



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

NEW CALEDONIA – OPENING STATEMENT

WCPFC6-2009/DP26
7 December 2009

Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the New Caledonia government, I would like to thank the government and the people of French Polynesia for their warm welcome in Tahiti and to express my sincere gratitude to all for their efforts in the preparation of this meeting.

Last year in Pusan, the Commission reached a consensus to adopt new conservation and management measures for the most threatened stocks in the region, namely bigeye and yellowfin, but the effects of these measures will not be seen after a while.

As the depletion of these stocks has an impact on the pelagic ecosystem as a whole, New Caledonia would like to stress again the importance of adopting efficient measures for its conservation. To reach this goal the Commission members have to fulfil their duties with regard to the implementation of the conservation and management measures and to adopt the necessary tools to help monitor this implementation by the Commission.

The Vessel Monitoring System and Regional Observer Programme of the Commission are essential in this regard. During the last couple of years the progress made by the Commission in these fields are especially impressive and I like to thank the secretariat for these achievements.

We are now facing the challenge of using these tools as efficiently as possible. With regard to the ROP the issue of data management must be treated carefully as the related information is of great importance.

Recently, in a letter to the Commission, New Caledonia expressed its views for a high involvement of the Oceanic Fisheries Programme of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community into the management of these data, taking advantage of the existing Memorandum of Understanding with the SPC and the expertise developed by the OFP on matters related to the observers programmes, particularly on data quality.

Given the high standard of professional support given to the Commission by the SPC-OFP, the government of New Caledonia considers that the adoption of the draft 3-year umbrella arrangement for the provision of data administration and science services with the SPC-OFP would greatly help the Commission manage these data efficiently and, more generally, have the best information available to adopt appropriate measures. Our understanding is that data administration by the SPC-OFP must include the management of observer data for the WCPFC.

Merci, Monsieur le Président.