

Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission

RESOLUTION ON DOLPHIN ABUNDANCE STUDIES IN THE EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN

June 2000

Recalling that the Declaration of Panama and the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program requires that decisions affecting the living marine resources of the eastern Pacific Ocean be based upon the best available science;

Considering that the scientific credibility is based upon the quality and the pertinence of the information; in analysis, robustness, and validation; as well as in the transparency of the methodology;

Acknowledging the magnitude of the economic and social costs assumed by the industries and citizens of the Parties, as well as the commitment demonstrated by responsible non-governmental organizations actively supporting the IATTC through their participation in the programs that constitute the agreement;

The IATTC therefore requests:

1. That the signatory parties complete their commitments contracted in the Panama Declaration including, among others, their obligation to consult with the IATTC, that is to say, with the High Contracting Parties.
2. That conclusions on methodology, as well as on the results follow the most rigorous scientific analysis.
3. That the United States be invited to participate in an independent review, coordinated by the director of the IATTC of the methodology used to estimate the size of dolphin stocks and the results of these estimates.
4. That the United States make available to the IATTC for this review the raw data collected on the research vessels, the scientific logbooks, their validity, their processing, their methodology, associated research procedures on which the estimates of the dolphin stocks in 1998 and 1999 were based, the environmental context and the complete results.
5. That the United States not consider the results valid and publishable until after this meeting of scientific peers.
6. In order to guarantee greater transparency, that in the following cruises, scientific observers of IATTC member countries take part.
7. That the information presented by SWFSC/NMFS be accompanied by an appropriate disclaimer stating that the information is preliminary and the analysis is incomplete. Any further use of the information presented and now in the possession of the participants shall be constrained until it is deemed to provide a sound basis for an objective scientific judgment.