



## **FOURTH REGULAR SESSION**

3-7 December 2007

Tumon, Guam, USA

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### **Papua New Guinea: Opening Statement**

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**WCPFC4-2007/DP23**

**3 December 2007**

**Mr. Chairman,**

I join the other speakers in expressing my delegations appreciation to our host - the Government of and people of Guam for their kind hospitality.

We acknowledged also the tremendous work of the Commission Secretariat in putting together the meeting documents as well as ensuring meeting arrangements and logistics are in place for this meeting.

Mr. Chairman, Papua New Guinea has very strong views on a number of issues that will be deliberated during this Session. Our interventions on these issues will be made as and when they come up for discussions.

Mr. Chairman before I highlight some of these issues, Papua New Guinea is increasingly concerned about the direction in which this Commission is being steered in terms of the application of conservation and management measures.

Mr. Chairman, the UNCLOS and in particular provisions relating to the conservation and management of marine resources and the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, we see that it relates more directly to conservation and management of fish stocks occurring including activities occurring beyond areas of national jurisdiction or the high seas.

Whilst this is so, it is unfortunate that there is yet to be robust and articulated measures established for the conservation and management of fish stocks in high seas. The Commission have instead continued to focus discussions on in zone management throughout the past three Sessions and we do not expect much change during this Session.

Article 4 of the WCPF Convention provides for the convention to be applied and interpreted in the context and manner that is consistent with UNCLOS and UNFSA. Whilst these two documents require us to deal with high seas conservation and management, we seem to be going the opposite direction by protracting and delaying measures for the high seas and instead dominate discussions on measures that apply in areas under our national jurisdiction.

This has continued to be stressed despite the fact that there are measures already in existence in the in zones of Pacific Island Countries that has been proven to be effective.

Our in zone has now become so congested with management measures to such an extent that we are now feeling the burden of management and conservation measures which affects our legitimate development aspirations and our sovereignty. For instance, we have:

- implemented 25% reduction in anchored FADs including a total banned on FAD deployment south of 6 degree south covering all of Solomon and Coral Seas,
- implemented area closer including a 50 nautical mile corridor along PNG/Indonesia border up to the high seas,
- banned fishing by distant water fishing nations vessels within the Modargo Square and
- as of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2007 implemented the VDS with limited number days with some of our traditional partners not able to catered for thus resulting in loss of revenue.

Mr. Chairman, is this the way we want things to turn out to be, that is, for more and more focus to be on areas that are under national jurisdiction and burden the small island developing states with measures so as to derailed their legitimate development aspirations whilst delaying implementation measures for the high seas?

Mr, Chairman it is now time for genuine and more significant actions to be taken by the Commission on management measures for the high seas. Some of these measures are:

- Area closures,
- Moving swiftly to adopt Regional Observer Programme,
- Establishment of VMS and
- High Seas Boarding and Inspection procedures.

Mr. Chairman, these are the genuine and immediate conservation and management measures that this Commission needs to have in place in order to complement the overwhelming and often onerous management and conservation measures that we have already established in areas under our national jurisdiction.

We see more and more Non-Commission Members applying to join the WCPF Commission without the Commission first putting in place measures compatible with our in zone measures which have been in place since 2004 but so far were not adequately implemented in the high seas because MCS measures for the high seas were never put in place to ensure compliance.

With this remarks, Mr. Chairman we thank you for the leadership that you have provided for the work of this Commission and are confident in your able guidance in our deliberation this week.