

**-- RECOMMENDATION --  
CONCERNING A VESSEL MONITORING SYSTEM PILOT PROGRAM**

*Recommendation adopted by the Commission at its Fifteenth Regular Meeting (Madrid, November 1997), Report for Biennial Period, 1996-1997 (Part II). Entered into force: June 13, 1998.*

*RECOGNIZING* the developments in satellite-based vessel monitoring systems (VMS), and the possible utility within ICCAT;

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION  
OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) RECOMMENDS THAT:

1. Each Contracting Party with vessels greater than 24 meters in overall length (or greater than 20 meters between perpendiculars) and fishing for ICCAT species on the high seas outside the fisheries jurisdiction of any coastal state shall adopt a pilot program for a satellite-based vessel monitoring system (VMS) for ten percent of such vessels, or ten vessels, whichever is greater. The pilot program will be a flag-state based program.
2. Each Contracting Party shall implement a three-year pilot program effective 1 January, 1999; except the three-year pilot program for vessels fishing in the Mediterranean, which shall be effective 1 January, 2000. Contracting Parties are encouraged to implement the pilot program earlier, if possible.
3. The pilot program shall not apply to vessels that never spend more than 24 hours at sea, counted from the time of departure from port to the time of return to port.
4. Information collected shall include the vessel identifier, location, date and time, which shall be collected with a required frequency to ensure that the Contracting Party can effectively monitor the vessel.
5. Performance standards shall at a minimum include a system that:
  - is tamper proof;
  - is fully automatic and operational at all times regardless of environmental conditions;
  - provides real time data; and
  - provides latitude and longitude, with a position accuracy of 500 m. or better, with the format to be determined by the flag state.
6. At its meeting in the year 2000, the Commission shall establish procedures on the submission of aggregate information and how the information is shared between Contracting Parties. These procedures shall ensure that appropriate measures are in place to ensure confidentiality.
7. By 1 June 1998, each Contracting Party shall submit to the Secretariat a report on anticipated implementation of its pilot program. Beginning in 1999, each Contracting Party shall report annually on the progress and implementation of its pilot VMS program. These reports shall be included in the annual national report.
8. The Commission shall evaluate the pilot program at its meeting in 2002.