

INTERNATIONAL DOLPHIN CONSERVATION PROGRAM

PERMANENT WORKING GROUP ON TUNA TRACKING

20TH MEETING

LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA (USA)
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**IMPLEMENTATION OF SECTION 7 OF THE TUNA TRACKING AND
VERIFICATION SYSTEM REGARDING AN INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM
TO REVIEW AND CHECK NATIONAL PROGRAMS**

At the 5th meeting of the Working Group to Promote and Publicize the AIDCP Dolphin Safe Tuna Certification System, held in June 2005, during the discussion on the matter of the ISO 9000 certification, it was noted that the best approach for the AIDCP Parties regarding the certification of dolphin-safe tuna would be to continue to strengthen the AIDCP, particularly with regard to third-party verification of the agreed procedures. In this connection, it was pointed out that the System for Tracking and Verifying Tuna (System) contains a provision committing the Parties to work cooperatively towards the development of an international program to facilitate general reviews and spot checks of national tracking and verification programs. The Working Group asked that a paper on this subject be prepared for a future meeting of the Working Group on Tuna Tracking.

It should be noted that this question also arose during the recent discussions in the FAO of guidelines on ecolabelling. Specifically, when the FAO meeting considered the AIDCP dolphin safe certification program, with a view to determining whether it would meet the FAO standards for ecolabeling being considered, the question arose as to whether there was an international program to verify the tracking processes conducted by each government involved in the AIDCP tracking and certification programs.

The specific paragraph which addresses this matter is in Section 7 of the System, and reads as follows:

“The Parties commit, while reserving their national sovereignty prerogatives, to work cooperatively towards the development of an international program to facilitate general reviews and spot checks of national tracking and verification programs. Consistent with this commitment, the Parties shall make available, or request the Secretariat to make available, to the International Review Panel (IRP) such reports and documentation on the tracking and verification program, including TTFs, as might be requested by that Panel, provided that the presentation of such documentation shall be subject to normal IRP procedures under the AIDCP Rules of Confidentiality.”

While this is obviously a sensitive matter that needs to be addressed carefully, one approach would be to establish an international program under the auspices of the AIDCP. Such a program could contain the following elements:

1. An agreement to implement Section 7 of the System by organizing a review program under the auspices of the Permanent Working Group on Tuna Tracking (TTWG), the main purpose of which would be to verify that dolphin safe tuna is maintained separately from non-dolphin safe tuna from the point of landing to the time it is ready for retail sale.
2. The TTWG would establish procedures for visits to places where tuna from the EPO is landed or processed. Visits would be conducted by representatives of AIDCP Parties and non-governmental members of the IRP, and other individuals or organizations as may be agreed by the TTWG.
3. Each visit would be carried out by representatives of at least three AIDCP Parties, one of whom would represent the government of the country visited. Secretariat staff may be invited to participate

in the visits.

4. The TTWG would endeavor to organize, during the first year after the establishment of the procedures, one visit to each Party with facilities for landing or processing tuna from the EPO. Thereafter, the TTWG would agree upon a reasonable schedule for periodic follow-up visits. Visits would be coordinated with appropriate officials of the host country, with a view to arranging for spot checks, if feasible.
5. Each Party in whose territory tuna from the EPO is landed or processed would conduct periodic audits and spot checks, pursuant to the System, to ensure that its tuna tracking and verification plan is being implemented properly. Each Party would conduct at least one such audit and spot check each year, and report the results to the TTWG.
6. The Parties would review the operation of this program annually, and may amend it as appropriate.