



**SIXTH REGULAR SESSION**  
Papeete, Tahiti, French Polynesia  
7-11 December 2009

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**PAPUA NEW GUINEA – PROPOSAL FOR ADDITIONAL HIGH SEAS CLOSURES  
TO PURSE SEINING**

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**WCPFC6-2009/DP41**  
**11 December 2009**

**Submitted by Papua New Guinea**

1. The Scientific Committee has reported that achievement of the objectives of CMM 2008-01 will be less likely if the current high seas pockets closure results in effort being transferred to high seas areas to the East, where bigeye tuna generally form a greater proportion of the purse-seine catch.
2. In the attached Bikenibeu Declaration, Ministers of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) noted the serious impact on the bigeye stock from fishing by distant water longliners and purse seiners in the high seas and that the high seas continues to provide a safe haven for IUU fishing. The Ministers agreed that further work will be taken on closures of additional high seas areas.
3. Papua New Guinea is deeply concerned that the effectiveness of measures adopted by the PNA and the WCPFC will be undermined by a transfer of effort to high seas areas in the east from the high seas areas to be closed to purse seining on January 1, 2010.
4. Papua New Guinea proposes that the areas of the high seas in the Convention Area east of 170° East and between 10° North and 20° South shall be closed to purse seining from January 1, 2010. The area to be closed is illustrated in the attached map.

## **BIKENIBEU DECLARATION BY MINISTERS FOR FISHERIES OF THE PARTIES TO THE NAURU AGREEMENT**

### **Securing greater value from their common fisheries wealth**

Fisheries Ministers of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement concerning Co-operation in the Management of Fisheries of Common Interest (hereinafter referred to as the “PNA”) met in Bikenibeu, Tarawa, Republic of Kiribati on 21 October 2009;

**RECALLING** the Nauru Agreement concerning Co-operation in the Management of Fisheries of Common Interest 1982 establishes a framework for the Parties to secure greater economic benefits from the tuna resources and co-ordinate and harmonise the management of common fish stocks for the benefit of their peoples;

**FURTHER RECALLING** the Palau Arrangement for the Management of Western Pacific Purse Seine Fishery 1992, the Federated States of Micronesia Arrangement for Regional Access 1995 and subsidiary agreements developed by the Parties to strengthen the management of their common fish stocks;

**EXPRESSING** disappointment at the lack of participation of Pacific Islands nationals in the harvesting and utilisation of their tuna resources and the low level of economic benefits resulting from the exploitation of their tuna resources by distant water fishing nations;

**REITERATING** the special aspirations of small-island developing States that their common tuna resources should be developed for the benefits of their peoples;

**COMMITTING** to the enhanced participation by the Parties in the development of their common tuna resources to maximise the economic benefits for their peoples

**FURTHER COMMITTING** to developing strong and effective conservation and management measures to ensure the long term sustainability of their common tuna resources;

**DESIRING** to ensure regional solidarity in the management of their common tuna resources and underlining their commitment to regional co-operation and strength through cooperation with other members of the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency;

**AGREEING** to additional institutional arrangements to strengthen the management and conservation of their common tuna resources for the benefits of their peoples and to develop innovative approaches to maximise the economic opportunities from the sustainable utilisation of these resources;

### **MINISTERS AGREED AS FOLLOWS: -**

In order to secure greater economic benefits and control of their tuna resources, the PNA shall strengthen the institutional arrangements for their co-operation in the management and development of their shared fisheries resources through the establishment of additional mechanisms.

## **Establishment of the PNA Office**

A. Ministers agreed to the establishment of the PNA Office in Majuro, Marshall Islands from 1 January 2010. The office shall have the functions of supporting the Parties amongst others to: -

- Develop strategic fisheries conservation and management initiatives for the Parties.
- Develop initiatives to maximise the sustained direct and indirect economic benefits to the Parties.

B. Ministers noted that the paper provided by Kiribati provided a basis for elaborating on the structure, functions and priorities of the PNA Office

## **Closure of additional high seas areas**

Ministers noted the serious impact on the bigeye stock from fishing by distant water longliners and purse seiners in the high seas and that the high seas continues to provide a safe haven for IUU fishing. The Ministers agreed that further work will be taken on closures of additional high seas areas.

## **New PNA Initiatives**

Ministers look forward to new PNA initiatives to generate increased benefits for their domestic economies from the region's tuna fisheries reflecting the importance of catches in their waters for global tuna supply. These include amongst others, refuelling in port, unloading catches in PNA ports and requiring vessels to have PNA nationals as crew.

## **PNA Longline Vessel Day Scheme**

Ministers underlined the importance of the PNA Longline Vessel Day Scheme and noted progress towards its development and looks forward towards its implementation by the end of 2010.

Done at Bikenibeu, Tarawa, Republic of Kiribati this 21<sup>st</sup> Day of October Two Thousand and Nine

