

MINUTES OF THE XXII INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF YELLOWFIN TUNA, TOKYO, JAPAN, OCTOBER 18, 1978

1. Opening

The meeting was called to order by the provisional President, Kúnio Yonezawa (Japan), in the morning of Wednesday, October 18, 1978.

2. Credentials Committee

Following the suggestion of the provisional President, Panama and Canada were appointed to scrutinize the credentials of the participating delegations. The List of Attendees is included as Annex A.

3. President

Kunio Yonezawa (Japan) was unanimously elected to preside over the meeting.

Rapporteur

James Drewry (United States) was unanimously elected Rapporteur for the meeting.

4. Adoption of the Agenda and Organization of Work.

The Provisional Agenda (Annex B) was adopted as proposed.

5. Review of the problems and proceedings associated with the implementation of IATTC recommendations, and
6. Consideration of the possible cooperative arrangements to improve the accomplishments of the conservation measures recommended by the IATTC (discussed together)

The Canadian delegation reported that six large vessels were operated in the fishery in 1977 and 1978. A radio station was designated for vessel reporting while fishing was being conducted outside the CYRA during the closed season. Any transshipments of catches were inspected by a Canadian official, and landings, whether direct or transshipped, were monitored at the cannery in Canada for species composition, quantity and fish size. Logbooks were collected and scrutinized routinely.

The delegation of Japan indicated that during the first half of 1978 there were forty Japanese long-liners in the fishery, but no Japanese purse seiners have operated in the CYRA since February 1976. All vessels of Japan are required to submit a report on their catch every few days. During 1977 Japanese vessels caught approximately 950 tons of yellowfin and no skipjack tuna.

The Mexican delegation reported a negligible increase in carrying capacity as a result of the addition of two bait boats to the Mexican tuna fleet. The reporting system was altered to permit better verification of catches. The Mexican delegation reported no violations during the reporting period.

The delegation of Panama reported that the government was not aware of any violations and that the catch of its vessels had decreased in the past year.

The United States delegation reported that 1977 was an easier year for enforcement since the fleet was inactive during a number of months and as a result the open season lasted nearly all year. The small boat allocation for the year was never reached. During the reporting period the United States continued its inspection programs, traveling to Costa Rica in some instances to inspect the catch of U.S. vessels. In addition, vessels of the U.S. fishing outside the CYRA during the closed season were required to report daily by radio concerning their location. If any U.S. vessels come from outside the CYRA to fish inside the CYRA they must first come to port to have their holds sealed, to facilitate verification of compliance with the 15% incidental catch limit on yellowfin. Finally, the United States proposed the continuation for 1979 of the special

allocation to the U.S. of 1,000 tons of yellowfin tuna for U.S. porpoise research after closure of the CYRA open season. In support of this proposal the United States made a detailed background statement (Annex C). At the suggestion of the President, the United States agreed to postpone consideration of the U.S. proposal for a special 1,000 ton porpoise research allocation.

The delegations for Costa Rica, France, and Nicaragua made no statement.

7. Consideration of the measures related to the implementation of the IATTC recommendations for 1979

The United States delegation proposed for 1979 the same conservation measures adopted for 1978, i.e., the same overall quota and special closed season quotas.

The Mexican delegation announced its continued resolve to withdraw from the IATTC, effective November 8, 1978. Mexico emphasized its determination to establish an international regime to succeed the IATTC system which would reflect evolving principles of international law in the Law of the Sea Conference, in particular the concept of the exclusive economic zone. Mexico proposed that the new regime take into account these new legal patterns and

reflect highly migratory habits of tuna in the Eastern Pacific. Mexico briefly summarized the efforts over the past year to develop a new treaty which, in Mexico's view, would benefit all users and coastal countries. Mexico announced that, until a new regime is established within several months, it is the aim of the Mexican government to contribute to IATTC goals of maximum productivity. Without being legally bound and only as a unilateral decision and in recognition of the imminent prospect of a new treaty, Mexico further stated that it would conform to IATTC recommendations. For the coming year, Mexico noted that Mexican vessels will take 30,000 metric tons of yellowfin tuna, an amount which corresponds approximately to the fleet's present capacity. The Mexican delegation submitted a full written statement for attachment to the minutes (Annex D).

The Costa Rica delegation made a full statement of its intended activities during the coming months (Annex E). Costa Rica noted its historic attitude toward the conservation of yellowfin tuna as evidenced by its being an original signatory to the present IATTC Convention. It was further noted that in 1975 Costa Rica decided to establish an exclusive economic zone in accordance with emerging principles at the Law of the Sea Conference. It was pointed

out that upon taking office in 1978 the new Costa Rican President declared the importance of marine resources to his country. Costa Rica stressed its recognition that cooperation is needed regarding management of tuna resources; therefore, Costa Rica has worked hard to achieve a new international regime. The Costa Rican report summarized the various efforts made by Costa Rica and other governments to establish a regime to succeed the IATTC. For the coming year Costa Rica will require that other nations' vessels have a Costa Rican fishing license before fishing within its exclusive economic zone. In addition, Costa Rica will catch 22,000 metric tons of yellowfin tuna in its zone, an amount equal to the average catch of tuna in its zone by the international fleet in recent years. Costa Rica reemphasized that it will cease to be a member of the IATTC in April 1979. Nevertheless, Costa Rica stated its hope that by then a new agreement will have been concluded.

The United States delegation pointed out the well known fact that the legal position of the United States differs from that of other IATTC member countries regarding jurisdiction over highly migratory tuna. The United States indicated that it has worked hard to try to negotiate a new agreement which would satisfy the needs and interests of all the parties. It was noted that everyone would prefer to see

the avoidance of unilateral protective steps by each country. The U.S. delegation also observed that it seemed, in light of the statements of Mexico and Costa Rica, that it was not possible at present to agree on a conservation resolution for 1979. Action on a conservation program appears likely now only after it has been determined what progress can be made on the new treaty. The United States delegation stated its confidence that efforts will continue in the final months of the year and in early 1979 to conclude a new agreement.

In response to the United States proposal for later resolution of a 1979 conservation program, since a basis for agreement was lacking, it was agreed that a conservation and management program for 1979 would not be decided at this time.

8. Other Matters

There were no other matters discussed.

9. Closure

The President adjourned the twenty-second intergovernmental meeting for the conservation of yellowfin tuna in the afternoon of Wednesday, October 18.