

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

Panama City, Panama
28 August 2024

DOCUMENT CAF-11-01

**FISCAL YEAR 2023 RESULTS AND BUDGETS FOR FISCAL YEARS 2025
AND 2026**

Requested budget, FY 2025	US\$	9,656,897
Projected budget, FY 2026	US\$	9,257,691

1. Introduction	1
2. Background	1
3. The IATTC Budget	2
4. Fiscal Year 2023 Operational Expenditures Variance Analysis.....	5
5. Budget Considerations	9
6. 2023 Special Projects	9
7. Status of Member Contributions, as of 31 December 2023	11
8. Status of Member Contributions for 2024.....	12
9. Rationale for Adjustments from the Approved Budget for 2024 to the Requested Budget for 2025 ..	13
10. Summary	14

This document presents the Commission’s financial activity for fiscal year¹ (FY) 2023, an update on the status of the contributions to the operating budget for FY 2024, the requested budget for FY 2025, and a budget projection for FY 2026.

1. INTRODUCTION

The IATTC’s annual budget is funded by contributions from the [21 Members](#) of the Commission. The budget is agreed by consensus of all Members, in accordance with Article IX.3 of the [Antigua Convention](#). The amount of each Member’s contribution to an agreed annual budget is derived from the formula established in Resolution [C-15-05](#).

The Committee on Administration and Finance (CAF), established by Resolution [C-12-02](#) in 2012, is responsible for providing advice and recommendations on matters related to the budget, financing, and administration of the Commission.

2. BACKGROUND

The [Antigua Convention](#) provides the Commission with a modern framework for achieving its objective of ensuring the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the fish stocks of the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) covered by the Convention, as well as the conservation of associated species and their ecosystems. The Convention mandates an important number of activities that must be carried out by the Commission and its staff. These include the collection and analysis of a wide range of data, as well as research undertaken by IATTC scientific staff, which in turn forms the basis for advice to the Commission regarding conservation and management. This necessarily requires a budget adequate to support all of this work. The resolutions adopted by the Commission can also add to the duties and responsibilities of the staff. For example, the implementation of a management measure limiting capacity (Resolution [C-02-03](#)) is tracked by means of the

¹ The IATTC’s fiscal year coincides with the calendar year, 1 January to 31 December.

IATTC [Regional Vessel Register](#) (Resolution [C-18-06](#)). Thus, close coordination with the fisheries authorities and tuna industries of each Member is necessary to monitor the movement of vessels within and among fleets, which is in turn reflected in the Regional Vessel Register. The IATTC also manages the observer program to monitor transshipments at sea by carrier vessels in the EPO, which is regulated by Resolution [C-12-07](#). Another most recent example may be found in Resolution [C-21-04](#) that calls for the establishment and implementation of an enhanced monitoring program in the framework for bigeye tuna set up by the Resolution. Programs implementing mandates such as these have budgetary implications because they require both human and technological resources. The Convention requires that the Commission have a staff qualified in financial, administrative, scientific and technical areas, for the “efficient and effective application” of the Convention. To meet this requirement, the Commission maintains an [internationally-recruited staff](#), most of whom work at the Commission’s headquarters in La Jolla, California (USA). Other IATTC staff and local employees work at the field offices of the Commission in Manta and Playas (Ecuador), Manzanillo and Mazatlán (Mexico), Panama City (Republic of Panama), and Cumana (Venezuela), and at the IATTC Laboratory at Achotines, Republic of Panama. Beside the work done in two areas of administration, finance and human resources on the one hand, and, policy and compliance on the other, the activities carried out by the IATTC scientific staff pursuant to the Antigua Convention are divided among [four programs](#) (Data collection and database, Biology, Stock assessment, and Ecosystem and bycatch), each of which is in turn conducts a number of specific [research projects](#).

Fundamental to the Commission’s work is the compilation of basic data on the fisheries (e.g., activities of fishing vessels, distribution of the fishing effort, and the amount and composition of the catches), which are obtained from onboard observer reports, vessel logbooks, cannery receipts, and information submitted by Members. Equally critical are the numerous research activities funded by the Commission’s budget and carried out by IATTC scientific staff in fields such as biology, behavioral studies, stock assessment, and ecology, that monitor not only the target stocks and bycatch species, but the health and function of the EPO ecosystem. The [research](#) undertaken at the Achotines Laboratory contributes to the understanding of the early life history, growth, and mortality of tropical tunas and the environmental dynamics that play an important role in the recruitment of fish to the fisheries.

Since 1976, the IATTC staff has conducted research on EPO dolphins associated with the tuna fishery, and since 1999 has provided the Secretariat for the [Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program \(AIDCP\)](#) and administered the AIDCP’s On-Board Observer Program. The AIDCP mandates 100% observer coverage of fishing trips by large purse-seine vessels² in the EPO. The Commission’s budget covers 30% of the observer program costs; the remaining 70%, along with certain other costs associated with the IDCP, is covered by the budget of the AIDCP, which is funded primarily by contributions from the Parties to the AIDCP through assessments paid by the participating vessels (see Document AIDCP-48-01). The funding level of 30%, established by the Commission at the inception of the Tuna-Dolphin Program in 1977, reflects the level of observer coverage of large purse-seine vessels required for the data collected to be statistically reliable, and these costs are also accounted for in the annual IATTC operational budget.

More detailed information on the staff’s [research activities](#) can be found on the IATTC [website](#).

3. THE IATTC BUDGET

For budgetary purposes, the activities of the Commission are divided into the following six categories.

A	Administration, finance, human resources, policy and compliance	D	Stock assessment program
B	Data collection and database program	E	Ecosystem and bycatch Program
C	Biology program	F	30% of the AIDCP observer program

² Carrying capacity greater than 363 t (IATTC Class 6).

A. ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE, HUMAN RESOURCES, POLICY AND COMPLIANCE

Category A includes those costs not readily allocable to any specific program and which benefit the Commission in its entirety and are elemental to the support provided as Secretariat to the AIDCP. In addition to general secretarial and clerical support (correspondence, filing, document management, meeting organization, etc.), these are broadly divided into **Administration, Finance and Human Resources**, on the one hand, and **Policy and Compliance** on the other. This category includes an important range of activities such as, on the one hand, financial planning, budgeting, accounting, management of human resources in the main office and in the field offices and the Achotines Laboratory (payroll, benefits, recruiting, policies, procedures), and administrative coordination of scientific research, as well as translation services, and on the other communication and relations, including cooperation and coordination with Members and Cooperating Non-Members, relevant international organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, and other stakeholders, assistance and capacity-building activities, meeting and document preparation, participation in meetings related to the Commission's mandate and legal, institutional and procedural matters related to the operation of the Commission, including guidance on the correct implementation of policies, procedures, measures and rules adopted by the Commission and the AIDCP Parties. All other costs are allocated to the program(s) to which they pertain or which they benefit directly.

B. DATA COLLECTION AND DATABASE PROGRAM

Category B includes salaries and benefits for field office and scientific staff assigned to the [Data Collection and Database Program](#), and field office staff whose duties include obtaining statistical records of the tuna fishery directly from the fishing fleet and processing plants, providing the data necessary for assessing the effects of fishing on the abundance of the stocks, coordination of the Observer program under the AIDCP and processing information collected by the observers. This category includes the processing of this data and the preparation of the corresponding reports as well as the provision of data in response to requests from CPCs. It also includes all activities related to the IATTC Regional Register of Vessels and its maintenance, including the lists and categories established in different resolutions.

C. BIOLOGY PROGRAM

Category C includes salaries and benefits for the Achotines laboratory and scientific staff assigned to projects of the [Biology Program](#), designed to increase the available knowledge of the life history and behavior of tunas, tuna like-species, and other associated species in the EPO. Data for these types of research are obtained from sampling catches at ports of landing, analyses of information collected from vessel logbooks and by on-board observers, studies conducted at sea on commercial fishing vessels, and laboratory experiments.

The Program encompasses two Groups which conduct several important research activities: **Life History and Behavior Group** and **Early Life History Group**.

The **Life History and Behavior Group** is responsible for the following major areas of activity:

1. Investigations of the biology and behavior of tunas, including deriving population parameter estimates.
2. Tuna tagging experiments to obtain vital information on movements and population structure, along with growth, mortality, and exploitation rates.

The research of the **Early Life-History Group** is mainly conducted at the Achotines Laboratory and includes the following activities (described in detail in Document [SAC-15 INF-P](#)):

1. Field and laboratory experiments to investigate the key environmental and biological factors of the early life history of the tuna that affect the recruitment of young fish to the exploitable population.
2. Develop tools to forecast recruitment of young tuna to the exploitable population.

The scientific knowledge produced by the Biology Program—along with fishery-dependent data sources (e.g. catch, effort and composition data)—is incorporated into population dynamics models for assessing the effects of fishing and natural factors on the abundance and sustainability of stocks (see activities of **Stock Assessment Program, Category D**). It is also used to parameterize the ecosystem models conducted

under the research activities of the **Ecosystem and Bycatch Program** (see **Category E**).

D. STOCK ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Category D includes salaries and benefits for scientific staff assigned to projects of the [Stock Assessment Program](#) related to the Commission's responsibilities regarding conservation and fisheries management. This program is divided into the following major areas of activity:

1. Based on the best available science, implement stock assessments of tunas, billfishes, dolphins, and stocks of other species (e.g. sharks and dorado) as deemed necessary by the Members, and conduct risk analysis for management of the tropical tuna fishery in the EPO.
2. Maintain active participation and/or collaboration in assessments conducted by other entities (e.g. International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-Like Species in the North Pacific Ocean, Secretariat of the Pacific Community) of stocks whose range includes the EPO (e.g. bluefin, albacore, billfishes, sharks) or for which hypotheses of stock geographic boundaries are being explored (e.g. Pacific-wide assessment of bigeye, billfishes, sharks).
3. Evaluation of the effect on the status of the stocks from current or any other types of proposed management measures (e.g. using risk analysis to evaluate the impact of management measures with respect to the reference points specified in the IATTC's harvest control rule).
4. Conduct a comprehensive Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) for the tropical tuna in the EPO and collaborate with other organizations in Pacific-wide MSEs (e.g. with ISC for albacore and Pacific bluefin tuna).
5. Design and evaluation of sampling programs for fishery data collection and scientific experiments in the EPO.
6. Analyze biological and fisheries data for input into the stock assessments.
7. Conduct research on stock assessment, stock assessment methodology, and related topics.
8. Provide analytical support for the other IATTC research programs.
9. Through collaborations with external studies, improve our understanding of the socio-economic aspects of sustainable fisheries for tropical tunas (e.g. POSEIDON with Ocean Conservancy).
10. Participation in scientific meetings, scientific bodies, and peer reviews of stock assessments and research.
11. Organize workshops on stock assessment methodology (e.g. the fall workshop series, in collaboration with CAPAM (the Center for the Advancement of Population Assessment Methodology)) and reviews of IATTC stock assessments.

E. ECOSYSTEM AND BYCATCH PROGRAM

Category E includes salaries and benefits of scientific staff assigned to the [Ecosystem and Bycatch Program](#). This program provides scientific support for implementing the broad goals of the Antigua Convention, in particular for the IATTC to "*adopt, as necessary, conservation and management measures and recommendations for species belonging to the same ecosystem and that are affected by fishing for, or dependent on or associated with, the fish stocks covered by the Convention*". Two main duties are assigned to the program:

1. Assess and mitigate the ecological impacts of the tuna fisheries on species and habitats. This includes the following activities:
 - a. Develop analytical tools to identify and prioritize species at risk for data collection, research and management.
 - b. Conduct Ecological Risk Assessments (ERAs) of EPO fisheries to identify and prioritize species at risk.
 - c. Conduct spatiotemporal analyses to identify areas of high bycatch/catch ratios for potential use in spatial management (static or dynamic closures), and investigate alternative tools for bycatch mitigation.
 - d. In collaboration with the fishing industry, conduct scientific experiments to:

- i. identify gear technology that will reduce bycatches and mortality of prioritized species;
 - ii. develop best practices for the release of prioritized bycatch species;
 - iii. develop best practices for mitigating the impacts of fishing on habitats in the EPO.
 - e. Conducting workshops for vessel crews to promote the reduction of impacts of the fishery on non-target species and compliance with IATTC resolutions.
 - f. In coordination with the Stock Assessment Program, improve our understanding of the effects of the operational characteristics of the fishery on fishing mortality, stock assessment, and management advice.
 - g. Support for capacity-building with regard to bycatch mitigation, and development of data collection programs for artisanal fisheries of coastal States (e.g. shark fisheries).
- 2. Improve our understanding of the EPO ecosystem as well as the interactions among the environment, climate and fisheries:
 - a. Conduct trophodynamic studies for defining key assumptions in EPO ecosystem models. This includes sampling and analysis of diets and tissues required to understand food-web dynamics, and analysis of biological, ecological and fisheries data to facilitate ecological risk assessment and ecosystem modeling.
 - b. Ecosystem modeling studies. This includes improving analytical tools to evaluate anthropogenic and climate impacts of the EPO ecosystem.
 - c. Conduct spatiotemporal analyses to better understand the effect of key environmental drivers on the short-term as well as long-term (regime shift) fluctuations of abundance of tunas and prioritized bycatch species.

Category F includes a portion of salaries and benefits of staff performing various tasks in support of the AIDCP that are not included in other programs, as well as costs directly related to the AIDCP observer program (*i.e.* salaries, benefits, travel costs, training, *etc.*) and those associated with maintaining field offices supporting the activities of the AIDCP.

The observer program is divided into the following major areas of activity:

1. Collection of fishery and biological data on catches and discards of tunas and associated species by the purse-seine fishery. The AIDCP budget covers 70% of the cost of these observers; the IATTC budget covers the remaining 30%.
2. Training of the observers who collect data for this program.
3. Organize and perform seminars for vessel operators, that include information on the international agreements and regulations currently in force, as well as other pertinent information, as required by the AIDCP.
4. Editing of the data collected by observers, in support of the **Data collection and database program**.

The information collected and processed through the observer program is also used to support monitoring of compliance with measures established by the IATTC and AIDCP.

In addition to the research activities specified above, the staff working under all programs also participates in scientific meetings, meetings of other scientific bodies, and peer reviews of research as deemed necessary.

4. FISCAL YEAR 2023 OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURES VARIANCE ANALYSIS

Table 1, Column 1, shows the approved budget for 2023; Column 2 shows the actual expenditures in FY 2023, and Columns 3a and 3b, the variances between the budgeted and actual costs.

TABLE 1. 2023 budget variance analysis	1	2	3a	3b
	Approved	Actual	US\$	%
HEADQUARTERS SALARIES AND BENEFITS:				
Salaries	4,356,710	4,341,834	(14,876)	(0.3)
Employee benefits:				
Group insurance:				
Medical insurance	347,000	343,479	(3,521)	(1.0)
Life, disability and personal accident insurance	30,000	24,770	(5,230)	(17.4)
International workmen's compensation insurance	10,000	10,102	102	1.0
Social security	296,000	305,370	9,370	3.2
Pension fund (IFCPF)	207,000	204,766	(2,234)	(1.1)
Retirement plans	525,000	420,289	(104,711)	(19.9)
Subtotal, Headquarters salaries and benefits	5,771,710	5,650,610		
ANNUAL MEETING COSTS	120,000	188,213	68,213	57.0
OPERATING COSTS:				
Field office facilities expenses	110,000	62,519	(47,481)	(43.2)
Field office and Ashotines Laboratory staff salaries	485,000	571,180	86,180	17.8
Headquarters office expenses	166,000	106,810	(59,190)	(35.7)
Research materials and supplies	50,000	56,044	6,044	12.1
General upgrades for Ashotines Laboratory	25,000	23,744	(1,256)	(5.0)
Purchase and maintenance of computer equipment	90,000	95,933	5,933	6.6
Vehicle Expenses:				
Purchase and operating costs of vehicles	46,000	25,672	(20,328)	(44.2)
Property insurance, licenses and permits	5,000	3,530	(1,470)	(29.4)
Printing, postage and publication	10,000	11,975	1,975	19.8
Staff travel	110,000	137,955	27,955	25.4
IATTC meetings (excluding annual meetings)	100,000	217,797	117,797	117.8
Contracts:				
Annual audit and tax reporting	45,000	62,984	17,984	40.0
Payroll services	20,000	25,846	5,846	29.2
Other professional services	15,000	72,440	57,440	382.9
Bank and other fees	5,000	4,050	(950)	(19.0)
Subtotal, Operating costs	1,282,000	1,478,479		
Subtotal, Headquarters salaries and benefits + Annual meeting costs + Operating costs	7,173,710	7,317,302		
AIDCP Observer program **	800,640	815,191		
TOTAL Operational budget	7,974,350	8,132,493		
Unexpected expenses	-	59,583		
2022 Pension fund expensed in 2023		150,000		
Capacity Building Fund **	159,487			
Enhanced Monitoring Program (EMP) **	385,274			
TOTAL	8,519,111	8,342,076		
* Further explanation of budget variance may be found in Document AIDCP-48-01				
** Income and expenses recognized in 2023 related to these funds are found in Table 3				

Table 2 summarizes the financial results, by budget category and line item, as of 31 December 2023.

TABLE 2. Operational expenses, in US\$, by budget category and line item, 2023 ³	A	B	C	D	E	Subtotal IATTC	F	TOTAL
HEADQUARTERS SALARIES AND BENEFITS:								
Salaries	1,218,414	678,465	688,950	810,410	945,595	4,341,834	122,706	4,464,540
Employee benefits:								
Group insurance:								
Medical insurance	93,165	48,686	77,388	60,224	64,016	343,479	14,023	357,502
Life, disability and personal accident insurance	8,227	3,600	4,516	4,448	3,979	24,770	1,412	26,182
International workmen's compensation insurance	3,093	1,527	1,910	1,884	1,688	10,102	600	10,702
Social security	86,097	44,406	63,998	57,246	53,623	305,370	9,391	314,761
Pension fund (IFCPF)	60,000	96,731	-	36,687	11,348	204,766	15,011	219,777
Retirement plans	133,882	45,270	48,610	89,455	103,072	420,289	12,848	433,137
Subtotal, headquarters salaries and benefits	1,602,878	918,685	885,372	1,060,354	1,183,321	5,650,610	175,991	5,826,601
ANNUAL MEETING COSTS	188,213	-	-	-	-	188,213	-	188,213
OPERATING EXPENSES:								
Field office facilities expenses	-	62,519	-	-	-	62,519	163,061	225,580
Field office and Achatines Laboratory staff salaries	-	314,550	256,630	-	-	571,180	-	571,180
Headquarter office expenses	36,021	57	64,472	-	6,260	106,810	-	106,810
Research materials and supplies	-	-	55,974	-	70	56,044	-	56,044
General upgrades for Achatines Laboratory	-	-	23,744	-	-	23,744	-	23,744
Observer expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	474,751	474,751
Purchase and maintenance of computer equipment	79,493	310	2,424	7,474	6,232	95,933	-	95,933
Purchase, and operating costs of vehicles	11,089	-	14,583	-	-	25,672	-	25,672
Property Insurance, licenses and permits	2,416	-	393	-	721	3,530	-	3,530
Printing, postage and publication	2,118	-	9,783	-	74	11,975	-	11,975
Staff travel	48,764	14,773	21,628	14,900	37,890	137,955	-	137,955
IATTC meetings (excluding annual meetings)	17,426	-	1,117	130,349	68,905	217,797	-	217,797
Contracts:								
Annual audit and tax reporting	62,984	-	-	-	-	62,984	-	62,984
Payroll services	25,846	-	-	-	-	25,846	-	25,846
Other professional services	67,815	-	4,625	-	-	72,440	-	72,440
Bank and other fees	1,080	-	995	-	1,975	4,050	1,388	5,438
Subtotal, operating expenses	355,052	392,209	456,368	152,723	122,127	1,478,479	639,200	2,117,679
TOTAL operational expenses	2,146,143	1,310,894	1,341,740	1,213,077	1,305,448	7,317,302	815,191	8,132,493

³ A (Administration, finance, policy and compliance); B (Data collection and database program); C (Biology program); D (Stock assessment program); E (Ecosystem and bycatch program); F (30% of the AIDCP observer program)

The following provides additional detail about the individual line items presented in **Table 2**.

HEADQUARTER SALARIES AND BENEFITS

Salaries: The permanent scientific, administrative, clerical, and technical personnel required to carry out the tasks assigned by the Commission. Headquarters staff salaries are based on US government salary scales.

Group insurance: Includes life, disability, medical, dental, and accident insurance. To counteract the growing costs of health insurance in the United States, the IATTC now offers employees a cross-border medical plan which allows the option of using health care providers in Mexico.

Social security: Includes contributions to US social security paid by the Commission.

Pension fund (IFCPF): Includes the IATTC's original pension plan, administered by the International Fisheries Commissions Pension Society (IFCPS), which provides level funding over periods of three years based upon actuarial evaluations. As discussed in prior budget documents and documented in the footnotes to the Commission's Annual Financial Statement audit, the IFCPF has experienced large deficits in prior years with the triennial actuarial evaluation performed in January 2023 reflecting continued deficits due to poor market conditions during the past three years.

Retirement plans: Since 2002, the Commission has operated a defined contribution (403(b)) retirement plan, to which both staff members and the Commission contribute.

International retirement plans were established for staff members residing outside of the United States which are included within this line item.

BUDGETED OPERATIONAL EXPENSES

Field office facilities expenses: includes rent, utilities, insurance, telephone, repairs and maintenance, furniture and equipment and office supplies for the Commission's field offices, travel, legal & professional.

Field office and Achatines Laboratory staff salaries: includes personnel costs related to changes in permanent field office and laboratory staff.

Headquarter office expenses: includes utilities, insurance, telephone, and office supplies for both the La Jolla office and the Achatines Laboratory.

Research materials and supplies: includes sundries and research supplies purchased for the Achatines Laboratory.

General upgrades for Achatines Laboratory: includes significant repairs and maintenance costs related to the Achatines laboratory facilities as well as large purchases of equipment.

Observer expenses: includes the required IATTC funding of the IDCP, which covers 30% of all direct observer costs such as wages, taxes, insurance, travel, equipment, and training. The amount is based upon the requested AIDCP budget in document AIDCP-46-01, and is subject to change once the Parties to the AIDCP approve the 2025 budget.

Purchase and maintenance of computer equipment: Includes equipment purchases of hardware such as computers and office machines, and software, including licensing agreements.

Operational costs and purchase of vehicles: includes purchase of vehicles, related maintenance, insurance and fuel costs.

Property insurance, licenses and permits: includes all property insurance and regulatory agency fees.

Printing, postage and publication: includes all costs related to postage and printing needs.

Staff travel: includes travel and subsistence costs incurred by IATTC staff members to attend meetings or

workshops organized by third parties. Does not include IATTC meetings.

IATTC meetings (excluding annual meetings): includes cost of venue and incidental costs incurred by IATTC staff members to attend IATTC meetings as well as costs for simultaneous interpretation services.

Contracts: includes legal and professional fees, auditing and payroll services, short-term contracts with specialists, and casual labor.

Bank and other fees: include bank fees and other similar costs.

5. BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

1. Variances

1.1. The IATTC strives to maintain costs within budget. During 2023 the year closed with four over budget variances in excess of US\$ 20,000 and 20% between the budgeted and actual costs (**Table 1**).

The budget line items most affected include:

- **Annual meeting** – As discussed at the 101st plenary, costs have greatly increased in the last two years resulting in further discussion amongst the Commissioners on how to manage the situation by working with host members when organizing the annual meeting. The discussions ended by stating that a maximum amount of expenses should be defined at the time of selecting a venue, in order to avoid excessive costs and further clarified that the host Member should only cover the costs of the venue and not the travel expenses of the IATTC staff as that is what this budget line item is for. However, a final agreement was not reached.
- **Staff travel** – Although efforts continue for staff to obtain sponsorships to attend meetings, overall costs remain high and are expected to increase. Additionally, the number of meetings to which the staff is expected to attend continues to grow.
- **IATTC meetings** – Continued interest in attending the annual Scientific Advisory Committee meeting and the need to perform external reviews of the stock assessment data have increased the need for additional funding to hold these meetings.
- **Other professional services** – In the first quarter of 2023, the IATTC took decisive step towards modernizing and enhancing its digital presence by hiring a social media consultant. After an initial period of guidance and planning, this responsibility is now managed successfully by two staff members.

Building upon our commitment to organizational improvement, we further leveraged the skills of external consultants to audit our current staff structure, and another to better assess the organizational status of the IATTC.

Both assessments aimed toward the identification of any possible areas of improvement.

Recognizing the importance of effective communication, especially in our diverse and bilingual environment, we also offered Spanish classes to our scientific staff. This training will not just enrich our staff's personal skill set but is also anticipates to enhance their ability to interact more effectively with our delegates and present their work allowing for limited need of simultaneous interpretation at workshops.

2. Unexpected expenses

2.1. On February 20, 2024 memorandum Ref.: 0073-410 was circulated informing the IATTC Commissioners and Heads of Delegation and the AIDCP Parties of the urgent need to terminate the contracts of two Secretariat field office staff members. The impact to the IATTC budget totaled US\$ 59,583.

3. 2022 expense paid in 2023

- **Pension fund (IFCPS)** – As mentioned in CAF-10-01, US\$ 150,000 for the 2022 unfunded pension liability were to be reflected in the current 2023 fiscal year.

6. 2023 SPECIAL PROJECTS

Table 3 summarizes the special project activity during 2023.

The IATTC staff routinely seeks and receives extrabudgetary contributions from outside sources to support its activities (**External**). Consequently, several projects in which the staff is involved are funded separately by individual Members or other interested entities. The information on these projects is included for illustrative purposes only, as their budgets are determined, approved, and accounted for separately, and are not part of the IATTC's regular budget.

Some expenditures were derived from resolutions (**Resolution**), such as the program for monitoring transshipments at sea established by resolution [C-12-07](#) on establishing a program for transshipment by large-scale fishing vessels (Document [CAF-11-03](#)), Funding national programs authorized by Resolution A-19-01, and the Capacity Building Fund (CBF), established by Resolution [C-14-03](#) for strengthening the institutional capacity of developing countries (Document [CAF-11-03](#)).

The CBF is essential to ensure the substantial and effective participation of those countries in the activities of the Commission, including its meetings as well as providing support to training and capacity-building activities. The fund is financed by a 2% levy added to the operating budget, and thus proportionately to each Member's contribution. In 2023 this amounted to US\$ 159,487, based on the approved operating budget of US\$ 7,974,350 for that year.

The IATTC approved the financing of the Enhanced Monitoring Program to be funded equally by the existing surplus and an added contribution of US\$ 385,274, of which only US\$ 130,384 was received for 2023 with an additional US\$ 38,739 from paid arrears which are included within Table 3.

Not included in this document are research activities and projects recommended by the Scientific Advisory Committee ([IATTC-101-03](#)), which would require additional funding, nor proposals by the staff for specific projects that are not currently funded (IATTC-101-02b)

TABLE 3. Special projects, 2023, in US\$				
Project (funding source)		Income	Expenses	+/(-)
External				
C.4.c	Data source on shark species (FAO)	88,982	88,982	-
Q.1.a	Environmental Leadership & Training Initiative Phase 3 (Yale University)	206,739	167,976	38,763
R.1.b	Development, Communication and Evaluation of MSE (EU)	-	184,122	(184,122)
U.1.a	Contract for project No. PFID-INF-2020-5 (SENACYT)	47,729	47,729	-
H.8.c	Mother Calf Dolphin Study (MEX)	449,640	449,640	-
H.8.a	Design survey for EPO dolphin stocks (MEX)	63,825	63,888	(63)
A.4.a	Regional tuna tagging program, Phase I (EU)	-	58,402	(58,402)
A.4.a	Regional tuna tagging program, Phase II (EU)	-	159,781	(159,781)
C.2.b	Electronic monitoring of long line activities in EPO (EU)	-	62,746	(62,746)
E.4.a	SPC Tag recovery (SPC)	42,684	42,684	-
	Other projects ⁴	15,549	27,336	(11,787)
Subtotal of External funding source		915,148	1,353,286	
IATTC				
	Western Pacific out of area	-	43,248	(43,248)
	Enhanced Monitoring Program (EMP) ⁵	349,702	661,840	(312,138)
Subtotal IATTC funding source		349,702	705,088	
Resolution				
C-12-07	Transshipment program	933,241	933,241	-
A-19-01	Distribution of allocation of funds for national programs	-	44,810	(44,810)
C-14-03	Capacity-building fund ⁶	169,123	182,757	(13,634)
Subtotal of funding sources by Resolution		1,102,364	1,160,808	
Total Special projects		2,367,214	3,219,182	

An administrative fee is charged on all research voluntary extrabudgetary contributions that are not included within the IATTC budget, as well as the placement of observers on vessels operating outside the IATTC Convention Area. This income is in addition to the regular budget and is used to cover unexpected costs not included in the approved budget.

7. STATUS OF MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS, AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2023

As noted in the introduction, the Commission's primary source of income is the contributions of its Members. **Table 4** summarizes the status of the contributions specified in Resolution [C-22-08](#) received during 2023.

⁴ Includes income and expenditures related to miscellaneous extrabudgetary funding such as CAPAM.

⁵ Cumulative carryover funds were used to cover project expenses during 2023 as agreed at the 101st plenary.

⁶ Further explanation of this budget may be found in Document CAF-11-02

TABLE 4. Member contributions received during 2023, in US\$				
	Arrears	2023	Voluntary	Total
Belize	-	46,071	-	46,071
Canada	-	133,226	-	133,226
China	-	285,562	17,000	302,562
Colombia	-	300,522	-	300,522
Costa Rica	-	152,049	-	152,049
Ecuador	-	1,848,566	-	1,848,566
El Salvador	-	116,650	-	116,650
European Union	-	362,641	-	362,641
France	-	156,218	-	156,218
Guatemala	-	51,412	-	51,412
Japan	-	274,261	-	274,261
Kiribati	221,962	45,861	-	267,823
Korea	-	23,341	-	23,341
Nicaragua	-	92,884	-	92,884
Panama	903,765	539,489	-	1,443,254
Peru	117,944	-	-	117,944
Chinese Taipei	-	235,794	-	235,794
United States of America	-	1,746,553	-	1,746,553
Vanuatu	-	52,499	-	52,499
Total contributions	1,243,671	6,463,599	17,000	7,724,270
Unpaid 2023 contributions at year end		2,055,512		
2023 approved budget		8,519,111		

8. STATUS OF MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2024

The approved operating budget for FY 2024 is US\$ 7,765,359, plus US\$ 810,640 in funding for the AIDCP Observer Program, US\$ 171,520 for the capacity building fund and US\$ 734,000 for the Enhanced Monitoring Program, for a total agreed budget of US\$ 9,481,519. As agreed in Resolution [C-23-12](#), “the members will pay the sum of US\$ 8,101,033 with the remaining balance of US\$ 1,380,486 funded by the cumulative carryover.”

Despite the requirement that all payments be made by 1 March of the corresponding year, as of 25 July 2024, there is still an unpaid amount of approximately 49% (US\$ 4.0 million) of the 2024 budget contributions established in Resolution [C-23-12](#), *Financing for fiscal year 2024*, in addition to the existing arrears (**Table 5**). Given that most of the contributions due in any given year are not paid before the established deadline, the Commission may wish to consider whether additional penalties for timely payment are warranted.

Table 5 shows the status of unpaid contributions, totaling US\$ 6,979,201 as of 31 July 2024:

TABLE 5. Contributions outstanding, in US\$, as of 31 July 2024⁷				
	Previous years	FY 2023	FY 2024	Total
Venezuela	1,540,890	199,042	190,393	1,930,325
Panama	1,240,890	-	570,242	1,811,132
Ecuador	-	-	1,679,744	1,679,744
Mexico	-	37,893	1,117,990	1,155,883
Colombia	-	-	282,309	282,309
Guatemala	-	7,206	68,150	75,356
Kiribati	-	-	44,452	44,452
Total	2,781,780	244,141	3,953,280	6,979,201

⁷ Payments made subsequent to 31 July will be presented at the meeting of Committee on Administration and Finance.

9. RATIONALE FOR ADJUSTMENTS FROM THE APPROVED BUDGET FOR 2024 TO THE REQUESTED BUDGET FOR 2025

Table 6 shows the budget change requests by line item from 2024 to 2025 as well as projected expenses for 2026. All changes were made based upon 2023 expenditure levels and consideration of future needs within specific line items for 2025.

The proposed increase of US\$ 327,697 in Headquarters salaries and related benefits includes adjustments for cost-of-living for staff, the addition of a Financial accountant as well as a Policy advisor.

The net increase in operating costs of US\$ 79,000 takes into consideration the following:

1. Adjustments for the **Field office and Achotines Laboratory staff salaries** to include a maintenance engineer at the Achotines Laboratory
2. Reductions to **Headquarters office expenses**, and the **Operational costs and purchase of vehicles** are being proposed to better align with anticipated spending as the Commission continues to reduce expenditures where possible.
3. Additional funds added to the **Purchase and maintenance of computer equipment** to ensure that that the staff has equipment that will continue to receive Microsoft updates and technical support. The IT staff is currently undergoing a full review of those computers that will no longer be supported which are more susceptible to viruses and malware.
4. Every year the Commission is asked to participate in an increased number of meetings therefore requiring additional funds for **Staff travel**.
5. As interest and participation in the annual Scientific Advisory Committee meeting as well as performance review workshops continues to grow, so do the related meeting venue costs, resulting in increased costs within the **IATTC meetings** expenses.
6. **Annual audit and tax reporting** as well as **Payroll services** are increased based upon actual costs incurred in 2023.

TABLE 6. Comparative figures, in US\$, by budget line item, FYs 2024 - 2026				
	2024	2025		2026
	(approved)	+/(-)	(requested)	(projected)
HEADQUARTERS SALARIES AND BENEFITS:				
Salaries	4,621,359	264,467	4,885,826	5,032,401
Group insurance:				
Medical insurance	317,000	33,000	350,000	350,000
Life, disability and personal accident insurance	30,000	-	30,000	30,000
International workmen's compensation insurance	12,000	-	12,000	12,000
Social security	316,000	20,230	336,230	346,317
Pension fund (IFCPS)	237,000	90,000	327,000	250,000
Retirement plan	553,000	(80,000)	473,000	487,190
Subtotal, Headquarters salaries and benefits	6,086,359	327,697	6,414,056	6,507,908
OPERATING COSTS:				
Field office facilities cost	80,000	-	80,000	80,000
Field office and Achotines Laboratory staff salaries	630,000	10,000	640,000	656,000
Headquarters office expenses	146,000	(25,000)	121,000	121,000
Research materials and supplies	50,000	-	50,000	50,000
General upgrades at Achotines Laboratory	25,000	-	25,000	25,000
Purchase and maintenance of computer equipment	90,000	40,000	130,000	100,000
Operational costs and purchase of vehicles	46,000	(16,000)	30,000	30,900
Property insurance, licenses and permits	5,000	-	5,000	5,150
Printing and postage	10,000	-	10,000	10,300
Staff travel	135,000	15,000	150,000	150,000
IATTC meetings (excluding annual meetings)	165,000	35,000	200,000	200,000
Contracts:				
Annual audit and tax reporting	55,000	15,000	70,000	72,100
Payroll services	22,000	5,000	27,000	27,810
Other professional services	15,000	-	15,000	15,000
Bank and other fees	5,000	-	5,000	5,000
Subtotal, Operating costs	1,479,000	79,000	1,558,000	1,548,260
ANNUAL MEETING COSTS	200,000	-	200,000	200,000
Subtotal, Salaries and benefits, Annual meetings, and Operating costs	7,765,359	406,697	8,172,056	8,256,168
AIDCP Observer program ⁸	810,640	9,360	820,000	820,000
Total Operational budget	8,575,999	416,057	8,992,056	9,076,168
Capacity Building Fund ⁹	171,520	8,321	179,841	181,523
Subtotal	8,747,519	424,378	9,171,897	9,257,691
Enhanced Monitoring Program (EMP)¹⁰	734,000	(249,000)	485,000	-
TOTAL BUDGET	9,481,519	175,378	9,656,897	9,257,691

10. SUMMARY

The Director and the staff of the Commission recognize the need to ensure that the organization functions efficiently while fulfilling their functions under the Antigua Convention comprehensively and diligently while carrying out the tasks assigned by its Members. With the continuing rise in costs, particularly those related to travel, it is imperative that our budget not only takes these into account, but keeps pace with them

⁸ Amount is based upon the AIDCP budget request and is subject to change (See current AIDCP finance document (AIDCP-48-01)).

⁹ Actual amount reflects a 2% contribution rate which is dependent upon the approved operational budget.

¹⁰ Prior approval for budget inclusion in the forecasted 2026 budget has not yet been given; therefore, not included in this table.

as well while considering the costs associated with the activities of the Commission, both at headquarters and abroad.

The scope of the Commission's activities and that of its staff continues to broaden. This expansion is as a result of not only the wider mandate emanating from the Antigua Convention, but also the evolving priorities set by the Commission, reflective of the desires and recommendations of our Members. This broader term of work necessitates the recruitment of more staff in addition to providing adequate compensation to our current workforce for any extra duties undertaken and keeping pace with inflation.

After an extensive evaluation and thoughtful consideration of the requested budget for 2025, we project a budget requirement of US\$ 9,656,897, reflecting a 1.8% increase from the 2024 approved budget.

It is crucial that every Member make their budget contributions in a timely fashion for the Commission and its staff to fulfill their mandates and to realize our goals.

The issue of pending arrears from some Members requires immediate resolution.