

July 16, 2014

Mr. Alvin Delgado, IATTC Chairman

Dear Chairman Delgado:

This letter is submitted on behalf of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that currently participate in IATTC Meetings, or may seek to in the future. We are writing to bring to the attention of the Commission our concerns regarding the level of transparency and openness in IATTC Meetings and information sharing, particularly in regards to the Review Committee.

The IATTC Commission is among the most open regional fisheries management organization (RFMO) commissions, and Annex 2 of the Antigua Convention and Resolution C-12-03 (IATTC Rules of Procedure) set a high standard regarding transparency and observer participation. However, we wish to bring to the attention of the Commission that the intent of these provisions for transparency in the work of the Commission is being weakened by current practices with regard to the provision of and access to certain meeting information and documentation.

Paragraph 2 of Article XVI of the Convention states: "Such participants shall have timely access to relevant information, subject to the rules of procedures and of confidentiality on access to such information that the Commission may adopt."

In contrast to this provision, documentation for the Meetings of the Committee for the Review of Implementation of Measures adopted by the Commission (Review Committee) are made available only via a password protected website and accredited observers are not given the password/link for this website. Although observers can view documentation if it is projected by the Secretariat in the Committee meeting, this does not provide adequate opportunity to consider the information being presented or afford sufficient transparency regarding the important issues being discussed in the Committee. Posting of information on a secure website and limiting distribution of the passwords to access meeting documentation to only members should only be employed when there is a clearly defined need to ensure the confidentiality or security of information discussed in accordance with agreed rules and procedures. Resolutions C-12-03 or C-11-07 do not stipulate that the documentation for the Review Committee is to be considered confidential.

The IATTC should maintain open and transparent procedures and operations to ensure the credibility and integrity of its compliance review process and the work of the Commission. As a result, we respectfully request that the Commission provide accredited observers with the password/link in advance of the IATTC Review Committee, and other meetings, as appropriate, at the same time as members.

We note with appreciation that again this year the Chair of the Review Committee announced that the Review Committee's report would contain additional detail, by member, regarding areas of improvement. We recall that the same agreement was made in Veracruz last year; however, the final 2013 Review Committee Report did not contain this enhanced level of detail, which is mandated by Section C of Resolution C-11-07. We respectfully request that the Review

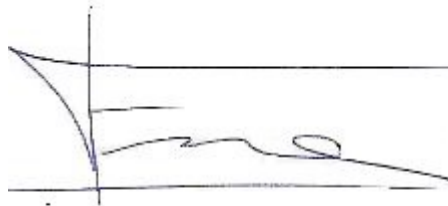
Committee Report for this year contain all the elements prescribed in Section C of Resolution C-11-07, including identifying for each member the compliance record and areas of possible improvement, as well as any recommended actions for consideration of the Commission.

We kindly request your urgent attention to these very important issues.

Sincerely¹,



INTERNATIONAL SEAFOOD
SUSTAINABILITY FOUNDATION



HUMANE SOCIETY
INTERNATIONAL



cc: G. Compean (IATTC Director); D. Hogan (Review Committee Chair)

¹ With support also from Defenders of Wildlife (A. Goyenechea)