



Dear Delegates,

The vessel owners and industry participants of **OPAGAC** submit this letter to request additional support from CPCs for measures that will further tuna conservation at the Commission meeting beginning 23 August, 2021.

COVID-19 continues to present unprecedented economic and social impacts on the fishery sector in the Pacific Ocean. However, we do not believe that these current circumstances should prevent the IATTC from taking action to ensure sustainable management of tuna stocks and marine ecosystems.

Management measures for tropical tunas

- Adopt a multi-year (2022-2024) conservation measure and effective plan to reduce the fishing mortality of bigeye and yellowfin tunas. This measure should include additional measures for FAD management (see below).
- Continue improving stock assessments and risk analysis for tropical tunas, requesting the IATTC Secretariat to carry out stock assessment of skipjack and bigeye tunas in 2022.
- Finalize a management plan to eliminate overcapacity in its convention area.¹

Comprehensive, precautionary harvest strategies

- Conduct a management strategy evaluation (MSE) for tropical tunas.
- Encourage the Commission to continue to support efforts to accelerate the MSE process, as several fisheries already certified or under assessment rely on this process.

FAD management best practices

- Continue working on the development of science-based limits on active FADs per vessel.
- Adopt FAD marking standards, recovery policies, and other best practices.
- Require the provision of FAD position data.
- Adopt a clear mandate for fleets to transition to bioFADs, with a timeline of three years.

Observer coverage in industrial tuna fisheries

- Adopt a 100% observer coverage requirement (human and/or electronic) for industrial tuna fleets.
- Adopt the electronic monitoring (EM) system work plan (detailed in EMS-01-02)

Additional topics

- Require cooperating parties to submit a compliance action plan for identified infractions to improve transparency.
- Adopt port state measures at the regional level and ask all members to ratify the 2009 FAO PSMA.
- Implement the scientific staffs' recommendation for fleets to improve shark fishery data collection.
- Request all IATTC contracting parties to ratify the ILO *Work in Fishing Convention* (C-188).

¹ Here we call attention to the European Union and Japan proposals, which can be frameworks to resume deliberations.

To date, **OPAGAC** has completed actions to achieve conservation outcomes within the IATTC. Examples include:

- Adopted a “Code of Good Practices for Purse Seining”, which is now implementing fully across the fleet. This Code includes provisions on:
 - The design and use of FADs that do not entangle endangered, threatened, or protected species;
 - The development and application of releasing techniques that minimize risk to associated species and optimize their survival. This includes gear provided specifically for species’ release’
 - The application of a FAD management system through the implementation of a FAD logbook and requirement for a responsible use of FADs during its lifetime;
 - 100% observer coverage;
 - Training for captains, crew and scientific observers; and
 - Scientific verification of activities related with good practices and continuous revision by a steering committee
- Released eight years of data from the fleet’s FADs, which included information on geolocation and the presence and abundance of fish underneath them. This information will enable scientists to assess fishing effort, species abundance, and fishing impacts on the marine ecosystem, which therefore leads to more informed management decisions;
- Participated in a trial project to test materials and design prototypes for non-entangling, biodegradable FADs (bioFADs).
- Participated in a project to develop and test new tools and methods to release sharks and rays that both maximize the survival of the species and ensure the safety of the crew.
- Received a Responsible Tuna Fishing (APR) certification for compliance with the on-board working conditions required by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in its *Work in Fishing Convention* ([2007, No. 188](#))