

## Information concerning OPRT

### 1. Formal name and contact

Organization for Promotion of Responsible Tuna Fisheries

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### 2. Background and history of OPRT

OPRT was established December 8, 2000. on the initiative by the Japanese Tuna fishing industry and with the support of the Japanese Government, based on a global awareness that the world's tuna resources are being excessively exploited and also the urgent need to eliminate IUU tuna longline fishing activities to prevent them from diminishing the efficacy of the international effort to rebuild stocks. (In response to the adoption of FAO's International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity, Japan scrapped its 132 large scale tuna longline fishing vessels, or 20 % of the total number of vessels in 1999. Almost all of IUU tuna fishing vessels catches are supplied to Japan's tuna market, making Japan virtually the single market for IUU tuna fishing. The continuing IUU tuna fishing diminishes the efforts made by Japan. This situation has led Japan to establish OPRT.)

OPRT's objective is to contribute to development of responsible tuna fisheries in line with international and social responsibility by fostering healthy tuna markets, as well as promoting sustainable use of tunas through the cooperation by all stake holders in tuna fisheries, including tuna fishing operators, traders, distributors and consumers.

Members of OPRT are associations of tuna longline fishing industries in major tuna fishing nations and also traders, distributors and consumers of Japan. Initially, the only tuna fishing association members were Japan and Chinese Taipei. By 2004, the tuna fishing associations of Korea, Philippines, Indonesia, China and Ecuador joined the OPRT and the number of vessels registered under OPRT increased to

1,425, representing over 90 % of the large-scale tuna longline fishing vessels operating around the world.

3. The present task of OPRT

OPRT carries out the following activities.

- a) Collecting and analyzing all information concerning tuna imported by Japan with the purpose of tracking the movement of IUU tuna fishing activities.
- b) Collecting all information concerning tuna longline fishing vessels worldwide and monitoring the positive lists of tuna longline fishing vessels published by Regional Tuna Fishery Management Organizations.
- c) Providing consumers and distributors with information and educational activities to promote understanding and cooperation for conservation and management of tuna resources.

( Remarks: In order to restrain and eliminate the activities by IUU vessels, OPRT had a program to buy and scrap those vessels on a step-by-step basis. Namely, OPRT implemented the project to scrap IUU fishing vessels under the joint cooperation project of industries of Japan and Chinese Taipei. 43 vessels were scrapped during 2001 to 2003.)

- d) Working to restrict tuna longline fishing capacity on a global and sustainable level in order to address excess fishing capacity of tuna fishing vessels.
- e) Promoting responsible fishing technologies to reduce by-catch from tuna longline fishing e.g. seabird and sea turtles.

4. Mandate and Rules of OPRT (The gist of the Articles of Association. The full text is sent in a separate e-mail.)

- a) OPRT appoints fifteen directors at maximum. One of the directors shall be appointed as President and one as Managing Director.  
The business plan, budget are resolved by General Meeting after passing resolutions by Board of Directors Meeting on the matters

5. Geographical Coverage of OPRT

Members are located at Japan, Chinese Taipei, Korea, Philippines, Indonesia, China and Ecuadore. OPRT aims to achieve membership of all large-scale tuna fishing operators throughout the world.

6. OPRT's main activities

- a) OPRT provides various types of information obtained from the Japanese market,

the world's largest sashimi market, to flag states committed to responsible, sustainable management of tuna resources- namely the countries whose industries are members of OPRT. Those countries can utilize the information fed back from OPRT for the proper management of their fishing vessels.

- b) OPRT cooperates for resource management with relevant regional and global fisheries organizations such as ICCAT, IATTC, IOTC and FAO, providing information contributing to tuna resource assessment and other studies  
For example, OPRT cooperates FAO by providing an expert of OPRT in relation to the Project on the Management of Tuna Fishing Capacity.
- c) In order to achieve the aims of OPRT, OPRT promotes international cooperation among OPRT members such as adjustment of fishing efforts, and also conducts studies, research on management of tuna resources, trade and markets.
- d) OPRT distributes the information to the members concerning the matters related to FAO's International Plan of Action for reducing incidental catch of seabirds in longline fisheries and also International Plan of Action for the conservation and management of sharks as an important measure to promote responsible tuna fisheries.

#### 7.Others

As an international NGO specifically working for ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of tuna through development of responsible tuna fisheries, OPRT's aims and activities are consistent with Regional Tuna Fishery Management Organizations' principle. Practical and effective implementation of the management measures will be promoted through direct and frequent communication and dialogue among OPRT members.