

**INTERNATIONAL DOLPHIN CONSERVATION PROGRAM**  
**INTERNATIONAL REVIEW PANEL (IRP)**  
**73<sup>RD</sup> MEETING**

**Panama, Panama**  
**26 August 2024**

**REPORT OF THE MEETING**

**AGENDA**

	Documents
1. Opening of the meeting	
2. Adoption of the agenda	
3. Review of Dolphin Mortality Limits for 2023 and 2024	<a href="#">IRP-73-01</a>
4. Review of AIDCP List of Qualified Captains	<a href="#">IRP-73-02</a>
5. Review of cases of possible no-compliance (observer data)	<a href="#">IRP-73-03</a>
6. Review of actions by Parties on possible infractions reported by the IRP:	
a) Actions taken since report at the 72 <sup>nd</sup> meeting	<a href="#">IRP-73-04</a>
b) Status review of special cases	
7. Report of the Permanent Working Group on Tuna Tracking	
8. Other business	
9. Recommendations for the Meeting of the Parties	
10. Place and date of next meeting	
11. Adjournment	

**APPENDIX**

1. List of attendees

The 73<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the International Review Panel (IRP) was held on 26 August 2024 in Panama City, Panama. It began at 12:05 p.m., local time.

**1. Opening of the meeting**

Dr. Arnulfo Franco, Director of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), which provides the Secretariat for the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP), gave the floor to Mr. Enrique Espinosa, Presider of the meeting.

As the delegations were being introduced, it was noted that Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, the United States, and Venezuela were present in the room, as well as NGO representatives Ernesto Escobar and Rafael Trujillo

**2. Adoption of the agenda**

The proposed agenda was adopted without changes.

**3. Review of Dolphin Mortality Limits for 2023 and 2024**

The Secretariat summarized the situation regarding the allocation and utilization of Dolphin Mortality Limits (DMLs) in 2023 and cumulatively as of 8 August 2024, as described in document [IRP-73-01 - Review of Dolphin Mortality Limits DML for 2023 and 2024](#).

It was reported that for 2023, full-year DMLs were granted to 113 vessels. Of these, 98 were utilized by 1 April 2023; thirteen vessels were exempted from losing their DMLs (for not having made sets on dolphins before 1 April 2023) due to *force majeure*. Of these, 5 did not utilize their DMLs; two vessels voluntarily renounced their DMLs; and three DMLs were granted from the Director's reserve (RDA), of which only two were utilized.

The average cumulative mortality per vessel for 2023 was 7.6 dolphins, based on 10,328 dolphin sets and a total mortality of 828 dolphins, resulting in a mortality per set of 0.08. The average DML allocated per vessel for 2023 was 43.36 and no vessel met or exceeded that limit.

For 2024, it was reported that 119 vessels were granted DMLs. Of these, 94 were utilized by 1 April, 16 were exempted from losing their DMLs due to *force majeure*, of which 14 had not utilized their DMLs as of 8 August. Three vessels voluntarily renounced their DMLs, and five additional vessels voluntarily renounced their DMLs in July. In addition, six vessels forfeited their DMLs and two were granted DMLs from the RDA.

This year, the average DML is 41 dolphins, with an average mortality per vessel of 6.08 dolphins, and a mortality of 590 dolphins in a total of 7,556 sets, resulting in a mortality per set of 0.08.

#### **4. Review of AIDCP List of Qualified Captains**

The Secretariat reported that, from 20 September 2023 to 8 August 2024, 25 captains were added to the List of Qualified Captains, none were reinstated, and no captains were removed from the list.

#### **5. Review of observer data**

The Secretariat reported the following cases:

- Two cases of vessels with DMLs without the required high-intensity floodlight. The Panel recommended that these cases be forwarded to the corresponding Party for investigation.
- A case of a vessel that departed without an AIDCP-qualified fishing captain. During the trip, the captain was added to the list. The Panel recommended that the case be forwarded to the corresponding Party for investigation.
- Three cases of the same captain who made three trips without being on the AIDCP List of Qualified Captains. The request to add him to the list was made after the completion of these three trips. The Panel recommended that these cases be forwarded to the corresponding Party for investigation.
- A case of interference to the observer, as the observer was harassed with inappropriate comments and actions by some crew members. The Panel recommended that the case be forwarded to the corresponding Party for investigation.

#### **6. Review of actions by Parties on possible infractions reported by the IRP:**

##### **a. Actions taken since report at the 72<sup>nd</sup> meeting**

The Secretariat reported that there were no cases arising from this meeting.

##### **b. Status review of special cases**

The Secretariat reported that there were no special cases to present.

#### **7. Report of the Permanent Working Group on Tuna Tracking**

Mr. Julio Guevara, Chair of the Working Group on Tuna Tracking, presented his report and noted the recommendation to the Secretariat to develop ideas to make use of the added value that can be given to the system and the information presented at the meeting, because at the moment only notes are being taken in this respect.

Mr. Guevara also expressed his desire to request the election of a new Chair for this group.

## **8. Other business**

- a) Venezuela made a statement highlighting the excellent results achieved by the tuna tracking and certification system and that it was therefore appropriate to congratulate the Parties on these achievements. It also congratulated the IRP for the work carried out over the years and the good results achieved.
- b) The Secretariat recalled that the term of the NGOs on the IRP had already expired at the end of the two years in which they had served in that capacity, and that the appropriate process should be initiated to elect new members or re-elect current members in accordance with the rules of the AIDCP.

## **9. Recommendations for the Meeting of the Parties**

The Panel agreed on the following recommendation for the Meeting of the Parties:

- Approve forwarding the cases listed in Section 5 of this report to the relevant Parties.
- That the work of the AIDCP be recognized in light of the significant reduction in possible infractions and the reduction in incidental dolphin mortality.
- That, during the Meeting of the Parties to the AIDCP, a new Chair of the Working Group on Tuna Tracking be elected.

## **10. Place and date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Panel will be held in conjunction with the next meetings of the AIDCP between late October and early November 2024.

## **11. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:29 p.m. local time in Panama City.