

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

81ST MEETING

ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA
27 SEPTEMBER-1 OCTOBER 2010

DOCUMENT IATTC-81-07

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

1. INTRODUCTION

The Antigua Convention recognizes the need to provide assistance to developing countries, to support their efforts to comply with the provisions of the Convention and to develop fisheries in their jurisdictional waters and on the high seas.

Paragraph 1 of Article XXIII (Cooperation and Assistance) states that *“The Commission shall seek to adopt measures relating to technical assistance, technology transfer, training and other forms of cooperation, to assist developing countries that are members of the Commission to fulfill their obligations under this Convention, as well as to enhance their ability to develop fisheries under their respective national jurisdictions and to participate in high seas fisheries on a sustainable basis.”*

Paragraph 2 of the same article states that *“the members of the Commission shall facilitate and promote such cooperation, especially financial and technical, and the transfer of technology, as may be necessary for the effective implementation of paragraph 1 of this Article.”*

Accordingly, the staff believes that the Commission should discuss and agree how to implement this aspect of the Convention and related resolutions, and should consider whether this matter should be a permanent item on the agenda for the annual meetings of the Commission.

2. OTHER INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS FOR ENHANCING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The United Nations has recognized the importance of supporting capacity-building in developing States, as reflected in paragraph 193 of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 64/71 of 4 December 2009. The resolution stresses the need to strengthen the ability of competent international organizations to contribute, at the global, regional, subregional and bilateral levels, through cooperation programs with governments, to the development of national capacity in marine science and the sustainable management of the oceans and their resources.

The meetings of the five tuna regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) under the Kobe process have made several recommendations regarding this technical assistance (Appendix 1).

Several international organizations have developed programs for building capacity for developing States. The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT) has implemented a program through a special fund made up from voluntary contributions by its member countries. (see http://www.un.org/Depts/los/general_assembly/contributions65.htm).

3. SOURCES OF FUNDING TO SUPPORT CAPACITY-BUILDING IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

3.1. IATTC special fund

The staff considers that the Commission should evaluate the possibility of creating a special fund to support capacity-building in developing States that are members of the IATTC.

Such a fund could receive special voluntary contributions from member countries, other governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the industry. The fund would be managed by the staff. The Commission would evaluate and approve the funding of projects presented directly by countries or via the Scientific Advisory Committee or other subsidiary bodies.

Areas in which the Commission could support capacity-building include:

- a. **Improvements in data collection and quality assurance.** Resolution [C-05-03](#) on sharks states that the Commission “shall consider appropriate assistance to developing members for the collection of data on shark catches”.
- b. **Training.** IATTC resolutions include a commitment to carry out training or seminars in some areas of the Commission’s work. Resolution [C-04-07](#) on mitigating bycatches of sea turtles states that members and the IATTC “should continue and expand organization of seminars for fishermen to enable them to treat incidentally-caught sea turtles properly to improve their survivability”. Also, Resolution [C-04-05](#) on bycatch requires governments to “educate fishermen through information dissemination activities, including distributing informational materials and organizing seminars on, *inter alia*, reducing bycatches of sea turtles and safe handling of incidentally caught sea turtles to improve their survivability.”
- c. **Research on biological issues and technology to reduce bycatch of small tunas.** IATTC resolutions include the commitment to carry out research in some areas of the Commission’s work. Resolution [C-05-03](#) states that members “shall ... undertake research to make fishing gears more selective.” Resolution [C-04-05](#) calls on governments to support, and seek funds for, studies and research on developing technology for releasing juvenile tunas, particularly sorting grids, apply technology for the identification of species and size composition in schools prior to setting; and develop techniques and/or equipment to facilitate the release of billfish, sharks and rays from the deck or from the net. Resolution [C-04-07](#) states that the Commission should establish a voluntary fund to assist coastal developing members in improving conservation of sea turtles.

Specific activities for supporting capacity-building are described in Document [SAC-01-18](#), *Plan for future activities*, prepared for the first meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee in August-September 2010 (Appendix 2).

3.2. Other sources of funding

The 1995 United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA¹), Article 25 (Part VII) requires States Parties to cooperate in order to enhance the capability of developing states “to conserve and manage straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks and to develop their own fisheries for such stocks; to enable their participation in high seas fisheries for such stocks and to facilitate their participation in sub-regional and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements.”

In order to help developing States implement UNFSA, in 2004 the United Nations set up a trust fund, managed by FAO, to provide financial assistance to developing States Parties to the Agreement in order to assist them in the implementation of UNFSA in accordance with Part VII. In particular, paragraph 14 (a) of the [Terms of Reference](#)² of the fund provides that financial assistance from the fund may be sought for the following purpose:

- a. *Facilitating the participation of representatives from developing States Parties, in particular the least-developed among them and small island developing States Parties to the Agreement, in the meetings and activities of relevant regional and sub-regional fisheries management*

¹ Formally the Agreement for the implementation of the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks

² http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/fishstocktrustfund/tor_fund.pdf

organizations and arrangements.

Thus, any developing State that is Party to UNFSA can apply for financial assistance from the trust fund. Accordingly, Peru, Belize, and Costa Rica, as Parties to UNFSA, can apply for funds to participate in IATTC meetings. The application may be submitted by the Party, or by the IATTC on behalf of the Party.

All applications for financial assistance must be submitted to the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the UN Office of Legal Affairs at least one month in advance of the date of the event or activity for which assistance is requested. The application should specify how it relates to the implementation of the Agreement, and include a description of the desired outputs of the project/expenditure and an itemization of anticipated costs.

Appendix 1.

Meeting	Recommendation
Second Joint Meeting of Tuna RFMOs San Sebastian, Spain; 29 June - 3 July 2009	Enhance the ability of developing coastal States, to conserve and manage highly migratory fish stocks and to develop their own fisheries for such stocks; enable them to participate in high seas fisheries for such stocks, including facilitating access to such fisheries; and to facilitate their participation in the work of tuna RFMOs and relevant technical Workshops.
Joint tuna RFMOs Meeting of experts to share best practices on the provision of scientific advice. Barcelona, Spain; 31 May – 2 June 2010	Developed countries should strengthen in a sustained manner their financial and technical support for capacity-building in developing countries, notably small island developing States, on the basis of adequate institutional arrangements in those countries and making full use of local, sub-regional and regional synergies.
Tuna RFMO workshop on improvement, harmonization and compatibility of monitoring, control and surveillance measures, including monitoring catches from catching vessels to markets. Barcelona, Spain; 3-5 June 2010	Provide technical assistance and capacity building support to assist developing countries in implementing existing CDSs and any expanded CDS, including ensuring that capacity building funds that currently exist in RFMOs can be used for this purpose.
International workshop on tuna RFMO management of issues relating to bycatch. Brisbane, Australia; 23-25 June 2010	Acknowledging the additional or new requirements of bycatch mitigation and the need to build further capacity for implementation, in carrying out the recommendations, consider capacity building programs for developing countries to assist in their implementation.

Appendix 2.

From Document [SAC-01-18](#), *Plan for future activities*, prepared for the first meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee in August- September 2010.

C. CAPACITY BUILDING

1. Tagging

Provided funds are available, a three-day training course on tagging methodology for large pelagics, with emphasis on tropical tunas, will be held at the Achotines Laboratory in 2011 for up to 10 participants from Latin American member countries. Participants will learn about the objectives of tagging studies,

types of tags, tagging methodologies, data analyses, and potential applications of tagging data in stock assessments, and carry out tuna tagging in waters close to the laboratory.

2. Bycatches

- a. Training courses on bycatch estimation and mitigation;
- b. Design of research strategies to address bycatch issues;
- c. Management and economic incentives to address bycatch issues.

3. Shark fisheries

The Commission staff will provide appropriate assistance to developing CPCs in:

3.1. Sampling

- a. Develop standardized data collection forms (catch, effort, biological data) for sharks and rays, in cooperation with other regional and subregional organizations, member nations, and if possible with Western Pacific organizations collecting data.
- b. Develop and disseminate sampling designs for landings of sharks and rays, and for observer programs where available, and support the creation and maintenance of databases.
- c. In-port collection of shark catch, size distribution, and effort data, as well as the development of standardized methods to identify shark species. This assistance should be extended to the proper identification of shark species based upon body parts (*e.g.* fins or trunks), or on incomplete specimens.

3.2. Data reporting

Improving their capabilities to report data on catches and effort by gear type, landings and shark trade, in accordance with IATTC reporting procedures, including available historical data. This assistance shall likely include the development of observer programs covering different fisheries. We plan to have one training course per year, dedicated to the development of standardized national observer programs.

3.3. Biological parameters

Conducting research on stock structure and biological parameters such as age, growth, natural mortality, diet, and reproduction. This assistance will likely include training in biological sample collection and analysis methods which will be part of the general training course on data collection.

3.4. Fisheries data studies

Conducting research on the spatial-temporal characteristics of the catch, including identification of shark nursery grounds and of specific areas and seasons that contribute to the majority of catches. This assistance shall likely include a general training course on quantitative methods in fisheries data analysis, which will also cover methods for estimating fisheries quantities, such as fishing mortality, and inputs for stock assessment (*e.g.*, total catch, standardized trends of CPUE).

3.5. Workshops on stock assessment of sharks

Participation in shark stock assessment workshops, which would include among its research topics stock assessment and management of sharks.