



INTERNATIONAL
TUNA FISHERS
CONFERENCE ON
RESPONSIBLE
FISHERIES & THIRD
INTERNATIONAL
FISHERS FORUM

25-29 July, 2005
INTER-CONTINENTAL
GRAND, YOKOHAMA,
JAPAN

YOKOHAMA DECLARATION
Declaration of responsible tuna fishers issued at the
International Tuna Fishers Conference on
Responsible Fisheries
and
Third International Fishers Forum
July 25-29, 2005, Yokohama, Japan

Having actively exchanged wide-ranging perspectives and approaches to promote responsible tuna fisheries and to reduce sea turtle and seabird incidental catch in longline fishing,

Committing ourselves to sustainable use of world tuna resources and conservation of marine ecosystems,

Emphasizing that sustainable fisheries depend on a healthy oceanic environment, and expressing our strong desire to make every effort to harmonize fisheries with the environment in order to ensure sustainable marine productivity and healthy ecosystems,

Recognizing that upon the establishment of the Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), regional fishery management organizations (RFMOs) achieved world coverage of tuna and tuna-like resource conservation and management within the international framework envisaged in Article 64 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,

Expressing concern that the number and capacity of tuna fishing vessels are still increasing and that tuna farming is rapidly expanding in the absence of fully developed conservation and management policies, even though several tuna and tuna-like stocks are fully exploited or overexploited, in spite of (a) the adoption of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) International Plan of Action (IPOA) for the Management of Fishing Capacity in 1999 and (b) the efforts to limit fishing capacity by large-scale longline vessels,

Expressing concern that illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities still persist, including shifting operations from larger vessels to smaller vessels to avoid RFMO regulations for larger vessels despite the adoption of the IPOA for IUU fishing and the efforts of RFMOs to eliminate IUU fishing activities,

Also expressing concern that certain longline fleets operate directed shark fisheries of considerable size solely for the purpose of harvesting shark fins inconsistent with United Nations General Assembly Resolutions,

Recognizing the need for all parties both on land and at sea to take holistic approaches to conserve sea turtles and seabirds, particularly, the importance of the role of fishers in implementing the FAO Guidelines to Reduce Sea Turtle Mortality in Fishing Operations, the IPOA for seabirds and the relevant mitigation measures adopted by tuna RFMOs, and

Being gravely concerned that some elements of the environmental community are conducting a concerted emotional campaign at international bodies such as the United Nations to implement a moratorium on longline fisheries in the Pacific contrary to scientific evidence and deliberately ignoring the efforts of managers and responsible fishers to introduce, implement, raise awareness and disseminate techniques for the reduction of incidental catch,

We, fishers—operators of large- and small-scale longline, purse seine, artisanal and other vessels—participating in the International Tuna Fishers Conference on Responsible Fisheries and the Third International Fishers Forum, do declare to engage in the following activities in order to further promote responsible tuna fisheries to:

1. Promote cooperation, information sharing and constructive dialog among all tuna resources' stakeholders—fishers, traders, distributors, fish workers, cannery, processors and consumers—in order to promote responsible tuna fishing, trade, marketing and consumption, and to facilitate conservation and sustainable use of tuna and tuna-like species;
2. Support activities of the World Tuna Purse seine Organization (WTPO) and to promote cooperation in realizing sustainable use of tuna resources by encouraging all tuna purse seine fishers to participate in WTPO where, at the present time, about 65% of tuna purse seine fishers are members;
3. Emphasize the importance of longline and purse seine fisheries working cooperatively with each other and with other stakeholders to improve techniques for use of fish aggregating devices (FADs) with the aim of reducing the impact of purse seiners on bigeye tuna, especially the juveniles, while recognizing the impact of longliners on bigeye adults;
4. Facilitate the establishment of new, or cooperation with existing, international rules for management of tuna fishing capacity based on the principle that any introduction of new fishing capacity should be accompanied with removal of equivalent fishing capacity consistent with the FAO IPOA on Management of Fishing Capacity and the recommendations or rules of relevant RFMOs, while taking due note of the rights and obligations of developing countries;
5. Refrain from circumventing conservation and management measures by reflagging our fishing vessels to non-parties of relevant RFMOs and/or RFMO Parties with little to no ability to control their fishing vessels;
6. Support the Joint Meeting of Tuna RFMOs to be held in Japan in early 2007 to promote cooperation and coordination of tuna RFMOs and to achieve a global consistency in tuna conservation and management measures;
7. Urge RFMOs to ensure conservation and management of shark stocks on a scientific basis in accordance with their respective resolutions/recommendations and those of the United Nations and to promote full utilization of sharks retained on board and the elimination of directed shark fisheries conducted solely for the purpose of harvesting shark fins;
8. Actively cooperate with the relevant RFMOs to make the best attempts to reduce incidental catch of sea turtles and seabirds through the following actions:
 - the collection of scientific data, including observer data whenever feasible,
 - the development and implementation of practical measures for monitoring incidental catch including, among others, the introduction of electronic observer techniques, and
 - the development and use of technology to reduce incidental catch and improve post-release survival rates for sea turtles;
9. Vigorously promote the immediate use of appropriate combinations of circle hooks and type of bait, including use on a trial basis, to reduce sea turtle incidental catch and improve post-release survival rate;
10. Vigorously promote the widespread use of proven techniques (such as tori poles, night setting, side setting, blue-dyed bait, etc.) to reduce seabird incidental catch, particularly, in areas with high rate of seabird incidental catch;
11. Reaffirm that the FAO and RFMOs are the organizations that have primary responsibility for addressing international tuna fisheries issues, and to encourage governments to ensure that consideration of such issues by other international frameworks, including the United Nations General Assembly, be conducted with the scientific and technical reviews by FAO and RFMOs; and
12. Continue, in every international arena, to challenge biased and unscientific accusations that attack environmentally responsible tuna fisheries.

We will transmit this declaration to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and relevant RFMOs for their consideration, and we will request that Governments, including the Governments of Japan and the United States, support fishers worldwide to implement this declaration.