



FIFTH REGULAR SESSION

8-12 December 2008

Busan, Korea

GREENPEACE – OPENING STATEMENT

WCPFC5-2008/OP08

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GREENPEACE

Briefing

Distinguished delegates of the WCPFC

To say that this years WCPFC meeting is critical is understatement. It cannot be emphasized enough how important it is that this Commission delivers strong and effective measures to stop the decline of the Pacific bigeye and yellowfin fisheries and proceeds to a more modern ecosystem based and precautionary management of the Pacific fish resources and the broader marine ecosystem.

This meeting is taking place only a few weeks after the disastrous failure of the ICCAT to act on scientific advice given to them and to halt the continued overfishing of the Atlantic bluefin tuna. This has been consistent in ICCAT for the last 20 years and it is now approaching a point where it has made itself redundant in the management of this resource and the responsibility would be better placed in the hands of another more competent body.

WCPFC being a younger organisation, hasn't got 20 years of mismanagement in it's record, but the last 4 sessions of the Commission do not give much reason for optimism that it will do things better than the other failed RFMOs.. Despite scientific advice since 2001 that the bigeye and yellowfin stocks are in decline, the commission is yet to adopt effective measures to halt the overfishing and restore the stocks. The same fishing nations that have caused the ICCAT to become an international disgrace are also here this week, and again have scientific evidence at hand to act upon. Weather this advice is followed or if short term economic gains will over ride the long terms sustainability of the fishery, the industry itself and the future of the Pacific as a region remains to be seen.

In order for this meeting to come out as successful in halting the decline of Pacific tuna resources and to allow protection for the entire ecosystems of the Pacific Ocean,

Greenpeace is calling on the members of this commission to adopt the following measures.

1. The cessation of fishing in the high seas areas bounded by Pacific Island states as a first step towards becoming no-take marine reserves, as part of a holistic ecosystem approach, to both conserve their rich biodiversity and as a key fisheries management measure. These reserves would be the start of a network of reserves throughout the region and globally.
2. That the Commission be firmly guided by the precautionary approach and account for the high levels of unknown and uncertainties in fishing data due to the high level of IUU fishing in the region by supporting and adopting a 50% reduction in tuna fishing effort across the entire WCPO sector based on the average 2001-2004.
3. The banning of all at-sea transshipments with no exemptions granted to any country.
4. The permanent ban on the use of FADs in purse seine fishing in order to protect juveniles and other marine life.
5. That the Commission takes a cautious approach to applications for co-operating non-member status
6. That CMM 2007-3 on IUU Fishing be amended to eliminate loopholes and exemptions

THANK YOU

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