
2012	ECU	4	IATTC	7	13	54
		4	National	6		
2013	COL	4	IATTC	1	1	100
	ECU	4	IATTC	11	17	71
		4	National	5		
		5	IATTC	1		
2014	COL	4	IATTC	1	1	100
	ECU	4	IATTC	5	16	38
		4	National	10		
5	IATTC	1				
2015	COL	5	National	1	1	0
	ECU	4	IATTC	1	8	38
		4	National	5		
5	IATTC	2				