

INTERNATIONAL DOLPHIN CONSERVATION PROGRAM
WORKING GROUP TO PROMOTE AND PUBLICIZE THE
AIDCP DOLPHIN SAFE TUNA CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

8TH MEETING

Del Mar, California (USA)
24 October 2006

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Approval of the minutes of the 7th meeting
4. Actions to promote AIDCP dolphin safe tuna certification system
5. Other business
6. Date and place of next meeting
7. Adjournment

1. Opening of the meeting

Dr. Robin Allen, Director of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, opened the meeting on the afternoon of 24 October. Dr. Guillermo Compeán, Chair of the working group, presided over the meeting. The attendees are listed in Appendix 1.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was approved as presented

3. Approval of the minutes of the 7th meeting

The minutes of the 7th meeting of the working group were approved with two corrections relating to item 4.

4. Actions to promote the AIDCP dolphin safe certification system

El Salvador submitted to the Chair of the Working Group, for distribution to the participants, letters prepared by eight Latin American countries during a recent regional meeting in El Salvador, which have been sent to the Secretaries of Commerce and of State of the United States (Appendix 2).

Costa Rica clarified that it did not sign the letters because it did not attend the aforementioned meeting, but that it supported the contents of the letters and would arrange to have Costa Rica sign them.

The United States commented that it would have a response to the letter as soon as possible. It also updated the meeting on the status of the litigation regarding the dolphin safe label in the United States.

Mexico reported on a resolution, adopted by a recent meeting of the Organización Latinoamericana de Desarrollo Pesquero (OLDEPESCA), that contains a position similar to the letter circulated by El Salvador.

Following this presentation, the United States commented that it was troubled by a suggestion in the OLDEPESCA resolution that the United States is not living up to its obligations under the AIDCP, one which it categorically rejected. Mexico noted that it has a different view on this point, but did not wish to debate this matter now in this forum.

5. Other business

Mexico commented that the dolphin safe material on the IATTC website needed to be updated.

6. Date and place of next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the working group would take place on 18 June 2007, at a venue to be determined.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.

Appendix 1.

ATTENDEES - ASISTENTES

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Appendix 2.

El Salvador, September 25, 2006

CONDOLEEZA RICE
Secretary of State
United States of America

Madam Secretary:

It is a pleasure to convey our regards and, at the same time, to call to your attention an issue that is of utmost importance to the US and the subscribing Latinamerican nations, in the fisheries, environmental and socioeconomic areas as they relate to tuna fishing, dolphin conservation and the protection of the maritime ecosystem of the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

As you know, since we have addressed this issue with your government in the past, 15 countries including the United States of America, have legally subscribed to the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP), which has served to successfully achieve responsible fishery practices, effectively accomplishing with transparency and through scientific evidence both the sustainability of the tuna fishery and the integral protection of the different species of the marine ecosystem, especially dolphins; for this reason, this Agreement has achieved the recognition of international organizations such as the United Nations Organization for Food and Agriculture (FAO) and of well known environmental NGOs, amongst others.

The signatory countries of the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP) have committed themselves since 1991 to the implementation of the "dolphin safe" concept that is within the subscribed fishery agreements, and even though the United States has conducted activities tending to comply with its obligations, including with the participation in the judicial process, to date the US maintains a "dolphin safe" definition different from that of the Agreement, which impedes the effective access of our tuna products and limits the implementation of the free trade agreements that have been signed with your country.

The adoption and implementation in the United States of the agreed "dolphin safe" concept that is established in the agreement would not only permit the continuity of the

AIDCP, but also would provide effective access to the U.S. market, removing unfair trade barriers.

Despite the continuous efforts that our governments and industries have made to comply with the Agreement, the acceptance of tuna in the United States is significantly limited if it lacks the "dolphin safe" label. Without which it is discriminated against, impeding sales on an equal basis, and affecting the competitiveness of our products in the U.S. market which, in turn, generates a negative impact in the development of our fishery industries since the U.S. market is one objective of many of the countries signing this letter.

We consider that while the internal process continues in the United States to implement the "dolphin safe" concept, which has been going on for more than 10 years now, our tuna fisheries development cannot continue to be allowed to be significantly affected. For this reason we formally request the government of the United States to publicly and proactively establish its position before the relevant private entities of your country related to tuna trade.

This would contribute notably to stop the continued deterioration of our industries resulting from the U.S. perception that the tuna fishing activities in our countries are not sustainable and do not respect the marine environment, and that the U.S. government is opposed to it. This in light that U.S. commercial companies on many occasions have shown their interest in purchasing the product but only if it is consistent with the policy of their own government.

We consider that the problem described above can be resolved through educational events in the United States, just like the ones that have successfully been organized by other governments members of the AIDCP, but only so long as the event is organized and conducted under the leadership of the government of the host country.

In order to support you in accomplishing the above described event, our countries are very well prepared to assist you with its organization. We think these events could initially take place in Washington D.C., on the soonest date possible.

Sincerely,