

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

82ND MEETING

LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA (USA)
4-8 JULY 2011

PROPOSAL IATTC-82-J-1

SUBMITTED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

**RESOLUTION FOR THE LIMITATION OF FISHING CAPACITY IN TERMS
OF NUMBER OF ACTIVE LONGLINE VESSELS**

Explanatory Memorandum

The IATTC Working Group on Stock Assessment (now Stock Assessment Review Meeting) has reported for a number of years some concerns on the state of fish stocks in the Agreement Area, and it has recommended that pressure on the stock should be stabilised, notably through the limitation of fishing capacity.

The stocks are not at this stage overexploited, but a precautionary management action is needed considering that the catches in recent years have increased. In addition there have been indications of increasing efficiency in the southern EPO, which has resulted in increased harvests of the stocks. It is not expected that further increases in the high catch levels observed in recent years would be sustainable.

Furthermore, IATTC has adopted in 2005 a Plan for Regional Management of Fishing Capacity which states in its Objectives and Principles the need for an efficient, equitable and transparent management of fishing capacity in the EPO in order to assist in achieving long-term sustainability of the fishery targeting species covered by the Convention. However, this plan has not been implemented through appropriate measures. Additionally, a Capacity Working Group took place in April 2011 and recommended adopting a fully comprehensive capacity management plan which takes into account the most important segments of the fleet operating in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, including the longliner fleet.

The proposal foresees the freezing of fishing capacity at 2008 levels of active presence of longline vessels over 20 metres overall length.

At the same time this Resolution does not prevent Coastal Developing States nor Overseas Territories who are IATTC members to develop their fleet, yet in a reasonable and sustainable manner, so to meet their development needs, provided that they present to IATTC a program (time schedule) of entering into the fisheries of the vessels listed in their fleet development plans, in line with the overall IATTC capacity management approach.

The measure is foreseen to be in force for the period 2012-2013, with a review by the Commission in 2013.

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC):

Taking note in particular of the recommendation by the IATTC staff to introduce precautionary measures for the main targeted stocks in the IATTC area of competence;

Conscious of the need to avoid an overexploitation of those stocks targeted by this fleet in their entire area of distribution;

Aware that the issue of excess fishing capacity is of worldwide concern, and is the subject of an International Plan of Action (IPOA) developed by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO);

Noting that the FAO IPOA for the Management of the Fishing Capacity stipulates in its Objectives and Principles that States and Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) confronted with an overcapacity problem which is undermining the achievement of long-term sustainability outcomes, should endeavor initially to limit at the present level and progressively reduce the fishing capacity applied to affected fisheries;

Mindful of the IATTC 2005 Plan for Regional Management of Fishing Capacity, which states in its Objectives and Principles the need for an efficient, equitable and transparent management of fishing capacity in the EPO in order to assist in achieving long-term sustainability of the fishery targeting species covered by the Convention, and that this plan clearly states that capacity limitation should apply to all segments of the fleet active in the Convention Area, through an holistic approach to capacity management;

Aware that the above Plan considers management of fleet capacity as a complement to other measures taken to conserve the stocks of species covered by the Convention, and that IATTC members and all participants in these fisheries should limit the total fleet capacity to the present level and to reduce it, as appropriate;

Believing that it is important to limit fishing capacity in the Convention Area in order to ensure that the fisheries in the region are conducted at a sustainable level;

Adopts, in accordance with the Antigua Convention, the following Resolution:

1. Members and cooperating non-members shall notify to the Director, by 31 December 2011, the lists of longline vessels, by gear type, greater than 20 meters length overall and their respective overall capacity, expressed in gross tonnage (GT), that actually fished in the Convention Area in 2008;
2. When notifying the Director in accordance with paragraph 1, the members and cooperating non-members shall confirm that they have verified the effective presence and fishing activities of these vessels in the Convention Area in 2008, through their VMS records, catch reports, port calls, or by other means. The staff shall have access to such information upon request.
3. Members and cooperating non-members will provide, by 1 June of each year, a list of the vessels which have fished in the Convention Area during the previous year.
4. The Director will establish a list of active longline vessels and will keep it regularly updated.
5. Members and cooperating non-members shall limit the number of their vessels of 20 m length overall and fishing in the Convention Area to the number of their vessels active in this fishery in 2008.
6. This limitation of number of vessels shall be commensurate with the corresponding overall gross tonnage and, where vessels are replaced, the overall tonnage shall not be exceeded.
7. Members and cooperating non-members shall ensure that, when there is a proposed transfer of capacity to their respective fleet, the vessel(s) to be transferred are on the IATTC Record of Longline Vessels or on the Record of Vessels of other tuna RFMOs. No vessels on the List of IUU Vessels of any RFMO may be transferred.
8. This Resolution shall not prejudice the legitimate rights and obligations under international law of coastal developing States and Territories in the Convention Area who may wish to pursue a responsible level of development of their own fisheries in the Convention Area. These States will submit to the IATTC Secretariat the development plans of their longline fleet.
9. This Resolution is applicable during 2012 and 2013. The Commission shall review its implementation at its Annual Meeting in 2013.