Mr. Jean-Francois Pulvenis  
Director ad interim  
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission  
La Jolla, California  

Subject: Progress on implementation for 2020  
by Chinese fishing fleet in the EPO  
on FAO turtle guidelines as required by Para 2, C-07-03  

Reducing bycatch and enhancing data collection for sea turtle are important conservation and management measures that have been implemented by Chinese tuna fleets in all fishing ground for many years.

-Management  
  • Notification from Authority  
In 2018, China Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs issued the Plan of Action for the conservation of Sea Turtle (2019-2033) to coastal authorities, in order to enhance the management of conservation of the species, and to effectively tackle with the new challenges this species is facing. The Plan of Action has indicated the principle and the target of the conservation of sea turtle, and has laid down the main task in the next 15 years for related authorities.

In 2019, China Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs issued a notification on further strictly complying with international tuna management measures, which included all sea turtle measures from t-RFMOs that China participated. The notification has been communicated to all tuna industries in China, and has made instructions for Chinese fisherman to deal with different scenarios of sea turtles when conducting fishing activities overseas.

-Data Collection  
  • Logbook  
For Chinese longline fisheries, sea turtle is one of the major bycatches required to be accurately recorded in the logbook. The fisheries authority of China officially issued logbook for Tuna Fisheries in 2008 and renew it in a timely manner in accordance with the RFMO's requirements. Each tuna longline vessel, no matter of its fishing ground, is required to record the sea turtle bycatch or interaction, including the species and entangling state. Company does not fulfill the requirements, once discovered, will be punished by government in accordance with certain domestic fisheries management measures, as China implements performance review for each
fishing company annually.

- **Observer program**
  Longline observer program is one of the ways that bycatch information is collected in Chinese tuna fisheries. In 2020, China conducted 18 longline observer trips in the IATTC convention area (including overlapping areas) and 3 sea turtles (two green turtles and one Hawksbill turtle) were accidentally captured during the trips. All the sea turtles are retrieved on board with proper treatment and are safely released alive (with dehooker equipment based on Sea Turtle Handle Guideline).

- **Training**
  - **Lectures on bycatch mitigation**
    We conducted training programme, which invited experts to give lectures about bycatch mitigations. Each tuna fishing company was required to dispatch at least one fishing manager at the base(or captain) to attend the course.

- **Tuna fisheries conference**
  In addition, national-wide conference on tuna fisheries, where major conservation measures (including measures for sea turtle and others) are introduced and explained repeatedly to the meeting participants from industries, are opened annually. Cases regarding infringement of domestic laws and RFMO’s CMMs will be shown to all participants during the meeting as an alarm for each company. The outcome of annual performance review on compliance is also circulated to fishing companies.

- **Propaganda**
  Booklets/posters on sea turtle species identification and mitigation method in line with FAO guidelines are published and distributed to each longline vessel, which can guide the crew members to save and safely release captured or entangled turtles. Mitigation devices, such as de-hookers and cutters, are provided to each longline vessel since September 2009 free of charge by China Overseas Fisheries Association. We are hoping that by taking comprehensive actions, our fleet can strictly follow the measures and take good care of this species when caught or entangled.

- **Cultural consideration**
  In Chinese culture, both sea turtles and tortoises are symbols of longevity, and no one would intentionally harm a sea turtle or a tortoise because they believe that such bad behaviour would bring them bad luck. Especially for fishermen, sea turtles are regarded as the sign of fortune and as such they respect and like sea turtles very much. Therefore sailors of fishing vessels would do whatever they can do to safely release a sea turtle incidentally caught rather than injure/harm them intentionally.

Regards,

**Jiangfeng ZHU**

Consultant/Commissioner to IATTC&IOTC
Division of Distant-water Fisheries
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Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs
P. R. China
June 28th, 2019

Dr. Guillermo A. Compeán  
Director  
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission  
La Jolla, California

Subject: Progress on implementation for 2018  
by Chinese fishing fleet in the EPO  
on FAO turtle guidelines as required by Para 2, C-07-03

Reducing bycatch and enhancing data collection for sea turtle are important conservation and management measures that have been implemented by Chinese tuna fleets in all fishing ground for many years.

Domestic Regulations
In 2003, Ministry of Agriculture, P.R.China has issued the regulation concerning strictly abide by tuna international management measures in accordance with relevant RFMO’s tuna conservation and management measures. The regulation stipulates the management measures of bycatch including sea turtle, requiring all longline vessels be equipped with de-hookers to mitigate hurt sea turtle captured incidentally and encouraging fishing vessels using round hooks.

- Data Collection
  • Logbook  
  Chinese longline fishing vessels are required to accurately record sea turtles caught incidentally as bycatch in the logbook. China Fishery Authority has officially issued logbook for Tuna Fisheries in 2008 and renew it in a timely manner in accordance with the RFMO’s requirements. Each tuna longline vessel, no matter of its fishing ground, is required to record the sea turtle bycatch or interaction, including the species and entangling state. A company does not fulfill the requirements, once discovered, will be punished by Chinese government in accordance with certain domestic fisheries management measures, as China implements performance review for each fishing company annually.

  • Observer program  
  Longline observer program is the main source of collecting bycatch information in Chinese tuna fisheries. In 2018, China conducted 9 longline observer trips in the IATTC convention area (including overlapping areas) and 24 sea turtles were accidentally captured during the trips. All the sea turtles were alive and set free in accordance with the guideline cautiously.


- **Training**
  
  - **Tuna fisheries conference**
  In addition, national-wide conference on tuna fisheries, where major conservation measures including measures for sea turtle and others are introduced and explained repeatedly to the meeting participants from industries, are opened annually. Cases regarding infringement of domestic laws and RFMO’s CMMs will be shown to all participants during the meeting as an alarm for each company. The outcome of annual performance review on compliance is also circulated to fishing companies. During the conference we also invite domestic experts to give lectures regarding bycatch mitigations and correct ways to deal with sea turtle when caught.

  - **Propaganda**
  Booklets/posters on sea turtle species identification and mitigation method in line with FAO guidelines are published and distributed to each longline vessel, which can guide the crew members to save and safely release captured or entangled turtles. Mitigation devices, such as de-hookers and cutters, are provided to each longline vessel since September 2009 free of charge by China Overseas Fisheries Association (28 sets are provided in 2018 each vessel). We are hoping that by taking comprehensive actions, our fleet can strictly follow the measures and take good care of this species when caught or entangled.

Regards,

Liu Liming

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Division of Distant Water Fishing  
Bureau of Fisheries  
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs  
People’s republic of China
Dr. Guillermo A. Compeán  
Director  
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission  
La Jolla, California

Subject: Progress on implementation for 2017 by Chinese fishing fleet in the EPO on FAO turtle guidelines as required by Para 2, C-07-03

Reducing bycatch and enhancing data collection for sea turtle are important conservation and management measures that have been implemented by Chinese tuna fleets in all fishing ground for many years.

- Data Collection
  • Logbook  
  For Chinese longline fisheries, sea turtle is one of the major bycatches required to be accurately recorded in the logbook. The fisheries authority of China officially issued logbook for Tuna Fisheries in 2008 and renew it in a timely manner in accordance with the RFMO’s requirements. Each tuna longline vessel, no matter of its fishing ground, is required to record the sea turtle bycatch or interaction, including the species and entangling state. Company does not fulfill the requirements, once discovered, will be punished by government in accordance with certain domestic fisheries management measures, as China implements performance review for each fishing company annually.

  • Observer program  
  Longline observer program is the main source that bycatch information is collected in Chinese tuna fisheries. In 2017, China conducted 9 longline observer trips in the IATTC convention area (including overlapping areas) and 27 sea turtles were accidentally captured during the trips. All the sea turtles were alive and set free in accordance with the guideline cautiously.

- Training  
  • Lectures on bycatch mitigation  
  In August, 2017, we conducted a training course, which invited experts from ISSF to give lectures about bycatch mitigations. Each tuna fishing company was required to dispatch at least one fishing manager at the base(or captain) to attend the course.

  • Tuna fisheries conference
In addition, national-wide conference on tuna fisheries, where major conservation measures (including measures for sea turtle and others) are introduced and explained repeatedly to the meeting participants from industries, are opened annually. Cases regarding infringement of domestic laws and RFMO’s CMMs will be shown to all participants during the meeting as an alarm for each company. The outcome of annual performance review on compliance is also circulated to fishing companies.

- Propaganda
Booklets/posters on sea turtle species identification and mitigation method in line with FAO guidelines are published and distributed to each longline vessel, which can guide the crew members to save and safely release captured or entangled turtles. Mitigation devices, such as de-hookers and cutters, are provided to each longline vessel since September 2009 free of charge by China Overseas Fisheries Association (This year, 32 sets are provided). We are hoping that by taking comprehensive actions, our fleet can strictly follow the measures and take good care of this species when caught or entangled.

Regards,

Wan Chen

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Dr. Guillermo A. Compeán  
Director  
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission  
La Jolla, California  

Subject: Progress on implementation for 2016  
by Chinese fishing fleet in the EPO  
on FAO turtle guidelines as required by Para 2, C-07-03

Reducing bycatch and enhancing data collection for sea turtle are important conservation and management measures that have been implemented by Chinese tuna fleets in all fishing ground for many years.

-Data Collection

- Logbook
For Chinese longline fisheries, sea turtle is one of the major bycatches required to be accurately recorded in the logbook. The fisheries authority of China officially issued logbook for Tuna Fisheries in 2008 and renew it in a timely manner in accordance with the RFMO’s requirements. Each tuna longline vessel, no matter of its fishing ground, is required to record the sea turtle bycatch or interaction, including the species and entangling state. Company does not fulfill the requirements, once discovered, will be punished by government in accordance with certain domestic fisheries management measures, as China implements performance review for each fishing company annually. According to last year’s logbooks, most of our vessels did not accidentally catch sea turtles.

- Observer program
Longline observer program is the main source that bycatch information is collected in the Chinese tuna fisheries. In 2016, China conducted 4 longline observer trips in the IATTC convention area (including overlapping areas) and no sea turtle was accidentally captured during the trip.

-Training

- Training course
In December, 2016, after the meetings of WCPFC in Fiji, we conducted a training course, which invited experts from ABNJ of FAO and Bird International to give lectures about bycatch mitigations. Each tuna fishing company was required to dispatch at least one fishing manager at the base(or captain) to attend the course.

- Tuna fisheries conference
In addition, national-wide conference on tuna fisheries, where major conservation
measures (including measures for sea turtle and others) are introduced and explained to the meeting participants from industries, are opened annually. Cases regarding violation of Domestic management measures and RFMO’s CMM will be delivered to all participants including the punishment during the meeting, to call the attention of each company on compliance. The outcome of the performance review on compliance is circulated to fishing companies.

• Propaganda

Booklets/posters on sea turtle species identification and mitigation method in line with FAO guidelines are published and distributed to each longline vessel, which can guide the crew members to save and safely release captured or entangled turtles. Mitigation devices, such as de-hookers and cutters, are provided to each longline vessel since September 2009 free of charge by China Overseas Fisheries Association (This year, 22 sets are provided). We are hoping that by taking comprehensive actions, our fleet can strictly follow the measures and take good care of this species when caught or entangled.

Regards,

Liling Zhao

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Division of deepsea fishing
Bureau of Fisheries
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China