

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

81ST MEETING

ANTIGUA (GUATEMALA)
27 SEPTEMBER – 1 OCTOBER 2010

RECOMMENDATION C-10-02

**RECOMMENDATION TO MITIGATE THE IMPACT ON SEABIRDS OF
FISHING FOR SPECIES COVERED BY THE IATTC**

The governments of Belize, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, the European Union, France, Guatemala, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Chinese Taipei, the United States of America, Vanuatu, and Venezuela (“the governments”), all members of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC):

Recognizing that some threatened and endangered seabird populations are found in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO);

Understanding that bycatches of seabirds are known to occur in the longline fisheries operating in some areas of the EPO;

Noting that the Antigua Convention calls for the adoption of conservation and management measures and for the recommendations for species belonging to the same ecosystem and that are affected by fishing for the fish stocks;

Reaffirming the importance of implementing the FAO International Plan of Action for Reducing the Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries (“IPOA-Seabirds”);

Recalling that tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organizations responsible for other ocean areas have adopted measures to mitigate the accidental bycatch of seabirds in longline fisheries;

Believing that fisheries observer programs can greatly increase the understanding of the extent of interactions between seabirds and fisheries, and the evaluation of how seabird bycatch mitigation measures can be most effectively applied;

Taking account of the work of the IATTC, including the IATTC Technical Meeting on Seabirds held on 11 May 2009, that has showed that combining different mitigation measures is more effective than using a single measure in reducing bycatch of seabirds;

Noting that scientific research into mitigation of seabird bycatch in longline fisheries has shown that the effectiveness of measures depends on the type of vessel, the season, and the species of seabirds present; and

Noting that effective mitigation measures can reduce the loss of bait and therefore increase catches;

Agree to apply in the EPO the following measures to mitigate the impact on seabirds of fishing for species covered by the IATTC;

1. The governments shall report to the IATTC on their implementation of the IPOA-Seabirds, including, as appropriate, the status of their National Plans of Action for reducing incidental catches of seabirds in longline fisheries.
2. The governments shall require their longline vessels¹ that fish for species covered by the IATTC in

¹ Vessels propelled by outboard motors are not subject to this recommendation

the EPO north of 23°N (except in Mexican jurisdictional waters) and south of 30°S, plus the area bounded by the coastline at 2°N, west to 2°N-95°W, south to 15°S-95°W, east to 15°S-85°W, and south to 30°S (see Annex 1) to use at least two of the mitigation measures in Table 1, including at least one from Column A. Vessels shall not use the same measure from Column A and Column B.

Table 1: Mitigation measures

Column A	Column B
Side-setting with bird curtains and weighted branch lines	<i>Tori</i> line
Night setting with minimum deck lighting	Weighted branch lines
<i>Tori</i> line	Blue-dyed bait
Weighted branch lines	Deep-setting line shooter
	Underwater setting chute
	Management of offal discharge

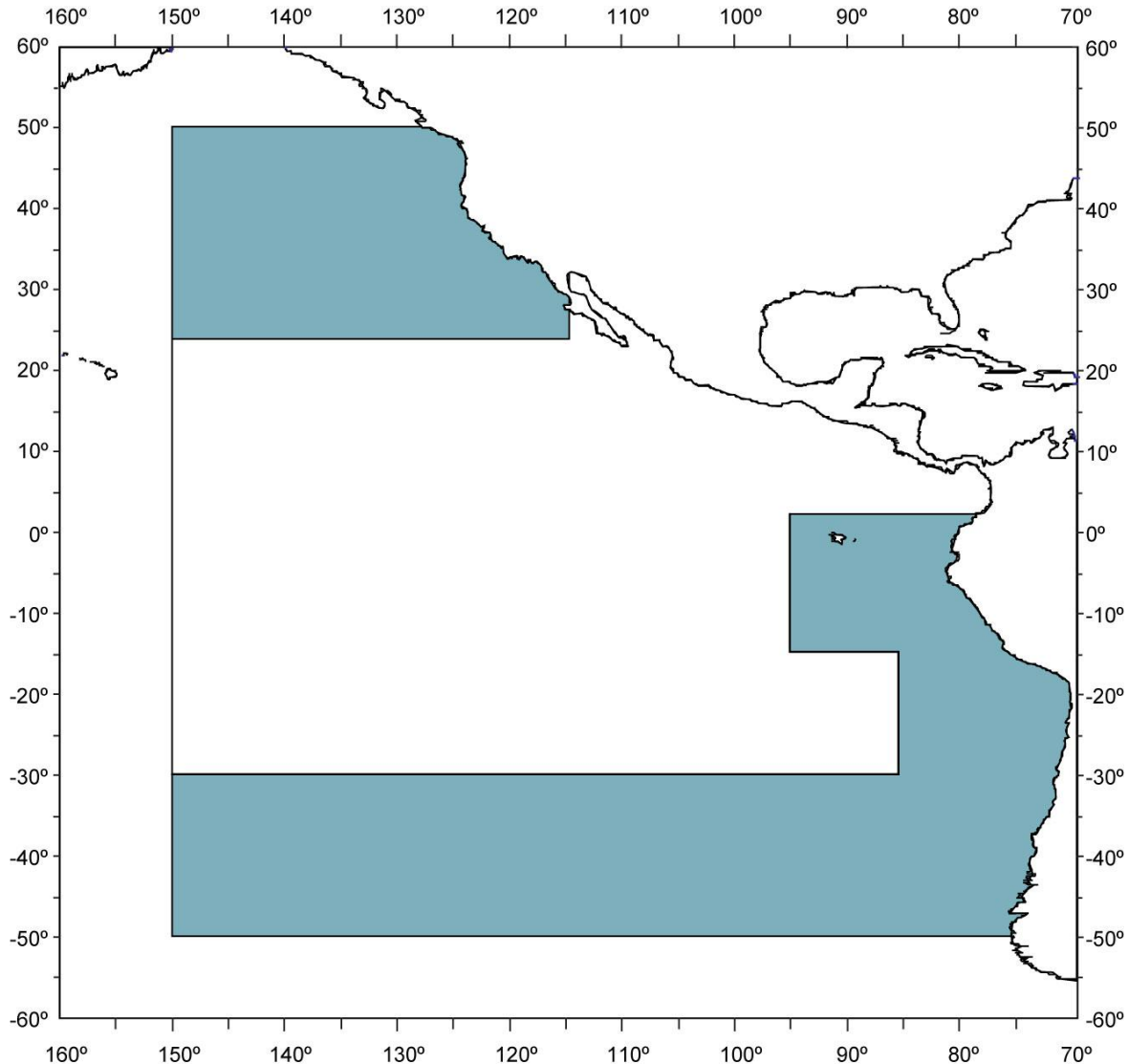
3. Members and cooperating non-members of the IATTC with longline vessels fishing in the EPO other than the area mentioned in paragraph 2 above, are encouraged to voluntarily employ at least one of the mitigation measures included in Table 1.
4. Minimum technical standards for measures are shown in Annex 2, subject to possible modifications based on research and evaluations mentioned in paragraphs 6 and 11.
5. The governments shall inform the IATTC, by 1 September 2011, and annually thereafter, of the mitigation measures that their flag vessels plan to employ in the implementation of this recommendation.
6. Members and cooperating non-members of the IATTC are encouraged to work, jointly and individually, to undertake research, especially on specifications for weighted branch lines, to further develop and refine methods for mitigating seabird bycatch, including measures for use during the process of hauling in longlines, and shall submit to the IATTC any information derived from such efforts. Preferably, research should be undertaken in the fisheries and areas in which the measures will be used.
7. The governments shall provide annually to the IATTC any available information regarding interactions with seabirds involving their flag vessels in the fishery, including bycatches of seabirds and details of seabird species and all relevant information available from observer or other monitoring programs.
8. Members and cooperating non-members of the IATTC are encouraged to establish national programs to place observers aboard longline vessels flying their flags or fishing in their waters, for the purpose of, inter alia, gathering information on the interactions of seabirds with the longline fisheries.
9. Members and cooperating non-members of the IATTC are encouraged to adopt measures aimed at ensuring that seabirds captured alive during longline fishing operations are released alive and in the best condition possible, and that, whenever possible, hooks are removed without jeopardizing the life of the seabird.
10. The governments shall begin implementation of this recommendation no later than 1 September 2011 for their longline vessels equal to or greater than 24 meters in length overall, and no later than 1 September 2012 for their longline vessels less than 24 meters in length overall. The technical specifications for measures most suitable for use by vessels less than 24 meters in length overall shall be considered by the Working Group on Bycatch, the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), and the IATTC scientific staff.
11. The effectiveness of this recommendation to reduce seabird bycatch in the EPO, including the mitigation measures in Table 1, the area of application, and the minimum technical specifications

adopted pursuant to this recommendation, shall be subject to review and possible modification, taking into account the scientific advice from the Working Group on Bycatch, the SAC, and the IATTC scientific staff..

12. The Working Group on Bycatch, and the SAC will also consider the need to extend this recommendation to other fleets operating in the EPO.

13. This recommendation replaces IATTC Resolution C-05-01.

Annex 1



Areas (shaded) within the EPO in which the use of at least two mitigation measures for reducing seabird bycatch is required: north of 23°N (except in Mexican jurisdictional waters) and south of 30°S, plus the area bounded by the coastline at 2°N, west to 20°N-95°W, south to 15°S-95°W, east to 15°S-85°W, and south to 30°S.

Annex 2

Specifications for Column A mitigation measures

1.a. Tori lines

- i. Minimum length: 100 m
- ii. Must be attached to the vessel such that it is suspended from a point a minimum of 5 m above the water at the stern on the windward side of the point where the hookline enters the water.
- iii. Must be attached so that the aerial extent is maintained over the sinking baited hooks.
- iv. Streamers must be less than 5m apart, be using swivels and long enough so that they are as close to the water as possible.
- v. If the tori line is less than 150 m in length, must have a towed object attached to the end so that the aerial extent is maintained over the sinking baited hooks.
- vi. If two (*i.e.* paired) tori lines are used, the two lines must be deployed on opposing sides of the main line.

1.b. Tori line (light streamer)

- i. Minimum length of tori line: 100 m or three times the total length of the vessel.
- ii. Must be attached to the vessel such that it is suspended from a point a minimum of 5 m above the water at the stern on the windward side of a point where the hookline enters the water.
- iii. Must be attached so that the aerial extent is maintained over the sinking baited hooks.
- iv. Streamers must be less than 1m apart and be 30 cm in minimum length.
- v. If two (*i.e.* paired) tori lines are used, the two lines must be deployed on opposing sides of the main line.

2. Side setting with bird curtain and weighted branch lines

- i. Mainline deployed from port or starboard side as far from stern as practicable (at least 1 m), and if mainline shooter is used, must be mounted at least 1m forward of the stern.
- ii. When seabirds are present the gear must ensure mainline is deployed slack so that baited hooks remain submerged.
- iii. Bird curtain must be employed:
 - Pole aft of line shooter at least 3 m long;
 - Minimum of 3 main streamers attached to upper 2 m of pole;
 - Main streamer diameter minimum 20 mm;
 - Branch streamers attached to end of each main streamer long enough to drag on water (no wind) – minimum diameter 10 mm.

3. Night setting

- i. No setting between local sunrise and one hour after local sunset.
- ii. Deck lighting to be kept to a minimum, noting requirements for safety and navigation.

4. Weighted branch lines

- i. Following minimum weight specifications are required:
- ii. Minimum weights attached to all branch lines is 45 g, with the following options:
 - less than 60 g weight attached to within 1 m of the hook; or
 - greater than 60 g and less than 98 g weight attached to within 3.5 ms of the hook; or
 - greater than 98 g weight attached to within 4 m of the hook.

Specifications for Column B mitigation measures

1. Weighted branch lines

- i. Following minimum weight specifications are required:
- ii. Minimum weights attached to all branch lines is 45 g, with the following options:

- less than 60 g weight attached to within 1 m of the hook; or
- greater than 60 g and less than 98 g weight attached to within 3.5 m of the hook; or
- greater than 98 g weight attached to within 4 m of the hook.

2. Blue dyed bait

- i. The IATTC Secretariat shall distribute a standardized color placard.
- ii. All bait must be dyed to the shade shown in the placard.

3. Management of offal discharge

- i. Either:
 - No offal discharge during setting or hauling; or
 - Strategic offal discharge from the opposite side of the boat to setting/hauling to actively encourage birds away from baited hooks.