

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

94TH MEETING

Bilbao, Spain, 22-26 July 2019

PROPOSAL IATTC-94 E-4

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-19-XX

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

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in Bilbao, Spain ~~La Jolla, California (USA)~~, on the occasion of its ~~93~~⁴~~th~~ 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:

~~*Taking into account* that 5% observer coverage of high-seas fishing operations was noted as the initial level at the Kobe II workshop on Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance, held in Barcelona, Spain, in June 2010;~~

Agrees that:

1. Each Member and cooperating non-Member (CPCs) shall ensure that, from 1 January 2020, at least 5% of the fishing effort made by its longline fishing vessels greater than 20 metres length overall carry 100% observers, either human observers of electronic monitoring systems. ~~In 2014, based on the results of the observer programs, the Secretariat, after consulting the Scientific Advisory Committee, will recommend to the Commission on the efficiency level needed to accomplish the objectives of this Resolution, and particularly on the potential increase of the required coverage rate. This coverage rate shall be then subject to the approval of the Commission at the corresponding ordinary meeting.~~

~~2. The Scientific Advisory Committee shall indicate, at its 2012 session, how fishing effort should be determined (sets, fishing days, number of vessels or other alternative options).~~

~~3. Each CPC shall endeavor to ensure that observer coverage will be representative of the activities of its fleet.~~

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.