

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

83RD MEETING

La Jolla, California (USA)
25-29 June 2012

RECOMMENDATION C-12-10

BEST AVAILABLE SCIENCE

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in La Jolla, California (USA), on the occasion of its 83rd Meeting:

Recognizing the importance of sound scientific advice as the centrepiece for the conservation and management of tuna and tuna-like species in the IATTC Convention Area, in accordance with international law and in line with the information needs of the IATTC;

Aware that the availability of adequate scientific information is fundamental to carrying out the objective of the Antigua Convention laid down in its Article II;

Noting the role of the scientific staff;

Recognizing the importance of the Scientific Advisory Committee in revising any scientific plans, proposals, and research programs of the Commission as well as any assessments, analyses, research, work or recommendations prepared by the scientific staff before consideration by the Commission, as laid down in Annex IV of the Antigua Convention;

Recognizing the limited financial resources of developing coastal States, and wishing to assist in building their scientific capacity;

Acknowledging the need to improve the availability and quality of data and analysis used for the provision of scientific advice, including on bycatch and discards; and

Building on the deliberations and recommendations of the Kobe process;

Agrees to:

1. Take all measures which would be appropriate:
 - i. To ensure a more interactive relationship between Members and Cooperating non-Members (CPCs), the IATTC scientific staff, and the Scientific Advisory Committee in relation to the provision of scientific advice, the Director shall, as appropriate, convene in person, virtually, or otherwise, technical meetings prior to the official meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee.
 - ii. To improve the collection and submission of data to the IATTC, including on bycatches;
 - iii. To support research programs and projects relevant to the information needs of the IATTC;
 - iv. To facilitate participation in meetings of the Scientific Advisory Committee and its Working Groups as well as in other relevant scientific bodies of scientists with suitable scientific qualifications;
 - v. To contribute to the training of scientific researchers, including young scientists.
2. Preserve and promote the professional independence and excellence of the scientific staff, the Scientific Advisory Committee and its Working Groups, and the relevance of their work to the information needs of the IATTC, by:
 - i. Enhancing the participation of scientists in meetings of the Scientific Advisory Committee and

- its Working Groups, including scientists involved in other tuna regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) and other relevant scientific bodies;
- ii. Enhancing the participation of the scientific staff in meetings of other tuna RFMOs and relevant scientific bodies;
 - iii. In conformity with the provisions of Article XII(3) of the Antigua Convention, drafting a strategic plan which shall be used to guide the work of the scientific staff the Scientific Advisory Committee and its Working Groups in assisting the IATTC to effectively achieve its mandate.
 - iv. Ensuring that relevant, professionally independent, and objective scientific advice, based on the best available and peer-reviewed scientific analysis, is presented by the scientific staff and the Scientific Advisory Committee to the IATTC;
 - v. Ensuring that the sources and history of revisions of all documents submitted to and assessed by the scientific staff, the Scientific Advisory Committee and its Working Groups are fully documented;
 - vi. Establishing standardized formats for the provision of clear and transparent advice to the IATTC;
 - vii. Providing for well-defined rules for formulating scientific advice to the IATTC, reflecting different views while striving for consensus, to promote consistency and transparency;
 - viii. Ensuring that the key role of the Scientific Advisory Committee as established by Annex IV of the Antigua Convention is respected;
3. With the aim of meeting the above-mentioned objectives, consider broadening financial support and mechanisms, including, *inter alia*, contributing to the “Special Sustainable Development Fund”, as established by Resolution C-11-11, for developing IATTC Members, for the purpose of the implementation of this Recommendation, in particular to:
 - i. Contribute to the scientific capacity-building of developing CPCs and enhance their effective participation in the work of the Scientific Advisory Committee and its Working Groups;
 - ii. Provide the necessary resources for the scientific staff, the Scientific Advisory Committee and its Working Groups, including consideration of alternative funding models for the commissioning of research.
 4. Strengthen, as appropriate, peer-review mechanisms within the scientific staff and the Scientific Advisory Committee by the participation of invited experts (*e.g.* from other RFMOs or from academia) in the scientific staff and Scientific Advisory Committee activities. These experts shall be subject to the data confidentiality rules and procedures currently applicable in the IATTC.
 5. Continue to support the scientific staff and Scientific Advisory Committee’s initiatives to publish their scientific findings in the scientific peer-reviewed academic literature.