

AGREEMENT ON THE INTERNATIONAL DOLPHIN CONSERVATION PROGRAM

23rd MEETING OF THE PARTIES

Antigua, Guatemala
24 September 2010; 9:00

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

AGENDA

	Documents
1. Opening of meeting	
2. Election of Chairman	
3. Adoption of agenda	
4. Approval of the minutes of the 22 nd Meeting of the Parties	
5. Secretariat's Report on the IDCP	MOP-23-05
6. AIDCP budget	MOP-23-06
7. 'Ecosystem-friendly' certification system	MOP-22-06
8. Report of the International Review Panel	
9. Captain training seminars	
10. Other business	
11. Place and date of next meeting	
12. Adjournment	

The 23rd Meeting of the Parties to the AIDCP was held in Antigua, Guatemala, on 24 September 2010. The attendees are listed in Appendix 1.

1. Opening of the meeting

The meeting was opened by Dr. Guillermo Compeán, Director of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC).

2. Election of Chairman

Mr. Bradley Wiley, of the United States, was elected Chair of the meeting.

3. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted with two additional items requested by Mexico under *Other business*, on the level of coverage by observers, and on night sets. It was noted that the meeting should not formally adjourn before receiving the report of the Joint Working Group on Fishing by Non-Parties, which would meet the following day.

4. Approval of the minutes of the 22nd Meeting of the Parties

The minutes of the 22nd Meeting of the Parties were approved, with a correction by the United States in the list of attendees.

5. Secretariat's Report on the IDCP

Dr. Compeán presented Document [MOP-23-05](#), noting that in 2009 100% of the trips by class-6 vessels were covered by observers, and no vessel exceeded its DML. The number of sets on dolphins increased 18%, from 9,246 in 2008 to 10,910 in 2009, but the mortality of dolphins per set fell from 0.13 to 0.11 during that period.

6. AIDCP budget

Ms. Nora Roa-Wade, of the Secretariat, presented Document [MOP-23-06](#). The AIDCP has been in deficit for several years; the Secretariat has cut costs where possible, but there are fixed costs that cannot be reduced, and the funds received are insufficient to cover costs. The Secretariat was therefore requesting a minimal increase of USD 1.55 per cubic meter of vessel well volume, from USD 14.95 to 16.15. If this were not approved, the IATTC could be asked to increase its share of the observer budget from 30% to 40%, in order to keep the program solvent.

Several delegations stated that they could not approve the requested increase, and brought up the possibility of reducing the coverage by observers from 100%. The European Union (EU) noted that this was a burden for the vessels that do not fish on dolphins, and that 100% coverage is not necessary for such vessels, and suggested that a requirement of 50% coverage would be suitable.

Panama asked about the proportions of the observers' work that are for the IATTC and the AIDCP, respectively, and Dr. Compeán responded that the IATTC has been calling upon observers to do more and more work, especially since observers report on compliance with IATTC measures.

Mexico pointed out that dolphin-related matters are not as critically important as in the past, and suggested that coverage could be reduced by a greater use of Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) as an alternative for verifying compliance.

The United States acknowledged the success of the AIDCP, but noted that 100% observer coverage was a critical element of this success, and was not in agreement with reducing that level of coverage.

Colombia asked whether the coverage by national programs could be increased and that organized by the Secretariat reduced; the Secretariat clarified that, because fixed costs would remain unchanged, this would not significantly affect the budget.

Finally, the Parties did not approve the increase in vessel fees requested by the Secretariat, but decided that the efforts to reduce costs should continue.

7. 'Ecosystem-friendly' certification system

Mr. Brian Hallman, Deputy Director of the IATTC, presented Document [MOP-22-06](#), noting that the idea of an ecosystem-friendly certification system had been discussed at previous meetings of the Parties. He explained that the Secretariat's paper at that meeting put forward the possibility of implementing the certification in two stages, and that in the first stage the following elements would be requirements for certification:

1. No tuna would be certified unless the IATTC has a resolution in force, based upon a scientific recommendation, for the conservation and management of yellowfin and bigeye tuna.
2. Only tuna tracked by the current AIDCP system for tracking and verifying tuna would be eligible for certification.
3. Only tuna caught by vessels with an observer on board would be eligible for certification.
4. Tuna would be certified only if meets the criterion that it was not caught in contravention of any AIDCP measures or any IATTC measures on conservation of yellowfin and bigeye tuna.
5. The fishing captain aboard the vessel is on the AIDCP list of qualified captains.

Mexico expressed its general support for the approach outlined in the Secretariat's paper, commenting that the next step would be to define the parameters of "ecosystem safe" for purposes of an AIDCP resolution.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mexico advised that it was willing to work with the Secretariat on a concrete proposal for the next meeting of the Parties.

The United States commented that any paper elaborating the meaning of the term "ecosystem safe" should take into account work examining the ecosystem impacts of different fisheries that is being done, or has been done, including work completed outside the Commission. The United States was aware of some work being prepared for publication that concludes that evaluating ecological tradeoffs between different fishing types is complicated, and identifying one fishing type as being more "ecosystem safe" than another might not be as clear as some Parties believed. The United States had also made extensive comments at the 22nd Meeting of the Parties in October 2009 regarding the proposed "ecosystem friendly" certification, and its concerns were summarized in Appendix 2 of the minutes of that meeting.

8. Report of the International Review Panel

Mr. Jeremy Rusin, coordinator of the 48th Meeting del IRP, presented his report, indicating that the IRP had decided to present the following recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties:

1. The Secretariat should explore funding options for measures to explain and promote the AIDCP dolphin safe tuna program.
2. AIDCP Parties should seek the support of environmental non-governmental organizations for the AIDCP dolphin safe tuna program.
3. The Secretariat should remind the national observer programs of the importance of observers leaving a copy of the Tuna Tracking Form (TTF) with the fishing captain of the vessel if the national authority is not present to collect it.
4. Governments should ensure that TTFs are delivered in the agreed manner and in accordance with the agreed schedule.
5. The approval of DMLs for 2011 should be handled by correspondence.
6. A meeting of the IATTC Secretariat and representatives of the national observer programs should be convened to review procedures for training fishing captains.

The Meeting of the Parties approved these recommendations.

9. Captain training seminars

The Secretariat explained that this matter was addressed during the meeting of the IRP, and that its recommendation was to convene a meeting of representatives of the national observer programs and the Secretariat to review the existing procedures.

10. Other business

On-board observers. The Secretariat advised that it could not recommend any change in observer coverage relative to compliance, but that it would prepare a document on the level of observer coverage necessary to maintain high scientific quality of the data collected. This document would be presented to the Scientific Advisory Board for its consideration.

Night sets. Mexico requested that, in order to present an informed proposal, the Secretariat evaluate the impact on dolphin mortality of increasing by 30 minutes the time for determining whether a set was a night set, and also requested information on dolphin mortality in sets defined as night sets. It was agreed by the meeting that the Secretariat should prepare this information before the next meeting of the Parties.

11. Place and date of next meeting

The next Meeting of the Parties will take place in October 2011..

12. Adjournment

The adjournment of the meeting was left pending the report of the Chair of the Joint Working Group on fishing by non-Parties.

Appendix 1.

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