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SYNOPSIS OF LONGLINE OBSERVER DATA REPORTED PURSUANT TO
RESOLUTION [C-11-08](#)

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This document and accompanying tables summarize current reporting by IATTC CPCs² in response to Resolution [C-11-08](#), which requires CPCs to place observers on a portion of their longline vessels over 20m length overall (LOA), operating in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO). The Resolution mandated the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) to establish the formats of these reports, which necessarily means also their content, including the nature of the data and other relevant information reported by the observer programs, and, by extension, the fleets that they observe.

To date the SAC, working with the IATTC staff, has established three reporting requirements under C-11-08: 1) summary national reports; 2) operational-level longline observer data; and 3) metadata for the longline fleet.

1. LIST OF LONGLINE VESSELS THAT FISHED IN THE EPO IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR

At the ninth meeting of the SAC in May 2018 (SAC-09), some CPCs noted that they were incorrectly listed in [SAC-09 INF-A](#) as non-compliant with reporting requirements, since their longline vessels over 20 m length LOA on the IATTC [Regional Vessel Register](#) were not active in the EPO in the previous year. Taking note of this situation and also noting that knowledge of fleet activity is necessary in order to assess the implementation of C-11-08 and other data reporting requirements, the SAC recommended that CPCs submit annually to the Secretariat a list of their longline vessels that fished in the EPO in the previous year ([Recommendation 9](#)). This recommendation was then expanded upon and adopted by the Commission in paragraph 5 of Resolution C-18-06, which states that “CPCs shall notify the Director by 30 June each year of their vessels on the Regional Vessel Register flying their flag that were actively fishing in the IATTC Convention Area for species covered by the Convention from 1 January to 31 December of the previous year.” As of 2 May 2019, only 6 CPCs had made submissions pursuant to this requirement. Therefore, for the purposes of this report, the IATTC staff assumed that the provisions of C-11-08 applied to all non-responding CPCs with longline vessels greater than 20m length on the Regional Vessel Register in 2018.

² Members and Cooperating non-Members

2. ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORTS

Each CPC with a longline observer program is required to submit an annual summary report to the SAC. The primary purpose is to report on compliance with the requirement that 5% of each CPC's longline fishing effort be covered by on-board observers, but other statistics are also to be submitted. The summary reports received to date during 2018 are posted on the [SAC-10 web page](#).

The data fields that CPCs are currently required to include in their summary reports are:

1. Country (or fishing entity)
2. Fishing year
3. Total catches of the longline fleet, by weight
4. Total fishing days in the year of the longline fleet
5. Percent coverage of fishing effort by observers
6. Total catch by vessels with observers on board
7. Species composition of catches in vessels with observers on board
8. Number of vessels with observers on board
9. Number of sea turtles caught incidentally on trips with observers
10. Whether caught sea turtles were released
11. Numbers of sharks caught in trips with observers
12. Numbers of rays captured in trips with observers
13. Numbers of billfishes captured in trips with observers
14. Numbers of fishing hooks used in trips with observers
15. Type of hooks used

Table 1 compares the information provided in these summary reports to these 15 fields. However, the staff notes that the measures of effort used by CPCs are inconsistent. The effort metric adopted by the SAC for the purpose of determining percent observer coverage is *effective days fishing*. For 2018, only one CPC explicitly uses this metric. Other metrics used by CPCs to report their longline effort include fishing days, sets, fishing operations, observed days, and trips. Some of these may approximate, or be equivalent to, *effective days fishing*, but the staff cannot assume that. This remains a concern because the observer coverage rate is the most important statistic provided, since it not only shows the level of compliance with the 5% requirement, but is also critical for extrapolating observer data to the longline fisheries as a whole.

The IATTC staff is proposing ([SAC-10 INF-H](#)) a change in the measure of effort for calculating observer coverage, from the current "*effective days fishing*" to number of hooks). Only one CPC explicitly uses the term *effective days fishing* to describe its effort, whereas all but one report the total number of hooks observed. Number of hooks is considered a more accurate measure of longline effort, and it is also a more commonly reported statistic among CPCs, therefore the staff is recommending changing to number of hooks as the metric of longline fishing effort under C-11-08.

3. OPERATIONAL OBSERVER DATA

In 2017, SAC-08 established minimum data standards for the reporting of operational-level longline observer data to the Commission, allowing CPCs to choose between reporting (a) data recorded on the IATTC longline observer forms, or (b) data representing a subset of the WCPFC list of minimum standard data fields. Since the 5% observer requirement has been in force since 2013, CPCs should possess the observer data for 2013-2017 that should now be reported to the Commission.

Table 2 shows that, as of 1 May 2019, the IATTC staff has received observer data for 2013-2017 from two CPCs, and partial records from a few others. However, most CPCs have not provided operational observer data for any year, and only one CPC has submitted its observer data for 2018.

The column for 2018 in Table 2 is colored orange rather than red because multiple CPCs have indicated that they cannot provide their longline observer data by the deadline of 31 March of the following year established in Resolution C-11-08. Furthermore, some CPCs have indicated that they cannot provide these data before 30 June, the deadline for submitting annual data such as total catch. For this reason, some CPCs describe their summary reports as preliminary or incomplete.

The staff encourages all CPCs that have not already done so to provide their operational data for 2013-2018 as soon as possible, noting that CPCs were required to have observer programs in place and to begin collecting data as of 1 January 2013.

4. METADATA

At its 7th Meeting in May 2016, the SAC agreed that CPCs should submit to the Commission a standard suite of metadata fields (Annex 1) using a format developed by ICCAT with a similar set of fields (see [Report of SAC-07](#), Appendix D). To date only one CPC has provided these data (Table 3).

TABLE 1. Summary of reporting on longline observer programs by CPCs

2018	Non-coastal CPCs					EPO Coastal CPCs		
	EU (PRT)	EU (ESP)	KOR	JPN 2017	JPN	TWN	CHL	MEX
Fishing year – report submitted	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	P ¹	Y	Y
Total fleet catches (mt)	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N ⁵	Y
Total observed catch (mt)	P ⁵	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N ⁵	N ²
Total fleet effort (effective fishing days)	N ³	N	N ¹	N ¹	N ¹	N ¹	N ⁶	N ³
Total observed effort (effective fishing days)	N ³	N ⁷	N ⁴	N ¹	N ¹	N ¹	N ⁶	N
% Observer coverage reported	4.25	N	3.90	8.50	7.50	Projected to reach 11.2%, but 3.4% in terms of data summarized for SAC-10	Reported as 100% for 2017 and likely the same for 2018?	6.00
Species composition of observed catch	P ⁴	Y	Y	P ²	P ²	P ³	Y	Y
Number of vessels with observers	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Observed turtle catch	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observed turtle release	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Observed shark catch	P ⁴	N ⁸	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observed ray catch	N	N ⁸	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observed billfish catch	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observed total hooks	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Type of hooks	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y

N¹ - Reported as sets or fishing operations rather than effective fishing days

N²- Reported total catch for fleet in t, but reported total observed catch as number of individuals

N³ - Reported as "fishing days"

N⁴- Reported as "days observed"

N⁵ - Provided catch information, but no totals

N⁶- Likely 100% coverage, but not expressed in effective fishing days

N⁷- Reported effort as observed hooks

N⁸ - Only retained catch was reported

P¹ - Report is only partial year data for 2018 and that it will be updated next year. Report for 2017 contained the same language, but updated info for 2016 is incomplete in terms of catch compositions

P²- Only 4 species of shark reported, the rest of sharks and non-retained species reported only to taxa group

P³- Preliminary reports for each year provide species composition data, but when final, updated data is submitted the following year, some categories are aggregated

P⁴- Provided a list of "main species recorded" by observers, but likely incomplete

P⁵- Provided total weight of "main species recorded" by observers, but likely incomplete

CPC	Not reporting											
	CHN	CRI	ECU	FRA	GTM	NIC	PAN	PER	USA	VUT	VEN	
Fishing year – report submitted												
Total fleet catches (mt)												
Total observed catch (mt)												
Total fleet effort (effective fishing days)												
Total observed effort (effective fishing days)												
% Observer coverage reported												
Species composition of observed catch												
Number of vessels with observers						*		***	**			****
Observed turtle catch												
Observed turtle release												
Observed shark catch												
Observed ray catch												
Observed billfish catch												
Observed total hooks												
Type of hooks												

* - Has many longline vessels on Regional Register, but most do not give a length, so applicability uncertain

** Reported that applicable vessel were not operational in 2017, but did not communicate status for 2018

*** Reported to SAC-09 that C-11-08 did not apply, but has 2 longline vessels >20m on the registry

**** Reported to SAC-09 that relevant vessel was not active in 2017, but did not communicate status for 2018

TABLE 2. Status of reporting of operational observer data and metadata by CPCs

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Metadata
BLZ	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
CHL	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
CHN	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
CRI	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
ECU	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
EU (Portugal)	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Yellow	Red
EU (Spain)	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red
FRA	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
GTM	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
JPN	NA ¹	NA ¹	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Red
KOR	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Green
MEX	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
NIC	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
PAN	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
PER	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
PRT	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
SLV	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
TWN	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red
USA	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red
VEN	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
VUT	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red

NA¹ Japan has stated this since the current WCPFC data standards were not in place until 2015, they cannot report against the IATTC standards for these years