

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

98TH MEETING

(by videoconference)
23-27 August 2021

PROPOSAL IATTC-98 A-2

SUBMITTED BY ECUADOR

**AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION C-11-08 ON SCIENTIFIC OBSERVERS
FOR LONGLINE VESSELS**

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

IATTC Resolution C-11-08 requires a 5% observer coverage of the fishing effort made by longline fishing vessels greater than 20 meters length overall.

Taking into account that the 2019 staff recommendation on management and data collection (Document IATTC-94-03), item 7.2.1 “*Longline fishery observer coverage*”, states the following:

“Resolution C-11-08 requires that at least 5% of the fishing effort by longline vessels greater than 20 m length overall (LOA) carry a scientific observer. However, 5% coverage is too low for calculating accurate estimates of the catches of species caught infrequently in those fisheries, such as some sharks of conservation concern; 20% coverage is considered the minimum level required for such estimates. Both the staff and the SAC have recommended that this level of coverage be adopted for longline vessels over 20 m LOA (SAC-10 INF-H).”

Taking into consideration the recommendations of the Working Group on Bycatch to the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) at its meeting in May 2019, particularly item 1: “*Revise Resolution C-11-08 to increase longline observer coverage on vessels >20 m LOA to 20% and consider ways to supplement observer requirements with electronic monitoring.*”

Furthermore, the recommendations of the tenth meeting of the SAC, Document IATTC-94-02, Section 3. “*Data*”, item 3.1.a. “*Electronic Monitoring*”, recommends the following:

*“The SAC recommends that the Electronic Monitoring (EM) initiatives implemented on purse seiners, both Classes 1-5 and Class 6, which will improve data collection for the purse-seine fleet, **are also tested in the longline fleet.**”*

Noting that 100% of the large purse-seine vessels that fish in the Convention Area are required to carry a scientific observer aboard, in accordance with the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program. In addition, some CPCs’ shipowners of purse-seine vessels smaller than Class 6 make economic efforts to provide information on their activities and carry observers aboard in support of scientific research.

In this context, it is considered essential that the current resolution be modified to accommodate a complete observer coverage, whether by humans or by electronic means, which is an important action to measure effort in fishing days of the longline tuna fishery.

RESOLUTION C-21-XX

AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION C-11-08 ON SCIENTIFIC OBSERVERS FOR LONGLINE VESSELS

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in Bilbao, Spain, on the occasion of its 94th Meeting:

Recognizing the need to collect better scientific information on target species as well as comprehensive data on interactions with non-target species, in particular, sea turtles, sharks and seabirds;

Noting the considerations of Parties with extensive longline fisheries and the need to ensure uniform and equitable treatment of all tuna-fishing vessels operating in the Convention Area;

Noting that large purse-seine vessels operating in the Antigua Convention Area are required to carry 100% scientific observers aboard, in accordance with the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program;

Acknowledging that some CPCs' shipowners of purse-seine vessels smaller than Class 6 make economic efforts to provide information on their activities and carry observers aboard in support of scientific research.

Taking into account the recommendations of the staff, Scientific Advisory Committee and Working Group on Bycatch at their meeting in 2019 and the considerations of their CPCs:

Agrees that:

1. Each Member and Cooperating non-Member (CPC) shall ensure that active longline vessels greater than 20 meters length overall carry human observers or electronic monitoring systems, in accordance with the following timeline:

1 January 2022	10%
1 January 2023	20%
1 January 2024	50%
1 January 2025	100%

2. The fishing effort shall be determined by the number of fishing days.
3. The main task of the scientific observers or the electronic monitoring systems shall be to record any available biological information, the catches of targeted fish species, species composition and any available biological information as well as any interactions with non-target species such as sea turtles, seabirds and sharks; and, when appropriate, to apply the mitigation measures agreed by the Commission in a timely and accurate manner.

4. When the results of the electronic monitoring program are notified, the margin of error inherent in the technical specifications of the system onboard, which shall not exceed a range of +/- 5%, shall also be reported.
5. With this information, the State/CPC authorities shall provide a report on the catching vessel, including the following documents: a) technical report on the remote monitoring system used; b) general information on date and location (longitude and latitude), species, statistics on length distribution, average size and weight.
6. The aforementioned video recordings shall also be available for analysis by the Commission and each CPC shall establish the necessary measures to prevent any replacement, editing or manipulation.
7. Each CPC shall update the list of its vessels by specifically indicating which vessels are active and the percentage of observers aboard and/or remote monitoring systems, in addition to inactive and/or sunk vessels.
8. The Director, in cooperation with the scientific staff and the Scientific Advisory Committee, shall review the reporting format detailing the required data to be collected by scientific observers or by electronic methods of remote monitoring and video cameras on longline vessels, and shall communicate it to the Commission.
9. Scientific observers shall submit to their flag CPC authorities a report on these observations at the latest 30 days after the end of each fishing trip.
10. Every year, CPCs shall submit to the Scientific Advisory Committee, through the Director, by 31 March, the scientific observers' information on the previous year's fishery in a format established by the Scientific Advisory Committee.
11. Provisionally adopt the definitions contained in Annex 1 of Document EMS-01-01 prepared by the IATTC scientific staff for longline vessels.
12. That the Electronic Monitoring System (EMS) work plan detailed in Document EMS-01-02 for longline vessels, proposed by the IATTC Secretariat, be implemented provisionally, and that a working group be created to follow up and make any necessary modifications.
13. That the IATTC scientific staff, in consultation with CPCs and stakeholders, within 90 days of the adoption of this resolution, develop Terms of Reference for the implementation of workshops on electronic monitoring for longline vessels.