



ZONA PROCESADORA COROZAL
CIUDAD PANAMA, PANAMA

TEL.: (507) 317-3600
FAX: (507) 317-3627
info@marpesca.com

Eastern Pacific Ocean tuna - purse seine (Marpesca) – June 2020

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fisheries
Av. Amazonas y Av. Eloy Alfaro,
170516,
Quito,
Ecuador

June 2020

Via email to aarens@produccion.gob.ec

RE: 95th IATTC Annual Meeting Position Statement

Dear Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fisheries,

The submission of this letter and subsequent position statement is regarding the [Fishery Improvement Project](#) (FIP) currently being undertaken by the Eastern Pacific Ocean tuna – purse seine (Marpesca) fishery. The fishery targets bigeye (*Thunnus obesus*), skipjack (*Katsuwonus pelamis*) and yellowfin (*T. albacares*) tuna. There are five purse seine vessels flagged to Ecuador, Nicaragua and Panama, fishing on the high seas in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) (and occasionally in national Exclusive Economic Zones). They are operated by Marpesca and are managed regionally by the IATTC. They fish both using Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs) and free school (non-FAD associated).

To find more information on the present FIP, please view the public Fishery Progress profile here: <https://fisheryprogress.org/fip-profile/eastern-pacific-ocean-tuna-purse-seine-marpesca>.

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 Flag states to advocate during the 95th annual IATTC meeting to urge action on multiple topics laid out below. To see these actions in further detail, please see the position statement available on the Fishery Progress FIP page sent on behalf of all the FIP participants to IATTC.

As a flag state, it is important that the following is adequately advocated for during the IATTC meeting in 2020 and we ask for you to make sure the following asks are raised:

- **Ask 1:** Adopt harvest strategies including reference points for North Pacific Albacore, that have clearly defined harvest control rules and monitoring mechanisms (Action 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 in FIP workplan)
- **Ask 2:** Set a timeframe to transition to FADs without nets and with biodegradable materials. (Action 2.2 in FIP workplan).

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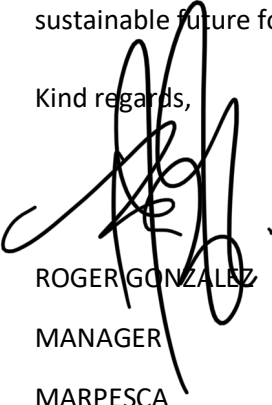
- **Ask 3:** Require fleets to remove previously deployed entangling FADs from the water. (Action 2.2 in FIP workplan).
- **Ask 4:** Design FAD-recovery mechanisms and incentives, such as increasing purse seiners' FAD retrieval and storing capacity and removing a percentage of FADs from the water relative to the number deployed. (Action 2.2 in FIP workplan).
- **Ask 5:** Adopt science-based limits on FAD deployments and/or FAD sets. (Action 2.2 in FIP workplan)
- **Ask 6:** Require complete FAD position data and acoustic records from echosounder buoys. (Action 2.2 in FIP workplan).
- **Ask 7:** Adopt supply-and-tender vessel measures, including identifying purse seine vessels supported, data collection on FADs being deployed and serviced, identifying on the Record of Fishing Vessels which activities are engaged in, and applying observer requirements. (Action 2.2 in FIP workplan).
- **Ask 8:** Develop a FAD marking scheme based on the FAO Guidelines on the Marking of Fishing Gear for all new FAD deployments, regardless of vessel type. (Action 2.2 in FIP workplan).
- **Ask 9:** Adopt measures to mitigate the incidental catch and maximise the post-release survival of sensitive fauna, such as sharks, mobulid rays, birds, sea turtles, particularly leatherback sea turtles, and promote additional research on mobulids, including post-release survival, genetics and population studies, as recommended by the IATTC Staff, Bycatch Working Group and IATTC SAC. (Action 2.2 in FIP workplan)
- **Ask 10:** Take immediate steps to enforce the existing shark finning resolution and strengthen it by requiring that all sharks be landed with fins naturally attached. (Action 2.1 in FIP workplan)
- **Ask 11:** Require 100% observer coverage (human and/or electronic) for longline vessels, and all vessels engaged in at-sea transshipment, within 4 years. (Action 3.4 in FIP action plan)
- **Ask 12:** Adopt best practice E-Monitoring and E-Reporting standards, including for logbooks for purse seine vessels. (Action 3.4 in FIP action plan)
- **Ask 13:** Disclose Resolution plans to address identified area of non-compliance (Action 3.4 in FIP action plan)
- **Ask 14:** Require members to submit a compliance action plan (Action 3.4 in FIP action plan)
- **Ask 15:** Adopt audit points or reference metrics for IATTC measures to ensure clarity in members obligations, reporting requirements, etc., and what will be addressed in the Review Committee. (Action 3.4 in FIP action plan)
- **Ask 16:** Make public annex 1, under IATTC Res C-11-07 (resolution on the process for improved compliance of resolutions adopted by the commission), The Standard Questionnaire on Compliance with IATTC Resolutions once it has been completed by participating CPCs, to ensure CCM's are implementing their obligations. (Action 3.4 in FIP action plan)

Please confirm receipt of this letter and we would appreciate any feedback after the RFMO meeting on how it went and your position on these points. We thank you in advance for making sure these

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important issues are being raised to enable us all to meet sustainability goals and ensure a sustainable future for our oceans.

Kind regards,



ROGER GONZALEZ
MANAGER
MARPESCA

roger@marpesca.com

Annex 1: Vessels in support of the above statement

Vessel Name	IMO Number	Flag	Operated by
Julie L	7053288	Ecuador	Marpesca
Tunamar	7409138	Ecuador	Marpesca
Pescatun	7305409	Nicaragua	Marpesca
Seatuna	7123473	Nicaragua	Marpesca
Tunapesca	7395375	Panama	Marpesca