



**COMMISSION
EIGHTEENTH REGULAR SESSION**
Electronic Meeting
1 – 7 December 2021

STATEMENT TO WCPFC18

**WCPFC18-2021-OP15
7 December 2021**

Submitted by Ecuador



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STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR IN WCPFC-18 ON THE
PROCEDURES FOR A COOPERATING NON-MEMBER
STATE TO BECOME A FULL MEMBER

Madame Chair and Delegates:

I allow myself to convey the greetings of the Government of Ecuador and wish the greatest success in the deliberations of WCPFC that is taking place virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We express our appreciation to the members of the WCPFC for renewing Ecuadorian Cooperating Non-Member (CNM) status, granted since the year 2009.

We recall our commitment to fully comply with the Conservation and Management Measures, and all the administrative and financial obligations, as we have done in the last years.

We also would like to express our support to:

1. Enforce tropical tuna conservation and management measures for all fleets that limits fishing mortality for bigeye, yellowfin, and skipjack.
2. Adopt a work plan for FADs with a timeframe to transition from traditional FADs to primarily biodegradable material made FADs; develop FADs recovery policies, marking procedures and ownership rules.
3. Adopt target reference points for bigeye and yellowfin.
4. Adopt CMM for an Electronic Observers' Monitoring Program and Minimum Standards for the use of electronic monitoring in all WCPFC fisheries
5. Continue the work towards reforming at-sea transshipment CMM and Compliance Monitoring Scheme.

Ecuador has expressed its desire to become full member of this organization at several WCPFC annual meetings. Unfortunately, Ecuador's request has not been well received. Given this, we hereby officially ask what the legal procedure would be to achieve that objective, aspiring that it should be clear, fair, and transparent one.

We would like once more to recall that at WCPFC-14 the delegation of the United States of America delivered a discussion document on this issue, as well as it was brought back again by the European Union. Their analysis would facilitate the delayed treatment that has been given to this important matter.

In this sense, in 2015, the WCPFC took a first step by implementing a change in the "CNM application form", in which candidate countries were asked whether they would like to become full members. In this regard, the delegation of Ecuador asks again what the benefit of this question was and if there has been any follow-up.

As it is known by the members, the general framework of RFMOs states that no State or group of States that have a real interest in the fisheries should be discriminated against.

Ecuador and most of the members of the WCPFC are members of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS), as well as the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA), pillars of the oceans and international legal framework for fishing.

In this regard, Ecuador considers that having officially and repeatedly requested the WCPFC its interest in becoming a “full member” and, by not receiving any response, constitutes discrimination and a violation of the UNCLOS and UNFSA rules.

Finally, it should be noted that the foregoing contrasts with the treatment that has been given in other RFMOs. By way of example, since the new IATTC Convention was adopted in Antigua, Guatemala in 2003, this Organization opened its doors for several coastal states not located in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, such as Belize, the People's Republic of China, and Kiribati, to become full members, without any barrier.

Ecuador reiterates its request that this Commission consider establishing a framework and conditions to allow Cooperating Non-Member countries interested in becoming full Members. Along these lines, Ecuador reiterates its interest and requests to be accepted as a full Member.

The Ecuadorian Delegation asks this statement to be included in WCPFC-18 Meeting Minutes.

The Ecuadorian Delegation
WCPFC-18
December 07th, 2021