

**INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION**

**90<sup>TH</sup> MEETING**

**La Jolla, California USA**

**27 June-1 July 2016**

**PROPOSAL IATTC-90 K-1**

**SUBMITTED BY MEXICO**

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION C-11-08 ON  
OBSERVERS ON LONGLINE VESSELS**

**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

The current resolution C-11-08 on observers on longline vessels makes it obligatory to have a coverage of 5% of fishing effort made by its longline fishing vessels more than 20 meters long.

Within the recommendations on tuna conservation, the scientific staff of the IATTC has previously noted the following:

*“The information provided is insufficient for a rigorous evaluation of the adequacy of 5% coverage for their longline fisheries. The data show that 5% is too low a level of coverage to allow accurate estimates of the catch of species caught infrequently in those fisheries. In other studies in which large amounts of information has been collected, a 20% level of coverage has been calculated to be adequate to provide reliable estimates of the infrequently-caught species.*

*The staff maintains its recommendation of 20% observer coverage of large longline vessels until sufficient information is available to justify a revision.”*

In this context, it is considered advisable that the current resolution be modified in order to accommodate a coverage that is necessary and greater than 20%.

The changes that should be made to the current resolution are indicated below.

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in La Jolla, California, on the occasion of its 90<sup>th</sup> Meeting:

*Noting* the need to ensure and promote uniform and equitable treatment of all tuna-fishing vessels operating in the Antigua Convention Area;

*Recommending* the need to collect better scientific information on target species as well as comprehensive data on interactions with non-target species, in particular, sea turtles, sharks and seabirds

*Noting* that large purse-seine vessels operating in the Antigua Convention Area are required to carry 100% scientific observers aboard, in accordance with the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program and that this effort has resulted in a greater knowledge of the fishery and its interactions;

*Taking* into account and reaffirming the recommendation by the Seventh Meeting of the Commission’s Scientific Advisory Committee to increase the coverage by observers to 20% in longline fishing vessels of 20 m length overall within the next five years, maximum, and in a gradual manner;

*Considering furthermore* that the 7<sup>th</sup> SAC meeting also recommended that countries with longline vessels over 20 meters length overall update which vessels are active, inactive, and/or sunk, and if possible inform the IATTC staff of the duration of their fishing operations;

Agrees that:

1. Each Member and cooperating non-Member (CPCs) shall ensure that, from 1 January 2017, the fishing effort shall be determined by the number of fishing days.
2. Each CPC shall ensure that from that date, the coverage by observers shall be representative of the activities of its fleet and therefore, during a maximum period of five years, the coverage by observers of longline vessels of 20 m length overall will be increased up to a 20% coverage.
3. Each CPC shall update the list of its vessels describing specifically which vessels are active, inactive and/or sunk, and if possible inform the IATTC of the duration of their fishing operations.
4. The main task of the scientific observers shall be to record any available biological information, the catches of targeted fish species, species composition and any available biological information as well as any interactions with non-target species such as sea turtles, seabirds and sharks.
5. The Director, in cooperation with the Scientific Advisory Committee, shall review the reporting format detailing the required data to be collected by scientific observers on longline vessels and will communicate it to the Commission.
6. Scientific observers shall submit to their flag CPC authorities a report on these observations at the latest 30 days after the end of each fishing trip.
7. Every year, CPCs shall submit to the Scientific Advisory Committee, through the Director, by 31 March, the scientific observers' information on the previous year's fishery in a format established by the Scientific Advisory Committee.
8. Evaluate the use of electronic monitoring systems in order to establish minimum standards and extend by these means coverage in longline fisheries.