

INTERNATIONAL DOLPHIN CONSERVATION PROGRAM  
PROGRAMA INTERNACIONAL PARA LA CONSERVACION DE LOS DELFINES

**INTERNATIONAL REVIEW PANEL**

**30<sup>TH</sup> MEETING**

MANZANILLO (MEXICO)  
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**DOCUMENT IRP-30-17**

**PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTING STOCK MORTALITY LIMITS  
(SMLs)**

Article V of the AIDCP requires the Parties to establish a per-stock, per-year dolphin mortality cap (called Stock Mortality Limit, SML) for each stock of dolphins covered by the Agreement. Annex 3 states that in 2001 and thereafter, the SML shall be 0.1% of the minimum estimated abundance ( $N_{min}$ ) of each stock. Beginning in 2001, in the event that annual mortality of 0.1% of  $N_{min}$  is exceeded for any stock of dolphins, the AIDCP requires that all sets on that stock and on any mixed herds containing members of that stock shall cease for that year.

The AIDCP also requires the Parties to establish a system, based on real-time observer reporting, to ensure effective implementation and compliance with these mortality caps. This requirement was complied with by requiring all observers aboard tuna purse seiners with a DML to report dolphin mortality by stock weekly via e-mail, fax, or radio. Late in 2001, as some SMLs were approached, the required reporting frequency was increased to twice a week. However, for various reasons the Secretariat received reports from only about 50% of vessels. Lacking complete real-time data, projections of mortality were made based on the data available, and these extrapolations indicated that restrictions on the fishery were necessary to ensure that no SMLs would be exceeded. Accordingly, the Secretariat recommended to governments that the fishery for tuna associated with the central stock of common dolphins be closed on December 10 for the remainder of 2001, and likewise for northeastern offshore spotted dolphins on December 21.

It should be noted that extrapolations can be inaccurate, and would be unnecessary if all vessels complied with the weekly reporting requirement. In any case, while a real-time reporting system has been established, no procedures have been established for implementing any restrictive measures necessary to ensure that the SMLs are not exceeded. The Secretariat therefore proposes the following procedures for consideration by the Parties:

**PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING STOCK MORTALITY LIMITS**

1. The Secretariat shall monitor the mortalities of the following seven stocks of dolphins for the purpose of ensuring that the respective SMLs are not exceeded:

	Stock		
Offshore spotted dolphin:	northeastern	western-southern	
Spinner dolphin:	eastern	whitebelly	
Common dolphin:	northern	central	southern

2. The basis for monitoring shall be weekly reports of dolphin mortalities by stock, transmitted by all observers from the AIDCP On-Board Observer Program directly to the Secretariat by fax, e-mail, or radio from vessels at sea.
3. The Secretariat shall, on the basis of these reports, estimate the projected total annual mortality of

each stock. These estimates shall be provided weekly to the participating governments, and may be provided to vessel owners and operators upon request.

4. If the estimated total mortality for any of the seven stocks reaches 80% of the SML for that stock, the Secretariat shall so advise the participating governments, and observers will be notified that the at-sea reports must be transmitted twice weekly.
5. If the estimated total mortality for any of the seven stocks reaches a level at which the Secretariat estimates that the SML for that stock will be reached in 30 days, the Secretariat shall advise the participating governments that restrictions on the fishery are imminent, and recommend that the governments so notify the owners and operators of vessels under their jurisdiction.
6. If the estimated total mortality for any of the seven stocks reaches a level at which the Secretariat estimates that the SML for that stock will be reached in 15 days or less, the Secretariat shall advise the participating governments that, pursuant to the AIDCP, all sets on that stock and on any mixed herds containing members of that stock should cease effective from the day on which that LMS is expected to be reached.
7. All participating governments shall take the necessary measures, in accordance with their national laws, to ensure that the restrictions in paragraph 6 are implemented and enforced, and shall provide the Secretariat with appropriate information regarding such implementation and enforcement.
8. The Secretariat may provide, upon request, information to vessel owners and operators regarding estimated dolphin mortality levels for the pertinent national fleet and for the entire international fleet.