

124

THIRD MEETING  
INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA  
September 1, 1951

The third meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission was held at the San Diego Club, San Diego, California beginning at 10:15 a.m., Saturday, September 1, 1951.

Present were: Mr. José L. Cardona-Cooper, Chairman, and Mr. Victor Nigro of the Costa Rican Section; Mr. Eugene D. Bennett, Mr. Lee F. Payne and Mr. Gordon W. Sloan of the United States section; Congressmen John J. Allen and Clinton D. McKinnon; several members of the U.S. advisory committee; Dr. M. B. Schaefer, Director of Investigations for the Commission; and others.

Mr. Cardona-Cooper spoke briefly, transmitting a cordial message from his country and welcoming all the observers and visitors attending the session. Dispensing with further opening speeches, the Commission proceeded to consider matters on the agenda.

Review of Investigations during 1951

The Chairman asked the Director of Investigations to review briefly the progress of work since the initiation of investigations in January 1951. Dr. Schaefer stated that: It is probably unnecessary to go into any great detail, except in answer to any questions that might be asked, because the Commissioners and Advisors have received periodic progress reports on the investigations. Due to the very limited funds made available by the U.S. Government, which were considerably less than were anticipated, it has not been possible to proceed with the investigations outlined and approved at the last meeting in Costa Rica. It was, therefore, deemed advisable to confine the limited available effort to beginning two of the most important phases of the program, namely the institution of a system of collecting data on the past and present operations of the fleet, and some preliminary studies of bait-fishes by means of samples of the bait catches collected through the cooperation of the fleet.

We have had printed and have put aboard vessels of the clipper fleet logbooks which are being kept by most of the captains, showing details of their operations, where they fish and bait, the kind and amount of bait they catch, the kind and amount of tuna they catch, and so on. We are also collecting information from logbooks which many of the boats have kept in past years. This is one of the most important phases of the research program, because it provides information on the basis of which we can determine in just what parts of the sea the tunas are caught and in what quantities. From comparing the quantities with the effort expended in catching them, we can arrive at measurements of abundance, and determine the variations of abundance from one area to another and from one year to another, and so arrive at a determination of the yield in relation to the size of the stocks of fish. This work has, so far,

been confined to the bait-boat fleet, because we have not had personnel available to cover the purse-seine fleet at San Pedro. We have, however, contacted a number of the purse-seine skippers and have discussed the matter with Mr. John Real of the Purse Seine Vessel Owners Association and other interested persons, and we are sure that the purse-seine fleet will be as cooperative as the bait-boat fleet has been. We will extend the coverage to the purse-seine fleet this coming year.

The second project we have started is getting information on the kinds and sizes of bait that are being taken by the fleet, and material for determining whether the bait-fish from each region are or are not independent racially from those of other regions. Quite a number of boats of the fleet are regularly bringing back samples of the bait they catch. We examine these at our laboratories. This kind of sampling has great advantages for some of our problems, but it also has two drawbacks. One is that the fleet takes only certain sizes of fish, and the other is that they frequent certain baiting grounds at particular seasons and don't go to them at other seasons. Therefore, these collections will have to be supplemented later by our own collections to provide the missing data. This has, however, given us a start at small expense on an important part of our research program.

Mr. Sloan asked about the amount of logbook data available for past years and the amount of work that will be required to catalogue it. It was replied that there is a very large amount of information in the log books of past years operations. The log books are borrowed from their owners and the information abstracted.

In order not to keep the books very long, which would be objectionable to the owners, who need them for reference, there is being set up a system of microfilming them so that clerical people may be put to work abstracting from the microfilm copies. It is estimated that there will be about three man-years of clerical work in getting the information abstracted and tabulated in a form suitable for analysis.

Mr. Bennett asked as to the use that is being or has been made of information obtained by the Division of Fish and Game of the State of California. Dr. Schaefer said that the research work of the Commission is being planned in as close cooperation as possible with the research of the California State Fisheries Laboratory, and that arrangements have only very recently been completed whereby the staff of the Commission may use the catch-statistics which have been gathered for some years by the State. It was pointed out by Mr. Payne that the reason for the delay in this regard is the legal requirement that such State records be kept completely confidential. It was emphasized in further discussion that the Commission is carefully maintaining, and will continue to so maintain, the security of such records, not only the statistical data obtained from the State of California, but also the information obtained from vessel logbooks, cannery records, and other sources. The Commission adopted at the last meeting a regulation to provide for the complete security of such information. The records are available only to the members of the scientific staff working with them.

Program of Investigations for 1952

The Commission proceeded to consider the work program for the current fiscal year. The Director had submitted a list of projects, work on which might be undertaken on a budget of \$150,000, with suggested priorities assigned in the event of a lesser amount (most recent information indicated that the budget will be not over \$125,000 and could be as little as \$80,000 or \$90,000.) These are:

1. Continuation of the compilation and analysis of catch statistics, logbook records and other information respecting success of fishing for bait-fish and tunas, and the measurement of changes in abundance and yield.....PRIORITY ONE.
2. Continuation of investigations of the biology and utilization of bait species by means of information and samples of the catch obtained through the cooperation of the fleet.....PRIORITY ONE.
3. Establishment of a regional laboratory at Puntarenas for studies of biology and ecology of bait species and certain biological studies of tunas.....PRIORITY ONE.
4. Collection of materials on tuna biology by means of regular examination of landings at San Diego, San Pedro and Puntarenas..... PRIORITY TWO.
5. Preliminary work on observations of tuna biology at sea from fishing boats, and development of tagging methods.....PRIORITY THREE.
6. Preliminary studies of the physical and chemical oceanography of our region of investigations--
  - a) Assembly and analysis of existing information.....PRIORITY TWO ✓
  - b) Collection of new data.....PRIORITY THREE

In answer to questions by the Commissioners, Dr. Schaefer stated that: On a budget of \$125,000 it will not be possible to do worthwhile work on all the items of this program, and it will be necessary to cut out part of the priority three work. If less than \$125,000 is available it will be possible to do only the priority one and two items. The priority one items alone will require an expenditure of about \$75,000.

Dr. Schaefer also stated that the work on physical and chemical oceanography during the current year was contemplated to take advantage of a unique opportunity to obtain a great deal of required information at low cost by participating in an expedition planned by the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, in and near the sea areas of interest to the Commission, which is being financed by the Office of Naval Research. It was tentatively planned that the Commission would defray a part of the vessel expenses and some of the cost of analysis of data in order to obtain observations of particular value to the elucidation of problems connected with the tuna fisheries. Most recent discussions have been to the effect that it might be more feasible to put whatever funds can be made

available into data analysis alone. Dr. Revelle, Director of Scripps Institution, confirmed this and went on to urge the Commission to take advantage of this opportunity, because it will enable the Commission to obtain information for a few thousand dollars that would cost hundreds of thousands if it were undertaken by the Commission itself. He stated that the expenditure of some funds for data analysis, the direction in which Scripps would require some financial assistance, would enable the expedition, for which the vessel operating expenses can be defrayed entirely from Navy funds, to pay particular attention to our area of interest, on the basis that they are interested in exploring the whole ocean, and will be most interested in working first in that part of the ocean information regarding which will be put to maximum use.

In light of Dr. Revelle's statement, it was recommended by Dr. Schaefer that the suggested priority of the items above listed be modified to assign to both parts of item 6 priority TWO and reduce item 4 to priority THREE. A further consideration in respect to this was brought out that the scientists of the California State Fisheries Laboratory are already doing some tuna sampling at San Pedro, and since this limited work is being done on item 4, further delay by the Commission is less serious than would otherwise be the case.

After further discussion among the Commissioners and members of the Advisory Committee, there was made and seconded the following motion which was unanimously carried: That there is approved the work program presented for fiscal year 1952, with first priority in the expenditure of available funds to be given to items 1, 2, and 3 of the list presented, second priority to be given to item 6, and third priority to be given to items 4 and 5; this assignment of priority to item 6 being conditional upon suitable planning and arrangement to be worked out between the Commission (through Dr. Schaefer) and Scripps Institution; permitting such further shifting of priorities as may be required.

#### Program of Investigations and Budget for 1953

The program of investigations drafted by the Director had been previously transmitted to the Commissioners and members of the Advisory Committee, together with estimates for the budget required to support it. This program of investigations and budget were discussed as the next item of business. It was pointed out that the program of investigations to be undertaken during 1952 under the very limited funds approved by the United States is inadequate to fulfill the commitments made by the United States under the Treaty. It is proposed during 1953 to put the Commission in a position to conduct full scale investigations needed to fulfill the requirements of the Treaty.

After discussion of the program and the budget, there was made, seconded, and unanimously passed the following motion: That the Commission approves the program of investigations prepared by the Director and previously transmitted to the Commission, a copy of which is to be appended to the minutes of this meeting. To carry out this program of investigations, and for other joint expenses of the Commission, it is hereby recommended that the budget for the period July 1, 1952 through June 30, 1953 be in the amount of \$424,000. The Director of Investigations is instructed to transmit detailed estimates and other supporting information respecting the program and budget to the cognizant agencies of Costa Rica and the United States in such form as may be required.

### Publications of the Commission

There was discussed a proposal for a system of publications of the Commission, needed to fulfill the Treaty requirement for an annual report and to provide for promulgating information regarding the scientific investigations. There was thereupon made, seconded, and unanimously carried a motion: That the publications of the Commission shall consist of:

- (1) Annual reports, to be issued for calendar years in Spanish and English, in two parts (a) report of the Commission and (b) Director's report on progress of investigations, the first report to cover years 1950 and 1951.
- (2) Bulletin, to consist of scientific papers of the staff and such scientific papers of associated or cooperating agencies as are of sufficient value to the Commission's work to warrant publication in this journal; papers to be in either English or Spanish; to be published at irregular times and collected in volumes of approximately 500 to 600 pages.
- (3) Circulars, to be resúmes of important results of the Commission's work written in non-technical language for the information of the members of the industry and the public at large.

### Election of Chairman and Secretary

It was agreed that, in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty, the Chairmanship and Secretaryship of the Commission should alternate between the nations concerned.

Mr. Eugene D. Bennett was nominated by Mr. Payne for Chairman for the coming year, and this was seconded by Mr. Nigro. There were no further nominations and Mr. Bennett was elected unanimously.

Mr. José L. Cardona-Cooper was nominated by Mr. Bennett for Secretary for the coming year, this being seconded by Mr. Nigro. There were no other nominations and Mr. Cardona-Cooper was elected unanimously.

### Invitation to attend F.A.O. regional conference in Peru

Mr. Cardona-Cooper, as Chairman of the Commission, was in receipt of a letter from the Director General of F.A.O. in Rome inviting the Commission to be represented at the conference to be held in Lima, Perú, September 17 to 22, 1951, to study the organization of a Latin American Fisheries Council. Mr. Cardona-Cooper has been designated the representative of Costa Rica at this conference, and offered to represent the Commission also, if that met with the wishes of the other Commissioners.

It was brought out in the following discussion that the Commission's funds are so limited that it is not possible to provide funds for defraying expenses involved in attending this conference without using funds which might be employed to better advantage on the research program. It was also decided that the representative of the Commission at such a meeting should attend only

as an observer, in order to express the good will of the Commission and its intention to cooperate with other organizations conducting research in the same area, and in order to report to the Commission on the proceedings of the conference, but otherwise should take no active part in the conference.

Thereupon the following motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously: That the Commission should accept Mr. Cardona-Cooper's generous offer to act as an observer for the Commission at the conference in Lima, Perú, in September 1951, to study the organization of a Latin American Fisheries Council, it being stipulated that this be without expense to the Commission, and that in his capacity as a representative of the Commission, he act exclusively as an observer of the proceedings.

#### Executive Session

The executive session of the Commission was held publicly immediately following the open session.

#### Leave policy for Commission employees

In order to establish a leave policy for employees of the Commission, the following motion was made, seconded and unanimously carried: That regular employees of the Commission may be granted leave with pay at the rate of 15 working days each year and in addition there may be granted leave for illness of 15 days each year. Leave for illness may be permitted to accumulate to a maximum of 45 days; unused annual leave may be carried over from one calendar year to the next, such carried-over annual leave not to exceed a maximum of 15 days.

#### Pay policy for Commission employees X

It was considered desirable to establish a policy for effecting salary changes of Commission employees as may be required for changes in cost of living and for periodic pay increases. Mr. James had pointed out in a letter on the subject that it is the practice of the other two international fisheries commissions to gear their salary scales to that of the U.S. Civil Service. It was also brought out in discussion that the Commission has no exact standards for determining the rates of pay of various jobs, and must rely on determinations by the Director for determining proper pay rates. The matter of equitable pay rates for local employees at Puntarenas, or elsewhere than in the United States, was also considered.

Following discussion of these factors, it was moved, seconded and unanimously carried: That the pay of staff personnel of the Commission who are ~~nationals or legal residents of the United States~~ shall be geared to the pay-rates of the U.S. Civil Service; rates of pay for such personnel shall be as nearly as practicable at those rates proscribed for similar positions in the U.S. Civil Service plus a differential of 7% in lieu of retirement and other benefits enjoyed by Civil Service employees that do not accrue to Commission employees; the pay of staff personnel who are nationals or legal residents of Costa Rica there employed shall be geared to the appropriate prevailing pay

scales there existing; changes in established pay rates will be referred to the Commissioners for prior consideration and approval before being put into effect.

Advisability of adopting rules of procedure for meetings

Mr. Sloan stated that he and Mr. James had done some preliminary work on a proposed set of rules of procedure for Commission meetings, since it seems that such a set of rules might be desirable, and asked for expressions of opinion on the matter. It was generally agreed that adopting rules of procedure would be desirable. After further discussion, it was moved, seconded and unanimously carried: That the Commission request Mr. James to submit to each of the Commissioners a draft of the proposed rules of procedure for the conducting of meetings of the Commission in the future, and that this matter be given priority of attention at the next meeting of the Commission.

Proportion of contributions of the United States and Costa Rica to the joint expenses of the Commission

Upon request of the Chairman, the Director of Investigations presented statistics for the most recent calendar year (1950) indicating that the utilization of tuna from Convention waters by the United States was 167,000 tons and that of Costa Rica was 281 tons. It is expected that during the present calendar year, the Costa Rican share of the tuna from Convention waters will not exceed this ratio. In accordance with the terms of the Treaty, the shares of contributions to joint expenses are to be in the same ratio as the utilization by the signatories of tunas captured in Convention waters. It was, therefore, moved, seconded and unanimously carried: That the ratio of apportionment of joint expenses continue to be on the basis of 2/10 of 1% to Costa Rica and 99-8/10% to the United States.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned.