

AGREEMENT ON THE INTERNATIONAL DOLPHIN CONSERVATION PROGRAM

21ST MEETING OF THE PARTIES

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COMPARISON OF ON-BOARD OBSERVER PROGRAMS IN REGIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

This document, requested by the 20th Meeting of the Parties in November 2008, presents comparisons between the observer programs of the IATTC, which include the AIDCP program, and those of other regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs).

The RFMOs considered are:

- Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), including the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP)
- International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).
- Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC).
- Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).
- Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO).
- Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR).
- Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT).

1. GENERAL

The following general considerations should be noted:

- The IATTC is the only one of these RFMOs with a regional observer program fully coordinated by the Secretariat, with its own observers and also with the participation of national programs. The programs of the other RFMOs consist of national programs which make reports to the Commission or Secretary about their activities. In some cases, short-term regional programs are created. Other organizations have general schemes with standards for the operation of national programs.
- All the tuna RFMOs except WCPFC have on-board observer programs for transshipments at sea. The CCSBT program will begin operations this year.
- The IATTC has the longest-established regional scientific and enforcement program. Some organizations do not currently have programs, but have plans for future programs.
- The IATTC, CCAMLR and NAFO have 100% coverage, but the main purpose of the latter two is enforcement. Other organizations have programs planned, but will begin with a lower rate of coverage.
- ICCAT, WCPFC, IOTC and CCSBT have some observer coverage of longline vessels, or have a program planned. The IATTC has not established a longline observer program, but some of its members do have such national programs.

2. PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES

RFMO	OBSERVER PROGRAM	PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES
IATTC	Transshipment	Monitor transshipments at sea by large-scale tuna longline vessels (LSTLVs), mainly compliance with Resolution C-08-02, and that transshipped tuna quantities are consistent with the catch reported in the IATTC transshipment declaration.
	Scientific and enforcement program	Administered by the IATTC for the AIDCP, applies to purse-seine vessels greater than 363 metric tons (t) carrying capacity. Its main purpose is monitoring the incidental catch of dolphins in the purse-seine fishery for tunas. The data collected are the basis for determining whether a Dolphin Mortality Limit (DML) has been exceeded, and is also used for scientific and research purposes, as well as for monitoring compliance with IATTC management and conservation measures.
ICCAT	Transshipment	Same objectives and purposes as IATTC and IOTC.
	Scientific and enforcement program	ICCAT intends to establish an on-board observer program for the bluefin tuna fisheries in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea, as part of the multiannual bluefin tuna recovery plan; this will enter into force in June 2009. The program aims at monitoring tuna-fishing and -farming activities involving eastern bluefin tuna.
IOTC	Transshipment	Same objectives and purposes as IATTC and ICCAT.
	Scientific and enforcement program	A regional observer scheme was established through Resolution 2009/04. Its objective is to collect verified catch data and other scientific data related to the fisheries for tuna and tuna-like species in the IOTC area. Observers aboard purse-seine vessels also monitor landings in port to identify the length composition of bigeye catches.
WCPFC	Scientific and enforcement program	Regional observer program is in the development stage. It will report on catches, compliance, science, environmental, fisheries management and monitoring of conservation and management measures.
NAFO	Scientific and enforcement program	Report on fishing activities, including vessel's position, logbook entries, catch compositions and quantity, discards, bycatches and undersized fish. Report apparent infringements to an inspection vessel and to the Secretary.
CCAMLR	Scientific and enforcement program	Report on the operation of vessels engaged in scientific research or harvesting of marine living resources in CCAMLR Area. Record details of vessel's operation; take samples of catches; record biological data, bycatches, entanglement and incidental mortality of birds and mammals, and sightings of fishing vessels in the Convention Area.
CCSBT	Transshipment	Require observers for transshipments at sea of southern bluefin tuna after April 2009. Part of a monitoring, control and surveillance regime to combat IUU fishing.
	Scientific and enforcement program	Members operate national scientific observer programs as part of the CCSBT Scientific Research Plan. The objective is to improve quality of data and information used for assessment of southern bluefin tuna.

3. COVERAGE

RFMO	OBSERVER PROGRAM	COVERAGE
IATTC	Transshipment	All carrier vessels receiving transshipments at sea of tuna-like species from LSTLVs in the IATTC Area must have an IATTC observer on board.
	Scientific and enforcement	All vessels with a carrying capacity greater than 363 t during each fishing trip in the Agreement Area must carry an observer. At least 50% of the observers on each Party's vessels must be IATTC observers; the remainder may be from the Party's national observer program.
ICCAT	Transshipment	Same coverage as IATTC and ICCAT.
	Scientific and enforcement	Coverage by national observer programs of catching vessels over 15 m in overall length actively fishing for bluefin tuna should be at least 20% of each of the following: purse-seine vessels between 15-24 m, pelagic trawlers, longline vessels, and baitboats. Coverage 100% during the harvesting process for tuna traps Full coverage by observers of purse-seine vessels over 24 m as a part of the multiannual bluefin tuna recovery plan during the open season (2 months). All purse seiners involved in joint fishing operations, regardless of the vessel length: observer must be present during fishing operations, transfers of bluefin to cages, and harvesting of fish from cages
IOTC	Transshipment	Same coverage as IATTC and ICCAT.
	Scientific and enforcement	At least 5 % of the number of operations/sets for each gear type by the fleet of each CPC while fishing in the IOTC Area for vessels 24 meters overall length and over, and under 24 meters if they fish outside their EEZs. For vessels under 24 meters that fish outside their EEZ, the 5% coverage should be achieved progressively by January 2013.
WCPFC	Scientific and enforcement	During 2009, 20% coverage of all trips by purse seiners, with 100% coverage during the closure of the fishery on FADs from 1 August to 30 September. For 2010, coverage is intended to be 100%. For longliners and other vessels, coverage is 5% of all trips.
NAFO	Scientific and enforcement	All fishing vessels must carry at least one observer at all times while fishing in the NAFO regulatory area.
CCAMLR	Scientific and enforcement	Scientific observers are currently mandatory on all finfish vessels and on all vessels engaged in new and exploratory fisheries. Observers are not mandatory on vessels fishing for Antarctic krill.
CCSBT	Transshipment	Since April 2009, all transshipments of southern bluefin tuna at sea must be observed.
	Scientific and enforcement	Coverage target of 10% for catch and effort monitoring for each fishery, with the intention of being representative of different vessel types in distinct areas/times. Actual coverage varies significantly among fleets and it has proved difficult to reach the 10% target for far-seas longline fleets.

4. OPERATION AND DURATION

RFMO	AT-SEA TRANSSHIPMENT PROGRAM	SCIENTIFIC AND ENFORCEMENT REGIONAL OBSERVER PROGRAM
IATTC	Coordinated by Secretariat; operation and logistics contracted to external consortium. Operating since January 2009.	Began in 1979; mandatory since 2000. AIDCP observer program is coordinated by IATTC Secretariat. 50% of the trips are covered by its own observers.
ICCAT	Same as IATTC and IOTC.	Not yet operative. National programs for eastern bluefin tuna will be operated by the member states;

	Operating since April 2007.	regional program will be coordinated by the Secretariat.
IOTC	Same as IATTC and ICCAT. Operating since January 2009.	Regional observer scheme would begin in July 2010, when the respective resolution enters into force. Parties are responsible for conducting the program.
WCPFC	None	Due to begin in 2009. National and subregional programs supply observers for the regional program; the Secretariat assists with coordination, and ensures that observers are certified to Commission standards.
NAFO	None	Began in 1990; since 1997 coverage is 100%. Parties have the primary responsibility for hiring independent observers and for conducting the program.
CCAMLR	None	Began in 1992. Member States are responsible for designating observers on vessels and for the submission of data. Secretary is responsible for subsequent processing, and analysis of data, and for reporting to the Commission.
CCSBT	Coordinated by the Secretary; will probably involve use of IOTC and ICCAT programs. Due to begin in April 2009.	Member States are responsible for observers aboard their vessels. Standards for the observer program adopted in 2003.

5. BUDGETS

RFMO	TRANSSHIPMENT PROGRAM	SCIENTIFIC AND ENFORCEMENT REGIONAL OBSERVER PROGRAM
IATTC	Annual budget approximately US\$ 650,000; paid by participating CPCs.	Annual budget approximately US\$ 1,985,000; paid by the industry and IATTC members.
ICCAT	2008-2009 fiscal year budget €528,603; paid by participating CPCs.	Program for eastern bluefin tuna will be financed by the vessels and farms involved. Costs not available.
IOTC	Paid for by participating CPCs. Costs not available.	Cost would be met by each CPC. Costs not available.
WCPFC		Cost of coordinating and managing the program is borne by the Commission's annual budget (US\$ 125,000). Placement of observers and their travel costs are expected to be covered by arrangements between flag States and the national and subregional observer programs; expected costs about US\$4–6 million.
NAFO		Observers paid for by sending Party (member wishing to place an observer on the vessel of another member). Costs not available.
CCAMLR		Costs associated with placing observers on vessels are usually managed through bilateral agreements between the member to whose vessel observer is assigned (receiving member), and the member that wishes to place an observer on the vessel of other member (designating member). Costs not available.
CCSBT	Paid for by participating CPCs. Costs not available.	Paid for by the member States; costs not available.