

**INTERNATIONAL DOLPHIN CONSERVATION PROGRAM**

**INTERNATIONAL REVIEW PANEL (IRP)**

**67<sup>TH</sup> MEETING**

*(by videoconference)*

**16 August 2021**

**REPORT OF THE MEETING**

**AGENDA**

	Documents
1. Opening of the meeting*	
2. Election of the Presider	
3. Adoption of the agenda	
4. Review of Dolphin Mortality Limits for 2020 and 2021	<a href="#">IRP-67-01</a>
5. Review of the AIDCP <i>List of Qualified Captains</i>	<a href="#">IRP-67-02</a>
6. Review of observer data	<a href="#">IRP-67-05</a>
7. Review of actions by Parties on possible infractions reported by the IRP:	
a. Actions taken since report at the 66 <sup>th</sup> meeting	<a href="#">IRP-67-03</a>
b. Status review of special cases	
8. Report of the Permanent Working Group on Tuna Tracking	
9. Recommendations for the Meeting of the Parties	
10. Place and date of next meeting	
11. Adjournment	

\* Including the adoption of *ad hoc* rules and arrangements for the 67th meeting only.

**APPENDIX**

**1. List of attendees**

The 67<sup>th</sup> meeting of the International Review Panel was held on 16 August 2021.

**1. Opening of the meeting**

Amb. Jean-François Pulvenis, Director *ad interim* of the Inter-American Commission of Tropical Tuna (IATTC), which provides the Secretariat for the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP), opened the meeting. *Ad hoc* rules and arrangements were adopted in order to hold the 67<sup>th</sup> meeting virtually.

**2. Election of the Presider**

Mr. Enrique de la Vega was elected Presider of the meeting.

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

The agenda was adopted without changes.

### **4. Review of Dolphin Mortality Limits for 2020 and 2021**

The Secretariat summarized the situation regarding the allocation, reallocation and utilization of Dolphin Mortality Limits (DMLs) in 2020 and 2021—described in Document [IRP-67-01 Review of Dolphin Mortality Limits DML for 2020 and 2021](#)—noting that by 2020, 108 full-year DMLs were allocated with an average of 45 dolphins. Eighty-five DMLs were utilized by 1 April, three were renounced, 20 were exempted due to *force majeure*, of which 17 were not utilized in the year. One second-semester DML was allocated, which was utilized, and two from the RDA (DMLs allocated from the reserve granted at the Director’s discretion in accordance with the AIDCP) of which one was utilized and one was not.

In 2021, 109 DMLs were allocated, of which 86 were utilized by 1 April, four were renounced, 17 were exempted due to *force majeure* and two were forfeited. Two second-semester DMLs and one from the RDA were allocated.

The average cumulative mortality per vessel for 2020 was 7.65 dolphins and the year ended with a cumulative mortality of 689 of the 4,900 distributed among the international fleet for the allocation of full-year limits. The average cumulative mortality per vessel for 2021 as of 24 June was 4.95 with a cumulative mortality of 356. The mortality by set for 2020 was 0.07 and 0.06 as of 24 June 2021.

The European Union mentioned that two vessels had a relatively high dolphin mortality in 2020 (one vessel between 26 and 30 and the other between 31 and 35) and asked whether this kind of situations where mortality is relatively high were monitored. The Secretariat informed that they do monitor, on a quarterly basis, cases where mortality exceeds the quarterly rate; thus, if a vessel exceeds 50% of the allocated DML by the end of the first semester, the fisheries authority of the vessel's flag is informed of the situation.

Additionally, the Presider of the meeting reported that vessels are subject to a performance evaluation that has a direct impact on the DML allocation of the following year. It was agreed that a recommendation would be issued for the Meeting of the Parties to assess the DML allocation system as well as mechanisms to further encourage the continued reduction of incidental mortality.

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

The Secretariat presented Document [IRP-67-02](#) showing the changes to the list of captains between 2 October 2019 and 2 July 2021, which include the addition of 30 captains. During this period, no captain was removed from the list.

### **6. Review of observer data**

The Secretariat presented the data reported by observers of the On-Board Observer Program concerning possible infractions received and processed by the Secretariat since the previous meeting of the Panel. The Panel agreed to refer to the corresponding Parties the four cases of trips without a qualified captain presented in Document [IRP-67-05](#). Similarly, the following cases presented in Document [IRP-67-05](#) will be automatically forwarded: four cases of trips without a raft; five cases of trips without a high intensity floodlight; two cases of trips without face masks; and one case without DSP.

Due to time constraints during the virtual meeting, it was agreed that the remaining cases of possible infractions—which included two cases of observer interference, one set without backdown, one set with sacked and/or brailed dolphins, and one trip without observer—will be reviewed at the next meeting of the Panel.

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

### **a. Actions taken since the report at the 66<sup>th</sup> meeting**

The Secretariat presented Document [IRP-67-03](#), which summarizes the actions taken in response to the two cases presented at the 66<sup>th</sup> meeting of the IRP, which consist of a possible observer harassment and a possible night set. Regarding case 2019-448 of possible harassment, the responsible Party mentioned that the investigation had already been completed and the necessary actions had been taken so it requested that the case be closed. The Panel recommended the closing of this file once the official document with the request is received from the responsible Party.

There were no interventions regarding the case of the possible night set.

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

The Secretariat presented the Document *Summary of pending special cases monitored by the Panel* (Document IRP-67-04). The case presented was case 66-01, with trip number 2019-448, on observer harassment; as described in the previous item, the Panel agreed to file it once the official request is received from Ecuador.

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

Mr. David Hogan, Chair of the Working Group, presented his report. He stated that there were no specific recommendations for the IRP and no other issues were discussed.

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

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

1. Review the DML allocation system and the incentives for vessels for their annual performance with the objective of continuing to make progress in reducing dolphin mortality in the EPO.
2. Refer to the corresponding Parties the four cases of trips without a qualified captain presented at the meeting of the Panel. Similarly, the following cases presented in Document IRP-67-05 will be forwarded automatically: four cases of trips without a raft; five cases of trips without a high intensity floodlight; two cases of trips without face masks; and one case without DSP. The other cases of possible infractions presented in Document IRP-67-05 will be reviewed at the next meeting of the Panel.
3. File special case 66-01, with trip number 2019-448, for observer harassment once the Secretariat receives official documentation from Ecuador summarizing the results of the investigation and requesting that the case be closed.
4. Review possible non-compliance of vessels that have been exempted from carrying an observer due to the special COVID-19 procedure and have not submitted the required forms to the Secretariat.

5. Continue observer deployment efforts to ensure that the majority of vessels are able to depart with an observer on board. Review the COVID-19 Pandemic Exemption Procedure for the Operation of On-board Observers to evaluate if it requires an adjustment or a time extension.

Regarding item 9.4, the Secretariat mentioned that these cases would be reviewed at the meeting of the IATTC Review Committee due to its connection with Resolution C-09-04. However, the Parties mentioned the need to also discuss them within the AIDCP, which will be done at the next meeting.

Regarding item 9.5, Colombia stressed the importance of continuing to work between the Parties and the Secretariat to ensure the placement of observers on all trips of Class-6 vessels. Regarding this item, it was mentioned that, while in 2020 only 6% of the trips were exempted from carrying an observer on board, the efforts by the Secretariat and the Parties should continue on issues such as vaccination programs in order to prevent fishing trips without observers and, at the same time, guarantee the health of crew members and observers.

#### **10. 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 the second semester of 2021.

#### **11. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 San Diego local time on 16 August 2021.