

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

102ND MEETING

Panama City, Panama
2-6 September 2024

PROPOSAL IATTC-102 J-1

SUBMITTED BY ECUADOR

CREATION OF AN *AD HOC* WORKING GROUP TO STRENGTHEN THE DIALOGUE AMONG SCIENTISTS, MANAGERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS ON MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVALUATION

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in Panama City, Panama, on the occasion of its 102nd Meeting:

Committed to the long-term conservation and sustainable exploitation of fisheries in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO);

Recognizing that the Commission had adopted provisional reference points and harvest control rules (HCR) for tropical tuna fisheries in the EPO in Resolutions C-16-02 and C-23-06;

Noting that in Resolutions C-16-02 and C-23-06 the scientific staff is urged to continue testing reference points and harvest control rules to support the adoption by the Commission of a permanent HCR;

Noting that Resolution C-21-04 urges the scientific staff to present a BET harvest strategy for consideration by the Commission in 2024;

Aware that Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) is the most advanced process to test the effectiveness of HCRs and other management strategies in achieving management objectives;

Aware that the usefulness of a MSE depends on the involvement of managers, scientists and stakeholders;

Noting that Resolution C-19-07 urges the Commission to consider the establishment of a working group for scientists, managers and other stakeholders on MSE;

Noting that the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) has recommended that the Commission create a working group to facilitate dialogue among scientists, managers and other stakeholders to advance the process of harvest and management strategy evaluation; and

Pursuant to Article VII, paragraph 1(u) of the Antigua Convention;

Agrees as follows:

1. To create the Working Group to improve the dialogue among fisheries scientists, managers and other stakeholders.
2. The Working Group shall have the following objectives:

- a. Improve communication and facilitate mutual understanding among fisheries scientists, managers, vessel owners, captains, fleet managers, unions, external fisheries experts, IGOs and NGOs regarding matters related to harvest strategies and MSE within the IATTC;
 - b. Advise and assist the SAC and the Commission in the development and implementation of a work plan and a timeline for the harvest strategy and MSE process in the IATTC;
 - c. Identify and recommend to the Commission management objectives and reference points compatible with the Antigua Convention, including the application of the precautionary approach and the corresponding performance indicators;
 - d. Identify and recommend candidate harvest strategies for IATTC fisheries that can be tested to determine their effectiveness and robustness in achieving management objectives for tropical tunas, beginning with bigeye tuna.
3. The Working Group shall be co-chaired by a person from the scientific and administrative area to be decided by the Commission.
4. The Working Group shall meet between the annual meetings of the Scientific Advisory Committee and the Commission. It may convene additional meetings if requested by at least 2 (two) Members of the Commission, provided that the majority of the Members support the request.
5. The Working Group shall communicate regularly between meetings via webinars and electronically, as needed.
6. The Working Group shall be open to the participation of various stakeholders, such as scientists, fisheries managers, representatives of the fishing industry, administrators, representatives of intergovernmental organizations, representatives of non-governmental organizations, vessel owners, fleet managers, consumer associations, fishermen and observers. Other representatives may be invited to specific meetings of the working group, depending on the topics to be discussed.
7. The meetings may take the form an open forum/dialogue at the discretion of the Chair(s) of the Working Group. All participants shall be treated equally during the meetings of the Working Group.
8. The duties of the Working Group shall be as follows:
 - a. [Analyze the possible functions of the Commission, its subcommittees, in particular the Independent Scientific Committee and the International Scientific Committee in each step of the harvest strategy development process, and clarify possible interactions and comments between them. Determine the need to engage external MSE experts and/or independent facilitators.]
 - b. Assist in reviewing and updating, as necessary, the work plans and timelines for the harvest strategy and MSE processes.
 - c. Make recommendations on [candidate/potential elements] of harvest strategies for testing with MSE, including:
 - i. General management objectives and related performance indicators;
 - ii. Candidate reference points, including the use of BMSY and FMSY or appropriate proxies as target and/or limit reference points, along with associated probabilities and timelines;
 - iii. Candidate harvest strategies, including input data, evaluation methods and harvest control rules.
 - d. Recommend monitoring and control systems to ensure effective implementation of harvest strategies.
 - e. Develop exceptional circumstances protocols to guide management in circumstances outside of those for which the harvest strategy was designed.
 - f. Recommend an internal and/or external review of the MSE, review the implementation of the harvest strategies adopted by the Commission, and recommend any necessary changes or additions.
 - g. Assist the Commission in identifying and committing the funds necessary to carry out the harvest strategy and MSE work plans.

9. The Working Group shall report to the Commission on an annual basis, beginning with the 2025 meeting of the Commission. The Commission shall consider the results of the Working Group under a permanent agenda item for this purpose and shall also provide new guidelines on other topics to be considered by the Working Group.