

AGREEMENT ON THE INTERNATIONAL DOLPHIN CONSERVATION PROGRAM

18TH MEETING OF THE PARTIES

**La Jolla, California (USA)
26 October 2007**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

AGENDA

	Documents
1. Opening of meeting	
2. Election of Chairman	
3. Adoption of agenda	
4. Approval of the minutes of the 17 th Meeting of the Parties	
5. AIDCP budget	MOP-18-05
6. Amendment of provision addressing frivolous requests for DMLs (Annex IV.I.9)	MOP-18-06
7. Fees for vessels with sealed wells	
8. Report of the International Review Panel	
9. Other business	
10. Place and date of next meeting	
11. Adjournment	

APPENDICES

1. List of attendees
2. Guidelines for technical training of observers

The 18th Meeting of the Parties to the AIDCP was held in La Jolla, California (USA) on 26 October 2007. The attendees are listed in Appendix 1.

1. Opening of meeting

The meeting was opened by Ing. Luis Torres, of Ecuador.

2. Election of Chairman

Ms. Eloisa Barahona, of the European Union, was elected Chair of the meeting.

3. Adoption of agenda

The provisional agenda was adopted as presented.

4. Approval of the minutes of the 17th Meeting of the Parties

The minutes of the 17th meeting were approved.

5. AIDCP budget

Dr. Guillermo Compeán, Director of the IATTC, presented Document [MOP-18-05](#). He noted that the IDCP continued to operate at a deficit, and that the budgeted income from vessel assessments would probably not be paid, in part because it was unlikely that all inactive vessels would pay their assessments. The Secretariat had two proposals aimed at balancing the budget: increase the assessments of vessels of less than 363 t capacity that are required to carry observers, and make vessel owners responsible for all costs related to embarking or disembarking observers outside the Agreement Area.

Ecuador expressed its opposition to the first proposal, so it was not agreed by the meeting. The second proposal was agreed by the meeting.

6. Amendment of provision addressing frivolous requests for DMLs (Annex IV.I.9)

Dr. Compeán presented Document [MOP-18-06](#), prepared at the request of the previous Meeting of the Parties in June 2007. The Parties approved the Secretariat's proposal that paragraph I.9 of Annex IV of the AIDCP be deleted.

7. Fees for vessels with sealed wells

The Parties agreed that vessel fees should be based on the vessel's total capacity without considering any sealed wells. Even if wells are sealed, the fees shall not take that into account.

8. Report of the International Review Panel

The President of the 44th meeting of the Panel presented his report. The Panel had the following recommendations for the Parties:

1. That 2008 DMLs for the 100 vessels that requested them be granted, on the condition that those that had not yet paid their assessments do so by 15 December 2007.
2. That the Parties address whether to amend Annex IV.I.2 of the AIDCP regarding the dates of the payment of assessments.
3. That the proposal by the Working Group to promote and publicize the AIDCP Dolphin Safe Tuna Certification System of developing a plan to achieve greater depth and coverage of the promotion and publicizing of the IDCP be approved.
4. That the guidelines for the technical training of observers developed by the meeting of the IATTC and national observer programs (Appendix 2) be approved.
5. That in future vessel captains be given copies of the IRP reports prepared by the observers.

The Parties decided to address recommendation 2 at their next meeting, and approved the four other recommendations. Regarding the last recommendation, Mexico noted that it should be made clear that this referred to only one document, the IRP report.

9. Other business

Mexico stated that several matters regarding the AIDCP needed to be addressed.

One was the question of the level of observer coverage. Mexico asked about observer coverage in other oceans, and whether 100% coverage was necessary for the scientific study of the stocks, noting that the IATTC covered 30% of the costs of the AIDCP, since this was considered sufficient for scientific estimates. Dr. Compeán said that the level of coverage needed depended on the objective of the study, and for some purposes a lower level was sufficient, but the current 100% coverage was primarily for the monitoring required by the AIDCP and for obtaining an accurate count of dolphin mortality.

Mexico also questioned whether the prohibition of night sets should be continued, in light of the financial burden that this causes to the industry and the perhaps limited benefits of the measure in terms of dolphin

conservation. He wondered whether this and other strict measures in the AIDCP could continue to be justified in light of the fact that they were originally agreed as a quid pro quo for market access, which has now been denied.

The issues raised by Mexico generated considerable discussion by the meeting, but no conclusions were reached. Several delegations observed that it was important to proceed carefully, and that any amendments to the AIDCP would need to be carefully considered.

10. Place and date of next meeting

The next Meeting of the Parties will be held in June 2008 on the occasion of the annual meeting of the IATTC.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned on 26 October 2007.

Appendix 1.

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Appendix 2.

GUIDELINES FOR TECHNICAL TRAINING OF OBSERVERS

A. Selection of candidates

1. Recruit only university graduates with a degree in biology, marine science or a related subject, provided there is no perception that the candidate's professional education might represent a conflict of interest when selecting candidates from disciplines which are closely related to the fishing industry;
2. Interview all candidates, and evaluate their motivation for becoming observers.
3. Use psychometric tests to assess the psychological profile of candidates.
4. Candidates must:
 - a. have completed all credits or curriculum in their field of study, or, at a minimum, be in the final semesters or subjects of their specialty.
 - b. have completed a course on survival at sea accredited by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).
 - c. present a medical report that certifies the candidate's physical capacity for carrying out the demanding work aboard.

B. Training of candidates

These guidelines are not intended as a blueprint for training sessions, but to highlight some essential aspects of observer training. The most important element for the success of training sessions is the selection of competent instructors, who should have several years' experience of working with the program as observers and/or data editors.

Training sessions of the AIDCP On-Board Observer Program should include training on: a) fishing methods and procedures and vessel operations; b) identification of marine species; and c) procedures for completing data forms; plus instructions regarding documentation of non-compliance with IATTC and AIDCP resolutions.

1. Fishing methods and procedures

This part of training should aim to familiarize the trainees with all aspects of purse-seine fishing operations, with special emphasis on the terminology used by fisherman and the standard codes and terminology to be used on the data forms. The trainees should be given the information necessary to identify the critical phases of these procedures; this will enable program personnel and national authorities to verify compliance with regulations.

Training sessions should include audiovisual material illustrating:

- a. purse-seine tuna fishing gear;
- b. purse-seine fishing procedures;
- c. dolphin rescue procedures.

2. Identification of marine species

The instructors should familiarize the trainees with the diagnostic external characteristics necessary for identifying the following taxonomic groups (in order of importance):

- a. tunas;
- b. dolphins associated with tuna fishing;
- c. sea turtles;
- d. billfishes, sharks and rays associated with tuna fishing;
- e. other cetaceans in the fishing area;
- f. other marine fauna associated with tuna fishing;
- g. seabirds.

3. Procedures for completing data forms

This should be the most extensive part of training, and should be based on the procedures in the observer field manual. It should include all forms covered in the manual. The trainees should complete as many simulations as possible of situations that may happen during a trip, thus allowing a more objective evaluation of their learning and performance during the training.

4. IATTC and AIDCP resolutions and regulations

This part of the training session should emphasize that the observer's role is to document the vessel's activities, and not to enforce, interpret or offer advice on any resolutions or regulations. The observer must be aware of these regulations, and inform vessel personnel about them if requested, but must not take them into account when recording data.

In particular, this part of the training should focus on making trainees aware of the possibility of interference (including bribery attempts), intimidation or obstruction by vessel crew during a trip, and preparing them to identify, deal with, and document any such instances, using actual cases as examples. They should be instructed in the importance of addressing such situations in a decisive and professional manner. The trainees should be able to identify such instances, and describe them clearly and in detail without including personal opinions, assumptions or irrelevant comments.

5. Reports of situations

The training courses should include elements that will allow the candidates' writing and narrative skills to be evaluated.

6. Conduct aboard

The courses should include a section in which the most important points regarding conduct and protocol aboard vessels and with vessel crew.