



## **FOURTH REGULAR SESSION**

3-7 December 2007

Tumon, Guam, USA

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### **OPENING STATEMENT – AMERICAN FISHERMEN’S RESEARCH FOUNDATION**

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**WCPFC4-2007/OP10**

**5 December 2007**

The American Fishermen’s Research Foundation, (“AFRF”), is grateful to the Commission for its permission to attend this important meeting as an ENGO Observer. It is an honor for our organization to be so recognized after the many years we have participated, first in the development of the South Pacific albacore troll fishery, (along with the cooperation of the Western Fishboat Owner’s Association, “WFOA”) and then later through the MHLC process, the deliberations of the PrepCon, and the first three meetings of the Commission.

Established in 1971, AFRF is a non-profit corporation dedicated to encourage, promote, and support scientific research and public education concerning albacore tuna and related species. It is a unique fisheries research foundation, funded entirely by albacore troll fishermen primarily from the United States, Canada, and New Zealand by self assessment of their catch delivered to AFRF contracted buyers, sold directly to consumers by individual vessels, and purveyed in value added markets. AFRF’s support for scientific research, efforts to further public education, and involvement with other projects benefit all pole and line albacore fishermen in the North and South Pacific from whichever country they call home.

AFRF’s Board of Directors is composed of half albacore processor and buyer representatives, and half WFOA fishermen representatives. AFRF has independent science advisors attend its Board meetings, as well as representatives from NOAA-Fisheries and academia. A partial list of past and current projects is set forth in the AFRF pamphlets to be made available in the lobby.<sup>1</sup>

AFRF continues to support the international management of albacore tuna in a sustainable manner, based on the best scientific data available. It believes that albacore resources which visit various countries’ EEZs should be managed so national measures are consistent and compatible with internationally agreed measures for the high seas area where this species spends the majority of its life. AFRF looks forward to working cooperatively with all coastal and distant water fishing states to ensure the sustainability and utilization of this wonderful resource upon which we all depend for good tasting, healthy, nutritious and economic protein.

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<sup>1</sup> Additional information is available at <http://www.afrf.org> and <http://www.albatuna.com>