



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

**INTERNATIONAL MARINE MAMMAL PROJECT, EARTH ISLAND INSTITUTE -
STATEMENT**

**WCPFC6-2009/OP08
8 December 2009**

Submitted by Earth Island Institute

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Earth Island is pleased to attend this meeting of the Western and Central Pacific Tuna Commission.

Our organization is responsible for developing and verifying Dolphin Safe tuna around the world. This Commission has a major role to play in maintaining viable tuna stocks while protecting species including dolphins and whales by promoting Dolphin Safe fishing practices.

We are pleased that this Commission has adopted closures to protect tuna stocks in the Western and Central Pacific. These closures should be long enough to provide significant, scientifically-based protection to all tuna stocks.

Furthermore, we believe that time and/or area closures can provide a means to reduce bycatch of non-target species, such as sharks, billfish, sea turtles and other species, while allowing fishermen to continue to harvest tuna at sustainable levels. We encourage the Commission to take steps to experiment with such closures to ensure protection for the ocean ecosystem.

For further information on Earth Island's international Dolphin Safe tuna monitoring program, please contact me.

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