

INTERNATIONAL DOLPHIN CONSERVATION PROGRAM  
**INTERNATIONAL REVIEW PANEL**  
**53<sup>RD</sup> MEETING**  
 VERACRUZ (MEXICO)  
 3 JUNE 2013

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING<sup>1</sup>**

**AGENDA**

|  | Documents  |
|--|------------|
| 1. Opening of the meeting  |            |
| 2. Election of the Presider  |            |
| 3. Adoption of the agenda  |            |
| 4. Approval of the minutes of the 52 <sup>nd</sup> meeting   |            |
| 5. Review of Dolphin Mortality Limits for 2012 and 2013  | IRP-53-05  |
| 6. Review of AIDCP <i>List of Qualified Captains</i>   | IRP-53-06  |
| 7. Review of actions by Parties on possible infractions reported by the IRP:                                     |            |
| a. Actions taken since report at the 52 <sup>nd</sup> meeting  | IRP-53-08a |
| b. Status review of special cases  | IRP-53-08b |
| 8. Review of observer data   |            |
| 9. Report of the Permanent Working Group on Tuna Tracking  |            |
| 10. Report of the Working Group to promote and publicize the <i>AIDCP Dolphin Safe</i> Tuna Certification System |            |
| 11. Other business   |            |
| 12. Recommendations for the Meeting of the Parties   |            |
| 13. Place and date of next meeting   |            |
| 14. Adjournment  |            |

**APPENDIX**

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1. List of attendees
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The 53<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the International Review Panel was held in Veracruz, Mexico, on 3 June 2013.

**1. Opening of the meeting**

Dr. Guillermo Compeán, Director of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), which provides the Secretariat for the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP), opened the meeting.

**2. Election of the Presider**

Mr. William Jacobson, of the United States, was elected to chair the meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> Subject to approval by the 54<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Panel in October 2013

### **3. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted with a change in the order of items 7 and 8.

### **4. Approval of the minutes of the 52nd meeting**

The minutes of the 52<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Panel were approved without changes.

### **5. Review of Dolphin Mortality Limits for 2012 and 2013**

The Secretariat summarized the situation regarding the allocation, reallocation, and utilization of Dolphin Mortality Limits (DMLs) in 2012, described in Document IRP-53-05. He pointed out that no vessel had exceeded its allocated DML for 2012; likewise, as of 25 April 2013, no vessel had exceeded its DML for 2013.

### **6. Review of the AIDCP List of Qualified Captains**

The Secretariat presented Document IRP-53-06, *Changes to the AIDCP List of Qualified Captains*, which updates the changes that occurred between 5 October 2012 and 25 April 2013. During that period, 10 captains were added and none reinstated or removed.

### **7. Review of actions by Parties on possible infractions reported by the IRP**

The Secretariat presented Document IRP-53-08a, *Responses to six types of possible infractions identified during the 52nd meeting*. There were two cases of observer harassment (Ecuador and Panama) and two cases of fishing without an observer (Mexico). No responses had been received from the governments involved.

#### **a. Actions taken since the report at the 52<sup>nd</sup> meeting**

Ecuador reported that it had been difficult to arrange a meeting at which both the captain and the observer could be present, and that progress could be made in the case once the meeting is held.

Panama reported that its case had already been investigated, and that a letter describing the results of the investigation would be sent during the current meetings.

Mexico reported it had sent a letter to the Secretariat regarding this case, and explained that the two trips reported as having been made without an observer aboard were trips targeting bluefin tuna: no sets on dolphins were made, the closure was not violated, and both vessels had satellite monitoring systems to verify their location. The vessels had left port at night without an observer, but the observers boarded the vessels the following morning. Nevertheless, Mexico acknowledged the infractions, which are being investigated.

The European Union indicated that Mexico should keep the Panel informed of progress on these cases.

#### **b. Status review of special cases**

The Secretariat presented Document IRP-53-08b, *Summary of pending special cases monitored by the IRP*, which presents the following three cases.

#### **Case 51-01.**

The trip occurred in 2012 and was presented to the 51st meeting as a possible infraction of making a set on dolphins without a dolphin safety panel. The case was referred to the Party in August 2012; to date no response has been received.

The Panel asked the Secretariat to follow up with an additional communication to the Party.

#### **Case 51-02.**

The trip occurred in 2012 and was presented to the 51st meeting as a possible infraction of not receiving all the required reports from the observer.

The Secretariat reported that the case was resolved: the missing data had subsequently been obtained directly from the observer. In order to prevent this type of situation from occurring in the future, the Secretariat has established a procedural mechanism for the timely recovery of data, which is in addition to the existing memorandum of cooperation (MOC) with the WCPFC on the mutual recognition of observer programs. There have been no similar problems in the other 14 trips since the MOU was implemented.

#### **Case 51-03.**

The trip occurred in 2012 and was presented to the 51st meeting as an infraction of interfering with the observer's work by attempting to bribe the observer. The case was referred to the Party in August 2012; to date no response has been received.

The Panel asked the Secretariat to follow up with an additional communication to the Party.

### **8. Review of observer data**

The Secretariat presented the data reported by observers of the On-Board Observer Program relating to possible infractions received and processed by the Secretariat since the Panel's previous meeting. The Panel discussed those cases that were not automatically referred to the pertinent Parties, and forwarded those that indicated possible infractions of the AIDCP to the responsible government for investigation and possible sanction.

The following cases, identified by the corresponding trip number, were discussed:

**2012-635. Interference with the observer's work.** The captain would not allow the observer's report to be sent to the WCPFC while the vessel was in the eastern Pacific.

The Panel agreed to refer this case to the pertinent Party for investigation.

**2012-689. Fishing without a dolphin safety panel.** The vessel had been allocated a DML for 2012, and the Party had confirmed that the vessel had all the required equipment on board at the time the DML was requested. However, the vessel made a single set on dolphins in order to keep the DML, but at that time did not have a dolphin safety panel in the net. The case has already been referred to the corresponding Party.

It was noted that, in order to maintain the credibility of the program, it is necessary that Parties verify that vessels applying for DMLs really do have all the required gear. The Secretariat stressed that it is the responsibility of the Parties, and not the Secretariat, to ensure that vessels with DMLs do in fact have all the gear and equipment required by the AIDCP at all times.

### **9. Report of the Permanent Working Group on Tuna Tracking**

Ing. Luis Torres, of Ecuador, who chaired the working group, presented his report. The European Union and Nicaragua requested that, in order to avoid any confusion, the Secretariat modify the table summarizing the situation regarding the Tuna Tracking Forms (TTFs) in order to reflect the total number of TTFs received to date, while distinguishing those received by the required 10-day deadline.

### **10. Report of the Working Group to promote and publicize the AIDCP Dolphin Safe Tuna Certification System**

Mr. Julio Guevara, of Nicaragua, who chaired the working group, presented his report. A video for promoting the AIDCP dolphin safe label was being prepared, as well as documents aimed at the general public describing the AIDCP and the label, which FAO and other international fisheries bodies would be asked to publish on their respective websites.

The working group had the following recommendations:

1. The information to be published should be reviewed by the Parties before publication.
2. The Parties should submit their suggestions for improving the promotional pamphlet.

3. Consider ways of implementing the following proposals by Mexico:
  - a. Hold a meeting with relevant entities to promote and disseminate the achievements of the AIDCP, such as academic institutions, the media, marine research institutions, etc.
  - b. Create a mechanism of institutional response to attacks on the AIDCP, so that it does not appear that only one Party is responding.
  - c. Make available information on the problems and successes of the AIDCP for inclusion in marine life and fisheries curricula at academic institutions.
  - d. Ask Parties to promote the AIDCP on pertinent web pages and in publications.

#### **11. Other business**

There was no other business.

#### **12. Recommendations for the Meeting of the Parties**

The Panel agreed on the following recommendations for the Meeting of the Parties:

1. The Secretariat should follow up on two special cases, 51-01 and 51-03.
2. The Secretariat should modify the table on the submission of TTFs in order to reflect the total number received to date, while distinguishing those received by the required deadline.
3. Consider the recommendations of the Working Group on promoting the AIDCP dolphin safe label.

#### **13. Place and date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Panel will be held in October 2013, on the occasion of the meetings of the AIDCP.

#### **14. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 PM on 3 June 2013.

## Appendix.

**ALFREDO FLORES\***  
Ministerio de Defensa  
[pescamar@mindef.gob.bo](mailto:pescamar@mindef.gob.bo)

**VLADIMIR PUENTES\***  
Autoridad Nacional de Acuicultura y Pesca  
[vladimir.puentes@aunap.gov.co](mailto:vladimir.puentes@aunap.gov.co)

**JOHN RAMIREZ**  
Autoridad Nacional de Acuicultura y Pesca  
[john.ramirez@aunap.gov.co](mailto:john.ramirez@aunap.gov.co)

**ALEJANDRA PELAEZ**  
Ministerio Relaciones Exteriores  
[alejandra.pelaez@cancilleria.gov.co](mailto:alejandra.pelaez@cancilleria.gov.co)

**JIMMY MARTÍNEZ\***  
Subsecretaría de Recursos Pesqueros  
[Jimmy.martinez@pesca.gob.ec](mailto:Jimmy.martinez@pesca.gob.ec)

**LUIS TORRES**  
Subsecretaría de Recursos Pesqueros  
[luis.torres@pesca.gob.ec](mailto:luis.torres@pesca.gob.ec)

**SALVADOR SIU\***  
Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería  
[Salvador.siu@mag.gob.sv](mailto:Salvador.siu@mag.gob.sv)

**DAVID HOGAN\***  
U.S. Department of State  
[hogandf@state.gov](mailto:hogandf@state.gov)

**ED STOCKWELL**  
U.S. Commissioner  
[edstockwell@insightbb.com](mailto:edstockwell@insightbb.com)

**ADAM BLOOMQUIST**  
U.S. Department of State  
[bloomquista@state.gov](mailto:bloomquista@state.gov)

**WILLIAM JACOBSON**  
U.S. Department of State  
[bill.jacobson@noaa.gov](mailto:bill.jacobson@noaa.gov)

**MARIO AGUILAR\***  
CONAPESCA  
[maguilar@conapesca.gob.mx](mailto:maguilar@conapesca.gob.mx)

**MARTHA ESTRADA**  
CONAPESCA  
[mestrada@conapesca.gob.mx](mailto:mestrada@conapesca.gob.mx)

**ISABEL C. REYES**  
CONAPESCA  
[ireyesr@conapesca.gob.mx](mailto:ireyesr@conapesca.gob.mx)

**MICHEL DREYFUS**  
Instituto Nacional de la Pesca  
[dreyfus@cicese.mx](mailto:dreyfus@cicese.mx)

## ATTENDEES

### BOLIVIA

**LIMBER MOLLERICON**  
Ministerio de Defensa  
[limber10palermo@hotmail.com](mailto:limber10palermo@hotmail.com)

### COLOMBIA

**JUAN CALDAS**  
Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible  
[jcaldas@minambiente.gov.co](mailto:jcaldas@minambiente.gov.co)

**SANDRA MUÑOZ**  
Ministerio de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural  
[sandra.munoz@minagricultura.gov.co](mailto:sandra.munoz@minagricultura.gov.co)

**ENRIQUE DE LA VEGA**  
Programa Nacional de Observadores de Colombia  
[edelavega@pescalimpia.org](mailto:edelavega@pescalimpia.org)

### ECUADOR

**LUIGI BENINCASA AZUA**  
ATUNEC/Asociación de Atuneros de Ecuador  
[info@atunec.com.ec](mailto:info@atunec.com.ec)

**JOSÉ OLMEDO**  
Servipuertos, S.A.  
[ab.joseolmedo@gmail.com](mailto:ab.joseolmedo@gmail.com)

### EL SALVADOR

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**ERIKA CARLSEN**  
NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Service  
[erika.carlsen@noaa.gov](mailto:erika.carlsen@noaa.gov)

**JEREMY RUSIN**  
NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Service  
[jeremy.rusin@noaa.gov](mailto:jeremy.rusin@noaa.gov)

**MARTINA SAGAPOLU**  
NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Service  
[Martina.sagapolu@noaa.gov](mailto:Martina.sagapolu@noaa.gov)

**GUILLERMO GÓMEZ**  
Gomez-Hall Associates  
[gomezhall@gmail.com](mailto:gomezhall@gmail.com)

### MEXICO

**LUIS FLEISCHER**  
Instituto Nacional de la Pesca  
[lfleischer21@hotmail.com](mailto:lfleischer21@hotmail.com)

**KIP EIDEBERG**  
Finn Partners  
[kip.eideberg@finnpartners.com](mailto:kip.eideberg@finnpartners.com)

**MARK ROBERTSON**  
Potomac Global Advisors, LLC  
[mrobertson@potomacglobal.com](mailto:mrobertson@potomacglobal.com)

## NICARAGUA

**JULIO GUEVARA\***  
INATUN  
[juliocgp@gmail.com](mailto:juliocgp@gmail.com)

## PANAMA

**ARNULFO FRANCO\***  
FIPESCA  
[arnulfofranco@fipesca.com](mailto:arnulfofranco@fipesca.com)

## PERU

**GLADYS CÁRDENAS\***  
Instituto del Mar del Perú  
[gcardenas@imarpe.gob.pe](mailto:gcardenas@imarpe.gob.pe)

**ERICH DIAZ**  
Instituto del Mar del Perú  
[ediaz@imarpe.gob.pe](mailto:ediaz@imarpe.gob.pe)

## EUROPEAN UNION

**ANGELA MARTINI\***  
European Commission  
[angela.martini@ec.europa.eu](mailto:angela.martini@ec.europa.eu)

**MARIA MOSET**  
Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente  
(España)  
[smosetma@magrama.es](mailto:smosetma@magrama.es)

**LUIS MOLLEDO**  
European Commission  
[luis.molledo@ec.europa.eu](mailto:luis.molledo@ec.europa.eu)

**JAVIER ARÍZ**  
Instituto Español de Oceanografía  
[javier.ariz@ca.ieo.es](mailto:javier.ariz@ca.ieo.es)

## VENEZUELA

**ALVIN DELGADO\***  
PNOV/FUNDATUN  
[adelgadopnov@cantv.net](mailto:adelgadopnov@cantv.net)

**OSNEIVER SANDOVAL**  
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores  
[osneiversandoval@gmail.com](mailto:osneiversandoval@gmail.com)

## TUNA INDUSTRY

**LILLO MANISCALCHI**  
Avatun  
[lilomaniscalchi@yahoo.com](mailto:lilomaniscalchi@yahoo.com)

**RAFAEL TRUJILLO**  
Cámara Nacional de Pesquería  
[direjec@camaradepesqueria.com](mailto:direjec@camaradepesqueria.com)

## NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

**REBECCA REGNERY**  
Humane Society International  
[regnery@hsi.org](mailto:regnery@hsi.org)

## OTHER OBSERVERS

**JESSICA MCCLUNEY**  
University of Washington  
[jkmcluney@gmail.com](mailto:jkmcluney@gmail.com)

## SECRETARIAT

**GUILLERMO COMPEÁN, Director**  
[gcompean@iattc.org](mailto:gcompean@iattc.org)  
**MARISOL AGUILAR**  
[maguilar@iattc.org](mailto:maguilar@iattc.org)  
**ERNESTO ALTAMIRANO**  
[ealtamirano@iattc.org](mailto:ealtamirano@iattc.org)  
**RICARDO BELMONTES**  
[rblemontes@iattc.org](mailto:rblemontes@iattc.org)  
**MÓNICA GALVÁN**  
[mgalvan@iattc.org](mailto:mgalvan@iattc.org)

**JEAN-FRANCOIS PULVENIS**  
[jpulvenis@iattc.org](mailto:jpulvenis@iattc.org)  
**TERESA MUSANO**  
[tmusano@iattc.org](mailto:tmusano@iattc.org)  
**ENRIQUE UREÑA**  
[eurena@iattc.org](mailto:eurena@iattc.org)  
**NORA ROA-WADE**  
[nwade@iattc.org](mailto:nwade@iattc.org)  
**NICHOLAS WEBB**  
[nwebb@iattc.org](mailto:nwebb@iattc.org)