

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION
COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE
11TH MEETING

Panama, Panama
28 August 2024

DOCUMENT CAF-11-02 Corr.¹

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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1. INTRODUCTION

At its 82nd Meeting in July 2011, the Commission approved, through Resolution [C-11-11](#), the creation of a “special sustainable development fund for fisheries for highly migratory species to strengthen the institutional capacity of developing countries.”

In July 2014, the Commission at its 87th Meeting modified the Fund radically, until then financed only by voluntary contributions and now by a fixed share of the Commission's regular budget amounting to 2% of the operational budget.

Paragraph 2 of Resolution [C-14-03](#) establishes that “The resources of the Fund shall proceed from the **fixed annual contribution of 2% of the Commission’s budget intended for building and strengthening the capacity of coastal developing countries and territories.**” At its 89th meeting in June 2015, the Commission defined specifically how this 2% contribution would be distributed among the Members:

“This 2% is not to be extracted from the operational budget. Rather, once the amount of the operational budget is settled, an additional amount equal to 2% of the operational subtotal shall be added to the regular budget as a separate line item, and the final budget amount will be the sum of these two components, and each Member’s contribution to the 2% shall follow therefore the same distribution key as the regular budget.”

While the resolution does not omit to state (paragraph 6) that: “Members, national and international bodies and entities are encouraged to make voluntary contributions to the Fund”, this source of funding ceased to be important in practice, as evidenced by the fact that there were no more voluntary contributions since 2014 when only one member made a contribution to the Fund.

2. CURRENT SITUATION OF THE FUND’S FINANCIAL RESOURCES

As described above, the Fund is an integral part of the Commission's regular budget and the contributions to the Fund are included in the annual contribution to be paid by each member in the amount established in a resolution, the most recent being Resolution [C-23-12](#) Financing for fiscal year 2024.

Consequently, without taking into account possible voluntary contributions, only two factors can affect the

¹ Some errors have been identified and corrected in table 1

Fund's financial resources situation: the total amount of the operational budget adopted for a given year and the timeliness with which members comply with their obligation to pay their annual contributions.

In this context, **Table 1** in addition to indicating the amount of the Fund in previous years and more specifically in fiscal year 2023 and payments received through 31 July 2024, also highlights, for illustrative purposes only, the situation of each member of the Commission in terms of the respective amount of its annual contribution that is automatically allocated to the Fund in accordance with the provisions of Resolution [C-14-03](#) on capacity building.

	Previous Years		2023		2024		Total	
	Paid	Pending	Paid	Pending	Paid	Pending	Paid	Pending
Belize	5,970	-	863	-	945	-	7,778	-
Canada	18,370	-	2,494	-	2,734	-	23,598	-
China	28,089	-	5,346	-	5,859	-	39,294	-
Colombia	41,516	-	5,626	-	-	5,977	47,142	5,977
Costa Rica	15,177	-	2,847	-	3,120	-	18,024	-
Ecuador	208,007	-	34,607	-	-	35,565	242,614	35,565
El Salvador	11,375	-	2,184	-	2,109	-	15,668	-
European Union	56,213	-	6,789	-	7,356	-	70,358	-
France	17,426	-	2,925	-	3,191	-	23,542	-
Guatemala	6,848	-	1,316	-	-	1,443	8,164	1,443
Japan	47,671	-	5,134	-	5,500	-	58,305	-
Kiribati	5,626	-	859	-	-	941	6,485	941
Korea	31,720	-	4,582	-	5,022	-	41,324	-
Mexico	139,743	-	21,639	-	-	23,671	161,382	23,671
Nicaragua	10,320	-	1,739	-	1,794	-	13,853	-
Panama	71,098	15,307	14,979	-	15,800	-	101,877	15,307
Peru	14,521	-	3,738	-	3,567	-	21,826	-
Chinese Taipei	29,878	-	4,414	-	4,838	-	39,130	-
United States of America	237,721	-	32,697	-	36,979	-	307,397	-
Vanuatu	7,131	-	983	-	1,077	-	9,191	-
Venezuela	7,793	30,034	-	3,726	-	4,031	7,793	37,791
Total contributions	1,012,213		155,761		99,891		1,267,865	
Approved budget²	1,057,553		159,487		171,520		1,388,560	
Pending contributions		45,340		3,726		71,629		120,695

² Amounts approved by budget year: 2016 \$131,086, 2017 \$132,109, 2018 \$156,412, 2019 - 2023 \$159,487

Table 2 summarizes the balance of the Fund as of 31 July 2024. To date, the balance to be carried forward to fiscal year 2024 is US\$ 411,661.

TABLE 2. Fund activity, in US\$, in 2022, 2023 and 2024 through 31 July			
	2022	2023	2024
1 January carryover from previous year	280,046	425,295	411,661
Income received	172,572	169,123	141,529
Total income	452,618	594,418	553,190
Expenditures			
Santa Marta Workshop	-	-	2,175
Participation in annual meeting	27,323	101,520	688
Participation in SAC meeting	-	81,237	28,168
Total expenses	27,323	182,757	31,031
Balance of Fund carried forward	425,295	411,661	522,159

To date, the resources of the Fund have been used for Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Kiribati, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, El Salvador, and Venezuela. It should be noted that the fund has been applied to benefit developing IATTC Member countries and not Cooperating non-Members since they do not contribute resources to the fund.

As previously noted, it will become necessary to develop criteria and procedures for providing assistance to eligible Members as the Fund continues to grow. It is important to note that, at a minimum, criteria should be established regarding beneficiary Members, as well as deadlines for requests for support, for example, taking into account that travel costs increase significantly the closer they are to the date of the meeting at which the beneficiary Member will participate with support from the Fund. Pursuant to paragraph 4 of Resolution [C-14-03](#), work is currently underway to develop financial regulations for the administration of the Fund: *“The administration of the Fund shall be the responsibility of the Director and shall be subject to the auditing rules of the Commission and the **financial regulations for the administration of the Fund to be developed by the Commission.**”*

In absence of precise instructions from the Commission, it should be noted that if the Fund is exhausted, any support for activities financed by the Fund would cease.

3. ACTIVITIES THAT WERE PROGRAMMED TO BE CARRIED OUT IN 2023 AND 2024

In accordance with the activities approved by the Commission at its last meeting, the activities described in **Table 3** were to be carried out in 2023 and 2024. It is important to mention that, due to the number of meetings and activities carried out by the Commission in the previous cycle, it was not possible to carry out the activities mentioned in items 3 and 4, but they will be taken up again for the next period. The activities described in items 1, 2 and 6 continued to be supported.

As part of the seminars mentioned in item 2, the following activities have already been carried out or resources have been taken from the Fund to carry them out:

- 1) Presentations at a Colombian University given by Dr. Arnulfo Franco, Jean François Pulvenis and Alexandre Aires-da-Silva on scientific and legal matters of the IATTC, during their trip to Colombia to participate in the capacity workshop in August 2024.
- 2) Training workshop: Introduction to the methods used in tropical tuna stock assessments. This first workshop will be held after the IATTC Annual Meeting in Panama, and the venue will be the Achotines Laboratory. The resources for this workshop have already been taken from the Fund, considering that this activity is part of the previously approved activity for the organization of workshops-seminars to support the training of decision-makers on various IATTC matters.

1	Development of data collection and scientific infrastructure for fisheries management
2	Capacity-building seminar/workshop for decision makers responsible for IATTC matters from developing CPCs ***
3	Training seminar on sea turtle mitigation techniques in accordance with Resolution C-19-04
4	Training seminars for port inspections pursuant to Resolution C-21-07
5	Annual IATTC scholarship for scientific capacity in developing CPCs****
6	Participation of representatives of developing Members in meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, including working groups and workshops *****

4. ACTIVITIES TO BE CARRIED OUT IN 2024 AND 2025

Resolution C-14-03 states in paragraph 3 that “*the Director shall present to the Commission for its approval every year the strategic investment plan chargeable to the Fund, which shall be constructed on the basis of the requirements of the developing countries and territories and the analyses carried out by the Commission staff.*” As indicated in the previous section, the activities in Table 3 could not be carried out, but have already been approved; therefore, for the remainder of 2024 and for 2025, some of them will continue or begin to be carried out, as appropriate.

Therefore, and considering the possibilities of holding meetings by videoconference, the intention is to use this method for at least the training activities 2 and 3 in the table above, with little or no impact on the Fund's resources. Thus, the activities planned for 2024-2025 are as shown in **Table 4**:

		Amount	
1	Second training workshop: Introduction to methods used in tropical tuna stock assessments*		9-14 September 2024
2	Training seminar on sea turtle mitigation techniques in accordance with Resolution C-19-04	US\$50,000	In a CA city to be determined
3	Training seminars for port inspections pursuant to Resolution C-21-07	US\$50,000	At a port to be determined
4	Training seminar on various IATTC matters	Translation cost (if necessary)	Via Zoom
5	Annual IATTC scholarship for scientific capacity in developing CPCs**	US\$30,000	Headquarters
6	Participation of representatives of developing Members in meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, including working groups and workshops ***	US\$40,000	At the venue of the meetings
* A first workshop will be held after the IATTC annual meeting in Panama. A second workshop is also planned for 2025.			
** As explained in previous reports, the intention is to carry out an activity through which applications will be received in order to select annual scholarship recipients. This scholarship was named the Jimmy Martínez Scholarship to honor and recognize the contributions of this Ecuadorian scientist and biologist to the work of the Commission and the sustainability of the species covered by the Antigua Convention. The stay at IATTC headquarters would be for approximately 3 months.			
*** As established in Resolution C-14-03 regarding the items on which the resources of the Special Fund should be used, support will continue to be given for the participation of representatives of developing Members at Commission meetings or its subsidiary bodies.			

It is important to recall that the pending activities to be carried out in 2024 and 2025 will be conducted with the contributions received from the 2% fixed contribution, plus funds remaining from previous years. Furthermore, all the activities fall within the framework of the guidelines established in Resolution [C-14-03](#). Therefore, there is no possibility of a surplus as such, since all funds not used during a given year are added to those of the following year.

Among the activities that are programmed to be carried out in 2024 and beyond, there are a few that deserve to be mentioned, particularly:

a) Resolution [C-19-04 on sea turtles](#) establishes in paragraph 5 that:

“Considering the particular situation of coastal developing countries, the special fund established in Resolution C-14-03 should be strengthened through the allocation of funds, from voluntary contributions of CPCs and inclusion of specific budget lines, to facilitate the implementation of this Resolution, including for training fishermen on safe handling and release, providing related equipment, or supporting trials for new mitigation techniques.”

b) Resolution [C-21-07](#) on minimum standards for **inspections in port** establishes in paragraph 34 that:

“On the basis of the outcome of the assessment (...), developing CPCs requiring assistance shall submit a plan of action for the implementation of this Resolution. CPCs shall give full recognition to the special requirements of developing CPCs in relation to a port inspection scheme consistent with this Resolution. As of 1 January 2024, and following the result of the assessment of needs, the Special Sustainable Development Fund established by Resolution C14-03, either directly or through supplementary voluntary contributions from CPCs, shall provide assistance to developing CPCs in order to, inter alia:

- *Develop their capacity including by providing technical assistance and establishing an appropriate funding mechanism to support and strengthen the development and implementation of an effective system of port inspection at national, regional or international levels and to ensure that a disproportionate burden resulting from the implementation of this Resolution is not unnecessarily transferred to them; and*
- *Facilitate their participation in meetings and/or training programs of relevant regional and international organizations that promote the effective development and implementation of a system of port inspection, including monitoring, control and surveillance, enforcement and legal proceedings for infractions and dispute settlements pursuant to this Resolution.”*

It should be noted that, in response to the questionnaire circulated by the Secretariat in 2022 to identify the needs of developing CPCs for the implementation of the resolution, several CPCs stressed the need for training in port inspections.

- c) The training will be conducted at the Achotines Laboratory, as it is estimated that it has facilities that can accommodate this type of activity. This location, in addition to its exceptional natural beauty, will reduce lodging and food costs, and the center will be able to receive improvements to more comfortably host this type of training activities.

On the other hand, the extent of the activities that are expected to be developed and carried out in compliance with these provisions shows the importance for the Committee to discuss the allocation of additional funding to complement the resources from the Fund, as expressly called for by the resolutions themselves.

5. ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT IN 2023 AND 2024 WITH EXTRABUDGETARY FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Resolution [C-14-03](#) states in paragraph 8 that *“the Director be asked, within his program of work, to explore and identify other options to strengthen the capacity of Members. This shall include*

opportunities for partnership with other organizations that work in this field and providing guidance to these organizations on the needs and priorities of the countries.” In this regard, the Secretariat carried out some activities in 2023, which were held by videoconference and the costs were covered by the Secretariat's budget (**Table 5**).

Member or entity receiving support/date	Activity	Support given
BLZ, ECU, SLV, MEX, NIC, PAN, PER, VEN	1 st workshop on improving data collection and provision: industrial longline fishery (January 2023)	The workshop was held via Zoom. CHN, USA, TWN, JPN and KOR also participated.
Countries with purse-seine fisheries in the EPO	Seminar for fishing captains on various IATTC matters (January 2024)	The workshop was held via Zoom.

6. POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES TO BE CARRIED OUT WITH ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

As on previous occasions, a list of potential activities—which could be carried out if resources in addition to the 2% contribution to the special Fund were available—is presented below. These activities were identified based on the wishes of several CPCs, activities included in IATTC adopted resolutions, the recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Committee, among others.

General data provisions

Following a recommendation by the staff supported by the SAC (recommendation 3.1 from SAC-12), Resolution C-03-05 is to be revised in consultation with CPCs, taking into consideration the elements presented in document SAC-12-09, through a series of workshops planned and facilitated by the staff. These workshops will be organized by main fishery, with the purpose of:

- a. discussing improvements in data collection, any required additional resources and capacity building activities;
- b. developing standard data reporting templates (draft appendixes in document [SAC-12-09](#));
- c. updating Resolution-C-03-05 to align data reporting requirements with the Antigua Convention, the WCPFC Scientific Service Provider (SSP) and harmonize them with FAO and other tuna RFMOs standards.

In addition, training in fisheries biology and stock assessment research would also be carried out, mainly in:

i. Biological parameters

Training for conducting research on fishery biology (e.g., estimation of growth, survivorship, and reproductive parameters), including training in biological sample collection and analysis methods.

ii. Stock assessment

Introductory course on quantitative methods in fisheries data analysis and stock assessment.