

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

**89<sup>TH</sup> MEETING**

Guayaquil (Ecuador)  
29 June-3 July 2015

**PROPOSAL IATTC-89 K-1**

**SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED STATES**

**AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION C-11-02 TO MITIGATE THE IMPACT  
ON SEABIRDS OF FISHING FOR SPECIES COVERED BY THE IATTC**

**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

**Description and Rationale:** The United States is proposing to revise Resolution C-11-02 (*Resolution to mitigate the impact on seabirds of fishing for species covered by the IATTC*) to generally implement recommendations from IATTC staff presented at both the 2014 and 2015 meetings of the Scientific Advisory Committee and harmonize it with the seabird conservation measure adopted by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Management Council (WCPFC) in 2012.

For southern areas, the proposal would require the use of at least two of the following three mitigation methods in combination, line weighting, night setting, and tori lines, which is consistent with current advice from the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) regarding seabird mitigation techniques, as described in document SAC-05 INF-E. In the northern areas, the two column approach would be retained (although blue-dyed bait and underwater setting chute would be removed from column B) to provide for additional options for bycatch mitigation measures. The assemblage of seabird species are different in the northern areas and, in general, do not dive as deeply as the albatrosses and petrels in the south. Furthermore, side-setting is retained in column A because it has been demonstrated to be effective in the Hawaii longline fishery in reducing bycatch of albatross species.

Considering that some islands in the area currently exempted from the seabird bycatch mitigation measures are breeding habitat for the Laysan albatross and this species is known to range over coastal and pelagic areas across the North Pacific, the proposal seeks to apply the mitigation measures at least to all areas north of 23°N. The proposal would also apply the measures to all longline vessels that are not propelled by outboard motors. Longline gear is known to interact with seabirds, and there is no empirical evidence that suggests that the size of the vessel deploying the gear is a factor that influences bycatch.

The proposal includes three annexes, including: (1) an updated map of where measures to reduce seabird bycatch would be required, (2) updates to the specifications for the mitigation measures that are included in the resolution, and (3) supplemental guidelines for the design and deployment of tori lines. The specifications and supplemental guidelines are consistent with ACAP best practice advice.

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) gathered in Ecuador on the occasion of its 89<sup>th</sup> Meeting:

*Concerned* that some seabird species, notably albatrosses and petrels, are threatened with global extinction;

*Recognizing* that some threatened and endangered seabird populations are found in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO);

*Recalling* that tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organizations responsible for other ocean areas have adopted measures to mitigate the accidental bycatch of seabirds in longline fisheries;

*Taking account of* the work of the IATTC, including the IATTC Technical Meeting on Seabirds held on 11 May 2009, that has shown that combining different mitigation measures is more effective than using a single measure in reducing bycatch of seabirds;

*Noting* that scientific research into mitigation of seabird bycatch in longline fisheries has shown that the effectiveness of measures depends on the type of vessel, the season, and the species of seabirds present; and

*Noting* that effective mitigation measures can reduce the loss of bait and therefore increase catches;

Agrees that;

1. Commission Members and cooperating non-Members (CPCs) shall, to the greatest extent practical, implement the International Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catches of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries (IPOA-Seabirds) if they have not already done so.
2. CPCs shall report to the IATTC on their implementation of the IPOA-Seabirds, including, as appropriate, the status of their National Plans of Action for reducing incidental catches of seabirds in longline fisheries.

*Southern Areas*

3. CPCs shall require their longline vessels when setting longline gear south of 30°S plus the area bounded by the coastline at 2°N, west to 2°N-95°W, south to 15°S-95°W, east to 15°S-85°W, and south to 30°S (see Annex 1), to simultaneously use at least two of these three measures: weighted branch lines, night setting and tori lines. Vessels shall follow the technical specifications for these measures provided in Annex 2. Annex 3 provides supplemental guidelines for the design and deployment of tori lines.

*Northern Areas*

4. CPCs shall require their longline vessels<sup>1</sup> that use hydraulic, mechanical, or electrical systems to use at least two of the mitigation measures in Table 1 when setting gear<sup>2</sup>, including at least one from Column A, in the EPO north of 23°N. Vessels shall follow the technical specifications for these measures provided in Annex 2. Annex 3 provides supplemental guidelines for the design and deployment of tori lines.

**Table 1: Mitigation measures**

Column A	Column B
Night setting with minimum deck lighting	<i>Tori line</i> <sup>3</sup>
<i>Tori line</i>	Deep-setting line shooter
Weighted branch lines	Management of offal discharge
Side-setting with bird curtains and weighted branch lines <sup>4</sup>	

<sup>1</sup> Vessels propelled by outboard motors are not subject to this resolution.

<sup>2</sup> Management of offal discharge is a mitigation measure employed during gear hauling, as well as gear setting, and should be employed as described in the Annex 2 Technical Specifications

<sup>3</sup> If tori line is selected from both Column A and Column B this equates to simultaneously using two (i.e. paired) tori lines.

<sup>4</sup> If using side setting with a bird curtain and weighted branch lines from column A this will be counted as two mitigation measures.

5. CPCs are encouraged to undertake and support research and trials aimed at developing and refining mitigation methods for longline fisheries in the North Pacific Ocean that are operationally feasible, demonstrated to significantly reduce seabird interactions, and are cost-effective and to share the results of such work with the Commission. The scientific staff of the IATTC, in coordination with the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), shall present to the Commission at its 2017 annual meeting recommendations for whether additional best practice measures, including measures that address bycatch during hauling, should be added to Table 1, and whether any of the current measures should be removed.

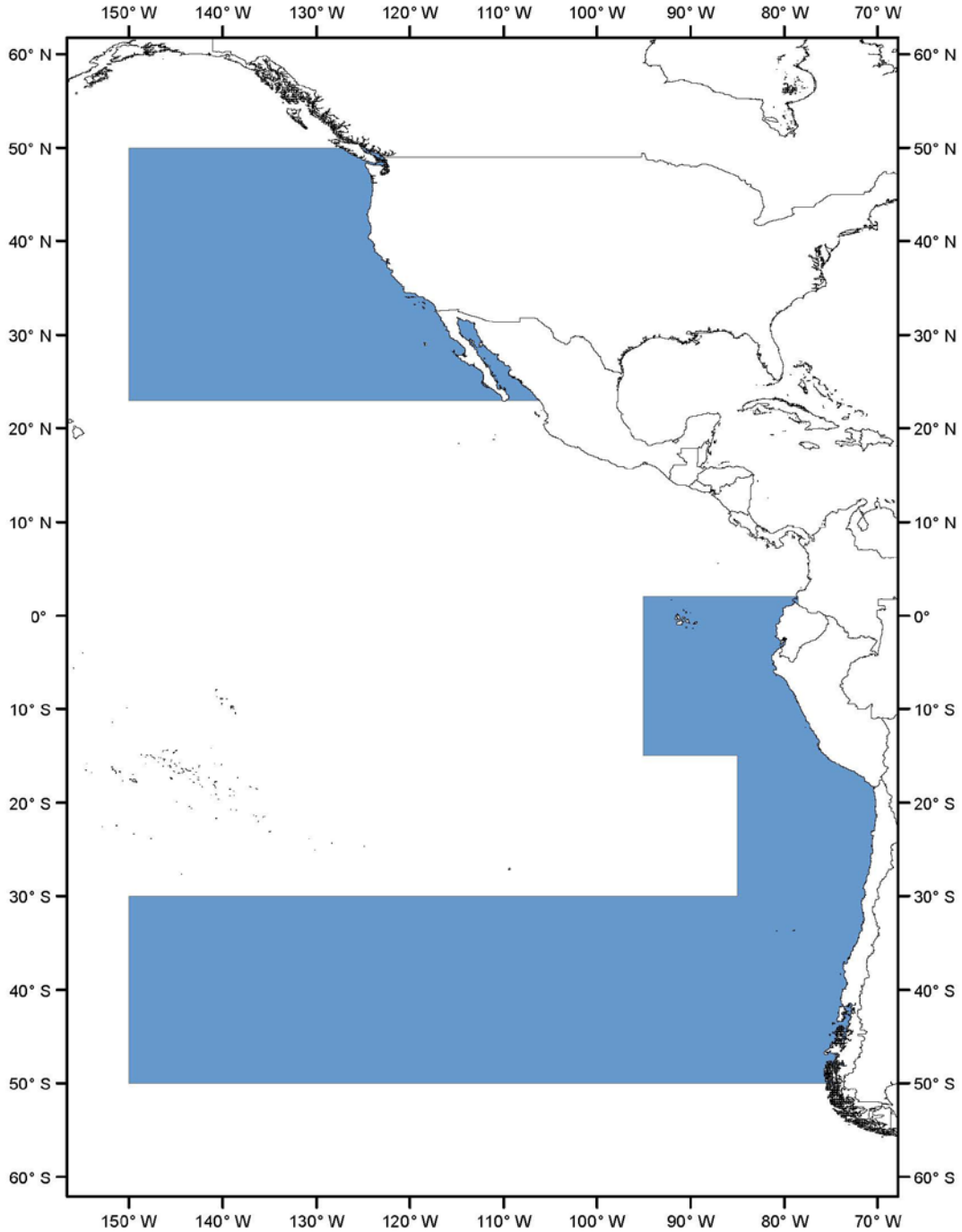
*Other Areas*

6. CPCs with longline vessels fishing in the EPO, other than the area mentioned in paragraphs 3 and 4, are encouraged to have their vessels employ at least one of the mitigation measures included in Column A of Table 1 when setting their gear.

*All Areas*

7. CPCs shall inform the IATTC, by January 1, 2016, which of the mitigation measures they require their vessels to use, as well as the technical specifications for each of those mitigation measures. Each CPC shall report for subsequent years any changes it has made to its required mitigation measures or technical specifications for those measures.
8. CPCs shall annually provide to the IATTC all available relevant information on interactions with seabirds reported, or collected by observers, including mitigation used, observed and reported species-specific seabird bycatch rates and numbers, to enable the SAC to estimate seabird mortality in all fisheries managed by the IATTC.
9. CPCs are encouraged to establish national programs to place observers aboard longline vessels flying their flags or fishing in their waters, for the purpose of, *inter alia*, gathering information on the interactions of seabirds with the longline fisheries.
10. CPCs are encouraged to adopt measures aimed at ensuring that seabirds captured alive during longline fishing operations are released alive and in the best condition possible, and that, whenever possible, hooks are removed without jeopardizing the life of the seabird. Research into the survival of released seabirds is encouraged.
11. CPCs shall implement the provisions of this resolution that differ from those in Resolution C-11-02 no later than January 1, 2016, and until that date, the provisions of C-11-02 shall remain in effect.
12. The effectiveness of this resolution to reduce seabird bycatch in the EPO, including the mitigation measures, the area of application, and the technical specifications adopted pursuant to this resolution, shall be subject to review and possible modification, taking into account the scientific advice from the SAC and the IATTC scientific staff.
13. The SAC will also consider the need to extend this resolution to other fleets operating in the EPO.
14. This resolution replaces IATTC Resolution C-11-02.

Annex 1



Areas<sup>5</sup> (shaded) within the EPO in which the use of mitigation measures for reducing seabird bycatch is required as specified in paragraphs 3 and 4: north of 23°N and south of 30°S, plus the area bounded by the coastline at 2°N, west to 2°N-95°W, south to 15°S-95°W, east to 15°S-85°W, and south to 30°S.

<sup>5</sup> This map is for illustrative purposes only

**Annex 2**

**Technical Specifications**

**1. Night setting**

- i. No setting between nautical dawn and nautical dusk.
- ii. Nautical dusk and nautical dawn are defined as set out in the Nautical Almanac tables for relevant latitude, local time and date.
- iii. Deck lighting is to be kept to a minimum . Minimum deck lighting should not breach minimum standards for safety and navigation.

**2. Weighted branch lines**

- i. Following minimum weight specifications are required:
  - greater than or equal to a total of 45grams (g) attached within 1 meter (m) of the hook; or
  - greater than or equal to a total of 60 g attached within 3.5 m of the hook; or
  - greater than or equal to a total of 98 g weight attached within 4 m of the hook.

**3. Tori lines**

**3a. For vessels  $\geq$  35 m total length**

- i. i. Deploy 2 tori lines during the entire longline setting to deter birds from approaching the branch line. Both tori lines shall be deployed simultaneously, one on each side of the line being set. Baited hooks shall be deployed within the area bounded by the two tori lines.
- ii. A tori line using long and short streamers shall be used. Streamers shall be brightly colored and a mix of long and short streamers.
  - a. Long streamers shall be placed at intervals of no more than 5 m, and must be attached to the line with swivels that prevent streamers from wrapping around the line. Long streamers of sufficient length to reach the sea surface in calm conditions must be used.
  - b. Short streamers (greater than 1 m in length) shall be placed no more than 1 m apart.
- iii. Vessels shall deploy the tori line to achieve a desired aerial extent greater than or equal to 100 m. To achieve this aerial extent the tori line shall have a minimum length of 200 m, and shall
- ii. be attached to a tori pole  $>$  8 m above the sea surface located as close to the stern as practical.

**3b. For vessels  $<$  35 m total length**

- i. A single tori line using either long and short streamers, or short streamers only shall be used.
- ii. Streamers shall be brightly colored. Long and/or short (but greater than 1 m in length) streamers must be used and placed at intervals as follows:
  - a. Long streamers placed at intervals of no more than 5 m for the first 55 m of tori line.
  - b. Short streamers placed at intervals of no more than 1 m.
- iii. Long streamers shall be attached to the line with swivels that prevent streamers from wrapping around the line. All long streamers shall reach the sea-surface in calm conditions.
- iv. Vessels shall deploy the tori line to achieve a desired aerial extent of 75 m. To achieve this aerial extent the tori line shall have a minimum length of 100 m, and shall be attached to a tori
- iii. pole  $>$  7 m above the sea surface located as close to the stern as practical. If the tori line is less than 150 m in length, it must have a towed object attached to the end so that the aerial

extent is maintained over the sinking baited hooks.

- iv. v. If two tori lines are used, the two lines must be deployed on opposing sides of the main line.

#### **5. Side setting with bird curtain and weighted branch lines**

- i. i. Mainline deployed from port or starboard side as far from stern as practicable (at least 1 m), and if mainline shooter is used, must be mounted at least 1m forward of the stern.
- ii. ii. When seabirds are present ensure the mainline is deployed slack so that baited hooks remain submerged.
- iii. iii. Bird curtain must be employed:
- • Pole aft of line shooter at least 3 m long;
  - • Minimum of 3 main streamers attached to upper 2 m of pole;
  - • Main streamer diameter minimum 20 mm;
  - • Branch streamers attached to end of each main streamer long enough to drag on water (no wind) – minimum diameter 10 mm.

#### **6. Management of offal discharge**

- i. EitherNo offal discharge during setting or hauling; or
  - ii. Strategic offal discharge from the opposite side of the boat to setting/hauling to actively encourage birds away from baited hooks.
- iii. Ensure that all hooks are removed from the offal prior to discharge.

#### **7. Deep-setting line shooter**

- i. Line shooters must be deployed in a manner such that the hooks are set substantially deeper than they would be lacking the use of the line shooter, and such that the majority of hooks reach depths of at least 100 m.

### **Annex 3**

#### **Supplemental Guidelines for Design and Deployment of Tori Lines**

##### *Preamble*

Minimum technical standards for deployment of tori lines are found in Annex 2 of this Resolution, and are not repeated here. These supplemental guidelines are designed to assist in preparation and implementation of tori line regulations for longline vessels. While these guidelines are relatively explicit, improvement in tori line effectiveness through experimentation is encouraged, within the requirements of Annex 2 in the Resolution. The guidelines take into account environmental and operational variables such as weather conditions, setting speed and ship size, all of which influence tori line performance and design in protecting baits from birds. Tori line design and use may change to take account of these variables provided that line performance is not compromised. On-going improvement in tori line design is envisaged and consequently review of these guidelines should be undertaken in the future.

##### *Tori line design*

1. An appropriate towed device on the section of the tori line in the water can improve the aerial

extension.

2. The above water section of the line should be sufficiently light that its movement is unpredictable to avoid habituation by birds and sufficiently heavy to avoid deflection of the line by wind.
3. The line is best attached to the vessel with a robust barrel swivel to reduce tangling of the line.
4. The streamers should be made of material that is conspicuous and produces an unpredictable lively action (e.g., strong fine line sheathed in red polyurethane tubing) suspended from a robust three-way swivel (that again reduces tangles) attached to the tori line.
5. Each streamer should consist of two or more strands.
6. Each streamer pair should be detachable by means of a clip so that line stowage is more efficient.

### ***Deployment of tori lines***

1. The line should be suspended from a pole affixed to the vessel. The tori pole should be set as high as possible so that the line protects bait a good distance astern of the vessel and will not tangle with fishing gear. Greater pole height provides greater bait protection. For example, a height of around 8 m above the water line can give about 100 m of bait protection.
2. If vessels use only one tori line it should be set to windward of sinking baits. If baited hooks are set outboard of the wake, the streamer line attachment point to the vessel should be positioned several meters outboard of the side of the vessel that baits are deployed.
3. Deployment of multiple tori lines is encouraged to provide even greater protection of baits from birds. If vessels use two tori lines, baited hooks should be deployed within the area bounded by the two tori lines.
4. Because there is the potential for line breakage and tangling, spare tori lines should be carried onboard to replace damaged lines and to ensure fishing operations can continue uninterrupted. Breakaways can be incorporated into the tori line to minimize safety and operational problems should a longline float foul or tangle with the in-water extent of a streamer line.
5. When fishers use a bait casting machine (BCM), they must ensure coordination of tori line and machine by:
  - a. ensuring the BCM throws directly under the tori line protection, and
  - b. when using a BCM (or multiple BCMs) that allows throwing to both port and starboard, two tori lines should be used.
6. When casting branchline by hand, fishers should ensure that the baited hooks and coiled branchline sections are cast under the tori line protection, avoiding the propeller turbulence which may slow the sink rate.
7. Fishers are encouraged to install manual, electric or hydraulic winches to improve ease of deployment and retrieval of tori lines.