

Eastern Pacific large pelagics - longline (Martec) FIP Position Statement for the 2022 97th IATTC Annual Meeting

Drafted with agreement from all Eastern Pacific large pelagics - longline (Martec) FIP
Participants – June 2022

The submission of this position statement is regarding the Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) currently being undertaken by the Eastern Pacific Longline Large Pelagics Fishery. The Eastern Pacific Longline Large Pelagics FIP (Martec) fishery targets yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*) and mahi mahi (*Coryphaena hippurus*). The 200 longline vessels are flagged to Costa Rica and Panama and fish on the high seas and within the Costa Rica and Panama EEZ's. The fishery is managed by the Costa Rican Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture (INCOPECA) and regionally the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC).

To find more information on the present FIP, please view the public Fishery Progress profile here:
<https://fisheryprogress.org/fip-profile/eastern-pacific-large-pelagics-longline-martec>

This FIP aims to meet the rising global demand for tuna in a sustainable manner by assuring catches do not exceed sustainable levels, promoting the ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management and strengthening policy and governance systems in the region. The end goal is to achieve certification under the Marine Stewardship Council Fisheries Standard by 2025.

As part of this FIP reaching MSC certification there are various actions which need to be undertaken which involve a range of different stakeholders. To ensure the FIP meets these objectives we need the support of the IATTC and urge action at the IATTC annual meeting this year on multiple topics laid out in this position statement.

We recognise that the impacts of COVID-19 continue to present challenges to regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) like the IATTC. However, we do not believe these circumstances should prevent the IATTC from taking action in 2021 to adopt science-based management measures to ensure the sustainable management of the tuna stocks and marine ecosystems under its purview.

The Eastern Pacific large pelagics - longline (Martec) FIP strongly urges the IATTC and its member states to ensure the IATTC acts in August at the Annual Meeting of the IATTC Commission to

1. Adopt precautionary tuna conservation and management measures, based on the current scientific advice, including additional FAD management measures;
2. Request the Scientific Staff to provide science-based limits on active FADs, deployments and/or sets;
3. Require the provision of raw data from echo-sounder buoys and amend the FAD resolution to include clear timelines to develop FAD marking guidelines and ownership rules and transitioning to the use of FADs without netting and made primarily of biodegradable materials;
4. Accelerate development of MSE for bigeye, skipjack, and yellowfin tuna;
5. Adopt the EMS workplan. Establish and require a fleet-wide observer programme (human or electronic) for purse seine vessels by 2023;
6. By 2023, adopt a Port State Measures Resolution; and
7. Establish a work plan to operationalize paragraphs 5-8 of C-11-07 on Compliance and to develop audit points.

If the above mentioned are addressed effectively it will have positive long term-sustainability implications and improve overall health of the Eastern Pacific marine ecosystem to allow for fisheries like our current FIPs to achieve sustainability targets, particularly in line with MSC certification.

For any further information, please contact the FIP manager Tom Evans at t.evans@keytraceability.com

Signed on behalf of the Eastern Pacific large pelagics - longline (Martec) FIP

June 2022