

AGREEMENT ON THE INTERNATIONAL DOLPHIN CONSERVATION PROGRAM

**32<sup>ND</sup> MEETING OF THE PARTIES**

La Jolla, California (USA)

20 October 2015

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**AGENDA**

	Documents
1. Opening of the meeting	
2. Election of Chairman	
3. Adoption of the agenda	
4. Approval of the minutes of the 31 <sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Parties	
5. Secretariat's report on the IDCP	MOP-32-05
6. AIDCP budget	MOP-32-06
7. Report of the Working Group to promote and publicize the AIDCP Dolphin Safe Tuna Certification System	
8. Report of the International Review Panel	
9. Other business	
10. Place and date of next meeting	
11. Adjournment	

**APPENDICES**

1. List of attendees
2. Report of the Chairman of the Working Group for promoting and publicizing the AIDCP *dolphin safe certification system*
3. Report of the Coordinator of the 58<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the IRP

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP) was held in La Jolla, California (USA), on 20 October 2015. The list of attendees is attached as Appendix 1.

**1. Opening of the meeting**

The meeting was opened by Dr. Guillermo Compeán, Director of the IATTC, which provides the Secretariat for the AIDCP.

**2. Election of Chairman**

Mr. Julio Guevara, of Nicaragua, was elected Chairman of the meeting.

**3. Adoption of the agenda**

The provisional agenda was adopted without changes.

**4. Approval of the minutes of the 31<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Parties**

The minutes of the 31<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Parties were approved without changes.

## **5. Secretariat's report on the IDCP**

Dr. Martín Hall, of the Secretariat, presented Document MOP-32-05, the report on the operation of the IDCP in 2014. Observers recorded 11,382 sets on dolphins and a mortality of 975 dolphins, for an average mortality per set of 0.086. 100% of trips by large purse-seine vessels were sampled, in accordance with the requirements of the AIDCP. Dolphin Mortality Limits (DMLs) of 59 dolphins per vessel were allocated to 83 vessels. No vessel exceeded its DML in 2014. The number of sets with no dolphin mortality has increased from 38% in 1986 to 95.5% in 2014.

Dr. Hall noted that the mortality of dolphins caused by the purse-seine fishery is currently at least 100 times less than that which would be expected to impact the capacity of the dolphin populations in the eastern Pacific to remain at their current levels, as determined by the most recent stock assessment by the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

## **6. AIDCP budget**

Ms. Nora Roa Wade, of the Secretariat, presented Document MOP-32 INF-A. The Secretariat maintains its request for an increase in the vessel assessments from US\$ 14.95 to US\$ 17.61/m<sup>3</sup>, which would cover the approved budget for 2016 and should avoid budget shortfalls. The current vessel assessment rate would, in most years, be insufficient to provide revenue equal to the amount of the approved budget. A budget deficit was avoided in 2015, but only because one vessel paid its outstanding assessments of US\$ 240,000, and because many of the vessels covered by paragraph 12 of Resolution C-02-03 paid their fees but to date had not fished. Such sources of revenue are irregular and unpredictable and should not be relied upon to help cover the approved budget amount.

Most Parties supported the proposed increase to the assessment rate, but Ecuador maintained its objection to any increase.

The Chairman re-emphasized that there was no guarantee that sources of extraordinary income would continue to help the Program avoid a deficit and urged that the proposed increase be considered at the next Meeting of the Parties, in order to be able to cover the costs of the program, taking into account, moreover, that those costs increase.

Mexico and the United States highlighted the importance of Parties with outstanding payments paying their assessments as soon as possible, and suggested that observers not be allocated to debtor vessels until they paid all their outstanding assessments.

## **7. Report of the Working Group to promote and publicize the AIDCP Dolphin Safe Tuna Certification System**

Ing. Carlos Marín, of Guatemala, who chaired the meeting of the Working Group, presented his report (Appendix 2), noting that the group reiterated the recommendations that it had made previously to the Meeting of the Parties regarding the publication and publicizing of the three materials on the AIDCP (educational module, pamphlet, and video), on the websites of the AIDCP Parties, and also to monitor their utilization and publication on the websites of other international organizations.

Mexico insisted on the importance of disseminating the AIDCP and of utilizing the adopted materials in a widespread manner, and invited the Parties, as of their next meeting, to begin to report on the dissemination actions undertaken, as was done by Guatemala during the current meeting.

## **8. Report of the International Review Panel**

Mr. Julio Guevara, Coordinator of the 58th meeting of the IRP, presented his report (Appendix 3), indicating that the Panel had decided to make the following recommendations:

1. Consider as qualified for a DML the 96 requests that were presented and consider as qualified provisionally the requests for DMLs for two vessels: one Mexican (not yet on the IATTC Regional Vessel Register) and the other Venezuelan (which had not completed the submission of the

requirements for qualification) that plan to fish on dolphins in 2016, subject to the condition that the Mexican vessel first be duly included in the Regional Register and that complete information for qualifying the two vessels to receive DMLs be submitted, along with corresponding payments to the IDCP.

2. That the Secretariat send a communication to Korea to report the case of a Korean-flag Class-6 purse-seine vessel that entered the eastern Pacific Ocean without an observer but with all its fishing gear, for the Korean authorities to investigate the case and inform the Parties about it.
3. Regarding the case of the substitution of an observer by an unknown person, that the Secretariat circulate among the Parties proposals for preventive measures to avoid a repetition of this kind of case.

The Parties approved these recommendations.

## **9. Other business**

### **a) Frequency of meetings**

The European Union proposed reducing the frequency the meetings the AIDCP from two per year, in June and October, to one per year, in June. It presented Document [MOP-32 INF-B](#), in which mechanisms are identified for resolving the two major difficulties with this proposal: the allocation of DMLs in October, and the increase in the periods for reviewing possible infractions.

An intensive and thorough discussion took place. In general, the Parties recognized the merits of the proposal with respect to the savings in time and money that it would allow, considering further that, thanks to the progress in the implementation of the AIDCP, the meetings in October require less time each year.

Some delegations stated that the allocation of DMLs in October could be discussed and decided by correspondence, as is done in cases of *force majeure* exemptions, and that, in order to avoid delays in the review of possible infractions, the Secretariat could send the corresponding information to the relevant Parties in advance, without waiting for it to be considered first by the IRP, without prejudice to its review in due course by the Panel at its meeting in June. The Secretariat and the Chairman reminded the meeting that this information is already sent to the Parties at the end of each fishing trip.

Some delegations expressed their concern that it would not be the IRP that would determine initially which possible infractions should be sent to the governments, given that that this work is the primary function of the IRP, and it should not be the Secretariat that had that responsibility, even if it was in a preliminary and tentative manner. They noted that omitting this important step could weaken the AIDCP as a whole.

The Parties decided to continue the consideration of this matter at the next meeting, and asked that a document analyzing in greater detail the advantages and disadvantages of the European Union's proposal be prepared.

### **b) Coverage by observers on vessels less than Class 6**

Dr. Compeán presented Document [MOP-32 INF-C](#), through which the Secretariat seeks confirmation by the Parties of the previously established method of calculating the assessments for vessels of less than 364 t carrying capacity (*i.e.* Class 5 and smaller), as well as a determination regarding how this coverage should be shared between the IATTC and national observer programs.

He noted that, in accordance with the relevant resolutions, the following are required to carry an observer:

- Class-4 vessels (between 182 and 272 metric tons carrying capacity) if they use the exemption of making a fishing trip during a closure period (Resolution C-13-01);
- vessels of less than 364 t carrying capacity (*i.e.* Class 5 and smaller) for which the IRP has

identified a possible infraction of fishing intentionally on dolphins (Resolution A-02-01); and

- vessels with sealed wells (Resolution C-12-08), which, additionally, must pay their assessment based upon their total actual capacity, which includes the sealed wells.

He also noted that, pursuant to Annex II of the AIDCP, at least 50% of the observers on the vessels of each Party must be IATTC observers.

After an exhaustive discussion, the Parties agreed the following:

- 1) That coverage by observers of vessels of less than 364 t carrying capacity (*i.e.* Class 5 and smaller) should be implemented in accordance with paragraph 2 of Annex II of the AIDCP, which stipulates 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.”*
- 2) Regarding the assessments that these vessels must pay, to maintain the decision of the 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties in November 2008 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 m<sup>3</sup> (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 m<sup>3</sup> (364 t x 1.17051 factor)”*, even if they make only one trip during the year and regardless of its duration.

#### **10. Date and place of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Parties will be held in June 2016 in conjunction with the 90<sup>th</sup> meeting of the IATTC.

#### **11. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m. on 20 October 2015.

## Appendix 1.

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