

**JOINT WORKING GROUP ON FISHING BY NON-PARTIES**

**3<sup>RD</sup> MEETING**

LIMA (PERU)  
10 JUNE 2004

**DOCUMENT JWG-3-08**

**SYSTEM OF NOTIFICATION OF SIGHTING AND IDENTIFICATION OF  
NON-PARTY VESSELS OPERATING IN THE REGION**

At the second meeting of the Joint Working Group on Fishing by Non-Parties, held in Antigua, Guatemala, in June 2003, its terms of reference were agreed. Among the functions established by the terms of reference is that stated in 2.i: “develop a system of notification of sighting and identification of non-Party vessels operating in the region”.

The development of such a system need not be overly complicated, and could perhaps be accomplished by a resolution drawing upon, expanding if appropriate, and formalizing the system already established within the AIDCP, as well as calling upon members of IATTC to report sightings of certain vessels.

The AIDCP on-board observers routinely document sightings of purse-seine vessels fishing in the eastern Pacific (EPO), recording their positions, activity, and names if possible. The reason for this requirement, which originated in the La Jolla Agreement the precursor of the AIDCP, is to document fishing by vessels that do not participate in the dolphin conservation program, including vessels without Dolphin Mortality Limits (DMLs) that might fish for tunas associated with dolphins.

The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) passed a resolution in 1998 regarding vessel sightings, which calls upon the vessels of its members, if they sight vessels of non-parties that may be fishing contrary to ICCAT conservation measures, to report such sightings to the appropriate authorities of its flag state. That member is then required to notify the authorities of the flag state of the vessel sighted, and also the Secretariat, which in turn notifies the other members.

In addition, the ICCAT resolution establishes a similar system for reporting sightings of vessels of members that may be fishing contrary to the conservation measures, and also addresses sightings of vessels that appear to be without nationality (stateless) that may be fishing for species covered by the ICCAT convention.

There has been at least one instance in recent years of the sighting of vessels of non-parties fishing in the EPO contrary to the IATTC's conservation measures. In 2002, a number of purse-seine vessels of several different non-members were seen fishing just east of 150°W longitude; the vessels making these sighting notified the Secretariat directly, which in turn notified the governments of the vessels sighted. In this case these governments responded positively, and advised their vessels to leave the EPO, which they did.

IATTC members may wish to take this experience into account in formulating a resolution on this matter, in particular the possibility of vessel operators notifying the Secretariat directly, and of the Secretariat communicating with Commission members and the governments of the non-member vessel involved.

Finally, there is the question of the timeliness of the information. Sightings recorded by AIDCP observers are currently not addressed until after the vessel has returned to port and the information has been processed. However, as in the case mentioned above, it is possible, and often important, to report any such sightings in real time.