

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

AD-HOC PERMANENT WORKING GROUP ON FADS

6TH MEETING

(by videoconference)

12-13 May 2022

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Working Group on FADs recommends:

1.1. Biodegradable FADs:

- (a) to encourage harmonization across t-RFMOs, as much as possible, of the definition of biodegradable FADs, of guidelines and timeline for their construction and implementation, as well as of data collection priorities.
- (b) that the following definition of “biodegradable” be considered; “*Biodegradable: Non-synthetic materials¹ and/or bio-based alternatives that are consistent with international standards² for materials that are biodegradable in marine environments. The components resulting from the degradation of these materials should not be damaging to the marine and coastal ecosystems or include heavy metals or plastics in their composition.*”
- (c) to recognize:
 - i. the need of further large-scale sea trials on an ongoing basis, in order to refine important practical/technical aspects of full implementation of biodegradable FADs (e.g., durability, designs, material availability and acquisition);
 - ii. that, ideally, these trials should be monitored and conducted in collaboration with scientists.
- (d) that fishers supported by shipowners continue trialing bioFAD designs in a continued effort, deploying systematically a percentage of their FADs made of biodegradable materials from 2023 on;
- (e) that the results of biodegradable trials at sea should be made available to the FAD WG;
- (f) to consider a gradual, stepwise process for the implementation of fully biodegradable FADs based on the current state of the art of materials available and on the result of field tests;
- (g) to consider the following categories in this gradual implementation process, in the understanding that the respective definitions do not apply the electronic buoys that are attached to FADs in order to track them and that the categories are preliminary and will be examined by the IATTC scientific staff before their presentation to the Commission:
 - i. Category I. The FAD is made of 100% biodegradable materials.
 - ii. Category II. The FAD is made of 100% biodegradable materials except for plastic-based flotation components (e.g., plastic buoys, foam, purse-seine corks).
 - iii. Category III. The subsurface part of the FAD is made of 100% biodegradable

¹ For example, plant-based materials such as cotton, jute, manila hemp (abaca), bamboo, or animal-based such as leather, wool, lard.

² International standards such as ASTM D6691, D7881, TUV Austria, European or any such standards approved by the Members of the IATTC

materials, whereas the surface part and any flotation components contain non-biodegradable materials (e.g., synthetic raffia, metallic frame, plastic floats, nylon ropes).

- iv. Category IV. The subsurface part of the FAD contains non-biodegradable materials, whereas the surface part is made of 100% biodegradable materials, except for, possibly, flotation components.
 - v. Category V. The surface and subsurface parts of the FAD contain non-biodegradable materials.
- (h) that, within the gradual process of biodegradable FAD implementation, designs try to reduce, as much as possible, the amount of material used, and the non-biodegradable fraction used in their construction;
 - (i) that IATTC data collection methods and tools, including fisheries observer data, be revised as needed, so that the gradual implementation of biodegradable FADs in the EPO can be effectively monitored;
 - (j) that motivating incentives be established, without affecting the fishing effort, in order to encourage the replacement of current FADs with biodegradable FADs.

1.2. Non-entangling FADs: that the following definition be considered for non-entangling FADs: “*A FAD that does not include any netting materials for any part of the FAD including both the surface structure (e.g., raft) and subsurface structure (e.g., tail)*”.

1.3. FAD data reporting:

- (a) when a CPC has difficulties in reporting the full details described in Annex II and III of Resolution C-21-04 (i.e., deactivations and remote reactivations),
 - i. that this CPC report these data on a temporary basis, using a simplified form to be prepared by the IATTC staff and to be posted on the commission website when available; and
 - ii. that this simplified form contain the following elements: date, buoy code and reason for the reactivation of deactivation
- (b) that the CPCs be encouraged to provide to the IATTC staff the historic, raw buoy data collected prior to January 1, 2022, and received by original users (i.e., vessels, fishing companies), including both trajectories and acoustic information.