



**TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE
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REPORT ON NORTH PACIFIC IUU TRIPARTITE JOINT MEETING

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Paper submitted by Canada

Introduction

1. In support of the 2001 United Nations prohibition of driftnet fishing on the high seas, Canada collaborates with the United States, Russia, Japan, South Korea and China through international organizations such as the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) and the North Pacific Coast Guard Forum (NPCGF) to detect and deter vessels participating in high seas driftnet fishing. Canada currently chairs the Enforcement Committee of NPAFC and the Fisheries Working Group of the NPCGF.
2. While it appears vessels illegally fishing with high seas driftnets are mainly targeting squid, these nets which range from 2.5 to 40km in length have serious environmental impacts including:
 - a. a destructive effect on the biomass of targeted species;
 - b. substantial bycatch of seabirds and marine mammals;
 - c. a high “dropout” rate of fish that are caught and die, but slip free before being harvested; and
 - d. the risk of “ghost” fishing from unrecovered nets that fill with fish and mammals, skink from the weight, then resurface to repeat the process.

North Pacific IUU Tripartite Joint Meeting

3. In February 2008 Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the NPAFC co-hosted an International North Pacific IUU workshop. Represented at this workshop were the Enforcement Committee of the NPAFC, the Fisheries Working Group of the NPCGF, the Technical and Compliance Committee of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, and the International Monitoring Control and Surveillance Network.
4. These organizations vary in membership and representation both by State and agency. They also vary as to their respective convention provisions on Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS), operational area and species of interest. What the agencies have in common is a strong interest in protecting the natural marine resources of the Pacific Ocean and in combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Although the species of interest (squid, tuna and salmon) may vary, their respective geographic migration patterns and water temperature ranges overlap, making these species subject to similar IUU activities in the North Pacific.

5. At the February 2008 workshop each organization provided a presentation on their membership, charter/mandate, Convention geographical areas, and MCS activities and processes, e.g. boarding and inspection, VMS requirements and processes for information sharing among members. Some of the most apparent commonalities of these organizations are expansive Convention Areas, overlapping jurisdictions/Convention Areas, species interactions and similar membership.

Information regarding the impact of IUU high seas driftnet fishing on North Pacific Albacore stocks

6. Since 1993 when the members of NPAFC commenced patrols of the North Pacific they have detected 113 high seas driftnet vessels of which 23 were apprehended and prosecuted. Until 2007 there was very little attention paid to species onboard these vessels other than salmon.

7. Since 2007 Canada has received complaints about net-marked tuna caught on the high seas from legitimate tuna fishers. On 9 September, 2008 a vessel was apprehended on the high seas in the North Pacific with 11.2km of driftnet and 50kg of skipjack tuna onboard.

8. In recent years it appears that high seas driftnet fishing has moved further south into waters with a temperature range more acceptable to highly migratory species and less suitable to salmon. It is believed that these illegal fishing vessels are using the squid fishery as a means of hiding from aircraft patrols.

Conclusion

9. The TCC is invited to:
- a. note that several recent apprehensions of high seas driftnet vessels have been in a temperature regime suitable for tuna;
 - b. note there have been several reports by legitimate tuna fishers in the North Pacific of net-marked tuna;
 - c. note that high seas driftnet fishing is illegal, indiscriminately destroying marine life and negatively impacting global food stocks;
 - d. note that at present it is difficult to quantify the impact of high seas driftnet fishing on North Pacific Albacore tuna stocks;
 - e. consider the prevalence of these illegal fishing activities and the potential harmful impact of high seas driftnet fishing on WCPFC resources; and
 - f. consider recommending to the Commission the adoption of a CMM prohibiting high seas driftnet fishing in the Convention Area.