
PROPOSAL FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A DISCUSSION PAPER ON ALLOCATION

WCPFC2-2005/DP.10
15th November 2005

Proposal submitted by New Zealand

1. In broad terms, effective fisheries management has three components:
 - Sound scientific information on the status of stocks and the impacts of fishing on those stocks, as well as on the environment and associated and dependent species;
 - Agreement on management objectives and measures to achieve those objectives, including the setting of TACs or TAEs followed by decisions governing access to fishing opportunities – the allocation of the TAC or TAE among participants – and measures covering the manner in which fishing can be conducted e.g. size limits, gear limits, fishing seasons;
 - Mechanisms to ensure that rules are adhered to and that fishing stays within the TAC or TAE, including systems for monitoring compliance e.g. permitting, registration, VMS, observers.
2. If any of these three components is missing it is unlikely that fisheries will be managed sustainably or that associated economic, social or cultural objectives will be realised.
3. New Zealand believes that the Commission is making good progress in putting in place the necessary systems and infrastructure to achieve the first and third of these broad fisheries management components. The Scientific Committee had a successful first meeting and has provided the Commission with best available scientific information in relation to the status of the stocks and likely trends under a range of management scenarios. The first meeting of the Technical and Compliance Committee will meet immediately prior to WCPFC 2 with a comprehensive agenda addressing key components of the Commission's regime for monitoring, control and surveillance.
4. Progress on allocation is critical to the development of the Commission's overall management regime for the effective conservation and management of highly migratory fish stocks in the Western and Central Pacific – the second of the three components referred to above. Until such time as allocation issues are resolved by the Commission, the incentives on member countries to maximise their individual interests in the tuna stocks managed by the Commission will undermine the Commission's ability to effectively manage these stocks.

5. While acknowledging the complexity and potential contentiousness of this issue within WCPFC, New Zealand is concerned to ensure that the Commission starts to make progress on the issue of allocation. To this end, it is proposed that the Commission tasks the Executive Director of the Commission to produce a discussion paper on allocation issues within WCPFC for circulation to Commission members in advance of WCPFC 3. The paper would provide the basis for initial discussions on the issue of allocation at WCPFC 3 in 2006.
6. Without seeking to constrain the contents of the paper, it is envisaged that the paper would discuss the following issues:
 - General discussion of allocation as a central component of fisheries management
 - Overview of relevant provisions of international law relating to allocation of access to fisheries resources – including the rights and obligations of coastal states, flag states and the role of RFMOs
 - Overview and assessment of the experience of other RFMOs, particularly tuna RFMOs, in addressing allocation
 - Analysis and discussion of the factors listed in Article 10(3) of the Convention relating to allocation criteria
 - Discussion of potential models for allocation within WCPFC (noting that allocation is a key topic for discussion at the Sharing the Fish Conference to be held in Perth in February 2006)
 - Outline of potential processes for the Commission to make progress on allocation.