

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

9TH STOCK ASSESSMENT REVIEW MEETING

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SUMMARY OF CONSERVATION PROPOSALS

This paper summarizes the different proposals for the conservation of bigeye and yellowfin tuna in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) presented by the IATTC staff, member countries, and the Chairman of IATTC during the Annual Meeting in June 2007 and the subsequent meetings on October 2007 and March 2008.

There are currently no measures in force to restrict purse-seine fishing effort or longline catches in the EPO.

At the Annual Meeting in June 2007, the Commission's scientific staff proposed (Document IATTC-75-07b), for yellowfin tuna, extending the closure of the purse-seine fishery by 32 additional days, to 74 days, and that the closure period be extended further if the capacity of the purse-seine fleet continues to increase. An alternative proposal for the purse-seine fishery for yellowfin was a total allowable catch (TAC) of 200,000 metric tons (t), with four possible increments of 30,000 t each, to be authorized at the Director's discretion.

Also, the Commission staff recommended, in addition to the above measures for yellowfin, three options for the conservation of bigeye tuna:

1. Close the purse-seine fishery on floating objects in the EPO for an additional 35 days; or
2. Set a TAC for bigeye taken by purse-seine, and prohibit sets on floating objects after a TAC of 48,000 t is reached, with the possibility of four increments of 5,500 t each, to be authorized at the Director's discretion; or
3. Limit the total annual catch of bigeye by each purse-seine vessel in a way that the sum of the individual-vessel limits equals 68,000 t. and prohibit further sets on floating objects by any vessel that has reached its limit.

The staff's conservation recommendations generated considerable discussion and debate. Three additional proposals were presented, by the United States, Ecuador/Spain, and Mexico; these, and the staff's proposal, are summarized in Table 1. However, the Commission could not reach agreement on any proposal, and agreed to convene another meeting to discuss conservation and management measures for bigeye and yellowfin tuna beyond 2007.

Accordingly, an extraordinary meeting was held in October 2007. At the October meetings, additional proposals were presented by Venezuela and by a group of countries (Colombia, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, and Peru) (Table 2). Also, the staff presented an evaluation of the three proposals made in June (Document IATTC-76-04). Again, no agreement was reached, so a further meeting was scheduled for March 2008.

At the March meeting, the staff presented a new proposal (Document IATTC-77-04), consisting of two components: a 12-week closure of the entire EPO from 20 June through 11 September, and a closure of an offshore area (between 94° and 110°W and from 3°N to 5°S) from 12 September through 31 December. On the basis of the discussion, the IATTC Chairman, in consultation with heads of delegations, presented a document which was, in essence, a draft resolution with numerous brackets in an effort to advance the discussions (Appendix A). However, despite considerable discussion by the governments, no agreement could be reached on any of the proposals.

TABLE 1. Summary of tuna conservation proposals presented at the 75th Annual Meeting of the IATTC, June 2007.

JUN 2007	IATTC staff	USA	Ecuador, Spain	Mexico
Duration	2008	2008-2010	2008-2011	2008
Coverage	All purse-seine and longline fisheries for tunas	All purse-seine and longline vessels	Purse-seine and longline vessels, except purse-seine vessels less than 363 t capacity	All purse-seine and longline fisheries for tunas
PURSE SEINE				
Closures/Catch limits	(a) Extend the closure period to 74 days, and extend it further if the carrying capacity of the purse-seine fleet continues to increase; or (b) Set a TAC of 200,000 t for purse-seine catches of yellowfin, TAC may be increased by up to four increments of 30,000 t each	Close the fishery for the rest of the year when a TAC of 200,000 t of yellowfin is reached; TAC may be decreased or increased by no more than 4 reductions or increments of 30,000 t each	Close the fishery for yellowfin and bigeye from either (1) 1 August-11 September; or (2) 20 November-31 December Close the fishery for yellowfin for the rest of the year when a TAC of 290,000 t of yellowfin is reached; thereafter, the landings of fisheries not targeting yellowfin may include a maximum of 15% of yellowfin relative to its total catch	Extend the closure period to 73 days, 20 November 2007-2 February 2008. If there are 2 closure periods, vessels observing the August-October closure may not fish north of 5°N during the November-February closure, and vessels observing the November-February closure may not fish south of 5°N during the August-October closure
Specific measures for bigeye	One of 3 options: 1) In addition to yellowfin closure, close the purse-seine fishery on floating objects for an additional 35 days; or 2) TAC of 48,000 t; up to four increments of 5,500 t each, for bigeye taken by purse-seine; sets on floating objects prohibited after TAC is reached; or 3) Limit the total annual catch of bigeye by each purse-seine vessel so that the sum of the individual-vessel limits equals 68,000 t. and prohibit further sets on floating objects by any vessel that has reached its limit	Limit annual catch of bigeye by each purse-seine vessel to 500 t	Close offshore area (94°W-110°W, 3°N-5°S) to purse-seine vessels greater than 363 t, 1 August-31 December	None

<p>Specific measures for FADs</p>	<p>Mark FADs; maintain a record of the number of FADs on board at the beginning and end of each trip and of the numbers and positions of FADs deployed at sea; make this information available to IATTC</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Mark FADs; maintain record of number of FADs and beepers aboard Record position of deployment and recovery of FADs; FADs should be recovered</p>
LONGLINE				
<p>Specific catch limits</p>	<p>China 2,190 t Japan 28,283 t Korea 10,438 t Chinese Taipei 6,601 t</p>	<p>China 2,190 t Japan 28,283 t Korea 10,438 t Chinese Taipei 6,601 t</p>	<p>China 2,190 t Japan 28,283 t Korea 10,438 t Chinese Taipei 6,601 t</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Limits for other CPCs</p>	<p>For each CPC, annual longline catches of bigeye not to exceed the greater of 83% of 2001 catches or 500 t</p>	<p>For each CPC, annual longline catches of bigeye not to exceed the greater of 2001 catches or 500 t</p>	<p>For each CPC, annual longline catches of bigeye not to exceed the greater of 83% of 2001 catches or 500 t</p>	<p>Each CPC to provide monthly reports of longline catches of bigeye</p>

TABLE 2. Summary of tuna conservation proposals presented at the 76th and 77th Meetings of the IATTC, October 2007 and March 2008.

OCT 2007 MAR 2008	IATTC staff	Venezuela	Colombia, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru
Duration	2008-2010	2008	2008-2009
Coverage	All purse-seine and longline fisheries for tunas	All purse-seine and longline vessels	All purse-seine and longline fisheries for bigeye
PURSE SEINE			
Closures/Catch limits	2 components: a) 12-week closure in the entire EPO, 20 June-11 September, b) Close offshore area (94°W-110°W, 3°N-5°S), 12 September-31 December.	a) Close fishery for 60 days, either 1 August-30 September, or 2 November-31 December b) Set minimum catch size for yellowfin (3.2 kg), bigeye (3.2 kg), and skipjack (1.8 kg) c) Catch of small tunas not to exceed 10% of vessel capacity d) Time/area closures in areas of high concentrations of juvenile yellowfin and/or bigeye	Close the fishery for the rest of the year when a TAC of 200,000 t of yellowfin is reached; TAC may be increased by no more than 4 increments of 30,000 t each
Specific measures for bigeye	None	None	TAC of 55,000 t; up to 3 increments of 5,500 t each
Specific measures for FADs	Mark FADs; maintain a record of the number of FADs on board at the beginning and end of each trip and of the numbers and positions of FADs deployed at sea; make this information available to IATTC	Vessels with an annual average of 60% of its sets on floating objects shall place sorting grids for juveniles. Mark FADs; maintain record of number of FADs and beepers aboard; record position of deployment and recovery of FADs; retrieve at least 40% of FADs deployed before returning to port	None
LONGLINE			
Specific catch limits	China 2,190 t Japan 28,283 t Korea 10,438 t Chinese Taipei 6,601 t	None	China 2,190 t Japan 28,283 t Korea 10,438 t Chinese Taipei 6,601 t
Limits for other CPCs	For each CPC, annual longline catches of bigeye not to exceed the greater of 83% of 2001 catches or 500 t	Each CPC to provide monthly reports of longline catches of bigeye	For each CPC, annual longline catches of bigeye not to exceed the greater of 83% of 2001 catches or 500 t

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

77TH MEETING

LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA (USA)
5-7 MARCH 2008

CHAIR'S DOCUMENT

[RESOLUTION] [RECOMMENDATION] ON A [MULTI-ANNUAL]
PROGRAM FOR THE CONSERVATION OF TUNA IN THE EASTERN
PACIFIC OCEAN IN 2008 [AND 2009]

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), at its 77th Meeting in La Jolla, California (USA) in March 2008:

Having responsibility for the scientific study of the tunas and tuna-like species of the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO), defined as the area bounded by the coastline of the Americas, the 40°N parallel, the 150°W meridian, and the 40°S parallel, and for the formulation of recommendations to Contracting Parties, cooperating non-Parties, fishing entities and regional economic integration organizations (collectively "CPCs") with regard to these tuna resources, and having maintained since 1950 a continuous scientific program directed toward the study of tuna resources;

Recognizes, based on past experience in the fishery, that the potential production from the tuna resource can be reduced by excessive fishing effort;

Being aware with grave concern that, despite the previous conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission, although the catches of bigeye and yellowfin tunas have declined recently, capacity continues to increase and overfishing of bigeye tuna and yellowfin tuna is occurring;

Notes that the tuna resource of the EPO supports one of the most significant surface fisheries for tunas in the world;

Taking into account the best scientific information available, as reflected in the recommendations of the staff and the report of the meeting of the Working Group on Stock Assessments in May 2007;

Considering that the studies of yellowfin and bigeye tunas presented at this meeting show that the stocks are at a level below that which would produce the average maximum sustainable yield (AMSY);

Considering that the increase in the use of fish-aggregating devices (FADs) with the latest generation of satellite equipment and other technologies increases in practice the fishing capacity in the EPO; and

Recognizing the importance of urging the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) to adopt parallel measures to conserve the tuna stocks in that region, and in particular, the shared stocks of highly migratory tunas in the Pacific Ocean;

[Resolves][Recommends] as follows:

1. This [resolution][recommendation] is applicable in [the years] 2008 [and 2009] to all purse-seine vessels and all longline vessels fishing for yellowfin, bigeye, and skipjack tunas in the EPO, defined as the area bounded by the coastline of the Americas, the 40°N parallel, the 150°W meridian, and the 40°S parallel.
2. Pole-and-line, troll, and sportfishing vessels [and purse-seine vessels of carrying capacity less than 363 metric tons] are not subject to this [resolution][recommendation].

3. That the fishery for yellowfin, bigeye, and skipjack tuna by purse-seine vessels in the EPO shall, in 2008 [and 2009], be closed
 - a. [for a 84-day period, either (1) from 0000 hours on 20 June to 2400 hours on 11 September, or (2) from 0000 hours on 9 October to 2400 hours on 31 December.]
 - b. [for a 60-day period, either (1) from 0000 hours on 14 July to 2400 hours on 11 September, or (2) from 0000 hours on 1 December to 2400 hours on 31 January.]
 - c. [for a 42-day period, from 0000 hours on 1 August to 2400 hours on 11 September.]
 - d. [Each flag government shall decide the dates of the closure period to be observed by each of its vessels.]
4. [That the fishery for yellowfin, bigeye, and skipjack tuna by purse-seine vessels in the EPO shall, in 2008 and 2009, be closed from 0000 hours on [12 September][1 December] to 2400 hours on 31 December within the area between [94° and 110°][100° and 116°]W from 3°N and 5°S illustrated in Figure 1.

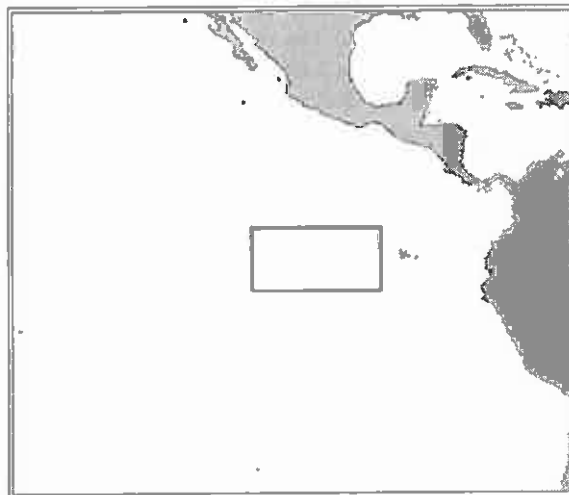


FIGURE 1. Closure area for the purse-seine fishery.]

5. Each CPC shall, for each year concerned, choose [which of the two specified periods will be closed to purse-seine fishing by all of its vessels][the dates of the closure applicable to each of its vessels][which of the two specified periods will be closed to purse-seine fishing by each of its vessels], and notify the Director by [15 April] [for 2008, and 1 January for 2009].¹ [All vessels of a national fleet][The vessel] must stop purse-seine fishing during the closure period [selected]. Every vessel that fishes in 2008 [and 2009], regardless of the flag under which it operates, or whether it changes flag or the jurisdiction of the CPC under which it fishes during the year, must observe the closure period to which it committed.
6. [In the event that there are two closure periods, to ensure the effectiveness of the closures, those CPCs that choose the August-October closure period shall not be able to fish north of the 5°N parallel during the December-January closure period. Reciprocally, CPCs that choose the December-January closure period will not be able to fish south of that parallel during the August-October closure period.]
7. Each CPC shall, for purse-seine fisheries:

¹ If option c in paragraph 3 is adopted, the shaded text would be deleted

- a. Before the date of entry into force of the closure, take the legal and administrative measures necessary to implement the closure;
 - b. Inform all interested parties in its national tuna industry of the closure;
 - c. Inform the Director that these steps have been taken;
 - d. Ensure that at the time a closure begins, and for the entire duration of the closure, all purse-seine vessels fishing for yellowfin, bigeye, or skipjack tunas flying its flag, or operating under its jurisdiction, in the EPO are in port, except that vessels carrying an observer from the AIDCP On-Board Observer Program may remain at sea, provided they do not fish in the EPO. The only other exception to this provision shall be that vessels carrying an observer from the AIDCP On-Board Observer Program may leave port during the closure, provided they do not fish in the EPO.
8. Each CPC shall take the measures necessary to control the total annual catch of bigeye tuna in the EPO during 2008 [and 2009] by longline tuna vessels fishing under its jurisdiction.
 9. China, Japan, Korea, and Chinese Taipei shall take the measures necessary to ensure that their total annual longline catches of bigeye tuna in the EPO during 2008 [and 2009] does not exceed the following levels:

China	2,639 metric tons
Japan	34,076 metric tons
Korea	12,576 metric tons
Chinese Taipei	7,953 metric tons

10. Other CPCs shall take the measures necessary to ensure that their total annual longline catches of bigeye tuna in the EPO during 2008 [and 2009] do not exceed the greater of 500 metric tons or their respective catches of bigeye tuna in 2001.² CPCs whose annual catches have exceeded 500 metric tons shall provide monthly catch reports to the Director.
11. To prohibit landings, transshipments and commercial transactions in tuna or tuna products that have been positively identified as originating from fishing activities that contravene this [resolution][recommendation]. The Director shall provide relevant information to the Parties to assist them in this regard. The Commission shall develop transparent and non-discriminatory criteria and procedures to promote compliance in the EPO, consistent with international law, including World Trade Organization agreements and other applicable trade agreements.
12. Each CPC shall[, in each of the years covered by this [resolution][recommendation],] notify the Director by [15 April][for 2008, and 1 January for 2009] of national actions taken to implement this [resolution][recommendation], including any controls it has imposed on its fleets and any monitoring, control, and compliance measures it has established to ensure compliance with such controls.
13. To evaluate progress towards the objectives of this [resolution][recommendation], in 2008 [and 2009] the IATTC Scientific Working Group will analyze the effects on the stocks of the implementation of this [resolution][recommendation], Resolution C-06-02, Resolution C-04-09, and previous conservation and management measures, and will propose, if necessary, appropriate measures to be applied in future years.
14. [[Without prejudice to the obligation of the Parties, under applicable international law, t][T]o implement a program of collecting information on FADs deployed in the EPO, to include, *inter alia*, a system of marking each FAD and recording information on the position of each FAD when it is deployed and recovered.

² The Parties acknowledge that France, as a coastal State, is developing a tuna longline fleet on behalf of its overseas territories situated in the EPO.

The Director shall, in consultation with the scientific institutions of CPCs, organize this program, and be responsible for maintaining the corresponding data base, in accordance with the Commission's rules of confidentiality.]

- 14bis. [Ask the Director to develop a draft program for collecting information on FADs in the EPO, with the aim of submitting it to the consideration of the Parties at the 78th Meeting of the Commission.]
15. [All vessels that fish on FADs, at the beginning and end of the trip, shall mark (number) these devices and maintain a record of the number of FADs and beepers aboard. They shall also record information on the position of the FADs at the time they are deployed in the water and, if applicable, when they are recovered. This information shall be sent to the flag CPC at the end of each trip.]
16. [Vessels that fish on FADs are encouraged to recover the greatest possible number of their own FADs.]
17. [Subject to the availability of the necessary funding, the Director shall develop a voluntary experimental program to examine the effectiveness of sorting grids in reducing the mortality of juvenile tunas in the purse-seine fishery. The Director shall develop an experimental protocol, including parameters for the materials to be used for the sorting grids, and the methods for their construction, installation, and deployment. The Director shall also specify the methods and format for the collection of scientific data to be used for analysis of the performance of the sorting grids.] [The foregoing is without prejudice to each CPC carrying out its own experimental programs with sorting grids and presenting its results to the IATTC Secretariat.]
- 17bis. [Continue the experiments with sorting grids for juvenile tunas and other species of non-target fish in the purse-seine nets of vessels that fish on FADs and on unassociated schools, voluntarily and documenting each experience exhaustively.]
18. [Instruct the Director to continue efforts that will allow the IATTC and the WCPFC to have equivalent management measures.]
19. [The WCPFC is encouraged to adopt, in the shortest time possible, conservation measures comparable to those adopted in this [resolution][recommendation], with the aim of maximizing the effectiveness of the collective measures of the two organizations, and ensuring a positive result for the resources.]
20. Each CPC shall comply with this [resolution][recommendation].