



FIFTH REGULAR SESSION

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8 December 2008



MEMBERS AND COOPERATING NON MEMBERS OF WCPFC5

On behalf of the Republic of Ecuador, we want to thank you for letting us express our views on our application to become Cooperating Non Party (CNM) of this organization. I also would like to take the opportunity to thank the government of Korea for their warm hospitality.

According with the provisions established in article 32 of the *Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fishes Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean*, and the relevant CMM-2004-02 Cooperating Non Member Resolution, we have submitted for the second consecutive year our application for CNM status attaching all the information requested.

The Ecuadorian fleet has been operating in the Central Pacific Ocean way before WCPFC was created and has been an active member of IATTC since 1963. At this moment there are 7 vessels licensed to operate by some WCPFC Members and about 10 more vessels fishing in international waters. Ecuadorian vessels do not fish permanently in the Central Pacific, but rather move in and out from the Eastern Pacific. All Ecuadorian vessels licensed to fish in WCPFC's members have complied the commitment of no fishing in highs seas pockets.

Ecuador has shown commitment not only with the conservation of tuna, but all marine resources. After a hard process that started 2 years ago, since November 30th Ecuadorian Maritime Authority started the obligatory use of

Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) for the whole fishing fleet, regulation that will strengthen in a meaningful way the control of the fisheries, especially in the high seas. This has been a very difficult process that started 2 years ago. All vessels 400 TM capacity and over, carry Observers on board, provided by the International Agreement for Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP), managed by the IATTC.

Also the Under secretariat of Fisheries has started to take actions to change the Fisheries Law.

We understand the concerns that some members might have about Ecuador's application. However, it is important to be aware that we are fishing in High seas of the Central Pacific, according to international law since many years ago, when WCPFC did not exist and IATTC area had no boundary. So our application is based in historical rights. There is no real increase of capacity. The amount of vessels fishing in the area is not higher than we have had historically.

Even though we have been fishing for many years in the Central Pacific Ocean, which has been part our natural fishing areas, we were not invited to HMLC negotiation process, and it would make more sense to let us participate actively in the organization rather than keeping us out.

Dear Delegates, we reiterate our wish to belong and support this organization. We are sure that the acceptance of our application will strengthen WCPFC.

Busan, December 8th, 2008