

**Acceptance Speech
for the Margarita Lizárraga Medal
by Dr Robin Allen
Agreement of the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP)
33rd Session of the Conference**

On behalf of the Parties to the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program, I am pleased and honored to receive the Margarita Lizárraga medal recognizing the contribution of the Agreement to responsible fishing. The Agreement was inspired by the wish of the Parties to implement the principles and standards of the Code of Conduct of Responsible Fisheries, adopted by the FAO Conference in 1995.

The operation of the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program involves close cooperation between governments, the owners, captains and crews of purse-seine fishing vessels, and non governmental environmental organizations. This cooperation includes a high level of information and experience exchange, and the Award is recognition of the contribution of all of these stakeholders who are working together to conserve and protect dolphins and to promote responsible fishing in the eastern Pacific Ocean.

While the Agreement primarily is concerned with the impact of the fishery on dolphin stocks, it also has more general environmental and conservation objectives which are to be achieved within the framework of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission.

I know that all involved in the work of the AIDCP are very proud of the ground-breaking achievements of the Agreement, particularly in dramatically reducing the incidental mortality of dolphins in the tuna fishery, and in forging new and effective working relationships among fishermen, governments, and environmental non-governmental organizations. The recognition of the Agreement's achievements and its contribution to responsible fishing by the FAO is a very important affirmation of its value, and I believe this award will encourage all concerned to continue to work hard to fulfill the goals of the AIDCP and to strengthen the Agreement.

On behalf of all those, thank you very much Director-General.