

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

101st MEETING

Victoria, Canada

7-11 August 2023

PROPOSAL IATTC-101 B-1

SUBMITTED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

EU PROPOSAL ON A RESOLUTION ON MONITORING AND CONTROL MEASURES FOR THE BLUEFIN TUNA FISHERY IN THE EPO

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

The purpose of this proposal is to establish the minimum standards for the monitoring and control of Resolution C-21-05. To support the management objectives set out by Resolution C-21-05, further measures are needed to 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 tunas 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 establishes a number of minimum provisions to monitor and control the Pacific bluefin tuna fishery including a record of vessels, traps and farms; catch and transhipment reports; general rules on by-catches; identification of designated ports; reporting of catches; and the future creation of an observer programme.

Objectives

1. The purpose of this Resolution is 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.

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. Fishing vessels not entered into the IATTC record of vessels referred to in paragraph 1 are deemed not to be authorized to fish for, retain on board, tranship, transport, transfer, process or land bluefin tuna.

IATTC record of tuna traps authorised to fish for bluefin tuna

4. The Commission shall establish and maintain an IATTC Record of all tuna traps authorised to fish for bluefin tuna in the EPO and a Record of farms authorised for fattening or farming. For the purposes of this Recommendation, tuna traps and 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 catch, transfer, harvest or land bluefin tuna.

5. Each CPC shall submit electronically to the IATTC Secretariat by 1 June every year, the list of its authorized tuna traps (including the name of the traps, register number) and farms.

Catch and transshipment reports

6. Each CPC shall ensure that its fishing vessels fishing actively for bluefin tuna and trap operators communicate to their authorities, during the whole period in which they are authorised 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.
7. The masters of fishing vessels shall maintain a bound or electronic fishing logbook of their operations in accordance with the requirements of Annex 1.

General rules on by-catches

8. 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.
9. 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 IATTC Secretariat who shall make it available to the Scientific Staff.

Use of aerial means

10. 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

11. 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 to the IATTC Secretariat by 31 December 2023. Any amendment shall be immediately communicated to the IATTC Secretariat.
12. Prior to entry into any port, masters of fishing vessels or their representatives shall provide the relevant authorities of the port, at least 4 hours before the estimated time of arrival, with the following: a) estimated time of arrival; b) estimate of quantity of bluefin tuna retained on board; c) the information on the geographic area where the catch was taken. If the fishing grounds are less than four hours from the port of arrival, the estimated quantities of bluefin tuna retained on board may be modified at any time prior to arrival.

Reporting of catches from CPCs to the Secretariat

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

Regional Observer Programme

14. The IATTC shall develop by 2025 a regional observer programme to ensure proper coverage by observers of the bluefin tuna fishery including vessels and traps for transmission to the Scientific Staff.

15. 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.
16. Where CPCs have national observers programs in place, data and information collected under the national programmes referred to in Article 19 shall be provided to the Scientific Staff in accordance with requirements and procedures to be developed by IATTC Director taking into account CPC confidentiality requirements.

Monitoring a transfer and caging

17. IATTC shall establish by 2025 rules, standards and procedures to monitor the transfer and caging activities.

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
 - iibis) Presentation (whole, gutted)
 - iibis) Processed weight (where applicable)
 - 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.
 9. The logbook must be filled in every day (by midnight) or before port arrival.
 10. The logbook must be numbered by sheets. Logbooks must be kept on board to cover a period of one-year operation.