

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION
COMISIÓN INTERAMERICANA DEL ATÚN TROPICAL

72ND MEETING

LIMA (PERU)
14-18 JUNE 2004

RESOLUTION C-04-05

CONSOLIDATED RESOLUTION ON BYCATCH

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC):

Recalling and reaffirming the Resolutions on Bycatch adopted at the 66th, 68th, and 69th Meetings of the Commission in June 2000, 2001, and 2002, respectively;

Recognizing the value of consolidating the operative parts of these resolutions into one comprehensive resolution on bycatch;

Believing that any additional measures on bycatch should also be incorporated into this single resolution;

Has agreed as follows:

ACTIONS BY GOVERNMENTS

Contracting Parties, cooperating non-Parties, fishing entities and regional economic integration organizations (collectively “CPCs”) shall:

1. Reduction of the incidental mortality of juvenile tunas:

- a. Until January 1, 2006:
 - i. Implement programs to require all purse-seine vessels to first retain on board and then land all bigeye, skipjack, and yellowfin tuna caught, except fish considered unfit for human consumption for reasons other than size. A single exception shall be the final set of a trip, when there may be insufficient well space remaining to accommodate all the tuna caught in that set.
 - ii. Review annually the effect and effectiveness of this program.
- b. Support, and seek the necessary funds for, the following future studies and research:
 - i. Develop technology for releasing juvenile tunas, particularly sorting grids.
 - ii. Apply technology for the identification of species and size composition in schools prior to setting, for example acoustic technology.
- c. Pursue the establishment of mechanisms for communicating information on areas of high concentration of juvenile tunas in real time within the fleet or parts of the fleet, taking account of the importance of ensuring confidentiality of such information.

2. Release of non-target species

Require fishermen on purse-seine vessels to promptly release unharmed, to the extent practicable, all sharks, billfishes, rays, dorado, and other non-target species.

3. General:

- a. Publicize the provisions of the Resolutions, particularly the requirement to promptly release unharmed, to the extent practicable, all sea turtles, sharks, billfishes, rays, dorado and other non-target species.
- b. Encourage fishermen to develop and use techniques and equipment to facilitate the rapid and safe

release of any such animals.

- c. Urge governments with vessels targeting species covered by the Convention to provide the required bycatch information as soon as possible.

4. Sea turtles:

- a. Require fishermen on vessels targeting species covered by the Convention to promptly release unharmed, to the extent practicable, all sea turtles.
- b. Encourage all the CPCs to voluntarily provide the Commission with all data on bycatches of sea turtles in all fisheries targeting species covered by the Convention, recognizing that a comprehensive approach is necessary to deal effectively with sea turtle issues;
- c. Encourage FAO to address the conservation and management of sea turtles, including the issue of bycatches of sea turtles as part of such a comprehensive approach;
- d. Implement the following actions:
 - i. Train crews of vessels targeting species covered by the Convention, particularly those without observers, in techniques for handling turtles to improve survival after release.
 - ii. Prohibit vessels targeting species covered by the Convention from disposing of salt bags or any other type of plastic trash at sea.
 - iii. Encourage the release, when practicable, of sea turtles entangled in FADs and other fishing gear.
 - iv. Foster the recovery of FADs when they are not being used in the fishery.
 - v. Take measures, including providing assistance, necessary to ensure that longline vessels carry on board the necessary equipment (*e.g.* de-hookers, line cutters and scoop nets) for appropriate release of incidentally caught sea turtles
- e. Require specific measures for encircled or entangled sea turtles, as follows:
 - i. Whenever a sea turtle is sighted in the net, all reasonable efforts should be made to rescue the turtle before it becomes entangled in the net, including, if necessary, the deployment of a speedboat.
 - ii. If a turtle is entangled in the net, net roll should stop as soon as the turtle comes out of the water and should not start again until the turtle has been disentangled and released.
 - iii. If a turtle is brought aboard the vessel, all appropriate efforts to assist in the recovery of the turtle should be made before returning it to the water.
- f. Educate fishermen through information dissemination activities, including distributing informational materials and organizing seminars on, *inter alia*, reducing bycatches of sea turtles and safe handling of incidentally caught sea turtles to improve their survivability.

ACTIONS BY IATTC STAFF

The Director shall:

5. Reduction of the incidental mortality of juvenile tunas:

Seek the necessary funds for the following future studies and research:

- i. Develop technology for releasing juvenile tunas, particularly sorting grids.
- ii. Develop technology for the identification of species and size composition in schools prior to setting, for example acoustic technology.

6. Species of large pelagic fish of interest to the artisanal fishery, particularly dorado:

Identify areas of high bycatches of these species, and verify the stability in time and space of any such areas.

7. **Billfish, sharks and rays:**

- a. Develop techniques and/or equipment to facilitate their release from the deck or from the net.
- b. Seek the necessary funds to carry out experiments to determine the survival rates of released billfish, sharks and rays.
- c. Define areas and periods in which any of these species are most likely to be caught.

8. **Sea turtles:**

- a. Study and formulate recommendations regarding modifications of the design of FADs to eliminate entanglement of sea turtles, particularly the use of webbing hanging below FADs.
- b. Educate fishermen through information dissemination activities, including distributing informational materials and organizing seminars on, *inter alia*, reducing bycatches of sea turtles and safe handling of incidentally caught sea turtles to improve their survivability.
- c. Compile manuals produced by the CPCs for safe handling and release of incidentally caught sea turtles by all gear types, and make those manuals available to all the CPCs for their use.

9. **General:**

Urge those governments with vessels targeting species covered by the Convention to provide the required bycatch information as soon as possible.

10. This resolution replaces Resolution C-03-08, *Consolidated Resolution On Bycatch*.