

**INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION
PERMANENT WORKING GROUP ON FLEET CAPACITY**

SECOND MEETING

**La Jolla, California, USA
October 8-9, 1999**

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN

The IATTC Permanent Working Group on Fleet Capacity held its second meeting in La Jolla, California, USA, on October 8-9, 1999, in conjunction with the 65th meeting of the IATTC, which took place on October 4-10. Ambassador Jean-François Pulvenis of Venezuela served as Chairman.

The meeting was called to order on October 8 at 5:15 p.m. Dr. Robin L. Allen, Director of the IATTC, reviewed Background Paper 1, *Considerations regarding limitations on the growth in carrying capacity of the tuna purse-seine fleet fishing in the eastern Pacific Ocean*, pointing out that limits on the capacity of the tuna purse-seine fleet in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) in 1999 had been adopted at the 62nd meeting of the IATTC in October 1998. He said that the fishing effort exerted in the EPO during 1999 was expected to amount to about 28,000 Class-6 days by the end of the year. The average maximum sustainable yield of yellowfin tuna is obtainable with about 20,000 to 22,000 days of effort. In answer to a question as to why Table 4a included data for 1985-1998, but the averages in Table 4b were based on data for 1994-1998 only, Dr. Allen replied that it was thought that the data for 1994-1998 only would be more representative of recent years, but that the staff would recalculate Table 4b with the data for 1985-1998 and make it available the next day. Among the matters covered in the ensuing discussion were criteria for assignment of shares of the total allowance and methods of measuring capacity and conversion factors between these measures.

It was generally agreed that the average catches of tunas within the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of the various countries would be an important consideration. The representatives of all the coastal states of the EPO expressed their wish to have shares in the total allowance, and several described their plans for acquiring fishing vessels and/or constructing tuna-processing facilities. It was pointed out that about 40 percent of the catch of tunas in the EPO comes from the EEZs of the coastal states and about 60 percent from the high seas. Historical participation in the fishery was also mentioned as a consideration, and it was pointed out that the sizes of the shares calculated on that basis would depend upon the years which were selected for the measurement of historical participation. The representative of Colombia pointed out that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea gives coastal states jurisdiction over all living resources within their EEZs. The representative of Panama called attention to the fact that Article 5 of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing states that recognition should be given to enhancing the ability of developing countries to develop their fisheries and to participate in high-seas fisheries. It was agreed that a formula for allocating allowances for the various nations would have to be seriously considered.

It was agreed that well volume is a fair basis for determining the capacities of vessels, but the IATTC staff has not yet been able to collect data on the well volumes of all the vessels of the fleet. A formula for converting tons of carrying capacity to total well volume was discussed, but it was recognized that some vessels pack their catches more densely in their wells than do others.

The representative of Nicaragua stated that the boundaries of its EEZ are not clear, and indicated that he wanted to record a reservation on the information on the catches within the EEZs in Table 4 of Background Paper 1. There was some discussion of present fleet sizes, and it was agreed that the various countries would supply information on the sizes of their respective fleets to the IATTC staff. The possibility that several countries might combine their capacity allocations was discussed. The representative of Mexico stated that the fleets of some of the countries had exceeded the limits established in the resolution of the 62nd meeting of the IATTC. A draft proposal prepared by the United States was distributed to the attendees, but the representatives of Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, and Peru said that they could not accept the proposal.

The working group agreed that it should meet again. A three-day meeting was proposed, which would preferably take place after the FAO Technical Consultation on the Measurement of Fishing Capacity scheduled for November 29-December 3, 1999. After some discussion, it was agreed that the meeting would take place on January 26-28, 2000, in San Jose, Costa Rica.

The meeting was adjourned on October 9 at 9:10 p.m.