

**INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION**

**100<sup>TH</sup> MEETING**

**Phoenix, Arizona, USA**

**1-5 August 2022**

**PROPOSAL IATTC-100 A-1**

**SUBMITTED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**EU PROPOSAL ON A RESOLUTION ON MONITORING AND CONTROL MEASURES FOR THE BLUEFIN TUNA FISHERY IN THE EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN (EPO)**

**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

The purpose of this proposal is to improve the monitoring and control of Resolution C-21-05 by establishing a minimum set of measures to promote its effective implementation. The 2020 stock assessment of Pacific bluefin tuna by the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) showed that the stock is overfished and is subject to overfishing relative to most of the commonly used reference points. In addition to the management objectives established by Resolution C-21-05, further measures are needed to better monitor the situation of the stock despite slight recent improvements and in view of increasing catch levels. As to date, there are no monitoring and control measures applicable to the Pacific bluefin tuna fishery in the EPO, in sharp contrast with the substantial number of provisions applicable to the tropical tuna stocks, which overall are in much better shape than the Pacific bluefin tuna.

The current proposal is based on the ICCAT large expertise on bluefin tuna. It foresees, among other aspects: compulsory registration of vessels, traps and farms authorized in Pacific bluefin tuna operations, catch and transshipment reports, identification of designated ports for landing and transshipment operations, a specific observer programme combined with video-camera monitoring. In addition, the SAC and the IATTC scientific staff are tasked to consider possible recommendation for closure periods as a way to better manage the fishery in the area.

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in Phoenix, Arizona (USA) on the occasion of its 100<sup>th</sup> Meeting:

*[Desirous]* to establish a regime of the monitoring and control of the bluefin tuna fishery in the EPO for the implementation of Resolution C-21-05,

Agrees as follows:

**DEFINITIONS**

1. For the purposes of this Resolution:
  - a) “fishing vessel” means any powered vessel used for the purposes of the commercial exploitation of bluefin tuna resources, including catching vessels, fish processing vessels, support vessels, towing vessels, vessels engaged in transshipment and transport vessels equipped for the transportation of tuna products and auxiliary vessels, except container vessels.
  - b) “catching vessel” means a vessel used for the purposes of the commercial capture of bluefin tuna resources.

- c) “processing vessel” means a vessel on board of which fisheries products are subject to one or more of the following operations, prior to their packaging: filleting or slicing, freezing and/or processing.
- d) “auxiliary vessel” means any vessel used to transport dead bluefin tuna (not processed) from a transport/farming cage, a purse seine vessel or a trap to a designated port and/or to a processing vessel.
- e) “towing vessel” means any vessel used for towing cages.
- f) “fishing actively” means, for any catching vessel, the fact that it targets bluefin tuna during a given fishing season.
- g) “transfer operations” means:
  - any transfer of live bluefin tuna from the catching vessel's net to the transport cage;
  - any transfer of live bluefin tuna from the transport cage to another transport cage;
  - any transfer of the cage with live bluefin tuna from a towing vessel to another towing vessel;
  - any transfer of live bluefin tuna from one farm to another, or between different cages in the same farm;
  - any transfer of live bluefin tuna from the trap to the transport cage independently of the presence of a towing vessel.
- h) “control transfer” means any additional transfer being implemented at the request of the fishing/farming operators or the control authorities for the purpose of verifying the number of fish being transferred.
- i) “trap” means fixed gear anchored to the bottom, usually containing a guide net that leads bluefin tuna into an enclosure or series of enclosures where it is kept prior to harvesting or farming.
- j) "trap CPC" means the CPC where a tuna trap is installed in the waters under its jurisdiction.
- k) “caging” means the relocation of live bluefin tuna from the transport cage or trap to the farming or fattening cages.
- l) “fattening” or “farming” means caging of bluefin tuna in farms and subsequent feeding aiming to fatten and increase their total biomass.
- m) “farm” means a marine area clearly defined by geographical coordinates, used for the fattening or farming of bluefin caught by traps and/or purse seine vessels. A farm could have several farming locations, all of them defined by geographical coordinates (with a clear definition of longitude and latitude for each one of the points of the polygon).
- n) “harvesting” means the killing of bluefin tuna in farms or traps.
- o) “transshipment” means the unloading of all or any of the fish on board a fishing vessel to another fishing vessel. However, unloading of dead bluefin tuna from the purse seine, the trap or the towing vessel to an auxiliary vessel shall not be considered as transshipment.
- p) “sport fishery” means non-commercial fisheries whose members adhere to a national sport organization or are issued with a national sport license.
- q) “recreational fishery” means non-commercial fisheries whose members do not adhere to a national sport organization or are not issued with a national sport license.
- r) “stereoscopic camera” means a camera with two or more lenses, with a separate image sensor or film frame for each lens, enabling the taking of three-dimensional images for the purpose of measuring the length of the fish and assisting in refining the number and weight of bluefin tuna.

- s) “control camera” means a stereoscopic camera and/or conventional video camera for the purpose of the controls foreseen in this Resolution.
- t) “farming CPC” means the CPC under whose jurisdiction the farm for bluefin tuna is located.

#### **IATTC RECORD OF VESSELS AUTHORIZED TO FISH BLUEFIN TUNA**

- 2. CPCs shall establish and maintain an IATTC record of all fishing vessels authorized to operate for bluefin tuna in the EPO. Each flag CPC shall submit electronically each year to the Secretariat at the latest 15 days before the beginning of the fishing activity the list of its catching vessels. Submissions shall be undertaken in accordance with the format to be developed by the IATTC Director.
- 3. No retroactive submissions shall be accepted. Subsequent changes shall only be accepted if the notified fishing vessel is prevented from participation due to legitimate operational reasons or *force majeure*. In such circumstances, the CPC concerned shall immediately inform the Secretariat, providing full details of the fishing vessel(s) intended to replace a vessel or vessels, included on the record and a comprehensive account of the reasons justifying the replacement and any relevant supporting evidence or references.
- 4. Fishing vessels not entered into the IATTC record of vessels referred to in paragraph 2 are deemed not to be authorized to fish for, retain on board, transship, transport, transfer, process or land bluefin tuna. The prohibition against retention on board does not apply to CPCs whose domestic legislation requires that all dead fish must be landed, providing that the value of the catch is subject to confiscation.

#### **IATTC RECORD OF TUNA TRAPS AUTHORIZED TO FISH FOR BLUEFIN TUNA**

- 5. The Commission shall establish and maintain an IATTC Record of all tuna traps authorized to fish for bluefin tuna in the EPO. For the purposes of this Recommendation, tuna traps not entered into the record are deemed not to be authorized to be used to fish for, retain, and participate in any operation to catch, transfer, harvest or land bluefin tuna.
- 6. Each CPC shall submit electronically to the Secretariat, the list (including the name of the traps, register number) of its authorized tuna traps.

#### **IATTC RECORD OF TUNA FARMS FOR BLUEFIN TUNA**

- 7. The Commission shall establish and maintain an IATTC Record of farms used for fattening or farming bluefin tuna in the EPO. For the purposes of this Recommendation, tuna farms not entered into the record are deemed not to be authorized to be used to fish for, retain, and participate in any operation to transfer, harvest or land bluefin tuna.
- 8. Each CPC shall submit electronically to the Secretariat, the list of its authorized tuna farms

#### **CATCH AND TRANSSHIPMENT REPORTS**

- 9. Each CPC shall ensure that its catching vessels fishing actively for bluefin tuna and trap operators communicate to their authorities, during the whole period in which they are authorized to fish bluefin tuna by electronic or any other effective means, daily information from logbooks, including the date, time, location (latitude and longitude), the weight and number of bluefin tuna caught in the EPO. This communication shall include operations where the catch was zero as well as releases and discards of dead fish.
- 10. The masters of catching and towing vessels shall maintain a bound or electronic fishing logbook of their operations in accordance with the requirements of Annex 1.

## **FISHING PERIOD**

11. At the SAC meeting in the year 2023 and at the subsequent meeting of the IATTC in 2023, the IATTC scientific staff shall present to the SAC an analysis of bluefin tuna in the EPO with the view to recommend to the Commission possible closures to the fishery as a way to improve the management of the fishery.

## **GENERAL RULES ON BY-CATCHES**

12. All by-catches of dead bluefin tuna, whether retained or discarded, shall be deducted from the quota of the flag CPC and reported to IATTC. If by-catch of bluefin tuna occurs in waters under the fishery jurisdiction of CPCs whose current domestic legislation requires that all dead or dying fish must be landed, this landing obligation shall be complied with also by vessels flying foreign flags.
13. If no quota has been allocated to the CPC of the catching vessel or trap concerned or if it has already been consumed, the catching of bluefin tuna as by-catch is not permitted, and CPCs shall take the necessary measures to ensure their release. CPCs shall report information on such quantities on an annual basis to the Secretariat who shall make it available to the Scientific Staff.

## **RECREATIONAL FISHERIES AND SPORT FISHERIES**

14. When CPCs allocate, where appropriate, a specific quota to sport and recreational fisheries that allocated quota should be set even if catch and release is compulsory for bluefin tuna caught in sport and recreational fisheries to account for possible dead fish. Each CPC shall regulate recreational and sport fisheries by issuing fishing authorizations to vessels for the purpose of sport and recreational fishing.
15. CPCs shall take the necessary measures to prohibit the catch and retention on board, transshipment or landing of more than one bluefin tuna per vessel per day for recreational fisheries. This prohibition does not apply to CPCs whose domestic legislation requires that all dead fish, including those caught by sport and recreational, shall be landed.
16. The marketing of bluefin tuna caught in recreational and sport fishing shall be prohibited.
17. Each CPC shall take measures to record catch data including weight of each bluefin tuna caught during sport and recreational fishing and communicate to the IATTC Director the data for the preceding year by 31 July each year.
18. Dead catches from sport and recreational fisheries shall be counted against the quota allocated to the CPC in accordance with Resolution C-21-05.
19. CPCs shall make available upon request from IATTC the list of sport and recreational vessels which have received an authorization.

## **USE OF AERIAL MEANS**

20. The use of any aerial means, including aircraft, helicopters or any types of unmanned aerial vehicles to search for bluefin tuna shall be prohibited.

## **DESIGNATED PORTS**

21. Each CPC who has been allocated a bluefin tuna quota shall designate ports where landing or transshipping operations of bluefin tuna are authorized. This list shall be communicated each year to the Secretariat as part of the annual fishing plan communicated by each CPC. Any amendment shall be communicated to the Secretariat. Other CPCs may designate ports in which landing or transshipping operations of bluefin tuna is authorized and communicate a list of these ports to the Secretariat.

## **REPORTING OF CATCHES FROM CPCs TO THE SECRETARIAT**

22. CPCs shall send weekly catch reports to the Secretariat. CPCs shall report to the Secretariat the dates when their entire quota of bluefin tuna has been utilized. The Secretariat shall promptly circulate this information to all CPCs.

## **TRANSSHIPMENT**

23. Transshipment operations of bluefin tuna in the EPO shall be allowed only at designated ports defined in paragraph 17.
24. All transshipments shall be inspected by the relevant authorities of the designated port CPC authorities.

## **CPC OBSERVER PROGRAMME**

25. Each CPC shall ensure coverage by observers, issued with an official identification document, on vessels and traps active in the bluefin tuna fishery on at least 20% of their catching vessels, 100% of towing vessel and 100% of harvesting operations from traps.
26. The observer tasks shall be, in particular, to record and report upon the fishing activity, which shall include, inter alia, the amount of catch including by-catch, and species disposition such as retained on board or discarded dead or alive; area of catch by latitude and longitude; date of catch; observe and estimate catches and verify entries made in the logbook.
27. Data and information collected under each CPC's observer programme shall be provided to the Scientific Staff in accordance with requirements and procedures to be developed by IATTC taking into account CPC confidentiality requirements.

## **IATTC REGIONAL OBSERVER PROGRAMME**

28. An IATTC shall develop a regional Observer Programme by 2024 to ensure observer coverage of 100%:
  - a) on all purse seine vessels authorized to fish bluefin tuna;
  - b) during all transfers of bluefin tuna from purse seine vessels;
  - c) during all transfers of bluefin tuna from traps to transport cages;
  - d) during all transfers from one farm to another;
  - e) during all cagings of bluefin tuna in farms;
  - f) during all harvesting of bluefin tuna from farms; and
  - g) during the release of bluefin tuna from farming cages into the sea.
29. Purse seine vessels without an IATTC regional observer shall not be authorized to fish or to operate in the bluefin tuna fishery.
30. IATTC regional observers should not be of the same nationality as the catching vessel/tugboat/trap or farm for which their services are required. In addition, to the extent possible, the Secretariat shall ensure that regional observers deployed have a satisfactory knowledge of the language of the flag CPC of the vessel or the farming CPC or the trap CPC.
31. One IATTC regional observer shall be assigned to each farm for the whole period of caging operations. In cases of *force majeure*, and following confirmation by the farming CPC authorities, an IATTC regional observer could be shared by more than one farm to guarantee the continuity of farming operations. However, the farming CPC authorities shall immediately request the deployment of an additional regional observer.

32. While the IATTC regional observer programme is not in place, the coverage set out in paragraph 23 shall be ensured by the CPC observer programme.

#### **MONITORING BY VIDEO CAMERA OF A TRANSFER AND CAGING**

33. For transfers of live bluefin tuna the master of the catching vessel or the representative of the farm or trap, where appropriate, shall ensure that the transfer activities shall be monitored by video camera in the water with a view to verify the number of fish being transferred. Each of the cages used in transfers or caging operations and each transfer and caging operations shall be allocated an unique identification number. The minimum standards and procedures for the video recording shall be in accordance with Annex 2.
34. Article 27 will also apply to release of bluefin tuna by CPCs for the purposes of compensating any catch in excess of the quota established by Resolution 21-05.
35. The farming CPC shall ensure that transfer activities from cages to the farm shall be monitored by their enforcement authorities by video stereoscopic camera in the water. One video record shall be produced for each caging operation.
36. In cases where there is more than a 10% difference in number between the estimates made by master of the fishing vessel or the trap, and the figure reported by the regional observer, an investigation shall be initiated by the CPC of the catching vessel or trap.
37. A programme using stereoscopic cameras systems or alternative methods that guarantee the same level of precision and accuracy shall cover 100% of all caging operations, in order to refine the number and weight of the fish. This programme using stereoscopic cameras shall be conducted in accordance with the procedures set out in Annex 3.
38. A difference greater than or equal to 10% between the number of bluefin tuna individuals reported caught by the vessel/trap and the quantities established by the control camera at the moment of caging shall constitute a Potential Non-Compliance of the vessel/trap concerned.
39. Each CPC shall take the necessary measures to ensure that the video records as referred to in paragraphs are made available to the national inspectors and CPC observers at request. Each CPC shall establish the necessary measures to avoid any replacement, edition or manipulation of the original video records.

#### **MARKET MEASURES**

40. Consistent with their rights and obligations under international law, exporting and importing CPCs shall prohibit domestic trade, imports, landings, processing, and exports of bluefin tuna that farms do not comply with this Resolution.

## **Annex 1**

### **Minimum standard information for fishing logbooks**

1. Master name and address
2. Dates and ports of departure, dates and ports of arrival
3. Vessel name, register number, IATTC number, international radio call sign and IMO number (if available)
4. Fishing gear:
  - a) Type by FAO code
  - b) Dimension (length, number of hooks...)
5. Operations at sea with one line (minimum) per day of trip, providing:
  - a) Activity (fishing, steaming)
  - b) Position: Exact daily positions (in degree and minutes), recorded for each fishing operation or at noon when no fishing has been conducted during this day
  - c) Record of catches including:
    - i) FAO code
    - ii) round (RWT) weight in kg per day
    - iii) number of pieces per day

For purse seine vessels this should be recorded by fishing operation including nil returns

6. Master signature
7. Means of weight measure: estimation, weighing on board and counting
8. The logbook is kept in equivalent live weight of fish and mentions the conversion factors used in the evaluation.

## **Annex 2**

### **Minimum standards for video recording procedures**

#### Transfers

- i) The electronic storage device containing the original video record shall be provided to the observer as soon as possible after the end of the transfer operation that shall immediately initialize it to avoid any further manipulation.
- ii) The original recording shall be kept on board the catching vessel or by the farm or trap operator where appropriate, during their entire period of authorization.
- iii) Two identical copies of the video record shall be produced. One copy shall be transmitted to the regional observer on board of the purse seine vessel and one to the CPC observer on board the towing vessel, the latter of which shall accompany the transfer declaration and the associated catches to which it relates. If the inspection services are present during the transfer they shall also receive a copy of the relevant video record. This procedure should only apply to CPC observers in the case of transfers between towing vessels.
- iv) At the beginning and/or the end of each video, the unique number assigned to the transfer shall be displayed.
- v) The time and the date of the video shall be continuously displayed throughout each videorecord.
- vi) Before the start of the transfer, the video shall include the opening and closing of the net/door and whether the receiving and donor cages already contain bluefin tuna.
- vii) The video recording must be continuous without any interruptions and cuts and cover the entire transfer operation.
- viii) The video record should be of sufficient quality to estimate the number of bluefin tuna being transferred.
- ix) If the video record is of insufficient quality to estimate the number of bluefin tuna being transferred, the operator may request to the flag authorities of the vessel or trap to conduct a control transfer. Such voluntary control transfer must include movement of all the bluefin tuna from the receiving cage into another cage, which must be empty.

#### Caging operations

- i) The electronic storage device containing the original video record shall be provided to the CPC observer as soon as possible after the end of the caging operation who shall immediately initialize it to avoid any further manipulation.
- ii) The original recording shall be kept by the farm where applicable, during their entire period of authorization.
- iii) Two identical copies of the video record shall be produced. One copy shall be transmitted to the CPC observer deployed on the farm.
- iv) At the beginning and/or the end of each video, the unique number shall be displayed.
- v) The time and the date of the video shall be continuously displayed throughout each videorecord.
- vi) Before the start of the caging, the video shall include the opening and closing of the net/door and whether the receiving and donor cages already contain bluefin tuna.
- vii) The video recording must be continuous without any interruptions and cuts and cover the entire caging operation.

viii) The video record should be of sufficient quality to estimate the number of bluefin tuna being transferred.

ix) If the video record is of insufficient quality to estimate the number of bluefin tuna being transferred, then a new caging operation shall be requested by the control authorities. For those cases when the origin of the fish is a purse seine vessel, the new caging operation must include movement of all the bluefin tuna from the receiving farm cage into another farm cage, which must be empty.

### **Annex 3**

#### **Standards and procedures for stereoscopic cameras systems in the context of caging operations**

##### **Use of stereoscopic cameras systems**

The use of stereoscopic cameras systems in the context of caging operations shall be conducted in accordance with the following:

- i. The sampling intensity of live fish shall not be below 20% of the amount of fish being caged. When technically possible, the sampling of live fish shall be sequential, by measuring one in every five specimens. Such a sample shall be made up of fish measured at a distance between 2 and 8 meters from the camera.
- ii. The dimensions of the transfer gate connecting the donor cage and the receiving cage shall be set at maximum width of 8 to 10 meters and maximum height of 8 to 10 meters.
- iii. When the length measurements of the fish present a multi-modal distribution (two or more cohorts of distinct sizes), it shall be possible to use more than one conversion algorithm for the same caging operation. The most up to date algorithm(s) established by SCRS shall be used to convert fork lengths into total weights, according to the size category of the fish measured during the caging operation.
- iv. Validation of the stereoscopic length measurements shall be undertaken prior to each caging operation using a scale bar at a distance of 2 and 8 m.
- v. When the results of the stereoscopic program are communicated, the information shall indicate the margin of error inherent to the technical specifications of the stereoscopic camera system, which shall not exceed a range of +/- 5 percent.
- vi. The report on the results of the stereoscopic program should include details on all the technical specifications above, including the sampling intensity, the way of sampling methodology, the distance from the camera, the dimensions of the transfer gate, and the algorithms (length-weight relationship). The Scientific Staff shall review these specifications, and if necessary provide recommendations to modify them.
- vii. In cases where the stereoscopic camera footage is of insufficient quality to estimate the weight of bluefin tuna being caged, a new caging operation shall be ordered by the flag CPC authorities of the catching vessel or the trap CPC authorities, or the farming CPC authorities.