

**INTERNATIONAL DOLPHIN CONSERVATION PROGRAM**

**INTERNATIONAL REVIEW PANEL**

**66<sup>TH</sup> MEETING**

**La Jolla, California, USA**

**21 October 2019**

**REPORT OF THE MEETING**

**AGENDA**

	Documents
1. Opening of the meeting	
2. Election of the Presider	
3. Adoption of the agenda	
4. Non-governmental members of the Panel	
5. Approval of the minutes of the 65 <sup>th</sup> meeting	
6. a. Review of Dolphin Mortality Limits for 2019	IRP-66-01
b. Dolphin Mortality Limits for 2020	IRP-66-02
7. Review of AIDCP List of Qualified Captains	IRP-66-03
8. Review of observer data	
9. Review of actions by Parties on possible infractions reported by the IRP:	
a. Actions taken since report at the 65 <sup>th</sup> meeting	IRP-66-04
b. Status review of special cases	
10. Report of the Permanent Working Group on Tuna Tracking	
11. Other business	
12. Recommendations for the Meeting of the Parties	
13. Place and date of next meeting	
14. Adjournment	

**APPENDIX**

1. List of attendees

The 66<sup>th</sup> meeting of the International Review Panel was held in La Jolla, California, USA, on 21 October 2019.

**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. Enrique de la Vega, of Colombia, was elected as the Presider of the meeting.

**3. Adoption of the agenda**

The proposed agenda was adopted without changes.

#### **4. Non-governmental members of the Panel**

The Secretariat reported that the procedure for electing non-governmental members of the IRP was conducted in accordance with the provisions of Annex VII, paragraph 4, of the AIDCP. Therefore, Rafael Trujillo, Ernesto Escobar and Arnulfo Franco were elected in representation from the tuna industry. Mrs. Rebeca Regnery, from Humane Society International, was elected in representation from environmental organizations.

#### **5. Approval of the minutes of the 65<sup>th</sup> meeting**

The minutes of the 65<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Panel were approved without any changes.

#### **6. a. Review of Dolphin Mortality Limits for 2019**

Mr. Enrique Ureña, from the Commission staff, presented Document [IRP-66-01, “Review of Dolphin Mortality Limits for 2019”](#), which covers the situation regarding the utilization of DMLs during 2019, as well as some statistics of dolphin-associated tuna fisheries. He reported that the average DML allocated for 2019 is 45 dolphins. No individual DML per vessel has been exceeded during the year and the mortality rate is 0.07 dolphins per set, with 8,116 sets on dolphins and a mortality of 584 as of 1 October 2019.

Mexico highlighted that the mortality rate has been very low for several years and that technology has already reached its peak in terms of excellent performance, which shows that the program is on the right track. It noted that mortality per stock should be reviewed.

Dr. Martin Hall, from the Secretariat, commented that such information should be reviewed since there could be an underestimation of the actual mortality rate based on observer data and due to other factors. The Director and Coordinator of Scientific Research emphasized the nature and soundness of the information management processes developed by the Program and stressed that the opinion expressed by Dr. Hall at this forum, in a personal capacity, does not represent that of the IATTC staff. Several Parties expressed their surprise at the statement by Dr. Hall and emphasized that these types of comments should be duly supported by documented evidence. For this reason, the IRP agreed to recommend that Dr. Hall be asked to prepare a document to support his comments. On the other hand, this will be an opportunity for the Secretariat to prepare a report on what has been done and is scheduled to be done in terms of procedures and controls to guarantee an optimal implementation of the AIDCP, particularly in relation to the observer program.

#### **b. Dolphin Mortality Limits for 2020**

Mr. Ureña summarized the situation regarding DML requests for 2020. He noted that DMLs were requested for 109 vessels, but one did not qualify due to having fallen into a pattern of infractions, pursuant to Resolution A-02-0, and that Annex IV, section I, paragraph 9, disqualifies a vessel with a pattern of infractions from receiving a DML. On this basis, the Panel recommended the allocation of 108 DMLs.

#### **7. Review of AIDCP List of Qualified Captains**

The Secretariat presented Document [IRP-66-03, “Review of AIDCP List of Qualified Captains”](#), which updates the changes that occurred between 30 May and 2 October 2019; during this time, two captains were added to the list, and none were removed or reinstated.

## **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 65<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Panel discussed those cases that are not automatically sent to the relevant Parties to determine which of them should be notified to the responsible Government as possible infractions.

The case of **Trip 2019-448** of a possible observer harassment report was reviewed. Even though this case has already been preliminary investigated by the relevant authority, the IRP recommended sending it as a possible infraction case to the authority for investigation and including it in the list of Special Cases followed up by the Panel. The IRP also recommended that the Secretariat send a communication to the corresponding Party recalling that it is important for captains to be more alert of possible observer harassment.

The case of **Trip 2019-614** of a fishing captain not included in the List of Qualified Captains was reviewed. The IRP recommended sending this case as a possible infraction to the corresponding Party and requested that both fisheries authorities and observer programs verify the List of Qualified Captains before assigning and/or dispatching a vessel with a DML.

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

### **a. Actions taken since report at the 65<sup>th</sup> meeting**

The Secretariat presented Document [IRP-66-04, "Actions taken since report at the 65<sup>th</sup> meeting"](#), which included a possible observer harassment and a fishing trip without an observer. Regarding the case of possible harassment, there is no response from the responsible Party. As for the case of the trip without an observer, the responsible Party mentioned that the corresponding investigation had been conducted and the vessel had been sanctioned. Furthermore, there was a case of a vessel that made a night set, which has been pending for more than two years.

The Parties with pending cases were encouraged to report on actions taken at the next meeting.

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

The Secretariat presented the Document "*Summary of Pending Special Cases Monitored by the Panel*". Case 63-01 has been reviewed during several meetings and involves trips 2017-916, 2018-140 and 2018-228, on which the same vessel conducted three consecutive trips without a qualified captain.

It was reported that the corresponding Government had sent a letter to the Secretariat on 16 September 2019 indicating that the infraction was identified and opened the corresponding administrative file, in addition to sending a memorandum to the shipowners requiring compliance with the provisions of the AIDCP. Consequently, the Panel decided to remove it from the list of special cases.

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

Mr. David Hogan, Chair of the Working Group, presented his report. He expressed that there were no specific recommendations for the IRP, the minutes were approved, and no other business was discussed.

## **11. Other business**

No other business was raised.

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

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

- a) Approve 108 DMLs of the 109 requested for 2020 since one of the vessels has a pattern of infractions.
- b) Send case 2019-448 to the relevant Party for investigation of possible observer harassment and include it in the list of special cases for monitoring.
- c) Send case 2019-614 to the relevant Party for investigation of a fishing trip with a captain who is not on the List of Qualified Captains.
- d) Request the Secretariat, in the event that Dr. Martin Hall submits a report on his comments before the AIDCP, to evaluate its contents and submit a report to the Parties for consideration by the IRP. This report must comply with the rules of confidentiality of the AIDCP.

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

The next meeting of the Panel will be held in conjunction with the next meetings of the AIDCP in 2020.

### **14. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 13:10 on 21 October 2019.